

Airport Improvement[®]



The Inside Scoop: How Rochester Int'l
Manages Snow and Ice



Terminal Expansion Fulfills Legacy at Fresno Yosemite Int'l



Crites Field Gets Innovative to Add Seasonal Equipment and Staff

AIRPORT STORIES INSIDE: ALB | CVG | FAT | HNL | LEX | MIA | MYR | PHL | ROC | SBN | SLC | UES



New Train Service Connects O'ahu Residents
to Honolulu Int'l and Beyond



Blue Grass Airport Upgrades Regional
ARFF Training Center

3 BRANDS

1 MISSION

TO DELIVER THE MOST **SAFE, RELIABLE, AND PRODUCTIVE** EQUIPMENT
TO THE ROAD AND RUNWAY MAINTENANCE INDUSTRY



WATER-BLASTING SOLUTIONS



MADE IN AMERICA



thehog.com

772-214-1714 • sales@thehog.com



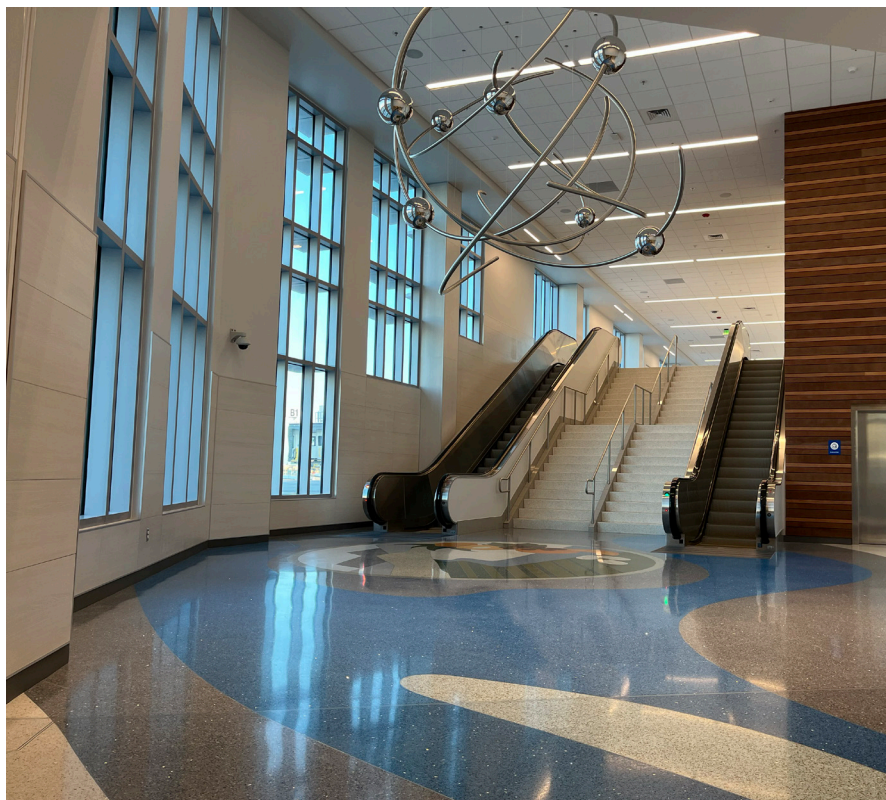
markritelines.com

877-788-2907 • sales@markritelines.com



blasters.net

813-985-4500 • sales@blasters.net



8

Terminal Expansion Fulfills Legacy at Fresno Yosemite Int'l



28

Salt Lake City Int'l Leverages Hardstands During Switchover to New Terminal



32

Myrtle Beach Int'l Expands Terminal to Support Post-Pandemic Growth



46

Small Business Event at Philadelphia Int'l Adds More Local Flavor to Concessions



52

South Bend Int'l Realigns Taxiway and Reconstructs Ramp



18

Crites Field Gets Innovative to Add Seasonal Equipment and Staff



24

New Train Service Connects O'ahu Residents to Honolulu Int'l and Beyond



40

The Inside Scoop: How Rochester Int'l Manages Snow and Ice



58

Blue Grass Airport Upgrades Regional ARFF Training Center

2026 AIRFIELD MARKING SYMPOSIUM



SCAN ATL

ATLANTA
MAY 12-14



SCAN SLC

SALT LAKE
SEPT 15-17



"Personnel involved in the application of airfield surface markings should complete training which includes surface preparation, removal and application of surface markings, and maintenance standards."

- FAA Advisory Circular 150/5340-1

Publisher
Paul H. Bowers
 paulbowers@airportimprovement.com
 262.510.7832

Editorial Director
Rebecca Douglas
 rebeccadouglas@airportimprovement.com
 815.621.4525

Social Media Director
Holli Fourniquet
 holli@holtcreativegroup.com

Creative & Production Director
Becker 505, LLC - Chad Becker
 chad@becker505.com

Circulation Director
Lisa Monday
 lisamondays@airportimprovement.com

Webmaster
Matt Tews
 matttews@airportimprovement.com

Contributing Writers
Scott Berman, Michelle Gardner,
Chris Jones, Jodi Richards,
Kristen Rindfleisch, Kristin V. Shaw
Andrew Tellijohn, Ronnie Wendt,
Jennifer Daack Woolson

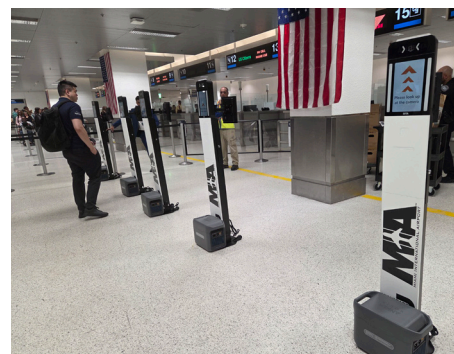
Advertising Sales
Samuel Bowers
 samuelbowers@airportimprovement.com
 262.347.9595

Bill Baumann
 billbaumann@airportimprovement.com
 609.610.5400

Vicki Jensen
 vickijensen@airportimprovement.com
 414.331.9768



62 Cincinnati Int'l Provides "Novel" Amenity for Guests and Staff



66 Miami Int'l Redefines Int'l Arrivals Process with Largest Deployment of Automated Passport Screening in U.S.

columns

Publisher's Column 7
One Airport's Used Equipment is Another's Salvation

Artscapes 72
A new sculpture at Albany Int'l is made out of an unusual material that is both blue and green

Industry Insider 74
James Moorhead, chair of the Int'l Aviation Snow Symposium, explains what makes SnoPo so special

advertiser index

ACC	51	Burns & McDonnell	36	Metal Pless	21
ACI-NA	65	CSHQA	14	Nachurs Alpine Solutions	7
ADB SAFEGATE	55	Cobus	30	National Foam	61
Aerosweep	42	Daktronics	38	Neubert	27
Airport Improvement	73	Delta Airport Consultants	39	Park AssistTKH	50
AMAC	69	EJ	34	Q&D Construction	17
APEX	13	EZ Liner	36	Schwarze Industries	16
Armstrong	6	Fortbrand Services	45	SEW Eurodrive	76
Arora Engineers	35	Fulfab	60	Sherwin	15
Asphalt Systems	56	Hill International	31	Sightline	4
B&B Roadway Solutions	57	ITW GSE	48	SWIFT	71
AVCON	64	Kueper North America	22	Trecan	43
Becker 505	68	Lavi	12	TYMCO	54
Blasters	2	MB Company	23	United Rotary Brush (TN)	44
Buffalo Snow Symposium	49	Mead & Hunt	11	Valtir	75

AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT published bi-monthly by Chapel Road Communications LLC, 212 Cardwell Court, Napa, CA 94559. All statements, including product claims, are those of the person or organization making the statement or claim. The publisher does not adopt any such statement or claim as its own and any such statement or claim does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publisher. Printed in the USA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT to 212 Cardwell Court, Napa, CA 94559. All rights reserved. Permission to reprint or quote excerpts granted only upon written request.



Future-Ready, Passenger-Focused



Design-forward ceiling and wall solutions that optimize passenger experience, ensure safety and compliance, and streamline project delivery for phased transit construction.

Learn more at armstrong.com/transportation

MetalWorks™ Immix® Linear Panelized Torsion Spring Ceiling Panels
Pittsburgh International Airport; Gensler + HDR in association with luis vidal + architects

Armstrong®
World Industries

One Airport's Used Equipment is Another's Salvation

There was a lot of turmoil at our airports when I wrote this column in February. Early in the month, El Paso's airspace was briefly shut down for what turned out to be a party balloon, and TSA was going through a partial shutdown...again. Later in the month, airlines had to suspend service in parts of Mexico due to civil unrest after government forces killed the leader of a major drug cartel. In the U.S., a historic blizzard caused mass flight cancellations in the Northeast, and passengers throughout the country were left to wonder whether Global Entry and TSA PreCheck were operating or suspended during a partisan standoff about funding for the Department of Homeland Security and procedures used by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Fortunately, some good news also came across my desk around the same time. It was captured in two of our stories for this issue. What was somewhat surprising is that we originally had no idea that these "good news" details would be part of either story.

I'm referencing our coverage of winter operations at Waukesha County Airport-Crites Field (UES) on Page 18, and a story about use of hardstands at Salt Lake City Int'l Airport (SLC) on Page 28. The element these stories have in common is the need, discovery and purchase of used equipment. UES needed snowplows,

blowers and sweepers; Minneapolis-St. Paul International happened to have four Oshkosh units it was ready to part with. In a similar vein, SLC needed buses for its temporary hardstand operations, and Denver International had shuttles it no longer needed after closing a remote parking lot. The result was win/win deals for all four airports.

Nicely played.

While this is certainly not a new practice, the acquisition of used equipment was a pivotal factor in the success of both projects to enhance airfield operations. I appreciate the beauty of these arrangements and hope they reflect only a small portion of used equipment transactions occurring between airports now and in the future.

A similar spirit of collaboration and mutual benefit is baked into the Buffalo Snow Symposium. But don't take my word for it. See what this year's chairman, Jim Moorhead, says about the unique event in our Industry Insider column on Page 74.

Cheers,

Paul



PAUL BOWERS, PUBLISHER



WE GET IT... YOU'RE BUSY!

The bidding process is a pain – but with NASi's Sourcwell contract, the runway de-icer qualification process has already been done for you!

Sourcwell 

Awarded Contract
Contract # 110122-NCH

© 2024 Nachurs Alpine Solutions. All rights reserved.

THE
SCIENCE
OF
DE-ICING™



SCAN TO LEARN MORE

VISIT US: nasi-tm.com

800.622.4877 x310
nasi_cs@nasindustrial.com





FRESNO YOSEMITE
International Airport

FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Terminal Expansion

Location: Fresno Yosemite Int'l Airport, in CA

Project Size: 98,000 sq. ft. of new space; security checkpoint expanded to 13,000 sq. ft.

Highlights: New, larger holdrooms with added concessions; expanded international arrivals facility; inline baggage handling system; 2 new boarding bridges; 5-lane passenger security checkpoint; curated public art program in partnership with local & int'l artists

Total Cost: \$150 million

Funding: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Community Project Funding & other federal sources contributed more than \$85 million; airport revenue bonds; 1/2-cent sales tax Fresno County assesses to support transportation projects

Contractor: Q&D Construction

Architectural Design: CSHQA

Architecture Subconsultant: Mead & Hunt

Passenger Screening Equipment: Leidos

Inline Baggage Handling System: Five Star Airport Alliance

Explosives Detection System: Smiths Detection

Passenger Boarding Bridges: Oshkosh AeroTech

New Concessions: Hudson; Los Amigos Mexican Restaurant; Mad Duck Craft Brewing Co.; Einstein Bros. Bagels; Ike's Love & Sandwiches

Project Timeline: Design began in April 2020; groundbreaking in 1st quarter 2023; new checkpoint opened April 2025; terminal expansion debuted in Dec. 2025

Carriers: Aeroméxico; Alaska; Allegiant; American; Delta; Southwest; United; Volaris

2025 Passenger Volume: 2.75 million (busiest year ever)

Terminal Expansion Fulfills Legacy at Fresno Yosemite Int'l

BY CHRIS JONES



By any measure, Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FAT) achieved many notable milestones last year.

The Central California gateway welcomed more than 2.75 million passengers in 2025—its busiest year on record—while also completing the next phases of a \$150 million multiyear capital program that is Fresno's largest public works investment in a generation.

When the dust settled in December, travelers began enjoying FAT's expansive 98,000-square-foot Concourse B addition that features larger seating areas and more restrooms along with fresh concessions

and a thoughtfully curated art program. A pair of new passenger boarding bridges vastly improves conditions for travelers by replacing two outdoor ground boarding/deplaning positions.

The newly expanded 13,000-square-foot security checkpoint exponentially boosts passenger screening throughput, while a new baggage handling system boasts more than one mile of conveyors to shuttle checked luggage to and from TSA screening more quickly. A modernized international arrivals building rounds out the new amenities, with enough room to process visitors three times faster than the facility it replaced.



Such numbers are impressive. But numbers only reveal part of this story.

Despite the many improvements FAT made last year, 2025 will unquestionably be remembered for one immeasurable loss.

"We're in the business of emergency preparedness, drills, incident command structures... we talk about continuity plans," says Francisco Partida, the airport's interim director of aviation. "But I don't think I've ever heard of a course or a



FRANCISCO PARTIDA

symposium or a breakout session at a AAAE conference that says, 'OK, No. 2s... What do you do when your airport director can't show up for work...forever?'"

You're It

Partida was home with family on a Sunday evening last July when he received a call from Georgeanne White, Fresno's city manager.

She asked Partida to recuse himself to a quiet place and sit before breaking the news: Henry Thompson, FAT's director of aviation,



HENRY THOMPSON

had died unexpectedly while on a trip to Las Vegas. He was only 59.

"As of this moment, you're it," White told Partida. "You're running the airport."

Though shocked and deeply saddened, Partida was also well prepared to take on the larger role. In fact, he'd been an understudy for it since childhood. His father worked for Mexicana Airlines in the 1970s, and Partida admits the aviation bug "bit early." As a young adult, he trained in San Antonio to become a commercial airline pilot but later transitioned to the business side of the aviation industry.



In addition to expanding the terminal, the airport added two new boarding bridges from Oshkosh AeroTech.

While employed by a private sector aviation firm based at Brownsville/South Padre Island International Airport (BRO), Partida met Bryant Walker, the Texas airport's director at the time. They connected over a shared passion for aviation, modernizing airports and elevating the user/customer experience, and Walker offered an unpaid internship even though Partida was well beyond his college years.

While maintaining a separate full-time job, Partida completed an 18-month internship, furthering his knowledge of airport administration, aviation security, customer service, public affairs and more. Along the way, he earned a full-time role in business development at BRO, eventually ascending through the ranks to the role of deputy director of Development and Security before moving to Fresno in 2023 to further advance his career.

"Fresno really stood out, not only for the city and [airport] projects...but for the leadership," Partida explains of his decision to move west. "[Thompson] was the ultimate airport professional."

For two years, Thompson ran FAT as the sole airport executive until Partida's arrival in 2023. As the two developed mutual trust and confidence, and the management team adjusted to an expanded chain of command, Thompson was able to gradually pass the reins to Partida, even if only for isolated weekends at first. When Thompson eventually said he'd be unreachable while away on a weeklong cruise, Partida knew he had earned the complete confidence of his mentor.

"I learned a lot from him, but he also allowed me to continue developing leadership skills," Partida reflects. "He never second-guessed my decisions."

And so it went...until the shocking call from White.

The morning after that fateful conversation, Partida personally reflected on Thompson's prior demonstrations of confidence in his subordinates' collective capabilities, and his own track record while FAT was briefly under his supervision.

"I told myself, 'I've done it before and I'm going to pretend he's on extended vacation, initially,'" Partida recalls.

He then convened an all-hands meeting with FAT's other executive leaders and reminded the team there was still work to be done with a multimillion-dollar capital program nearing completion. Everyone vowed to stay on course, rely on one another and to look after the 150-person workforce that was reeling from the sudden loss of a popular leader.

"Henry [Thompson] poured his heart and soul into making sure [the terminal expansion] was executed," Partida notes. "We had our marching orders."

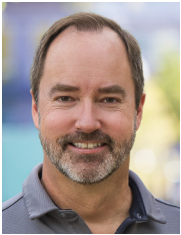
Longtime Aviation Professional

Thompson built a strong reputation in the industry decades before he was hired in Fresno. His career began in the early 1980s when he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force to learn airfield management, later serving as an air traffic control supervisor and trainer.

After leaving the military, he spent two years at San Jose Mineta International (SJC), then 18 more at San Francisco International (SFO) before moving to Louisiana to lead the city of Shreveport's airport system. He returned to California for a three-year stint as director of Santa Barbara Airport (SBA) before accepting the top role with Fresno's city-managed aviation department in late 2021.

Upon announcing the hire, Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer highlighted Thompson's vision, ability to attract more air service and dedication to fostering excellent customer experiences. With FAT's sizable terminal program already underway, Dyer flatly declared, "Henry is the right man for this job."

Under Thompson's guidance, FAT attracted new or increased scheduled service to Atlanta; Chicago; Dallas; Las Vegas; Portland, OR; and Salt Lake City.



MARTIN HAHLE

Martin Hahle, an architect and principal with CSHQA who has worked on jobs at FAT for more than two decades, notes that Thompson leveraged artwork to create a sense of place while simultaneously providing functional benefits.

"A lot of airports are trying to make an iconic statement with their exterior designs," Hahle says. "In Fresno, they're all about the passenger experience and amenities *within* the facility."

He points to a river motif in the new terrazzo flooring as an example. Its meandering pattern references the local San Joaquin River while creating a sense of flow among passengers, Hahle explains. It also blends into a floor medallion by local artist Ruth Soderlund called *Valley Harvest*, which depicts fruits and nuts grown on farms throughout the nearby region and inspires pride among travelers with ties to the local agriculture trade, he adds.

Elsewhere, a floor-to-ceiling mural titled *Fresno Airport – A Welcoming Adventure*, by San Joaquin Valley artists Colleen Mitchell-Veyna and Kesley Gilles, is displayed near the security checkpoint, while a multistory mosaic piece called *We Have Arrived*, by artist Caleb Duarte, was added to the facade of FAT's parking structure last summer.

"Henry really cared for this terminal and how to give it some identity, how to reflect the flavors and cultures and diversity of the Central Valley," Partida says, adding that the many murals beautify the holdrooms and bring "really special meanings" to the spaces.

