

Analysis of Mayor Eric Stephens' Statements Regarding the Instrument of Transfer and Pitt Stop Property

Key Takeaways from Mayor Stephens' Comments:

1. Confirms FAA-Controlled Land & Instrument of Transfer Restrictions

- Mayor Stephens acknowledges that certain lands in Shawnee, including the YMCA and Pitt Stop, are on **FAA-controlled land**.
- The land is leased through the **Instrument of Transfer (1947)** from the **U.S. Government** to the City of Shawnee.
- Mayor Stephens states, "*We have to abide by their rules,*" indicating FAA oversight.

2. Claims That Some of This Land Has Been Sold

- Mayor Stephens states that land **has been sold**, mentioning:
 - **66 Nations gas station** (land was originally airport property).
 - **Shawnee Little Theatre** (was on airport land but now privately owned).
 - **Early Childhood Center school** (formerly airport land, now owned by the school district).
- He mentions that the City had to **get FAA approval** for these sales.

3. Discrepancy Between Mayor's Statement and County Records

- Mayor Stephens suggests Pitt Stop is part of this land and that sales have occurred.
- **However, Pottawatomie County Assessor records (2025 tax year) show the City of Shawnee still owns the 80-acre parcel**, which includes Pitt Stop.
- No recorded sale history in official county records.

4. Uncertainty on Legal Process & Future Sales

- Mayor Stephens expresses uncertainty about whether all land sales were **properly recorded**.
- He acknowledges that the **Secretary of the Navy's office** would need to be involved in any sale due to the original **Naval Air Station contract from 1947**.
- He suggests Representative Stephanie Bice or Senator Lankford could help facilitate legal clearance.

5. Acknowledges the Federal Government Can Reclaim the Land

- Mayor Stephens notes that **under the Instrument of Transfer**, the **federal government can take back any land at any time during a national emergency**.
- This suggests that **improper sales or leases** could be challenged by the U.S. Government.

6. Lack of Transparency in Land Transfers

- A resident states that **county records do not show any of this land as sold**.
- Mayor Stephens does not dispute this but suggests that the process may not have been publicly documented.

- He also indicates that future land transfers may not be open for public bidding but instead offered to **specific entities like the YMCA or school district**.
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Potential Legal & Compliance Issues

1. FAA & Federal Oversight

- If land sales occurred **without FAA or federal approval**, they could be challenged legally.
- The **Instrument of Transfer (1947)** requires FAA approval for any changes in land use.

2. Transparency & Public Records Compliance

- The **lack of recorded sales history** in county records suggests potential **failures in proper documentation**.
- If the land was sold **without public notice or competitive bidding**, there could be **legal implications for Shawnee's government**.

3. Possible Reversion of Land to the U.S. Government

- If the City of Shawnee **violated the Instrument of Transfer's conditions**, the **federal government could reclaim the land**.
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Next Steps for Verification

1. Request Official Sale Documentation

- Submit a **Public Records Request** to:
 - **City of Shawnee Clerk's Office**
 - **Pottawatomie County Assessor's Office**
 - **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)**
- Ask for **deeds, contracts, FAA approvals, and transaction records** for any sales related to **airport land or Instrument of Transfer land**.

2. Verify Federal Compliance

- Contact **FAA regional office** to confirm whether any **land transfers were approved**.
- Request **confirmation from the U.S. Department of Transportation or the Secretary of the Navy's Office** about the status of the original Instrument of Transfer agreement.

3. Investigate Legal & Public Notification Requirements

- If land was sold **without public notice or proper documentation**, this could be a violation of Oklahoma's **Open Records Act** or **municipal governance laws**.