Beyond aesthetic touches, Thompson sought to incorporate authentic local foods into FAT's expanded dining program. That attracted Mad Duck Craft Brewing Co., a Fresno-based gastropub, and Los Amigos Mexican Restaurant, which runs a 2,000-square-foot eatery through a licensing agreement with SSP America, the airport's food and beverage concessionaire.

After Thompson passed away, Mayor Dyer told a local news outlet that Thompson had done more for the airport in a short period of time than anyone he could recall.

That sentiment was echoed by White, the Fresno city manager, who said Thompson's focus on improving the travel experience and advancing the airport's long-term goals "left a lasting impact."

U.S. Rep. Jim Costa, who has served the San Joaquin Valley in Washington, D.C. for more than 20 years, praises Thompson for being instrumental in strengthening the region's transportation infrastructure.

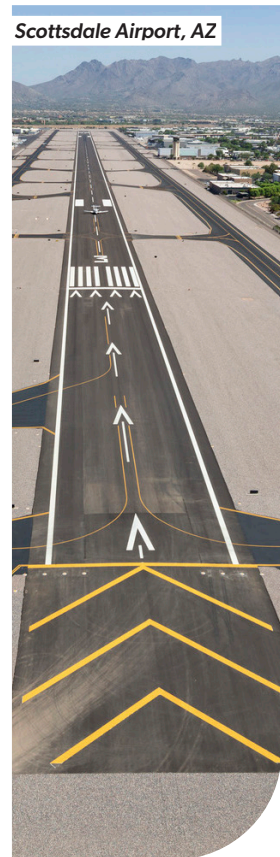
Mead
& Hunt



Mojave Air & Space Port, CA



Willow Run Airport, MI



Scottsdale Airport, AZ

Advancing airports with
vision and precision.

meadhunt.com/aviation



The TSA checkpoint was expanded to 13,000 square feet.

Adds Partida: "I can stand on Henry's shoulders because he set the pace and set the plans." After Thompson's death, he told the team, "The only thing that's going to change is how empty we feel when he's not here."

Growing a Global Gateway

The airport's terminal and checkpoint projects were led by general contractor Q&D Construction, with Boise-based CSHQA acting as prime architect on the design-build program. Hill International provided construction management oversight, with consulting firms Deol Data and MySmartPlans helping streamline the workflow.

As a subconsultant to CSHQA, Mead & Hunt provided specialized design and programming support for the new Federal Inspection Services facility, where U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers now process arrivals from the Mexican cities of Guadalajara, León and Morelia.

Duane Boreham, co-owner and president of aviation projects with Q&D Construction, notes that a heavy emphasis was placed on hiring local subcontractors, with approximately 80% of the workforce residing



DUANE BOREHAM

Queuing and Passenger Flow

- ▶ Smart Guidance / Automatic Smart Gates
- ▶ Electronic Queuing Systems
- ▶ Magnetic Base Stanchions
- ▶ Partition Walls, Barriers & Gates
- ▶ Emergency Egress Gates & Belts
- ▶ Consulting, Design, and Installation

Lavi Industries

sales@lavi.com | 877-275-5284 | www.lavi.com



in or near Fresno. At peak activity, up to 260 people from nearly 50 subcontractors and 30 vendors were on the projects.

While passengers readily notice the expanded spaces, Boreham says the new inline baggage screening system will actually make the biggest difference for the airport and its tenants. On a personal level, he was most excited to work on the new Customs area—a first such project for Q&D.

It was desperately needed. Over the years, FAT built a successful following among Mexican visitors, serving nearly 434,000 passengers headed to or from south of the border in 2025 alone. Until recently, however, processing for international arrivals occurred in an undersized modular facility designed to handle just 150 passengers per hour. The facility was inadequate for the 186-seat and 212-seat aircraft Aeroméxico and Volaris respectively use at the airport.

The airport's new larger Customs facility can process up to 450 arrivals per hour.

Boreham notes that older airports tend to feel tighter and smaller, but FAT's growth was well-planned from its gates and holdrooms to the Federal Inspection Services facility itself. "It flows so much better," he reports.

Speaking from an architect's perspective, Hahle says behind-the-scenes changes bring notable differences in security that benefit travelers, airlines and airport staff. Checked bags were previously loaded for screening by hand, but the airport's new inline system by Five Star Airport Alliance is fully automated moving bags through Smiths Detection's state-of-the-art explosive detection machines.

The existing passenger checkpoint at FAT grew from three cramped lanes into five more expansive lanes with full-length Leidos screening equipment that adheres to current TSA best practices.

"One lane now does more than it could before," Hahle explains. "And we made it a nice experience so you don't feel you're being jammed through a tunnel."

The airport kept its popular Sequoiascape in the central lobby of the terminal and Hahle says efforts were made to let daylight inspire connectivity to the natural beauty that attracts so many visitors to Fresno each year. The new sterile corridor in Concourse B has windows that allow guests to see the Sierra Nevada mountains along the horizon.



APEX WATERJETTING
Equipping YOU to do What YOU Do Best!



**PAVEMENT MARKING
REMOVAL**

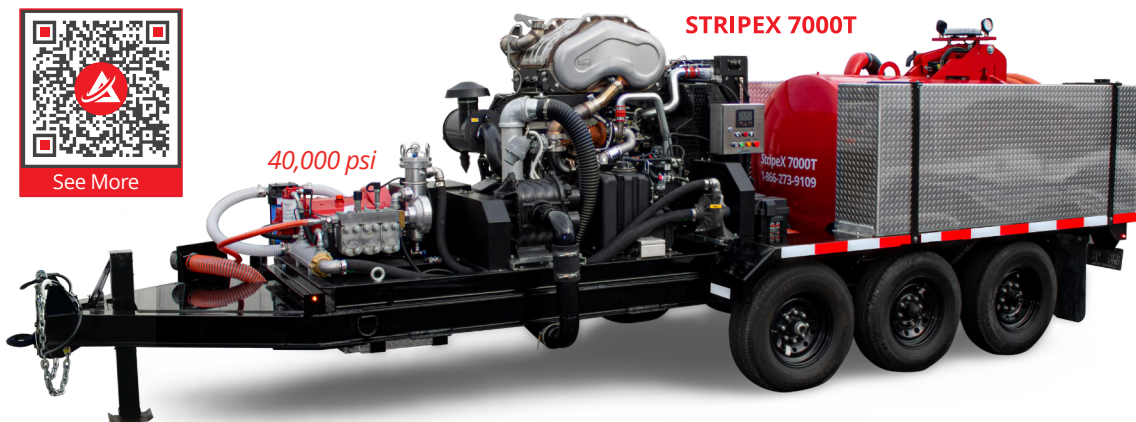
**RUNWAY RUBBER
REMOVAL**

**PAVEMENT MARKING
CLEANING**

**SURFACE PREP &
CLEANING**



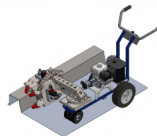
See More



STRIPEBOT™



STRIPE BLASTER CART



CURB BLASTER



STRIPE BLASTER



JETLANCES

apexwaterjetting.com | 3944 SW Sand Trail, Palm City, Florida, 34990, USA | 1-866-273-9109



APEX WATERJETTING
Equipping YOU to do What YOU Do Best!



Forward, Pause, and Forward Again

Although initial design work began behind the scenes months earlier, the airport's largest-ever capital program was officially unveiled to the public in September 2020 under the cheeky branding "FAT Forward." (The three-letter FAT code was derived from Fresno Air Terminal, the airport's name from 1948 to 1996.)

Billed as a multiyear expansion predicated on years of pre-pandemic traffic growth, FAT Forward's first project was a four-story, 917-space garage. It was funded through a \$35 million loan from the California State Infrastructure Bank, a key Golden State economic development arm.

When announcing the new garage, airport leaders emphasized the project would create hundreds of jobs during a period when it was "important to put people to work."

By the time the garage opened in fall 2021, however, FAT had already screamed back to life as Fresno and other smaller U.S. destinations enjoyed a rapid resurgence following COVID-19 lockdowns. FAT and similar airports were able to capitalize on "revenge travel" from cooped-up Americans whose recently accumulated savings fueled their pent-up demand to go somewhere, anywhere.

Given its proximity to the outdoor wonders of Yosemite, King's Canyon and Sequoia National Parks, FAT became the aviation

gateway to some of the most buzz-worthy post-pandemic attractions in the United States.

The airport also benefited from a surge in move-ins, as growing work-from-home opportunities prompted many residents to leave the Bay Area and Southern California for more affordable living situations in the state's Central Valley.

"Fresno is the fifth-largest city in the state and it has a solid economy," Partida explains. "But of course, we are also the closest commercial airport to those three national parks."

And just like that, a market that was once down suddenly found itself way—way up.

Boreham, from Q&D Construction, says he always believed that FAT would rebound quickly. In addition, he lobbied airport clients to use the downturn of 2020 to perform as much construction work as possible, because projects would be easier with fewer people flying.

The city of Fresno, which owns and operates FAT, took a more cautious approach given the magnitude of the costs involved, notes Partida. Ultimately, such pauses weren't significant enough to affect travel demand, he adds.

FAT's checkpoint and terminal became one of the first projects Q&D Construction undertook using videoconferencing tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Ironically, the firm received its notice to proceed for design work on the same day the city of Fresno shuttered its offices to protect staff from potential exposure to coronavirus.

"Had we been an hour later, we would have missed it altogether," Boreham jokes.

While work progressed despite the pandemic, FAT Forward encountered other serious challenges. Soon after the new garage had welcomed its first vehicles, Director of Aviation Kevin Meikle retired in late 2021 following a nine-year run as the airport's top official. His retirement, followed by Thompson's untimely passing last year, at first raised questions of potential voids in direction for FAT and its project stakeholders.

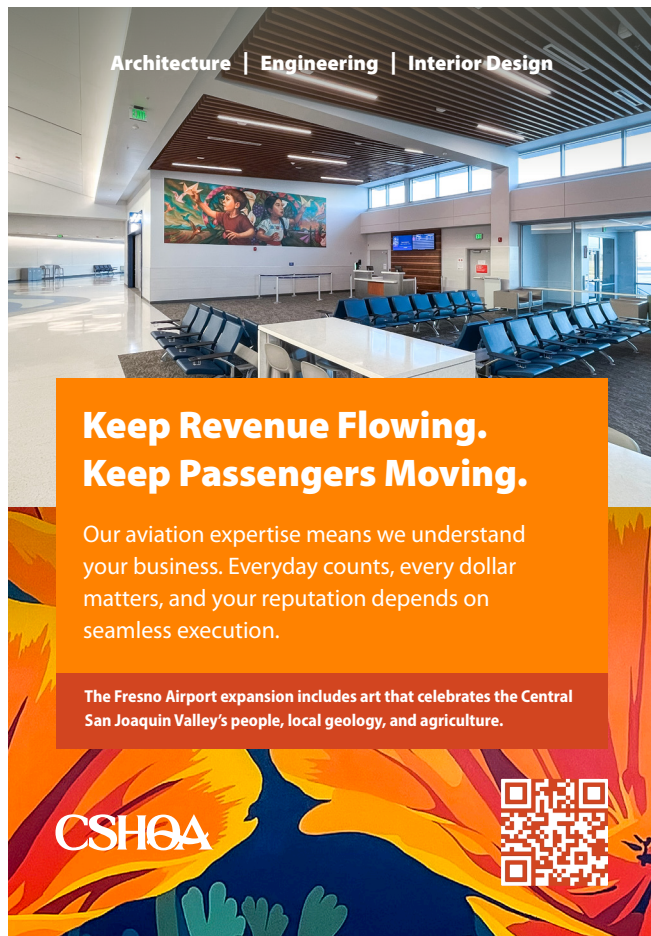
"A leadership change can really affect how we progress," Boreham notes. "It's tough enough doing it once, and in Fresno we did it twice."

Such concerns proved unwarranted as teams stayed on task amid the turmoil. Boreham praises Partida, FAT Construction Manager Luis Garcia, Project Manager Jarred Garza from the city's Airports Division, and his design-build team led by Senior Project Manager Brian Mills for keeping everyone united during a most difficult time.

"They did a really good job," he says. "We had a lot of historical knowledge with the airport team. We actually didn't miss a beat."

"Preventable Anxiety"

An aligned approach and shared vision are precisely what air carriers want from airport leadership whenever capital improvement programs are discussed—especially after significant changes at



Architecture | Engineering | Interior Design

Keep Revenue Flowing. Keep Passengers Moving.

Our aviation expertise means we understand your business. Everyday counts, every dollar matters, and your reputation depends on seamless execution.

The Fresno Airport expansion includes art that celebrates the Central San Joaquin Valley's people, local geology, and agriculture.

CSHQA



the top of an airport's organizational chart, says Steve Sisneros, founder and principal of Las Vegas-based consultancy Sisneros Advisors.

"Change within executive ranks at airports is not uncommon," he notes. "But it's imperative upon executive leadership to make sure that delegation and a buy-in of vision are there; so if something changes, that vision just continues on."

Once an airport team is aligned, he says the next step is ensuring support from airlines and other stakeholders, because these parties are often expected to bear sizable portions of capital program costs.

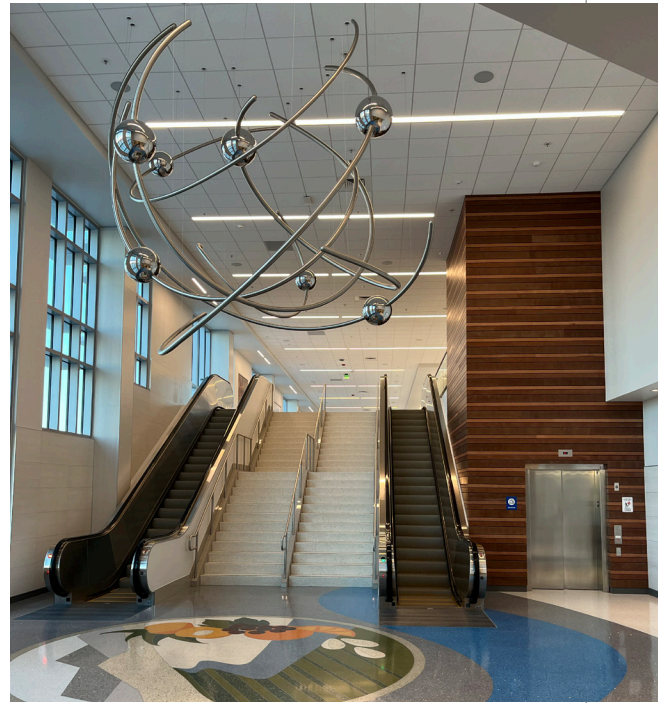
"If the carriers feel like they're not part of the process, there can be more churn than necessary," he adds, referring to such situations a "preventable anxiety" for all involved.

Sisneros gained insight into how capital programs unfold at U.S. airports during his seven years as vice president of Airport Affairs with Southwest Airlines. Before he retired from the company last July, his portfolio included more than 100 airports, including FAT after Southwest began service there in April 2021.

Now a consultant, Sisneros specializes in helping clients and their stakeholders successfully navigate major infrastructure projects. In addition, he serves as an executive advisor on airport-related projects for the Paslay Group, a Fort Worth-based airport consulting firm offering executive program management for complex capital development programs.



STEVE SISNEROS



Work from local and international artists figured prominently into the expansion project.

**Because
Coming Home
Always Matters!**



Sherwin Industries, Inc.
AIRPORT RUNWAY SUPPORT



Sisneros points out that early engagement “can go both ways,” with airport leadership initiating some capital improvements and airline tenants driving others. Gone are the days, he says, when carriers routinely rejected any large-scale capital expenditure due to concerns about associated increases to fees or rental rates.

“Airlines, by and large, are willing to make those investments, especially if it improves operational continuity or customer experience,” Sisneros contends. He acknowledges there may be disagreements along the way, but believes mutually beneficial conclusions are likely if there has been honest engagement.

“Putting together capital programs is really challenging. Recognizing that these are complex problems to solve, giving yourself the time to solve them [is key],” he says. “Ultimately the goal is to get a deal.”

The Next Harvest

Almonds and raisins aren’t the only things growing in San Joaquin Valley.

Partida says more travelers living in nearby counties are choosing FAT, some from as far north as Stockton and Modesto to as far south as Bakersfield. Doing so allows them to escape the frequent congestion on highways leading to larger airports in the Bay Area or greater Los Angeles.

With further growth in mind, FAT Forward rolls on.

Two additional gates are already in design for Concourse B, and Kimley-Horn is at work on designs for a planned \$130 million rehabilitation of the airport’s 9,000-foot primary runway. Bids were released last year though a construction contractor has not yet been selected to replace the asphalt surfaces of 11L-29R with sturdier concrete.

An upgraded \$100 million air traffic control tower complex is also in the works to better serve travelers flying through what’s quietly become one of California’s fastest growing regions. In early January, FAA released a Finding of No Significant Impact on the environment and Record of Decision, clearing the way for the city to proceed with a new 150-foot-tall tower and supporting infrastructure.

Shortcomings of the existing 1960s tower include temperature issues, leaky ceilings and elevators that can be down for weeks while awaiting custom replacement parts.

“We owe it to the National Airspace System and our local controllers and radar approach [personnel] to give them a better place to work,” Partida says.

City and airport leaders are optimistic that recent upgrades may soon lead new or existing airline partners to add service after more guests have experienced the latest iteration of FAT.

“We’ve unlocked a lot of possibilities,” Partida says. “Take that chance and skip the hub—that’s what’s next.” ✈️



WE TAKE YOUR FOD SERIOUSLY

SCHWARZE A7 Zephyr

VACUUM AND BRUSH REMOVAL OF DEBRIS

HIGH VELOCITY BLAST AIR TO PUSH MATERIAL OFF SURFACE

POWERFUL MAGNET TO COLLECT FERROUS MATERIAL

GLYCOL RECOVERY FOR PICKING UP DE-ICING FLUID



WATCH IT SWEEP



CALL US FOR A DEMO

Sourcewell HGACBuy ADWA

1.800.879.7933
WWW.SCHWARZE.COM

THE **BIGGEST LITTLE COMPANY** IN AVIATION



**WHEN IT COMES TO BUILDING BIG,
Q&D'S SMALL TEAM DELIVERS
MASSIVE RESULTS.**

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT OUR VP OF AVIATION
LFORGAYS@QDCONSTRUCTION.COM



Q&D CONSTRUCTION

est. 1964

HEADQUARTERED IN RENO, NV

Crites Field Gets Innovative to Add Snow Equipment and Seasonal Staff

BY MICHELLE GARDNER



Three years ago, the busiest general aviation airport in Wisconsin brought all snow

removal operations in-house. Service from long-term contractors had produced mixed results at Waukesha County Airport–Crites Field (UES) near Milwaukee, and Airport Manager Kurt Stanich and his staff believed they could manage the workload more effectively at a lower cost.



KURT STANICH

Stanich justified the change to Waukesha County, which owns and operates UES, and Director of Public Works Allison Bussler agreed that a different approach would be more fiscally responsible. It took two years from the initial proposal to official approval, and the transition began just before the 2022/2023 snow season. Stanich applied his experience in the U.S. Marines

and implemented the Corps' "Improvise, Adapt and Overcome" strategy to quickly acquire more equipment and hire additional personnel.

At the time, UES owned a barebones fleet of snow removal equipment used by some of its outside contractors. But switching exclusively to in-house crews meant the airport needed more units to keep its two runways and other airside areas clear for winter operations. Staffing also needed to increase beyond three employees—including Stanich—to perform the imminent extra work. "It wasn't like we were starting from zero, but it was pretty close," Stanich muses.

The first year after the switch, UES hired two full-time supervisors and eight part-time drivers. Since then, its winter operation staff has grown to five full-time employees, 16 part-time drivers and one part-time Operations staff member. In 2025, the airport logged about

94,000 aircraft operations, with nearly 16,600 occurring between October and December.

The associated equipment and maintenance budget was \$130,000, with another \$50,000 for seasonal labor to help airport staff manage the effects of Wisconsin's unpredictable winter weather. Some seasonal hires stay on for summer groundskeeping duties, but most are asked to reapply each winter due to administrative requirements.

When asked how long the snow removal season lasts at UES, Stanich deadpans, "11 months." In reality, it runs from October to April, peaking in January. However, this season included early storms that dropped more than 20 inches of snow from October to December 2025. On average, the airport experiences 20 to 25 snow events per season, with 40 to 46 inches annually.



The Equipment Guru

Over the last three years, UES has substantially expanded its equipment fleet with support from Waukesha County. (See equipment list in box to the right for specifics.)

Stanich credits Thomas Zemruski, fleet manager for the county's Department of Public Works, with identifying and negotiating innovative equipment opportunities. For instance, Zemruski has transferred older units from the Highway Department to the airport, including a front-end loader with a fully articulating Metal Pless plow blade.

"Unlike private industry, government and quasi-government agencies can call on peer agencies, share advice and help each other improve processes or save money,"



THOMAS ZEMBRUSKI

he says. "Ultimately, we all operate under the Department of Public Works umbrella—highway, fleet, engineering and airport—and our success comes from supporting one another as one team."

Clearly, having Zemruski in charge of all Public Works equipment has benefited the airport, and it's just one reason Stanich calls him "the equipment guru."

While Zemruski's experience is not in the aviation industry, Stanich appreciates that he understands how highly specialized airport snow equipment is—and knows that options for larger units are limited. Case in point: A timely call Zemruski made to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) led to a deal that brought four of its older Oshkosh vehicles to UES: a runway sweeper, two plows and a snow blower. "They were exceptionally well maintained, and we believe they still have significant service life," he notes.

Airport employees handle daily equipment inspections and make minor adjustments, but more substantial work such as changing oil, fixing hydraulic leaks, performing annual inspections and refurbishing units is performed at the county's maintenance facility about one mile from the airport.

Zemruski acknowledges that maintaining older equipment can be challenging, but the associated cost-savings make the challenges worthwhile. Maintaining that balance became more difficult after Oshkosh sold its snow products division to M-B Companies in 2023. "M-B has indicated that they will be sunsetting parts support for equipment over 20 years old, which is nearly all of our units," says Zemruski, adding that future purchases for UES will likely involve new vendors, training and warranties. "Price alone isn't enough. In airport operations, reliability, service response, warranty support and safety are important," he emphasizes.

Hollywood on Line 1

Finding qualified personnel to operate snow removal equipment is difficult for many general aviation airports, but UES seems to have cracked the code with funny homemade recruitment videos.

Waukesha County Public Information Officer Hillary Mintz suggested the idea of creating movie spoofs to help attract applicants for seasonal positions, and Stanich agreed to give it a try. Mintz, who previously worked as a television reporter, helped produce the first video, which was patterned after



HILLARY MINTZ

FACTS&FIGURES

Project: In-House Snow Removal Program

Location: Waukesha County Airport-Crites Field, in WI

Owner/Operator: Waukesha County

Key Components: Acquiring new equipment; recruiting permanent & seasonal workers

Airport Footprint: 577 acres, with 5,849-ft. concrete runway & 3,599-ft. asphalt runway

2025 Aircraft Operations: About 94,000 (16,587 from Oct.-Dec.)

Tenants: 1,300

Based Aircraft: 247

Winter Season: Oct. to April, with avg. snowfall of 40-46 inches

Switch From Outside Snow Removal Contractors: 2022

Current In-House Crew: 5 full-time employees, 16 part-time drivers, 1 part-time Operations staff member

Seasonal Labor Budget: \$50,000/yr.

2025 Snow Equipment & Maintenance Budget: \$130,000

Current Fleet:

- 2 1995 Oshkosh H-2718Bs (can be used with snowblowers or brooms)
- 2 1998 H-2723s (dedicated snowplow units)
- 2005 Oshkosh H-2718B, refurbished in 2021
- 2015 Case 621F Front-End Loader with Metal Pless plow blade
- 2016 CAT 289D Skid Steer
- 2011 Freightliner M2 112 with dual wings & plow
- 2015 Chevy 3500 Dump Truck with plow & spreader
- 2017 Ford F250 with plow & spreader

Recruitment Tool: Humorous homemade videos that parody popular aviation movies to help attract seasonal snowplow operators

Airplane! Spoof: <https://youtu.be/wcVp6X8VWLQ>

Top Gun Spoof: <https://youtu.be/8LutZfm9zY>

Noteworthy Details: Busiest general aviation airport in WI; Terminal Aerodrome Forecast site



A front-end loader previously operated by the Highway Dept. is proving valuable at the airport.

Airplane!, the 1980 film that parodied *Zero Hour!* and the *Airport* disaster movies from the 1970s. In the video UES created (essentially a parody of a parody), a passenger is asked if he can drive a snowplow to clear the runway. “Surely, you can’t be serious,” the passenger answers, prompting the reply: “I am serious, and don’t call me Shirley.” (See Facts & Figures box on Page 19 for the video link.)

The video enjoyed success on the county’s social media channels and was even featured on local news broadcasts, prompting the airport to create a sequel. “Kurt [Stanich] is one of my more motivated colleagues,” notes Mintz.

This time, Stanich channeled his military service and experience as a Certified Flight Instructor to parody *Top Gun: Maverick*, the 2022 box office hit about an aging hot-shot Navy fighter pilot (played by Tom Cruise) now teaching young recruits to fly. The UES version was aptly titled *Top Plow: Waukesha*, complete with red and blue wings around the logo. (See Page 19 for video link.)

“Basically, the scene we recreated was the new snowplow drivers meeting Maverick in an airport hangar, and I exchanged the word ‘airplane’ with ‘snowplow’ in the script” explains Stanich. A floor-to-ceiling American flag hanging in the background and a soundtrack filled with familiar electric guitar riffs make the similarities to *Top Gun* nearly impossible to miss. And naturally, the recruits “feel the need, the need to plow.”

Stanich plied employees with pizza and promises of fame to secure on-air talent. “No real actors or actresses were harmed in the filming of this video,” he quips. Mintz again handled filming, editing and promotion. “You don’t need a big budget,” she emphasizes. “We put these videos out for free and we shot this one on a phone.”

The results were over 5,000 views on Facebook, TikTok and YouTube; more coverage on the local news; and, most importantly, a significant spike in applications for seasonal snow plowing positions.

“Our recruitment at least tripled,” reports Supervisor Lowell Holcomb, who starred as Maverick. The wide pool of applicants ranged from those in their 20s to retirees.



LOWELL HOLCOMB

Encouraged by the success of this year’s video and the fun they had making it, Stanich and his crew are already planning their next video project. In true Hollywood form, they are keeping details about possible storylines strictly under wraps.

Everyone Is an Operator

The airport’s snow removal crews work in two 12-hour shifts: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. Day shifts are especially challenging after storms because airfield activity surges as soon as the skies clear—particularly from the four on-field flight schools.

With strong response from recruitment videos, rapid hiring and onboarding were critical to prepare for the 2025/2026 snow season. In addition, UES operates under the philosophy that “every staff member is an airport operator” and all employees—regardless of role—receive training in airfield inspections, basic operations and wildlife management.

For instance, Administrative Specialist Sarah McCalvy has helped with plowing and airfield inspections during staffing shortages. “We are all cross-trained,” she says, adding that this approach allows the airport to pivot quickly during snow events and respond effectively to tenant needs.



SARAH MCCALVY

While operating big equipment attracts a variety of applicants, Stanich often prefers candidates with a willingness to learn over those with prior plowing experience. Flexibility to operate different types of equipment and adaptability to on-call scheduling are other sought-after attributes. Hiring several pilots from the airfield has added new perspective to the team and provided a conduit for feedback about performance.

Stanich highlights commitment, teamwork and innovation as defining strengths of the airport’s winter operations team. “We’ve built a crew that cares, and it shows,” he adds.

Safety and Training

Comprehensive instruction about the equipment and basic airfield operations is crucial for all crew members, but especially seasonal employees because many are inexperienced or come from unrelated professions. For instance, one of the first season hires is also a real estate agent.

Josh Matekovic, airport operations supervisor, shares that training combines classroom instruction and hands-on experience. New hires receive movement area and airfield



JOSH MATEKOVIC

safety training, including information about signage, markings and safe operations. This is followed by training about specific equipment, snow placement priorities and radio communication with the control tower.

Training typically totals about 20 hours spread across several days in the fall. Light snowfalls early in the season are often used as real-time training opportunities.

New hires often find operating equipment at night and learning proper radio communication to be the most challenging aspects of the hands-on training. When teaching trainees how to communicate with the control tower, Holcomb emphasizes the importance of using the correct jargon and conveying information in the proper order.

After a few classroom run-throughs, supervisors Holcomb and Nick Marszalkowski train new hires on the airfield—sessions that require patience from controllers in the tower. Once trainees are competent with radio communication and movement area procedures, the next step is learning where to put the cleared snow. “And then,” Marszalkowski says, “It’s, ‘Welcome to the jump seat. Welcome to the show.’”



NICK MARSZALKOWSKI

During actual snow events, runways, connecting taxiways and terminal ramps are Priority 1 areas. Taxi lanes to hangars are also maintained, but individual tenants are responsible for clearing the aprons of their respective hangars.

In addition to key airfield surfaces, the airport maintains parking lots, hangar roads and internal roads. The county highway department provides support for Aviation Drive, which leads into the airport from the county highway.

According to Holcomb, a light dusting of snow takes two to three hours of machine time to remove. This means daytime removal efforts may take up to 10 hours due to airfield traffic. Night-time efforts are typically much faster because equipment operators don’t need to yield to nearly as many aircraft. If needed, UES can deploy 12 crew members and seven pieces of equipment at one time throughout the airport.

Because weather dictates the schedule, crews are often on standby, sometimes waiting overnight for storms that never materialize. “We have to be here just in case,” says Holcomb. Stanich notes that protecting staff downtime can be difficult, as someone must always be monitoring the weather.

AEROPLESS
METAL PLESS AIRPORT DIVISION

www.aeropless.com

1 866 362-1688

ECO-FRIENDLY AIRPORT SNOWPLOWS



ASK US ABOUT OUR
SEASONAL RENTAL **OR** LEASING OPTIONS!



There's an App for That

The team uses a variety of resources to help with forecasting, including the government website Aviation Weather. Among the countless smart phone apps that employees have tested over the years, Weather Underground, MyRadar and trueWeather have emerged as favorites.

Marszalkowski favors an app that provides forecasts for 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. based on zip code location. "We focus on trends, looking 72 hours out, and escalate our response from there," he says.

The National Weather Service in nearby Sullivan, WI, is a key partner. Since 2009, the airport has had its own Terminal Aerodrome Forecast, made possible by an AWOS (Automated Weather Observing System) upgrade prompted by a formal request from the tower manager to better support FAA requirements for controllers. Stanich values the myriad of National Weather Service data that is available—email briefings, slides, webinars and forecast details—to help snow removal crews plan their strategies.

Marcia Cronic, a lead meteorologist and aviation program leader with the Milwaukee-Sullivan National Weather Service, notes that advances in radar and computer processing have significantly improved forecasting with higher resolution scans and faster updates. Stanich originally met Cronic at a



MARCIA CRONIC

Wisconsin Airport Managers Association conference, and their two organizations have worked together since 2010. UES is one of only 17 Terminal Aerodrome Forecast sites in the state.

Cronic encourages other airport managers to reach out to the National Weather Service office in their area and connect with the aviation program leaders to learn more about available services.

Budgets, Funding and Wish Lists

Stanich values having bottom-line budget authority that allows savings in one area to cover cost overruns in another. "We don't have any tax levy, so we get our revenue, or a majority of it, from fuel sales and land leases for hangars," he notes.

Looking ahead, his crew members have ideas about future equipment purchases designed to reduce ongoing maintenance and labor costs. Holcomb and Marszalkowski propose transitioning to multi-function equipment, such as plow-and-broom combinations that allow one operator to accomplish two tasks.

Like other general aviation airports, however, UES faces funding challenges. In particular, Stanich is frustrated that FAA only funds two pieces of snow removal equipment per airport, and a multi-function vehicle—such as a plow-and-broom combo—counts as two. That effectively means funding for just one machine. "From an operator's perspective, that makes no sense," says Stanich. "The FAA doesn't actually say you only need one piece of equipment, but that's all they'll fund."

He and managers of other general aviation airports are working together to change this policy, though they know it won't be easy. Another topic of concern is that FAA applies the same standards nationwide, even in southern states that rarely need snow equipment. Stanich and his peers want to explore whether federal funding can be redesigned to a region-based approach.

That Was Then, This is Now

More than three years after UES shifted snow removal to in-house crews, Stanich remains energized by the change. He's also grateful for the trust Bussler and the county placed in him and his team to lead the largest operational shift in the airport's 90-year history.

While the transition wasn't easy, he says it delivered unexpected year-round efficiencies and flexibility. Looking back, Stanich wishes the change had happened sooner, noting that the key financial benefits came from having greater operational control—allowing decisions on staffing, equipment and tactical storm response. The former contract model, with fixed per-inch pricing and escalating costs, proved unsustainable, he adds. Equally important is the ability to recruit and retain skilled operators over multiple seasons instead of relying on rotating contractor crews.

"There's some financial benefit," Stanich says, "but the greater benefit is having a veteran crew of hardworking people that make this job less stressful and far more enjoyable. I'm thankful for the challenges that pushed us to succeed."

County resources have certainly been valuable, including creative support from Mintz for the recruitment videos. And the strategic procurement skills of "Equipment Guru" Zembruksi will continue to be valuable as the industry evolves toward multi-function vehicles, which come with inherent funding challenges. 

KÜPER®

Premium Snowplow Cutting Edges



RUPO

Rubber with Hardened Poly Inserts

Advanced specialty airfield cutting edge with hardened poly inserts to protect in pavement lights and markings

Kueper North America, LLC | www.kueperblades.com
843-723-7361 | info@kueperblades.com

In pavement light mounting and operation must comply with FAA Advisory Circular 150/5345-46 Specification for Runway and Taxiway Light Fixtures 03/02/2016 in order to use Kueper Plow Blades.

Multi-Tasking Equipment for Today's Airports

MB delivers multi-purpose machines designed to reduce fleet complexity, increase efficiency, and support year-round operations.



MB6P

Compact Power, Year-Round Capability

Combines compact maneuverability with multi-season versatility.

Hydrostatic power and articulated steering provide precise control and reliable performance for all-season operation.

- Faster transitions
- Fewer machines needed
- Lower operating and fuel costs



MB7BT

Bi-Directional, Built for Productivity

Redefines versatility with bi-directional operation.

With PTO and 3-point hitch on both ends, operators can run two attachments without pause.

- Multi-purpose efficiency
- Superior maneuverability
- Reduced equipment footprint



MB is proud to support NEC/AAAE
Visit us at the 2026 Snow Symposium.

m-bco.com



mb

a brand of aebi schmidt



FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Train Guideway & Stations

Location: Daniel K. Inouye Int'l Airport, in Honolulu

Scope: 5.2-mile extension of Skyline electric train system; 4 new stations (including airport)

Service: High-speed connection between city & airport for travelers & employees

Frequency: Every 10 min. 4 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.; every 15 min. 8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Airport Station: ADA-compliant access; closed-circuit video cameras & security; emergency phones & call-boxes; info displays for train departure times; automated voice announcements; ticket vending machines; bicycle parking; TheBus & TheHandi-Van connectivity; direct access to airport parking lot & terminals; wayfinding to/from station & airport

Number of Trains: 20 (about 250 ft. long)

Est. Cost: \$10.08 billion (including financing costs)

Funding: 83% local taxes; 17% federal funding

Timeline: State legislature authorized funding in 2005; groundbreaking in 2011; Segment 1 started service in 2023; airport station opened Oct. 2025 as part of Segment 2

Systems Consultant: Lea+Elliot

Airport Guideway & Stations: Shimmick/Taylor/Granite (STG) Joint Venture

City Center Utility Relocation: Frank V. Coluccio Construction Co. Inc.; HMS Construction; Nan Inc.

City Center Guideway & Stations: Tutor Perini Corporation

Core Systems (project wide): Hitachi Rail Honolulu Joint Venture

On-Call Construction (project wide): Nan Inc.

Key Benefits: Traffic relief for employees & passengers traveling to/from airport

New Train Service Connects O'ahu Residents to Honolulu Int'l and Beyond

BY KRISTIN V. SHAW



Traffic jams are not what most people picture when they think about the Hawaiian island of O'ahu. Sitting on a beach watching the waves with a tropical drink in hand? Definitely. Stuck in bump-to-bumper traffic? No thanks! But that has been the frustrating reality for both local residents and passengers at Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (HNL) in Honolulu.

More than 21 million travelers board and deplane at HNL, and the airport and its tenants collectively employ about 35,000 people, with many adding to perennial congestion on Highway H1. In general, traffic is "horrendous" from the west side of O'ahu—

where many islanders live—to HNL and downtown, acknowledges Lori Kahikina, executive director and chief executive officer of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART).

"We're talking maybe about 15 to 20 miles, and it can take people over two hours to travel that corridor," Kahikina explains. "We needed some relief."

Skyline, Honolulu's elevated train system, was extended from East Kapolei in the southwest quadrant of O'ahu to HNL in October 2025 to help address the persistent issue. While this doesn't solve all of the traffic problems, it offers locals and HNL passengers another transit option. And there's more to come. The train system is scheduled to go all the way to central and downtown Honolulu and neighborhoods on the east side by 2031.



LORI KAHIKINA



More Efficient Option

While HART is the public transit authority responsible for planning and constructing Skyline, the city Department of Transportation Services manages its operation and maintenance. Roger Morton, Department of Transportation Services director for the city and county, was tasked with helping HART manage the system side of the project.

Morton's department also focuses on 40- and 60-foot buses that serve visitors and employees at the airport, and the bus system will now connect the new rail end points to popular destinations. With the debut of the train system a few years ago, the Department of Transportation Services and HART have established a pathway to improvement with future segments. It also expands local public transportation from the perspective of security (buses were scrutinized as potential targets after 9/11) and sheer people-moving volume. Kahikina notes that one Skyline train can fit approximately 800 passengers, which is the equivalent of about 10 city buses.

Recent improvements to the train system are designed to work in concert with the bus system to make a difference

for tourists in a state where tourism is incredibly important. They are also critical for HNL's workforce and anyone even tangentially associated with transport in Hawaii.

"We've talked about the airport connection being important for visitors, but we should not forget the 15,000 airport workers who rely on the train to get to work," Morton says. "If you drive to the airport, you have to park and then wait for the shuttle. The train makes it so much better now."

O'ahu has limited space for infrastructure expansion, as the roadways are fixed between the ocean and mountains. In the event of a major traffic event, there is no place for drivers to go; they are just stuck. From that viewpoint, HART and the Department of Transportation Services see Skyline as a solution that was long overdue.

"O'ahu's corridor is about 40 miles long and three miles wide," Morton explains. "The interior of the island is forest and watershed, unsuitable for development, while the amount of developed land is very limited. As a result, we have some of the highest population densities along that primary urban corridor, which causes terrible traffic. A high-speed rail helps us solve our traffic problem."

Huy Huynh, HART core systems director and principal for systems consultant Lea+Elliott, remembers speaking with Hawaii residents many years ago who would rise before dawn to beat traffic into the city.

Sometimes they would arrive at work and go back to sleep in their car. Now, they can take a time-conserving train, complete with Wi-Fi service.



HUY HUYNH

Transit Upgrade

The trains are powered by electricity via a third rail that supplies the current, and are fully driverless. Train manufacturer Hitachi says the benefit of an automated system like this is safety, as the element of human error is removed from the equation. If there is an issue, passengers

can call for assistance from the train and at the stations via emergency telephones. More than 2,100 cameras transmit video information to the control center, which enables staff to respond quickly in an emergency.

All trains are air-conditioned and include Wi-Fi, an attractive feature for commuters. Riders can bring large items like bicycles, surfboards, baby strollers and luggage, and the cars have dedicated spaces for wheelchairs and are fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. These features serve tourists and residents alike, every day of the week. In addition to the train, the Department of Transportation Services for the city and county of Honolulu added buses in congested mixed-flow traffic to serve rapidly developing areas.

The first segment of Skyline opened on June 30, 2023, transporting residents and visitors from East Kapolei to Aloha Stadium, covering 10.75 miles with nine stops. In October 2025, Segment 2 officially started bringing riders to the HNL station, adding 5.2 miles and four stations along the way. Segment 3 will go further east to central and downtown Honolulu. It's currently under construction and scheduled to begin service in 2031. When that occurs, the system will span nearly 19 miles with 19 stations in all.

Skyline's elevated guideway is about 30 feet wide to accommodate two sets of tracks and was constructed in precast concrete segments. The guideway is supported by cast-in-place concrete piers on drilled shafts that vary in depth, starting at 30 feet. One shaft is 357 feet, which is considered the deepest cast-in-place shaft in the world, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers.

When traveling east, the train stop for HNL is the stop just after the station at Pearl Harbor, making an efficient line between the two popular destinations.

Pearl Harbor, a military base where 2,400 Americans lost their lives in an aerial assault during World War II, is a major tourist site. In addition, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam supports both Air Force and Navy missions, hosting about 100,000 people. The Pearl Harbor area alone represents roughly 10% of Oahu's

A new train station provides direct access to the terminals and airport parking.



total population (plus a heavy annual volume of tourists). The new train service makes traveling to the area much easier.

Long Path to Success

According to HART, the seeds of this project were first planted two decades ago. In 2005, the Hawaii State Legislature authorized a General Excise Tax to provide funding for local mass transit. However, the ceremonial project groundbreaking at the Kualaka'i (East Kapolei) Station didn't happen until 2011, and Segment 1 wasn't completed until 2023.

Along the way, there were several delays, including a State Supreme Court ruling about archaeological studies in 2012. "Native Hawaiians bury their ancestors, and we have utmost respect for their remains," Kahikina explains. "When we encounter iwi [Hawaiian for the bones of native ancestors], we have to go through a historical preservation process, contact the lineal descendants and ask if they want to intern in place or put them back very respectfully once the construction is completed. It's a cultural issue we have run into over the years and we are addressing that along the route to downtown Honolulu as well."

The project also includes the Mauka Shift, a plan to move a section of the rail guideway from the center of Dillingham Boulevard to the inland side of the street to avoid subterranean utility lines. Under Dillingham Boulevard is what Kahikina jokingly calls "a spaghetti noodle nest" of utility infrastructure that has been in place for decades. Not surprisingly, the snarled web of electricity, water, sewer and fiber optics lines are not mapped well, which makes inadvertently cutting into them far too easy.

"When that happens, trying to keep on schedule can be very, very challenging," Kahikina remarks.

The underground utility lines and electric transmission lines above ground on both sides of Dillingham Boulevard continue to

present potential problems and delays that HART is working hard to anticipate.

On the ocean side, aboveground power lines can't all be moved underground due to space. The design team determined that moving the guideway to the mountain side of the street addresses this problem and avoids the need to move other existing underground utilities. The total savings: a cool \$150 million, plus reclaimed project time.

More Smiles, Less Stress

Huynh calls the train extension a mega project that brings a great deal of benefit to the community and city. "It's not easy to implement such a huge project so far away from the mainland," he says. "Collaboration and technical integration are so critical to manage different moving parts."

Now that trains run to/from the HNL station every 10 to 15 minutes depending on the time of day, Morton is excited that future generations will grow up with fewer memories of being stuck in traffic. So far, feedback is very positive and ridership continues to increase.

"Whether the riders are local or tourists, when they ride the train, they are smiling," Morton says. "Number one, they have a great view from the train because it's elevated and you see things you don't see from the highway."

Kahikina notes that tourists from Japan and Europe who are already accustomed to multimodal transportation systems find Skyline efficient and familiar. She also reports that train ridership has jumped from an average of about 4,000 people per day to more than 10,000 since Segment 2 opened recently.

"It's not going to be a cure-all, but at least it will give people a different option," she remarks. 🚆

How Many BLOCKHEADS Does It Take to Close a Runway?

Fewer Than You Think - Deploy in 15 Minutes, Not 45

BLOCKHEAD® 8 FT LOW-PROFILE BARRICADE | US PATENT NO.D1,051,897 | TRUSTED AT 30+ AIRPORTS



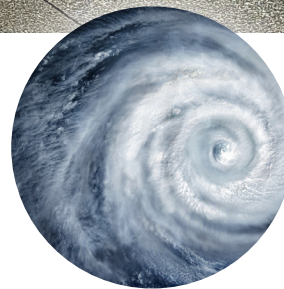
FASTEST DEPLOYMENT

Stack with lights installed -
deploy in minutes



WIND TUNNEL CERTIFIED

ERAU tested to 98 MPH



HURRICANE RESISTANT

Zero failures through
2 hurricane seasons



60% SPACE SAVINGS

Revolutionary stacking
reduces costs

BLOCKHEAD® SPECIFICATIONS

Model:	BLOCKHEAD® 8 FT Low-Profile Barricade
Dimensions:	96" L x 8" H x 8" W
Material:	UV-resistant polyethylene plastic
Weight (Empty):	15 lbs
Water Capacity:	13.61 gallons
Sand Capacity:	3144.3 cubic inches
Reflective Tape:	High-grade orange-white sheeting
Light Mounts:	Three (3) 2-inch safety light mounts
Flag Mounts:	Two (2) 3/4" tapering mounts
Part No.:	AB9688
Patent:	US Patent No. D1,054,897

KEY FEATURES

- Stackable with NAC LED lights installed (NAC lights required)
- Patent-protected design (US D1,051,897)
- Competitor lights must be removed for stacking
- 1-2-3 light configuration
- Can ship with lights pre-installed
- Wind-tested and FAA compliant
- Reduces storage space up to 60%

COMPLIANCE & CERTIFICATIONS

FAA & ICAO Compliance:	Meets Performance Specification
Quality System:	ISO 9001:2015 Certified
Manufacturing:	Made in USA - Tampa, FL
Business Type:	Certified SDVSB

FIELD PERFORMANCE

Airports Installed:	30+ nationwide
Hurricane Testing:	Zero failures, 2 seasons
Wind Tunnel Testing:	ERAU Certified - 98 MPH
Notable Projects:	West Palm Beach Int'l (18 mo) Tampa Int'l Runway Extension

ORDERING INFORMATION

Available Colors:	Orange (standard), White
Sold in Quantities:	25, 50, 75, 100 units

SETUP TIME
TRADITIONAL 45 min
BLOCKHEAD® 15 min



PATENT NOTICE: Stackable design (US Patent D1,051,897) functions exclusively with NAC LED barricade lights. All other lights must be removed before stacking, eliminating deployment time savings and increasing labor costs.

COST SAVINGS CALCULATOR

60% less storage = Fewer truck trips & warehouse space
Integrated lights = 2-3 labor hours saved per deployment
No light removal/installation = Reduced crew fatigue
**2-year warranty = Extended protection
& lower replacement costs**

NAC
NEUBERT AERO CORP.
Airport Products & Services



MADE IN THE USA



airportNAC.com | 727.538.8744 | info@airportnac.com





Salt Lake City Int'l Leverages Hardstands During Switchover to New Terminal

BY KRISTIN V. SHAW

FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Hardstand Operations During Terminal Construction

Location: Salt Lake City Int'l Airport

Hardstands Deployed: 20

Cost: Part of \$5.1 billion budget for all 3 phases of terminal construction

Funding: Airport cash; federal grants; passenger facility charges; rental car user fees; revenue bonds

Timeline: 1st hardstands built in 2017; deployment began in 2020; at peak, 20 stands were used; by fall 2023, only 5 remained, with sporadic use into early 2024

Boarding Ramps & Staircases: East Island Aviation Services

Financial Services for Project: Hill Int'l

Program Management: Making Projects Work

Construction Joint Venture: Holder Construction, with Big-D Construction for local management

Airside Buses: ElDorado

Logistic Support for Bus Operations: SP+ (now Metropolis)

Signage: M.C. Dean

Key Benefit: Gate access during construction of new terminal



The average passenger may not know the term “hardstand,” but they certainly know when they use one. The big giveaway is the walk or bus ride from the terminal to the ramp when they board, and vice versa after arriving at their destination. Hardstands are common in Europe but less so in America, where most airports prefer to avoid them altogether and use enclosed boarding bridges instead.

However, sometimes they're necessary. Salt Lake City International Airport (SLC), for instance, leveraged them during the multi-phase construction of its new terminal. When transitioning operations from the adjacent previous facility, SLC used hardstands on a limited basis to help maintain flight schedules. Once they were no longer needed, the airport promptly decommissioned them.

The airport deployed its first hardstand in October 2020 and eventually had 20

in use. By October 2023, the airport only needed five, and the remaining stands were sporadically used until March 2024. When all was said and done, SLC management deemed the strategy effective and efficient—and even included built-in hardstand options for future expansion.

Tough Decisions About Passenger Flow

When the airport's previous terminal opened 65 years ago, it was built to accommodate 10 million passengers. By 2014, more than 21 million passengers were enplaning and deplaning at SLC. That year, the airport broke ground on a new facility to address capacity issues, including new gates to handle a variety of regional and large jets. Construction on the \$5.1 billion program began in July 2014 with a timeline continuing through 2026.



Even under ideal circumstances, building an airport is a long and complex process that requires project teams to juggle the needs of airlines, passengers, concessionaires and other stakeholders. But 2020 ushered in an unforeseen wrinkle that shook up the entire industry: the COVID-19 pandemic. As air traffic slowed dramatically, the team at SLC faced tough decisions about its construction timeline.

"We went from having 30,000 people a day at our front door to 1,500," recalls Executive Director Bill Wyatt.



BILL WYATT

By May 2020, there was little optimism about when air traffic would return to normal, and Wyatt and his project team considered options for transitioning to the new terminal. It seemed like an

optimal time to close the old gates and continue construction on the new terminal.

"We figured we would save ourselves and everybody else a tremendous amount of stress and headache by avoiding running operations at the older airport and the new airport simultaneously," Wyatt recalls.

Delta Air Lines, which operates a major hub at SLC, agreed.

So did the airport's project management consultant, Making Projects Work. Brian Stetson, a program manager with the firm, notes that expanding SLC was a no-brainer because skiing, national parks and outdoor tourism are driving more and more visitors to the area. Scheduling construction, however, was the more difficult part.



BRIAN STETSON

"One of the biggest challenges was time," Stetson says. "You know how aviation is: We needed gates, and we needed them immediately."

When the pandemic hit, SLC's airlines agreed that shutting down wasn't an option. The project team had to come up with something else, and that "something else" was hardstand parking.

"It seemed reasonable that the best—or maybe we call it the 'least-worst'—option was to demo the existing facilities and then build all the new facilities and see where everything would shake out," Stetson remembers.

It was a bit of a gamble, though, since no one knew what the future held post-pandemic. While the SLC team didn't have a Magic 8 ball, it felt sure that passengers would start streaming through the door again at some point. The big question was when.

Staffing and Equipment

In fall 2020 (during Phase I of construction), Delta Connection flights at 11 gates on Concourse A were switched to remote hardstands. Passengers departing on regional jets had to venture halfway down the west side of concourse A, connect to Concourse B via a tunnel, then backtrack to the gate counters for the hardstands.

Wyatt acknowledges that the circuitous route wasn't as easy as passengers would have liked, but he considers the temporary measure a success from an operations perspective. And passenger flow improved dramatically in 2024, when the 1,000-foot River Tunnel that connects concourses A and B opened.

"Airports of our size are small cities, and we have a lot of stakeholders here," Wyatt remarks. "You've got the airport, the concessionaires, the rental car companies, the ground transportation and the airlines. You really have to pay attention to communication and coordination."

Communication was a key tenet of the hardstand plan, even outside of the SLC network. As the team put together an operations sequence, it knew that buses would be needed to shuttle passengers to and from the remote hardstands. Buying a

fleet of new buses was not SLC's first choice; however, renting or buying used school buses or charter buses wouldn't meet its needs.

"The minute we found out we were going forward with the hardstand operation, our parking manager started making calls," says Director of Airport Operations Treber Andersen. "We discovered that Denver Airport had closed a remote lot, and those buses were not being used anymore."



TREBER ANDERSEN

SLC purchased 17 40-foot Eldorado buses for \$3.3 million, and in-house crews removed rows of seats from the middle to make room for more passengers and luggage. Mechanics were comfortable making the modifications because the airport already owned the same brand of buses.

Hill International, which provides financial services for the overall construction project, credits the airport for finding a way to mitigate the high expense. "In terms of managing costs, finding these buses was very helpful," says Charles Idehen, program controls manager at Hill.



CHARLES IDEHEN

In keeping with the airport's environmental policies, the newly acquired vehicles run on compress natural gas.

Next up was finding people to drive the buses; and candidates with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) were a hot commodity during the pandemic.

"Before 2020, I'd pass a big billboard on my way home advertising wages for bus drivers at \$19 per hour," Wyatt recalls. "By the time we were finished with the hardstands, we were paying \$24 or \$25 an hour for CDL bus drivers."

The airport consulted its parking provider to help establish shuttle service for hardstand operations. SP+ (now Metropolis) supplemented its existing parking lot operation at SLC and brought in additional managers to launch the new airside bus service. One key move was recruiting an employee with hardstand experience at other airports to work with dispatchers, hire drivers and provide associated training.

"Driving those large buses all over the airfield is not an optimal thing for an airport," Wyatt says. "We had someone in the control tower just to be sure the movement on that part of the airport was properly coordinated."

COBUS – THE AIRPORT BUS

WE MOVE PEOPLE



COBUS LLC ■ Phone +1 (203) 231-6526 ■ E-mail cobus@cobus-us.com ■ www.cobus.us

Security was another challenge. Because passengers on multiple flights descended the same ramp and then veered off toward different areas for their flights, SLC stationed security staff at each portal to make sure travelers had the proper ticket to enter that area.

Preparing for More Expansion

In October 2025, Wyatt cut the ribbon to celebrate the grand opening of 10 new gates, six additional concessions, two members-only lounges and other new passenger amenities. With all of the hardstands decommissioned and most of the multibillion-dollar construction complete, post-project analysis is already underway.

Jordan Cammack, construction manager from the joint venture of Holder Construction and Big-D Construction, is officially a “big fan” of the flexibility that hardstands offer. So is Stetson, from the project management side of the project team.



JORDAN CAMMACK

“Airports often think of hardstands as a temporary ‘this is kind of what we have to suffer through’ project; and then out they go,” Stetson says. But hardstands can help airports explore expansion and allow airlines to try out new route service, he adds.

Wyatt calls their use at SLC a “family operation” because the entire airport had to pitch in to achieve success. While using hardstands wasn’t ideal for anyone, he says the team did its best to mitigate issues and make conditions as comfortable as possible for passengers.

“We talked with Delta and all the airlines about the hardstand operation, and we listened very carefully to what we heard,” he relates. “Even though it had its challenges, it wasn’t a hard decision to decide to go forward with. In the beginning, we may not have fully appreciated the challenges to our passenger base, but there wasn’t much that we could have done differently.”

Ultimately, the strategy was so successful that the new airport includes hardstands for future expansion. If they are needed for a short-term event, such as the 2034 Olympics, SLC will be ready with a quick solution.

Meanwhile, Concourse B is slated for completion this fall. ✈️

Busing passengers to and from remote hardstands helped maintain operations during terminal construction.

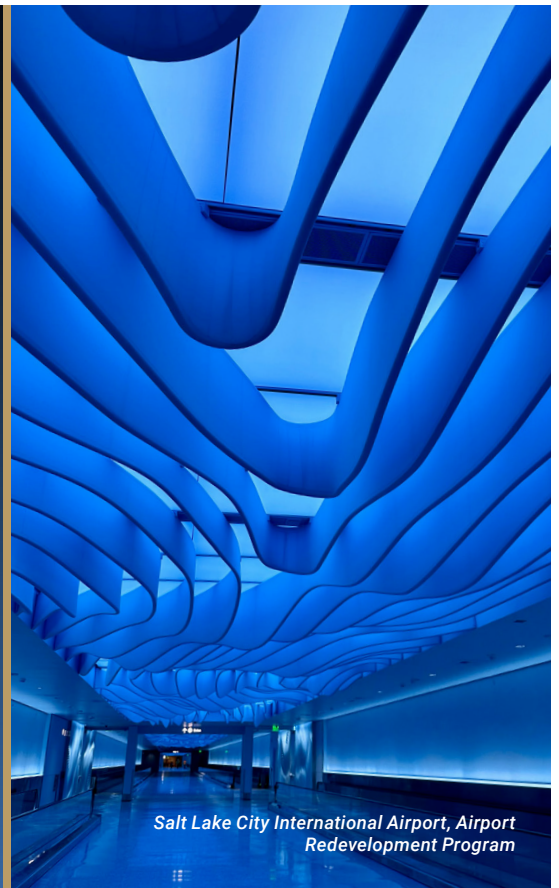


HILL 50
International
GIS CONSULTING GROUP
Years

*50 Years
Delivering
Projects that
Moves the
World Forward*

Program Management
Project Management
Construction Management
Planning Oversight
Design Management
Advisory Services

www.hillintl.com
(800) 283-4088



*Salt Lake City International Airport, Airport
Redevelopment Program*

Myrtle Beach Int'l Expands Terminal to Support Post-Pandemic Growth

BY KRISTEN RINDFLEISCH

Myrtle Beach International Airport (MYR) recently completed one of its most comprehensive terminal expansion and modernization efforts ever, adding capacity, upgrading infrastructure and reshaping the passenger experience. The \$95 million program was specifically designed to create a terminal that is more functional and more welcoming for travelers arriving and departing South Carolina's Grand Strand region.

The inherent challenges of serving ever-rising passenger volume in facilities originally designed for small regional jets prompted MYR to update the terminal for its new fleet mix. Specifically, the project added 50,000 square feet and six new gates to Concourse A, while also modernizing public areas and renovating 12 existing gates throughout concourses A and B. Key features include larger holdrooms, clearer passenger flows

and better amenities for an improved customer experience.

Although planning for the expansion and renovation began before the COVID-19 pandemic, the airport's notably rapid rebound accelerated the project timeline. When area beaches welcomed tourists back for Memorial Day in 2020, MYR became one of the nation's fastest-recovering airports "The beach was open for business all day," remarks Judi Olmstead, director of Airports for Horry County. "A lot of families had their kids on the beach while they were working remotely."

Fortunately, the nimble project team was able to accelerate both design and execution of construction. In fact, work

was completed roughly six weeks ahead of schedule and about \$4.5 million under budget. Remaining funds were earmarked for similar improvements in other areas of the airport.

Today, MYR serves more than 50 destinations via 10 airlines, and it continues to pursue expanded air service, including the return of its pre-pandemic non-stop flight to Toronto. "We're always attempting to get Canadian traffic back with the golfers, as well as other international opportunities," says Olmstead, adding that the West Coast is another focus for service development. "We're always hoping for L.A. or Vegas."

The project was delivered by a joint venture of JE Dunn Construction and Southside Constructors, with Gresham Smith serving as prime design consultant and Accenture as program manager.



JUDI OLMSTEAD



PHOTO: GRESHAM SMITH

Construction began in June 2024 and reached substantial completion 17 months later, followed by a ribbon-cutting celebration on Dec. 1, 2025.

New Gates and Terminal-Wide Upgrades

"When our existing concourses A and B were constructed, the holdrooms were sized around smaller regional jets," says Breck Dunne, director of Airport Development for Horry County. As the airport began accommodating a variety of larger aircraft in recent years and overall passenger volume grew, the need for additional gates and associated concourse space became



BRECK DUNNE

increasingly critical. "It's important for us to capture a holdroom size appropriate for those larger aircraft," Dunne comments.

Traveler demographics added yet another challenge. "Being a resort market, we see a high influx of passengers from the hotel checkout window of roughly 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., so our circulation areas get really congested," he explains. "It was important for us to capture larger circulation corridors in this project as well."

The design team alleviated these pressures by widening corridors, redistributing seating and improving sightlines so passengers can intuitively move through the terminal even during peak congestion.

Improving the Passenger Experience

In addition to addressing aircraft needs and capacity issues, project designers focused on enhancing the passenger experience. "We targeted noise, outdated finishes and visual clutter," summarizes Brad Sucher, senior vice president of Gresham Smith.

Olmstead acknowledges that parts of the terminal had fallen well behind current standards. For example, Concourse B was built more than 20 years ago and had received minimal updates. "We needed to just modernize the whole experience," she says. The airport made terminal upgrades throughout the terminal to help visually connect newly constructed areas with existing facilities.

New finish materials were specified to improve both performance and passenger comfort. Tile flooring in public circulation areas was replaced with terrazzo to dramatically quiet the terminal and amplify natural light. The new flooring is also more durable, notes Sucher.

All public restrooms were rebuilt with additional capacity, enhanced comfort, updated accessibility and more modern fixtures. "Touchless amenities such as soap, water and a hand dryer are all right next to one another, so you never take your hands away from the sink," Olmstead notes. New features include a family restroom, a mother's room and an ADA-compliant restroom with an adult changing table.

Seating is another aspect designers changed to meet evolving passenger needs. Legacy beam seating was reduced by roughly 50% and redistributed throughout the terminal. Different types and configurations were also added. "We implemented a blended seating strategy that supports different dwell times and creates visual 'neighborhoods,'" Sucher explains. "Traditional tandem seating preserves capacity, while lounge clusters, café-height tables, companion/accessible options and work-top counters provide choice and comfort."

Work-top counters were placed strategically along viewing area and circulation edges to visually break up

FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Concourse A Expansion & Terminal Modernization

Location: Myrtle Beach Int'l Airport, in SC

Major Components: 6 new gates on Concourse A; renovation of 12 gates on concourses A & B; new flooring; renovated restrooms; new signage & wayfinding; wider passenger circulation corridors; new power infrastructure; upgraded special systems; additional seating with built-in power

Key Benefits: Added capacity; improved passenger flow; upgraded amenities; brighter & quieter public spaces; clearer wayfinding; enhanced accessibility; scalable infrastructure to support future growth

Project Size: 50,000 sq. ft. expansion; 65,000 sq. ft. renovation

Cost: \$94 million

Funding: Passenger Facility Charges; Airport Improvement Program; SC State Aeronautics Funds

Construction/Renovation: June 2024–Nov. 2025

Owner's Authorized Rep/Program

Management: Accenture

Architect: Gresham Smith

Construction Manager at Risk: JE Dunn Construction + Southside Constructors Joint Venture

Special Systems Engineering: Arora Engineers

Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Engineering: AME

Landside Civil Engineering: DRG

Airside Civil Engineering: Delta Airport Consultants

Jet Bridges: Oshkosh AeroTech

Terrazzo: David Allen Co.

Furniture & Seating: PMC Commercial Interiors

Electrochromic Tinting Windows: SageGlass

Restroom Fixtures: The Splash Lab

Temporary Construction Wall: SwiftWall



Reliable solutions for your airport project.



Designed to accommodate extreme weight loads and conform to existing local specifications.

Learn more at ejco.com or call 800 626 4653



1-883
Made in USA



All public restrooms were renovated and modernized.

holdrooms, soften sightlines and offer productive perches, he notes. Now, guests can charge their electronic devices in any seating area.

Designing for Light, Views and Spatial Clarity

Openness, scale and visual connection were key areas of focus throughout the expansion and renovation. From the inception, designers sought to create an environment that feels both expansive and intuitive, while preserving close ties to views of the airfield. "You've got all this natural light pouring in, and there's a clear line of sight all the way back into the existing [structure], including baggage claim and the exit lane," Sucher describes. The result is a concourse that visually connects passengers not only to their gates but to the terminal as a whole.

Concourse A was extended as close to the runway as allowable, with a floor-to-ceiling curtain wall and clerestory windows to provide abundant daylight and reinforce the visual relationship between passengers and activity outside on the airfield. "As a plane goes by, you almost feel like you can reach out and touch [it]," Sucher says. Electrochromic glazing from SageGlass was incorporated along key façades to mitigate glare while preserving unobstructed views to the apron.

As part of the broader wayfinding effort, Gresham Smith studied sightlines and visual hierarchy across the terminal to optimize intuitive flow. "This reduced

visual noise, opened cross-terminal views and reinforced intuitive circulation so passengers can see where they need to go sooner," Sucher remarks. These improvements will be particularly important when the terminal experiences peak volume during busy tourist seasons.

Rather than simply adding more signage, the project focused on streamlining and repositioning existing cues at key decision points. "One of the things we felt was important was to modernize our signage, simplify it, so there would be a little less congestion on the signage," Dunne adds. Floor patterns, ceiling heights and material transitions were also used to subtly reinforce direction and passenger flow.

A Coastal Sense of Place

Designers worked to weave references to Myrtle Beach's coastal identity into the project in a way that feels modern rather than thematic. Color palettes, materials and finishes throughout the terminal draw inspiration from the surrounding shoreline, allowing the architecture and interiors to quietly reinforce the airport's role as a gateway to the leisure destination. "The terrazzo incorporates some 'beachy waves and sand' type of feel," Dunne offers as one example.

Coastal sense of place is most visible in the new central hub, where preserved regional palm trees were installed among bench-style seating to introduce a natural focal point while reinforcing the openness and light emphasized throughout the

design. Positioned to preserve clear sightlines to the airfield and surrounded by daylight from the curtain wall, the palms help ground the concourse in its geographic context without overwhelming the passenger environment, notes Sucher.

The local references continue into the restrooms, which were rebuilt and modernized. "There's a pixelated wave graphic that also gives that beach vibe as you walk into the restrooms," Dunne describes. Blue-toned glass partitions and coordinated finishes reinforces the beachy vacation feel while maintaining a clean, contemporary aesthetic, he adds.

Aligning Scope, Budget and Stakeholders

The project was delivered using a construction manager at risk model. JE Dunn Construction, in joint venture with Southside Constructors, provided early preconstruction services and then served as construction manager during the build. Early involvement allowed the firm to hone its strategies.

"We came up with an alternative approach of boring all the electrical over to the expansion, versus tearing roof up and potentially having that risk," shares Nick Christoffersen, JE Dunn vice president – Aviation Group manager. "That was a time savings and also saved the airport a lot of money by not having to do all that work."



NICK CHRISTOFFERSEN

Accenture served as the Owner's Authorized Representative, providing comprehensive program management services throughout the project. The firm worked closely with the MYR Finance Department on financial controls and contract compliance services, tracking alignment between the established scope, schedule and funding.

"The project's success was driven by ensuring a clearly defined scope, which ensured that stakeholders, contractors and decision-makers shared a unified understanding of project requirements, which reduced ambiguity and minimized rework," says Cassie Krautsack, director of Program Management with Accenture. This clarity helped keep the team focused on delivering the intended improvements without unnecessary changes that could have adversely impacted the cost or schedule, she details.

Communication and risk management played a big role in maintaining momentum as the project moved from planning into construction. "Robust communication enabled the team to anticipate potential changes early and resolve issues before they created delays or financial impacts," Krautsack notes. Consistent coordination with stakeholders

supported transparency and timely decision-making, and proactive contingency planning helped ensure risks were identified early in the process, she elaborates.

"This project stands out as a model of collaborative airport delivery because every stakeholder—from airport leadership to Horry County officials, contractors and program management partners—operated with a unified understanding of goals, constraints and priorities," Krautsack adds. This alignment helped minimize friction, allowing each partner to focus on its responsibilities while maintaining a shared commitment to delivering a high-quality terminal expansion, she says.

Christoffersen, from the construction side of the team, ranks the collaboration exhibited on the MYR project as some of the best he's ever experienced.

Business as Usual

Meeting an aggressive construction/renovation schedule while continuing full daily airport operations was perhaps the most complex aspect of the project. "We renovated our entire existing building—the flooring and signage and all the restrooms—all while maintaining 24/7/365 operation," Dunne reflects. The scope included work in active concourses, holdrooms and passenger corridors, adding complexity to every phase of construction.

To reduce operational impacts, the project team adopted an "island" approach, completing most of the expansion independently from the active terminal and then connecting

Planning and Design | Program & Construction Management Facilities Management | IT | Asset Management



Arora proudly delivered comprehensive Special Systems Engineering and Construction Phase Services in support of the Gresham Smith Team for the two-level terminal expansion at Myrtle Beach International Airport (MYR) including six new gates, hold rooms, concessions, and associated support spaces.

Arora's scope of work included:

- Telecom Backbone & Network Infrastructure
- Public Address & Dynamic Information Displays
- Video Surveillance & Electronic Access Control
- Systems Integration & Operational Phasing
- Construction Administration & Field Coordination

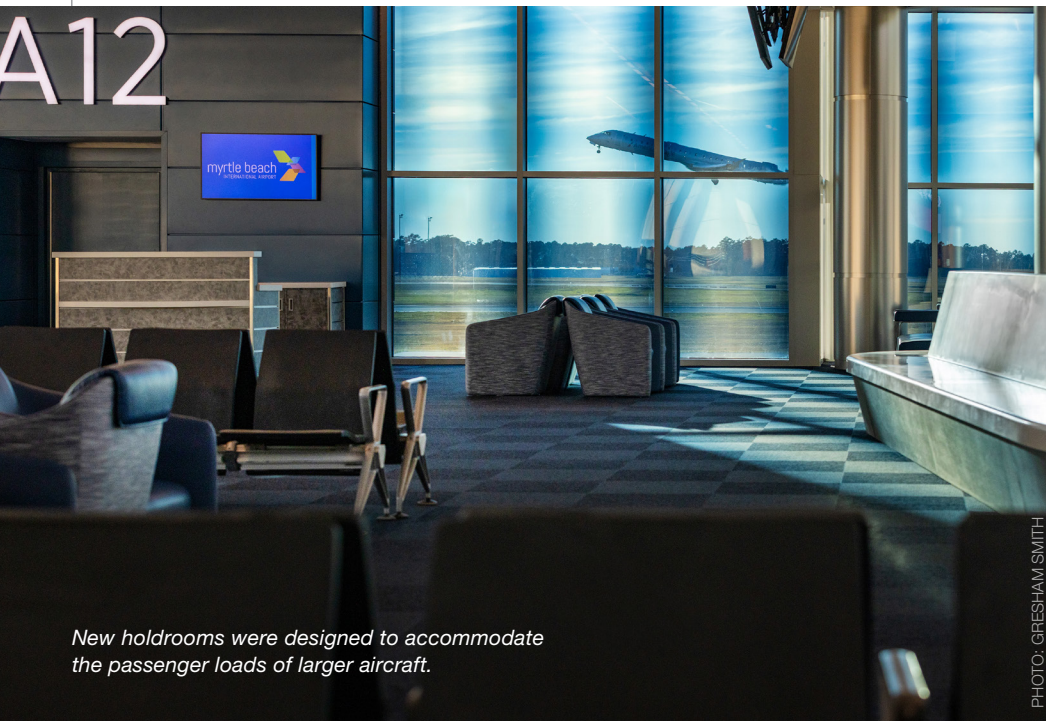


Photo Courtesy of Gresham Smith

aroraengineers.com | Rethinking Infrastructure®

Atlanta | Baltimore | Boston | Chicago | Dallas | Denver | Houston | Los Angeles | New York
Orlando | Philadelphia | San Diego | San Jose | Seattle | Bengaluru, India | Pune, India





New holdrooms were designed to accommodate the passenger loads of larger aircraft.

PHOTO: GRESHAM SMITH

the areas when new construction was almost complete. Contractors installed a temporary barrier, the SwiftWall Pro, at the end of the concourse to physically separate work zones from ongoing airport operations and create a more controlled construction environment. Beyond limiting disruptions to both passengers and airline partners, the strategy helped manage security requirements and streamline construction sequencing.

Renovating the existing building, however, was an entirely different matter. Restroom renovations, flooring replacement, signage updates and utility work all had to be carefully phased to avoid interrupting airline schedules and passenger flow. "We had to close gates... we had to move one of our existing gates to make it fit within the new area," Olmstead recalls. "All that was tough."

EZLINER®

Proven, Reliable,
Cost-Effective

SCAN FOR
ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION



Paint equipment built to optimize time, money, and safety.

BENEFITS:

- Marks up to 36" wide in a single pass
- Accommodate multiple additional guns to be able to paint patterns and colors in a single pass
- Exclusive use of latex paint, creating less runway debris



EZLINER® - ARROW®

(800) 373-4016

ezlinerarrow.com
sales@ezlinerarrow.com

Billings, Montana
Orange City, Iowa

Sourcewell
Awarded Contract

canoe
APPROVED SUPPLIER

To manage these challenges, the project team relied on detailed phasing plans that accounted for seasonal traffic patterns and daily peak periods. Work was frequently scheduled overnight, on weekends and during off-peak travel windows to minimize impacts. Temporary passenger routes, coordinated gate closures and constant communication with airline partners were critical to maintain operational continuity. Weekly coordination meetings and near-daily field adjustments allowed the team to respond quickly as conditions changed, with a focus on passenger safety and customer experience.

Special Systems and Future Readiness

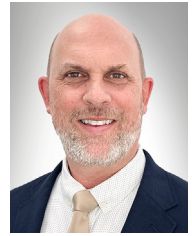
Integrating telecommunications, audio-visual and security systems into existing infrastructure while the airport maintained full operations required careful sequencing and coordination. Special systems planning was emphasized as a critical project component to ensure that facilities remain resilient and adaptable as passenger volumes, technology and security requirements continue to evolve.

Working as a subconsultant to Gresham Smith, Arora Engineers provided special systems engineering and associated construction-phase services across the new concourse and renovated terminal spaces. Heath Kolman, vice president and

special systems practice lead at Arora Engineers, notes that collaboration with TSA, airlines and airport Operations staff guided system cutovers and deployment schedules to ensure uninterrupted security, communications and operational visibility.

Early coordination was central to the design approach. "System redundancy and future capacity were addressed through early planning of the telecommunications and security systems architecture to support both current operations and future expansion," Kolman explains. Planning began during schematic design and continued through design development, allowing system layouts, pathways and equipment locations to align with the airport's long-term goals.

Special systems infrastructure was designed to integrate seamlessly into the existing terminal while preserving reliability. Redundant network pathways, ownership-based cabling separation and carefully planned telecommunications spaces will allow systems at MYR to scale without requiring major reconfiguration, says Kolman. Wireless infrastructure planning was developed to support future growth as well.



HEATH KOLMAN

**BURNS
MCDONNELL**

Transforming The Airport Experience

From arrival to departure.



READ AVIATION
SPECIAL REPORT



PHOTO: GRESHAM SMITH



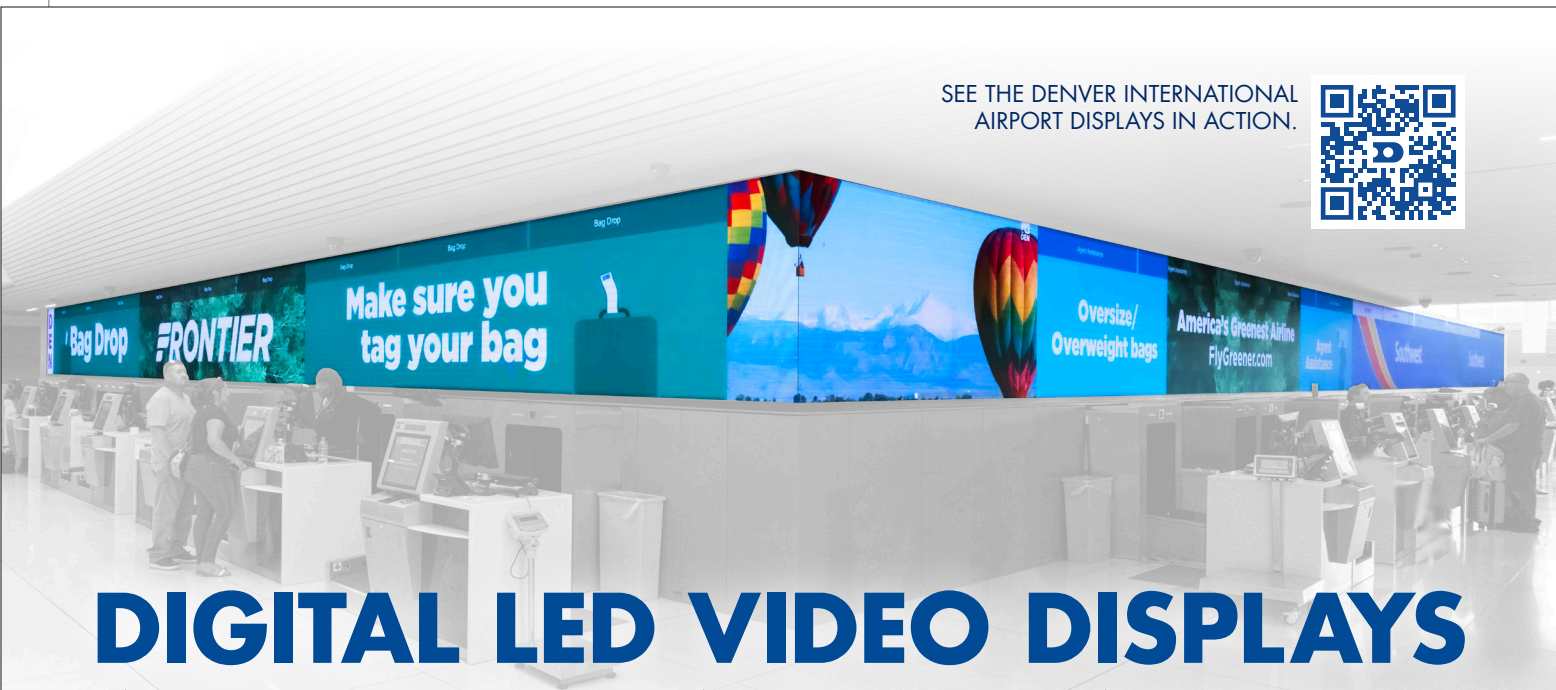
Natural light, preserved palm trees and a coastal color palette let visitors know they are in the Grand Strand region.

Operational reliability was further supported through coordinated power distribution planning.

“While glazing and lighting were outside Arora’s direct scope, power distribution coordination—including UPS [uninterruptible power supply] and emergency generator coordination—was critical to ensuring reliable operation of communications, audio-visual and security systems,” Kolman notes.

Ultimately, the company’s work is designed to create a strong foundation for future growth. “The project established a scalable special systems framework that allows future growth within the planned telecommunications and systems infrastructure footprint,” Kolman summarizes. This approach positions MYR to integrate future security and terminal system upgrades efficiently with minimal disruption.

SEE THE DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT DISPLAYS IN ACTION.



DIGITAL LED VIDEO DISPLAYS

✓ IMPROVE THE TRAVELER EXPERIENCE ✓ OPTIMIZE OPERATIONS ✓ CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE

Daktronics LED video display technology provides a reliable canvas for airports that focus on the traveler. With the effective use of indoor and outdoor installations, airports can do more than move travelers from point A to point B.

DAKTRONICS.COM/AIRPORTS



The recent expansion and modernization project was one of the airport's most comprehensive initiatives ever.



PHOTO: GRESHAM SMITH

Lessons Learned

As MYR reflects on the completion of its concourse expansion and terminal renovations, project partners point to early alignment, disciplined planning and strong collaboration as key drivers behind its success. From the airport's perspective, the project delivery method proved critical. Olmstead emphasizes its value in managing complexity and maintaining momentum. "Utilizing a construction manager at risk...was just very successful for us," she says. Early contractor involvement helped set realistic expectations around cost, phasing and constructability, adds Olmstead.

Christoffersen, from JE Dunn Construction, encourages engaging contractors as soon as possible. "The earlier that we can act as a team and provide input on design and schedule, the more we're able to influence when projects will open and the total cost of the project," he remarks, adding that delayed engagement can limit flexibility later in the process.

Accenture's Krautsack correlates early alignment and scope discipline. "One of the biggest lessons is the value of establishing a clearly defined scope before any major decisions or procurement activities begin," she says. Alignment across airport leadership, county partners, contractors and program managers helped prevent rework and scope creep, Krautsack explains.

Kolman, from Arora Engineers, also highlights the value of early involvement. "Integration of special systems engineering in the early design process, proactive capacity analysis, planning for redundancy and scalability, and careful coordination within active terminal environments are key takeaways from this project," he summarizes.

Airports should think holistically about any expansion project—rather than limiting improvements to new construction alone, adds Sucher, from Gresham Smith. "Use expansion as a catalyst to elevate the whole terminal," Sucher advises, pointing to MYR's decision to invest in flooring, restrooms, seating and wayfinding for existing spaces.

What's Next

With the concourse expansion complete, MYR is already moving forward with additional phases of its long-term capital improvement program.

The next project on the horizon is to expand the security screening checkpoint from six lanes to nine and add more queue space. The original terminal design anticipated the need to increase capacity and throughput; continued growth in passenger volume made now the time.

Beyond the terminal, MYR is embarking on a multi-phase runway reconstruction program that will be one of its most significant infrastructure investments ever. Phase One begins early this year and will be a two-year project. Phases Two and Three are each expected to last six to eight months. The phased approach is designed to maintain airfield operations during construction.

These and other efforts are part of MYR's larger effort to modernize its facilities and accommodate sustained traffic growth while remaining fiscally responsible to the community it serves. As passenger demand continues to evolve, airport leadership says the upcoming projects are essential to maintaining operational resilience, supporting airline partners and delivering a consistent, high-quality passenger experience well into the future. ✈️



**DELTA AIRPORT
CONSULTANTS, INC.**
www.deltaairport.com

Planning
Engineering
Environmental
Industry Analysis
Program Management
Construction Administration
Business & Financial Planning



Frederick Douglass
greater rochester international airport

The Inside Scoop: How Rochester Int'l Manages Snow and Ice

BY JENNIFER DAACK WOOLSON



Winter isn't just a season at Frederick Douglass Greater Rochester International Airport (ROC) in upstate New York; it's an operational priority. With average annual snowfalls hovering near 90 inches, snow and ice removal is a core function.

Sean Cleary, airport operations manager at ROC, bases procedures on a zero-tolerance policy for runway ice, leaving little room for error. Aircraft schedules, braking action and safety margins all depend on how quickly and efficiently snow and ice are managed.



SEAN CLEARY

The airfield is divided into zones to help ensure the most critical surfaces stay clear, safe and operational during snow events. The 3.3 million square feet of Priority 1 areas include the 8,001-foot primary

commercial runway, which runs north/south, as well as all connecting taxiways and the ramp apron for commercial traffic.

The goal is to never let snow build up enough on Runway 4-22 to become a problem. "We strive for nothing worse than wet conditions," Cleary says. It's a philosophy that requires immediate action, so as soon as the first snow starts falling, his crew is out there. "If we're on the runway with our brooms from the start of the storm, not allowing any accumulation, we're able to maintain a clearer surface with that almost-perfect braking action report the pilots are looking for," he explains.

Focus on the commercial runway doesn't mean other areas are forgotten. The airport has a robust general aviation community, and snow removal plans account for movement on Runway 10-28, the 6,700-foot crosswind runway favored by general aviation aircraft. As snow or

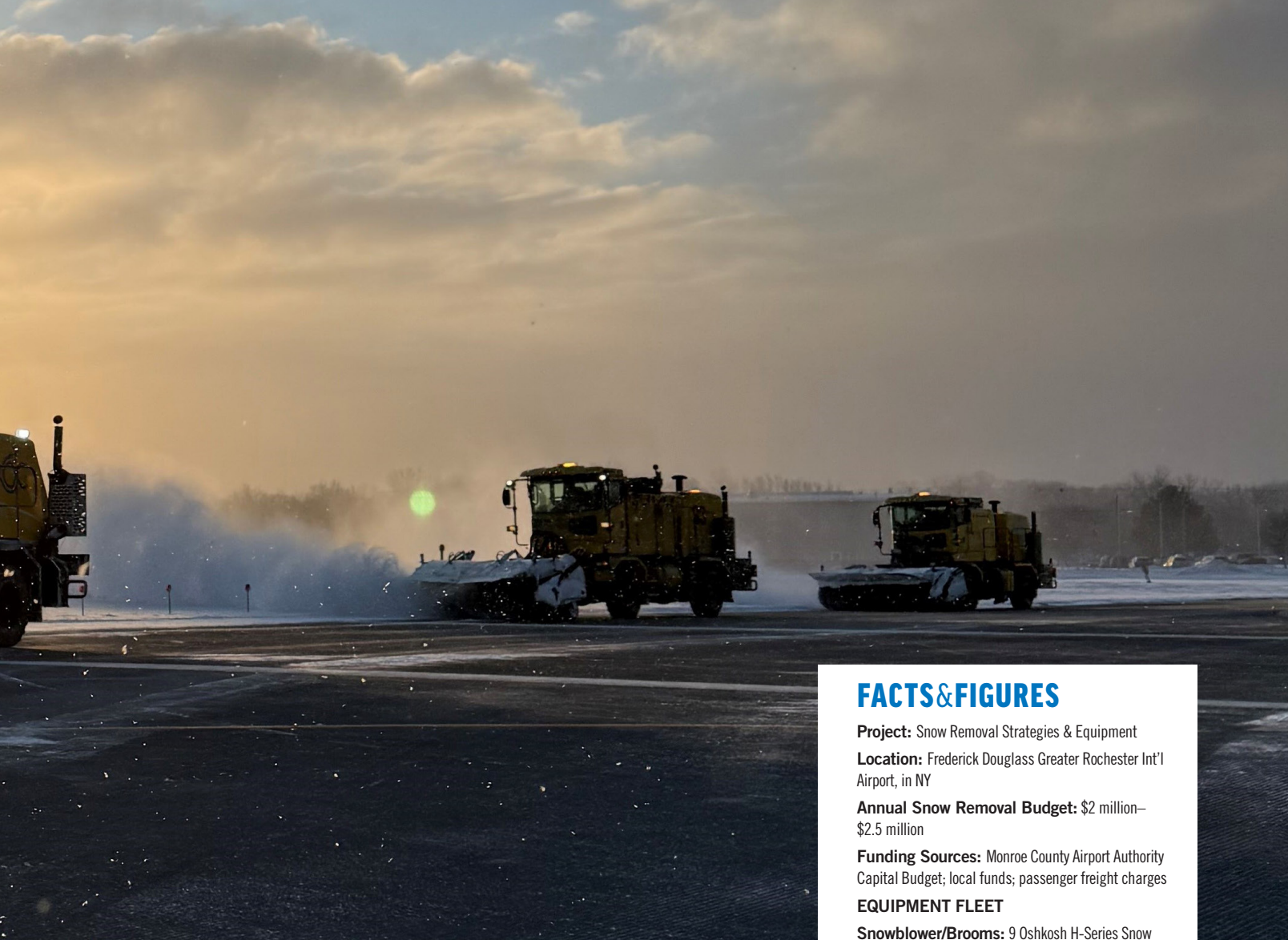
sleet tapers off, attention shifts from 4-22 to 10-28, the secondary runway.

The target clearing time for Priority 1 areas is about 30 minutes, balancing snow removal with active air traffic. The key is staying ahead of demand, Cleary emphasizes. "Even if there is a window where we may not have any arrivals or departures, we're still out there clearing the runway," he says. "That way, when the arrivals and the departures start to pick up, we're not having to chase our tails."

While Cleary's crews are busy clearing the airfield pavement, fixed base operators USAirports and AVFLIGHT handle aircraft deicing. Airlines contract with the two companies for deicing services, and ROC is responsible for glycol collection and treatment.

A Fleet to Fight Snow and Sleet

The proactive approach used at ROC depends on a fleet designed for endurance



and versatility. At the heart of its operation are nine Oshkosh H-Series dual-engine machines that can switch between broom heads and commercial snow blowers. Cleary keeps seven configured with broom units, and two with blowers. He considers the Oshkosh machines workhorses for runway clearing, and crews often operate four to five brooms in tandem.

“Our brooms, which use a mix of poly and steel bristles, are definitely our bread and butter,” Cleary says. The steel bristles are especially effective at breaking up ice and compact snow, he notes.

The airport doesn’t simply plow snow off its runways and taxiways. “We have to windrow it, and then blow it off into the field to avoid damaging or burying lights or signage,” Cleary explains.

The airport’s fleet of plows includes three HV-Series International 10-wheel dump trucks equipped with 16-foot Wausau plows, which have a steel cutting

edge to scrape the hardpack snow and ice buildup. These plows have Kuper cutting edges—a mix of rubber and ceramic pucks designed to ride over inground airfield lights. Also in the arsenal is an HV-Series International 6-wheeler dump truck with a 16-foot TENCO plow and same steel cutting edge. Rounding out the plow lineup are two Western Star 4700 Plow trucks with dedicated sander bodies in the back. “These trucks allow for a one-man operation of plowing and sanding,” Cleary says. “This is essential to our operations because after the plows are operating on the taxiways, they become slippery causing poor braking for the aircrafts. With these plows, after the taxiways are cleared, they can lay down sand all in one operation.”

For clearing apron areas and major intersections, ROC relies on four Case 1121G wheel loaders with large 30-foot blades for efficiency. “If we were to clear

FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Snow Removal Strategies & Equipment

Location: Frederick Douglass Greater Rochester Int’l Airport, in NY

Annual Snow Removal Budget: \$2 million–\$2.5 million

Funding Sources: Monroe County Airport Authority Capital Budget; local funds; passenger freight charges

EQUIPMENT FLEET

Snowblower/Brooms: 9 Oshkosh H-Series Snow Brooms & Blowers

Plows: 3 HV-Series International 10-wheel dump trucks with 16-ft. Wausau plows with Kuper cutting edges; HV-Series International 6-wheeler dump truck with 16-ft. TENCO plow with steel cutting edge; 2 Western Star 4700 Plow trucks with dedicated rear sander bodies

Loaders: 4 Case 1121G wheel loaders with 30-ft. Pro-Tech blades

Potassium Acetate Sprayer Truck: 1 International HV-Series chassis with custom rear liquid deicer system made by Batts Inc. including 2,000-gal. tank & 50-ft. spray boom with 35 nozzles, each able to deliver 8.5 gal/ minute at 90 psi

Sand Trucks: 2 dedicated sand trucks with Bucher sanders & 2 300-gal. potassium acetate tanks with a spraying system

Sand Supplier & Supporting Dealer: Valley Sand & Gravel

Equipment Repair & Maintenance: Monroe County Fleet Maintenance

Key Strategies: Zero tolerance for ice on runways; quick & sustained response to prevent snow from building up; preparedness for crews & equipment; retaining experienced employees; cross-department support; continual improvement through post-storm debriefs; local dealers & service providers for equipment repair & maintenance

The fleet includes three 10-wheel dump trucks with 16-foot Wausau plows and Kuper cutting edges.



FOD*BOSS

*The Global Standard in
FOD Collection*

www.fodboss.com

those with a plow truck, we'd be making 100 different turns," Cleary explains. "Those loaders will come through with a 30-foot blade and be able to push a much larger path much more quickly."

For melting ice, ROC uses a 2,000-gallon potassium acetate truck with a 50-foot spray boom. This vehicle has an International HV-Series chassis with a custom liquid deicer unit made by Batts Inc. on the back. Each of the 35 nozzles across the width of the boom can deliver 8.5 gallons per minute at 90 psi.

Rounding out the fleet are two 300-gallon potassium acetate tanks with spraying systems, and two sand trucks with rear Bucher sanders.

The entire fleet of vehicles, from plows to sanders and everything in between, is housed in a 25,700-square-foot snow removal equipment building added in 2022. Designed by Passero and built by DiPasquale Construction Inc., the \$6.1 million facility allowed ROC to consolidate all of its snow removal equipment under one roof and dramatically improve response times. Previously, some snow

removal equipment was stored at the airport's Fleet Center on the far south end of the airfield. "One of the biggest benefits of the new building is that it's right next door to our Operations Center," Cleary says. "Now, the equipment can drive right onto the field within minutes, rather than anywhere up to 30 or 45 minutes."

Takeoffs and Sandings

Like most airports, ROC relies on potassium acetate and FAA-approved runway sand to respond quickly to icing events. "It typically takes anywhere from 300 to 500 gallons of potassium acetate per pass to treat the [primary] runway," Cleary notes. "But within a pass or two and almost less than 30 seconds, that ice is already starting to melt."

Dedicated sand trucks allow crews to deploy wet sand, which significantly improves performance, particularly in high-wind conditions, he adds. The on-board spraying systems saturate the sand in liquid potassium acetate to penetrate ice on the taxiways and runways. "This is really effective in windy ice storms," Cleary explains. "The wet sand has some weight to it, and it more easily embeds in the ice so the wind's just not blowing it off."

The airport's FAA-certified airfield sand is supplied by nearby Valley Sand and Gravel. The material is sifted, washed and tested to ensure it is not a danger if ingested into an aircraft engine, Cleary explains. The airport has capacity to store 10,000 tons of sand on site and has a ready reserve of about 10,000 additional tons at the mine that can be delivered on request.

Although some municipalities pre-treat airport pavement when snow or ice is predicted, ROC takes a more cautious approach. "Pre-treating is kind of a touchy subject here," Cleary shares. "Typically, after a freezing rain event, we get snow. And if you pre-treat a runway and then it snows, it creates what we call a 'mashed potato' effect." The result is snow that is harder—not easier—to remove.

Best Practices

For Cleary, successful winter operations depend on much more than specialized equipment. His method is built on three foundational best practices: preparedness, experience and support—each reinforcing the other during snow and ice events.

At ROC, preparedness starts long before the first snowfall is forecast. It begins with scheduling preventive maintenance in the off season to ensure all equipment is fully

operational when winter weather arrives. The airport contracts Monroe County Fleet Maintenance for equipment repairs and maintenance, and partners with local dealerships for warranty work and help resolving issues with manufacturers. "Having local support on our specialized equipment is helpful because of their quick response time," Cleary emphasizes. "When a piece of equipment goes down, it's essential that we get it back up and running as soon as possible. Every minute that we have a piece down is critical to the safety of the airfield."

For Cleary, being prepared also means ensuring operators are current on procedures and machinery training. Staffing is planned with intention, so the right number of trained operators are available

AIRPORTS PROUDLY USING TRECAN SNOWMELTERS INCLUDE:

BOS | BUF | BWI | CLE | DCA | DFW | IAD | JFK | LGA
MCI | MHT | MSP | PIT | YUL | YVR | YYZ

SNOW

Trecan Snowmelters are the industry standard for Airport snowmelting equipment.



Save Time and Money

- Cost Effective
- Eliminate snow removal delays
- Eco-friendly and energy efficient
- Reduce or eliminate trucking of snow on air traffic areas
- Eliminate security risks associated with trucks

trecan.com

ISO 9001:2015 Certified



**Trecan
Combustion**

To protect airfield lighting and signage, crews first plow and then use snowblowers to remove windrows close to the fixtures.



when storms hit. To build in flexibility, all operators are cross-trained on each piece of equipment, which allows the team to adapt quickly if one piece of equipment becomes unavailable during a storm.

Experience is the second pillar. Cleary himself started at ROC as a seasonal employee 16 years ago. He was promoted to a full-time operator, then a supervisor before being named airport operations manager in 2022. His current staff

includes 18 operators and six supervisors, providing 24/7 coverage year-round. Crew members are seasoned—the least-tenured supervisor has been at the airport more than a decade—and bring deep institutional knowledge to every snow event, Cleary says proudly. Experience allows supervisors to make fast, confident decisions while juggling constant communication with airlines, air traffic control and field crews. “They’re taking phone calls all the time trying to put out fires, and their experience and familiarity with the airfield definitely helps them mitigate some of those situations,” he explains.

The third key component is support. “At ROC, we’re a tight-knit group,” Cleary remarks, noting that support extends across departments and stakeholders, from maintenance teams to air traffic controllers to tenants.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, post-event analysis is standard practice. “After every storm, the air traffic control manager and I sit down and have a debrief to discuss what we can do better,” Cleary says. Those conversations reduce tension, improve coordination and help ensure response to the next storm is even more effective, he adds.

That commitment helps the airport adapt, learn and maintain its zero-tolerance standards—even in the most demanding winter conditions. ✈️

Your Source for Pavement Cleaning

Municipal

Airport

Contractor



UNITED
ROTARY BRUSH CORPORATION

www.united-rotary.com
urbsales@united-rotary.com



United Rotary Brush Corp

(800) 851-5108

Heavy Equipment plow blades

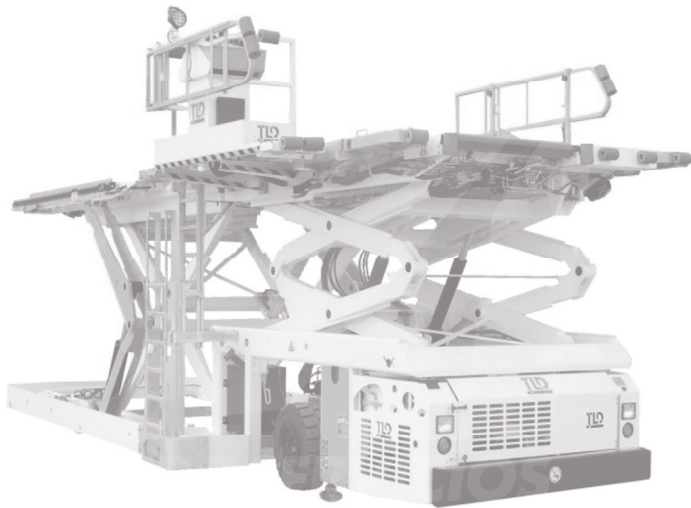


Hinkler Daniels Plows



FORTBRAND

FORTBRAND AME



FORTBRAND GSE



FORTBRAND INTELLIGENCE

Since 1983, Fortbrand Services has supplied Ground Support Equipment and Airport Maintenance Equipment to passenger airlines, airports, ground handlers, air cargo carriers, and FBOs—delivering practical, turnkey solutions tailored to each operation. Serving North America and the UK, Fortbrand supports buying, renting, and leasing with attractive financing and a fleet of 1,200+ deployment-ready units, including Vammas high-speed snow removal equipment, Wille multi-function tractors, deicers, cold air blowers, sweepers, and more.

Our lifecycle support model adds OEM-trained technicians, rapid-response winter-ops service, and customized onsite training to maximize uptime and operator performance.

Fortbrand Intelligence also integrates advanced sensor, software, simulation, and testing tools to strengthen airfield safety and decision-making. Procurement can be streamlined through cooperative contracts such as Sourcewell (111522-FTB).

Sourcewell

Awarded Contract

Contract # 111522-FTB





Small Business Event at Philadelphia Int'l Adds More Local Flavor to Concessions

BY ANDREW TELLIOH

FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Adding More Local Products to Concessions Program

Location: Philadelphia Int'l Airport

Event: Buy Philadelphia Fair

Format: Networking event to connect small local businesses with existing airport concessionaires

Event Partner/Concessions Manager: MarketPlace PHL

Participation: About 150 representatives from nearly 50 small local businesses; about 40 airport concessionaires

Results: Countless connections made; several deals struck, with more under discussion



The city of Philadelphia will host a bevy of high-profile sporting events this year—first round games for the NCAA Men's Basketball Championship in March, the PGA Championship in May, FIFA World Cup matches in June and July, and the MLB All-Star Game also in July, just to name a few. Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) is focused on being a good “front door” to the region for all of them.

“It’s really a year where Philadelphia is on the global stage,” says PHL Chief Commercial Officer Kate Sullivan. “We thought a lot about

what kind of passenger experience we wanted to deliver while we’re expecting extra inbound visitation.”

For starters, PHL is spending \$500 million spiffing up its seven terminals with fresh paint, new carpeting and improved holdroom seating, complete with additional charging capacity for travelers’ electronic devices. In addition, there has been a concerted effort to increase the exposure of local products in the food/beverage and retail lineup.

To do so, the airport and its concessions manager/developer, MarketPlace PHL, staged the first-ever Buy Philadelphia Fair in late September 2025. The one-day event



KATE SULLIVAN



was like speed dating for existing concessionaires and small local businesses that aspire to have millions of travelers' eyes on their products.

"We were hearing that some of our operators were really having a hard time identifying those local opportunities," explains Dana Krawchuk, marketing and guest experience manager at MarketPlace PHL.

That's how the business-to-business networking mixer was developed.

"We really wanted to make sure we were continuing to offer all the amazing things we have to represent Philadelphia," says Krawchuk. "We recognized a really positive opportunity to make sure the small business community was really shining at the airport."



DANA KRAWCHUK

Ready, Set, Network

About 150 guests from nearly 50 small local businesses attended the event to market their wares; about 40 airport concessionaires participated to shop for new vendors. The format allowed representatives from small local businesses to circulate among tables staffed by large and small airport concessionaires for impromptu conversations about potential business collaborations.

There was also a Pitchadelphia element (patterned after the concept of succinct "elevator pitches") that allowed small businesses to create 60-second videos marketing their products.

The overall event was on brand for PHL, which has long had a strong local presence throughout its terminals and concourses. In fact, it was one of the first U.S. airports to feature kiosks, a format that gives small businesses the opportunity to enter the sought-after selling environment for a relatively low financial investment. The airport has even run a Concessions Academy to help prospective operators prepare for new experiences.

"And now we're creating [another] kind of entry point for businesses who maybe don't want to have a full store, don't have a broad enough product mix for a store," explains Sullivan. "We're giving them the option and tools to try to get into the airport."

To connect with companies that might not be aware of opportunities at PHL, airport staff and MarketPlace PHL advertised their networking event in the *Philadelphia Business Journal* and reached out to business associations, chambers of commerce and other area groups. They also took a highly targeted approach and "dropped into the DMs (direct message threads)" of companies producing goods that could help the airport demonstrate what makes Philadelphia unique. "Anybody we believed would be a good representation for our traveler, for the passengers, we reached out to," Krawchuk says.

The strategy worked well for Onsite Travel Essentials, a retail shop that opened between concourses B and C this past December. From the beginning, Onsite planned to showcase local products, including Emma's Gourmet Popcorn, tea towels and other screen-printed items from Girls Can Tell, Martin's Potato Chips and Sweetzels spiced molasses cookies. It even created a "store-within-a-store" for Hakim's Bookstore, the oldest Black-owned bookstore on the East Coast.

At the recent recruitment event, Onsite found four more local vendors: Parcel Island (for funny greeting cards, stationery, etc.), exit343design (Philly-theme totes, apparel and other gifts), Skip's Candles and The Famous 4th Street Cookies.

"All four have received positive customer feedback and remain popular," reports Patricia Daguro, a buyer for Onsite Retailers. "We have retained contact information for other vendors we met in case of future opportunities."

The airport store even created a special display table and a rotating pop-up section to highlight the new local merchandise.



PATRICIA DAGURO



Planning is already underway for a follow-up event later this year.

Feedback and Plans for The Future

Daguro describes the Buy Philadelphia Fair as smooth and well-organized, and hopes it will become an annual, or at least recurring, event.

"Consistent involvement fosters ongoing innovation, strengthens bonds with the local business community and promotes collaboration and mutual improvement for future opportunities," she comments. "The event provided great exposure for local and emerging businesses that we might not have discovered otherwise."

The airport and MarketPlace PHL are both pleased to have created an environment for participants to make business connections—and, in some cases, deals. "We're happy to say that has actually happened," says Krawchuk. "It was very cool from a

marketing perspective to see the event be very successful."

Sullivan reports great feedback from both airport concessionaires and the small businesses who came to pitch products to them.

With plans already underway for a follow-up event in 2026, the airport and MarketPlace PHL are brainstorming ideas about how to make it even better.

Daguro suggests allowing more room for concessionaires to display their products, and organizing the room by categories. "This setup would also help retailers concentrate on the specific products they want to incorporate into their business," she notes.

Building on substantial outreach efforts in 2025, the airport and MarketPlace PHL have identified even more business groups to invite this year. They also plan to fine tune the

ITW GSE 7400 eGPU

Instant Clean Battery Power

- ✓ No direct emissions
- ✓ Healthier, safer workplace
- ✓ Near-silent operation
- ✓ High uptime, low maintenance



Learn more
on itwgse.com

It's all about connections



**BEYOND THE STORM:
BUILDING EXPERTS FOR AIRPORT WINTER OPERATIONS**

SNOWPO



INTERNATIONAL AVIATION SNOW SYMPOSIUM

**BUFFALO CONVENTION CENTER, BUFFALO, NY
APRIL 24 – 29, 2026**

For over 58 years, the NEC International Aviation Snow Symposium has been the world's premier event focused exclusively on the mission critical challenges of snow and ice removal and winter operations. Featuring cutting edge technology, AAAE accredited classes, and numerous networking opportunities, the show's entire program is designed to increase your skill and knowledge about airport winter operations. Join us in April 2026 to share your ideas and collaborate with hundreds of 'Snowfighters' from around the world.

- **NUMEROUS EDUCATION OPS AND SESSIONS**
- **AIRPORT EQUIPMENT TECHNICIAN SEMINARS**
- **9TH ANNUAL SNOW PLOW RODEO**
- **LEGENDARY CLOSING CELEBRATION**
- **INDUSTRY AWARD PRESENTATIONS**
- **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES**
- **INDUSTRY EXPERT SPEAKERS**

SPONSOR AND EXHIBITOR OPPORTUNITIES

GO TO: WWW.SNOWSYMPOSIUM.ORG

AND VISIT OUR SPONSOR AND EXHIBITOR PAGES

**REGISTER ONLINE AT:
WWW.SNOWSYMPOSIUM.ORG**





Connections were made and business deals struck at the first-ever Buy Philadelphia Fair.

Watch What's Happening in Your Garage. Then Share It.

When your HD parking guidance footage is so sharp, marketing **must** blur faces and license plates for privacy. That's our camera-based smart sensor doing double duty: real-time parking guidance plus Park Surveillance, allowing your operators to record, save, and share HD footage.



Pitchadelphia portion of the program, which was added shortly before the inaugural event.

MarketPlace Development, the parent company of MarketPlace, was so impressed with the results, it is considering bringing similar events to other airports where it operates concessions.

"It was all about supporting the small business community," Krawchuk summarizes. "And really showcasing the amazing businesses we have in the area."

From PHL's perspective, the Buy Philadelphia Fair is helping add more local products to its concessions lineup *and* building long-term relationships with the small business community.

"The thing that we've always been committed to," explains Sullivan, "is finding ways to create opportunities for Philadelphia, for regional Philadelphia businesses, and to make sure that our food and shops program really reflects the best of what Philadelphia has to offer." ✈️



To shape the future of airports, building better communities for all.

About ACC

The Airport Consultants Council (ACC) is the global trade association dedicated to representing private businesses involved in the development and operation of airports. ACC's mission is to innovate and deliver excellence in airport development.

Why Choose Us?

ACC provides advocacy, networking, training & accreditation, and more for its members with the goal of supporting and growing the aviation industry.



Networking

Showcase your industry leadership through ACC's unique events and committees; network with your partners, potential associates and key decision makers.



Advocacy

ACC and our members help shape regulations and policies that impact your operations. Join us in the effort and stay updated through our communications.



Professional Development

Participate in technical training professional development opportunities. Take advantage of webinars, in-person events, and workshops all year long.



1420 King Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22314
<https://acconline.org/>



South Bend Int'l Realigns Taxiway and Reconstructs Ramp

BY JOÖI RICHARDS

FACTS&FIGURES

Projects: Taxiway Realignment; Ramp Reconstruction

Location: South Bend Int'l Airport, in IN

Budget: \$105 million

Funding: \$96 million federal; \$9 million state & local

Timeline: Oct. 2020-Sept. 2025

Civil & Electrical Engineering: Mead & Hunt Inc.

Construction Administration & Inspection: Butler, Fairman & Seufert

Construction: Rieth-Riley Construction Co. (Phases A, C, D & E)

Construction: Milestone Contractors North Inc. (Phase B)

Soil Excavated: Nearly 920,000 cubic yd.

Asphalt Laid: More than 133,000 tons

New Terminal Ramp: 20 acres of concrete, 14 in. thick

Electrical & Communication Cables Installed: More than 137,000 ft.

Airfield Light Fixtures Changed from Incandescent to LED: 475

Stormwater Pipe Installed: 2.87 miles

Stormwater Structures Added: 84

Paint for New Airfield Markings: 1,239 gal.



Despite challenges such as seasonal limitation and uncertain funding, South Bend International Airport (SBN) celebrated the completion of a \$105 million airfield project in September. The five-year, multi-phase project corrected the geometry of a key taxiway to improve pilot wayfinding and separated the taxiway from the terminal ramp to enhance airfield safety, security and efficiency. And it was all completed amid rising traffic volume.

"We strive constantly for safety and security, and we knew we needed to make some improvements," acknowledges Mike Daigle, chief executive officer and executive director of the northern Indiana airport.

Owned and operated by the St. Joseph County Airport Authority, SBN has seen

steady increases over recent years from more frequent flights and up-gauging from smaller regional jets to larger, mainline Group III aircraft.

"We are continuously growing," Daigle comments, noting that passenger volume and the number of aircraft coming and going are both increasing.

In 2024, the airport recorded 450,000 enplanements, with five carriers and nonstop flights to 17 destinations. In the first nine months of 2025, SBN passenger volume was up almost 28% from 2024, the airport's second-best year.

"We're growing dramatically," Daigle emphasizes.

Prioritizing Safety and Security

The need to decouple Taxiway B from the terminal apron was a priority when planning began. Because this taxiway was located at the north edge of the terminal apron, aircraft pushing back from the gates would



MIKE DAIGLE



enter a controlled area, which hampered general maneuverability and caused serious safety concerns. As operations have increased, mainline aircraft could only be accommodated on two gates at the end of the building, limiting the airport's growth.

As if that wasn't enough of a challenge, pavement that sloped toward the terminal caused traction issues for aircraft, tugs and ground handlers when water and ice accumulated on the apron.

Thanks to the recently completed project, mainline aircraft and larger regional jets can now use any gate. Additionally, a new centralized deicing pad allows for more efficient operations and glycol collection.

In 2016, Mead & Hunt worked hand-in-hand with the airport and FAA on a feasibility study to identify and evaluate potential alternatives for SBN. "We did review a couple possibilities and set on the one that made [the airfield] better operationally and safer for everybody,"

Daigle says. "It became apparent fairly quickly that with our primary east-west runway and the parallel taxiway, there really were very few options."

As a result, the team outlined the following project scope:

- Geometry changes to decouple the apron and taxiway for improved safety
- Stormwater network/drainage improvements
- Aircraft deicing improvements: centralized location, glycol collection
- Aircraft gate parking improvements: increased fleet mix, slope improvements
- Pavement condition improvements

Originally proposed as a three-year construction project, cost and the availability of federal funding extended the schedule over five construction seasons. Phases were carefully planned to minimize the impact on operations.

One Phase Per Year

The five-year project was divided into five phases, labeled A through E. Work began on the west end of Taxiway B and moved east toward the terminal, temporarily closing the crosswind runway. "We just repeated that for the next two years so we could get all the commercial ramp completed," explains Patrick Mac Carthaigh, vice president of Operations at SBN. "Then we went eastbound from there and completed the project this summer."



PATRICK MAC CARTHAIGH

Scheduling and phasing the project to reduce operational impacts as airlines added more flights and capacity required careful planning. "That was a challenge as we got into construction," Mac Carthaigh recalls. During the transition, SBN adopted a gate management system, AeroCloud, to provide maximum scheduling flexibility for the Ops teams, Daigle notes.

There was a learning curve as SBN airlines transitioned to common-use gates, but the airport has continued to realize operational benefits. "We've upgraded it since our initial rollout, and it's working very well," Mac Carthaigh reports. "[AeroCloud] gives them flexibility that they otherwise never had."

Leveling the Field

One of the biggest challenges on SBN's airfield was sloping pavement on the commercial ramp. At some points, the elevation varied by several feet.

"The slopes were pretty steep, sloping back toward the building," explains Paul Shaffer, PE, executive vice president with Butler, Fairman & Seufert.

This not only caused drainage problems, it also allowed ice to form around the gates during winter, making it difficult for tugs to push back airplanes and dangerous for baggage



PAUL SHAFFER

handling and ground crews. “Those people had a very slippery, icy environment to work in,” Shaffer notes.

To correct this, the apron was lowered as much as 7 feet in some areas and sloped away from the building. “That was a pretty dramatic cut,” Shaffer emphasizes. The entire ramp was rebuilt in sections to ensure proper grade and structural integrity. Now, the surface drains readily and ice does not accumulate around the gates.

Butler, Fairman & Seufert oversaw materials testing during Phases A and B, including soil density analysis to ensure a suitable platform. Unanticipated soil issues required the material

to be undercut as deep as 20 to 30 feet in some sections, notes Shaffer. Crews removed and relocated the problematic material, and then brought in more suitable fill, which also underwent density and compaction tests as it was built up to produce a more even surface.

Fortunately, subcontractor R&R Excavating, led by Reith Reilly, had experience in mitigating soils similar to those encountered. “It was a good collaborative team approach to ensure it all got taken care of,” Shaffer remarks.

Throughout the process, ensuring that slope changes were well-marked and clearly delineated was crucial for safety.

With work areas so close to airline operations, disruption was unavoidable. “We had to take those gates out of service to cut that much dirt out and lower the pavement,” Shaffer explains. Temporarily relocating boarding bridges and then transitioning them to the new, different elevation significantly complicated matters. To accommodate the work, SBN shut down four gates at a time, coordinating closely with airlines to rearrange schedules. Fixing the apron slope in the least amount of time possible was a key priority.

“It was difficult accepting the same volume of operations through the construction process,” notes Mac Carthaigh.

“It was challenging at times,” Daigle agrees. “But I think our Ops team did such a great job in communicating with the airlines.”

Other Airfield Improvements

During Phase B in 2022, the airport added a centralized deicing pad. Previously, aircraft were deiced at the gates.

When choosing the new location, project planners had to avoid the existing geothermal field west of the terminal, and initially proposed placing pads west or east of the airfield. Airport leadership, however, prioritized a more central location to provide convenient access for both passenger and cargo aircraft. Tying the operation into the sanitary system was also a factor, making the ideal location just northwest of the terminal building.

The new system allows drainage from deicing operations and stormwater to be captured and stored in a 100,000-gallon underground tank. The glycol system is designed to allow for variable discharge rates, as required by local wastewater treatment facilities, but currently discharges up to 10,000 gallons per day for quicker, more efficient winter operations.

REGENERATIVE AIR SWEEPERS For a Deeper Clean



Photo courtesy of Meridian Regional Airport

ROUTINE CLEANING OF RAMP, RUNWAY, & ROADS Removes FOD that can hide in cracks & crevices

Model 600® HSP® Options

- Chassis Mounted Magnet removes ferrous metals at sweeping speeds up to 25 miles per hour.
- Liquid Recovery System removes and recovers standing liquids, such as glycol.
- Lateral Air Flow Nozzle clears debris, such as sand, grass and snow from runways and taxiways.
- Runway Sweeper, High Speed Performance.



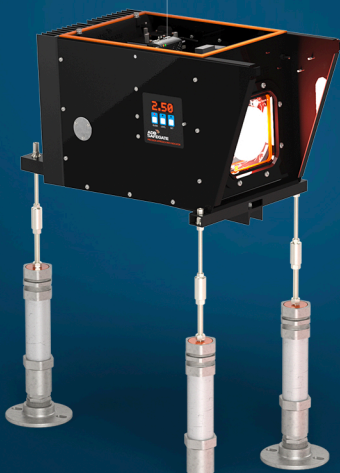
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 800.258.9626 | TYMCO.COM

Phase E, recently completed in 2025, reworked pavement grading in critical areas of the instrument landing system. This required shutting down the system for close to 60 days and closing the primary runway for 45 days, under close coordination with FAA. During that period, aircraft used the crosswind runway instead, which especially presented challenges in poor weather conditions. Scheduling the bulk of this work during summer helped matters, and SBN experienced just six diversions in that time. “When you consider how many flights they have per day, that’s not too bad,” notes Shaffer.

Airfield safety and security is now improved without direct taxiway connection from the runway to the commercial ramp, Daigle notes. In addition, Security Identification Display Area access points were upgraded with new cameras and gates to better control the periphery, while new LED lighting on the apron improves safety and security for ground support operations.



A significant amount of cut excavation was required to lower the grade of the new terminal apron.



PAPI Connect with LINC NODE

Connect. Collect. Predict.



PAPI IoT Gateway
Cellular LPWA (2G fallback)



Secured Data Ingestion
& Processing



CORTEX Service
Web Application

Upgrade your LED PAPIs with LINC Node for real-time system visibility. This IoT-enabled solution connects your PAPI to Airside Cloud, delivering continuous monitoring, predictive analytics, and proactive alerts.

With CORTEX Service, you unlock predictive analytics, alerts, visualized with an intuitive PAPI Map and Cockpit view for remote monitoring anytime, anywhere. Boost airfield safety, cut inspection costs, and minimize runway closures—all in one smart upgrade.

**ADB
SAFEGATE**

Funding and Forecasts

Jeff Thoman, senior project manager with Mead & Hunt, says the uncertainty of FAA funding levels from year to year created a puzzle that required the team to be adaptable, flexible and creative. For each phase of the project, the team developed multiple bid options to allow quick reaction and decision-making if funding levels changed. “[The airport] wanted us to have something ready to go in case late-year money was provided to them,” Thoman explains. “It became really challenging to figure out.”



JEFF THOMAN

Weather and the need to leave the airfield in operating condition between phases also played a significant role during project planning. “We couldn’t have taxiways or connectors closed through the winter, and certainly not runways closed through the winter,” Thoman explains.

This required a lot of iterations of project phases to maximize both funding and favorable weather conditions.

“We worked through it with constant communication with the airport and the ability to remain flexible,” Thoman recalls. “The FAA was also a great partner.”

The team was closely integrated to ensure all stakeholders had a voice at the table when it came to decision making, he adds.

Communication both ways was critical, Daigle emphasizes. “Sharing more than less is better, and you need to provide a way for people to come back with questions.”

Despite a proactive spring construction start, the project faced Indiana’s unpredictable spring weather. And much of the work relied on ground being accessible. That meant some years’ work pushed into October, competing with busier-than-usual operations during college football weekends. “We might have private aircraft landing every four minutes—seemingly non-stop,” Mac Carthaigh recalls. “And we were eliminating taxiway entrances to the terminal apron to avoid that direct access issue.” Clear and consistent communication, including pre-season planning meetings, helped facilitate safe and efficient operations even when Notre Dame (just minutes away from SBN) had home games.

“We believe in solid communication and working with our partners,” Mac Carthaigh says, noting the importance for Air Traffic Control, airlines, fixed-base operators, and other stakeholders to have a clear understanding of processes throughout the ever-evolving project.

Beyond delivering the safety and efficiency gains, the taxiway realignment is opening up new revenue opportunities for SBN. A space on the east side of the airfield, adjacent to Taxiway B, is now being considered for future aeronautical development. “It’s not finalized what we’re going to do, but it could be multiple aviation uses, which it was not before,” Mac Carthaigh says.

“Our airfield construction is continuously ongoing as we continue to modernize and update,” Daigle adds. 

PRESERVE YOUR PAVEMENTS

Proven solutions for extending the life of your airfield pavements.



FAA P-608-R
UFGS 32 01 13.64



FAA P-608
UFGS 32 01 13.63



FAA P-608-R
UFGS 32 01 13.64

801-923-7536



LXL HYDRAULIC SLIDE GATE OPERATOR

POWERFUL ENOUGH TO MOVE GATES UP TO 3000LBS



UL CERTIFIED



MADE IN
AMERICA



LEARN MORE
ABOUT GATE
OPERATORS

FEATURES

- Safe 24VDC controls standard
- Drive rail increases rigidity of gate panel
- Continuous duty operation
- Hand release for manual operation
- Built-in maximum run timer and timer to close
- On board 3 button control station
- On board LCD display for programming and diagnostics
- Standard voltages & phases
- Customer/Tech Support



ASSA ABLOY

866.467.2773 | BBRSS.COM



Blue Grass Airport Upgrades Regional ARFF Training Center

BY JODI RICHARDS



FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Expansion & Upgrade of Regional Aircraft Rescue & Firefighting (ARFF) Training Center

Owner: Blue Grass Airport, in Lexington, KY

Key Benefits: More advanced, realistic training for ARFF crews

Project Budget: \$4.8 million for facility construction/expansion; \$9 million for new simulators

Funding: Airport Improvement Program grant; FAA discretionary funding

Timeline: Planning began in 2022; new simulators came online in 2024; facility construction began 2023; grand opening Aug. 2025

New Training Technology: B737/A320 Live Fire Training Simulator; UH-60 Blackhawk Simulator, both from Alpine Metal Tech

Facility Expansion: 4,200 sq. ft.

Prime Contractor: Alpine Metal Tech North America

Construction: Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.

Electrical: Elliot Electric

Earthwork: LagCo

HVAC & Plumbing: TP Mechanical



Last August, Blue Grass Airport (LEX) in Lexington, KY, unveiled its newly expanded and significantly upgraded Regional Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Training Center. For many, the stars of the show were advanced simulators of a Blackhawk helicopter, Boeing 737 and Airbus A320.

One of only 12 airport-operated training facilities in the United States, the center at LEX began offering basic and advanced ARFF training in 1997. "Since then, we've been serving airports all over the country and even internationally," says Tyler Miller, the center's chief operating officer. "We've become known for offering that consistent training, and our attendance has steadily increased. Because of that growth, we needed to expand our footprint."

The airport partners with FAA to refine and deliver training curriculums that meet the federal agency's requirements. Each

year, the Blue Grass Regional ARFF Training Center hosts more than 1,000 firefighters representing more than 125 public safety departments from more than 30 states and several Canadian provinces, as well as LEX's own fire department.

Growing Prominence

The recent \$4.8 million update and expansion helps the center at LEX meet a growing demand for training, including basic certifications, recertifications and custom-designed courses.

"The need has been apparent for quite some time as we've continued to grow and received feedback from our students that we are one of the preferred training centers," Miller says. As aviation has advanced, so have best practices and technology for ARFF training. And, as the center's training catalog grew, so did the need for more classrooms, support areas, equipment and lockers.

Planning for the comprehensive renovation and expansion began in 2022, with Alpine Metal Tech North America and



TYLER MILLER



Whiting-Turner Contracting Company selected to lead the design/build project. "It did take a couple of funding cycles for us to be able to fit into the overall Airport Improvement Program," Miller notes. But the facility received federal funding, which he sees as a nod to the importance and industry impact of the project.

The 4,200-square-foot expansion doubled the size of the previous facility. A new classroom can accommodate double the number of trainees—up to 30—and features advanced technology in an updated, more comfortable space. Existing classrooms and training areas were also upgraded and modernized.

Key features include dedicated areas for equipment and fire gear storage, an apparatus bay (that will soon house a Rosenbauer training fire truck), an area for training with personal protective equipment, and a gear cleaning/washroom.

The size, layout and amenities allow for the introduction of best practices and new

technologies that weren't available when the facility was originally constructed.

Now, the center is better equipped to provide a practical approach to learning with the latest technology, resources and knowledgeable instructors, says Miller. "It's really bringing the classroom from 1995 to 2025," he remarks. "It's what you would see in a typical college classroom and what students have come to expect in a classroom today." Miller says the new environment is less of a firehouse atmosphere and more conducive to focus and learning.

Courses are led by dedicated staff, including Fire Chief Brian Wainscott and ARFF Training Instructor Scott May, who both joined the faculty in 2020.

Advanced Simulators

To further enhance and expand its capabilities, the center added two new training simulators—one of a Blackhawk helicopter and another that can portray two different popular narrow-body airliners.

After LEX determined its requirements for the simulators, manufacturing took about 12 months, followed by four months for installation and commissioning.

Alpine Metal Tech North America manufactured and oversaw construction and installation of the AMT Simulation B737/A320 Live Fire Training Simulator, which is designed to enhance the realism and depth of training and provide students more comprehensive experience handling emergency situations with Boeing 737s and Airbus A320s.

Older simulators are not as sophisticated and lack the training possibilities that this model provides, explains Mitch Joseph, technical director for Alpine Metal Tech.

"Essentially, they were a shell of an aircraft inside a big burn pit that simulated fuel spills," he explains. In contrast, the company's current unit is a multipurpose simulator that not only simulates fuel spills, but can also create more than two dozen different fire scenarios for training ARFF crews.

"Obviously, over the past 20 years, simulator technology has changed and it has become much safer," Joseph says. "That is our utmost concern—that we provide a training facility that is, first of all, as safe as possible, but also provides realistic training scenarios."

Miller calls the B737/A320 simulator his "pride and joy," adding that LEX can now provide training for crews from Index E airports, which handle large aircraft and require greater ARFF resources. The new simulator at LEX is 98.4 feet long with a wingspan of 63.6 feet. The cockpit area includes a flight control console and pilot and co-pilot seats. There are also passenger compartments and interchangeable wings to replicate a Boeing 737 or Airbus A320. Perhaps most notably, the simulator provides 28 different live fire training scenarios inside and outside the aircraft model, and also includes advanced environmental and flame monitoring systems and evacuation systems.



MITCH JOSEPH



A new, larger classroom features upgraded technology.

The center's other new unit is a 30-foot UH-60 Blackhawk simulator, also from Alpine Metal Tech. It helps trainers prepare ARFF crews for the specialized rescues that helicopter accidents can require due to the unique aircraft design and construction.

Facility Upgrades

Renovations to accommodate the advanced simulators began in 2023, with construction scheduled to reduce impact on day-to-day operations. That was a tricky feat because crews had to demobilize the existing simulator before replacing it. "We had to go dark as a training center for a while," says Miller of the roughly six-month hiatus.

Demolition of the previous simulator proved more challenging than anticipated due to unforeseen underground conditions that required additional site prep. "There was quite a bit of rock that the contractor had to deal with, which led to unusable soil and the need to backfill," Joseph explains.

After the new simulators were online in 2024, contractors accelerated their work renovating and expanding the building. During this six-month period, classroom instruction was conducted in a conference room at the airport fire station.

For Miller, the project's unexpected challenges and extra adjustments were worth it. "The updates and expansion have really solidified our role and made us even more relevant and valuable to the industry," he remarks.

Serving the Industry

The Blue Grass Regional ARFF Training Center is a separate business entity that operates independently from the airport's fire department. "From an executive mindset, I think this is a very good example of our airport identifying one of our differentiators and then investing in it and maximizing our opportunities," says Miller.

Although the newly expanded and upgraded training center is expected to attract more non-aeronautical revenue, Miller stresses that isn't the primary focus for LEX. "If we don't make a lot of money off of the training center itself, we recognize the value that it has in the airport industry and how our role is to serve aviation as a whole," he explains.

"I'm really proud of the facility that we've introduced, and we're proud that the training center is self-sustaining," Miller elaborates. "I think it's a great example of our airport team prioritizing a project that a lot of the Lexington public will not see on an everyday basis. This truly is a project of service to the industry." ✈️

EXPERIENCED | TIME-TESTED

FULFAB

AIRCRAFT

✈️

HANGARS

FULLY INTEGRATED HANGAR & DOOR SYSTEMS



HANGAR & DOOR EXPERTS



START TO FINISH EXPERTISE
Single-source for Design, Manufacturing, & On-Site Services

800.274.0144 | FULFAB.COM

**NF NATIONAL
FOAM**

AVIO^{F3} GREEN MIL 3%

SYNTHETIC FLUORINE FREE FOAM
LISTED ON THE DOD QPL

Aviation Industry Products

Rescue Response Vehicles

Avio^{F3} Green Mil 3% SFFF
(MIL-PRF-32725)

Airport Fuel Storage

Universal^{F3} Green 3%-3% AR-SFFF

Airport Hangars

Universal^{F3} Green 3%-3% AR-SFFF



These products are
GreenScreen
Certified Silver®

GreenScreen Certified® is a registered
trademark of Clean Production Action

NATIONALFOAM.COM/AVIATION
919-331-6100

WE CAN HELP YOU TRANSITION TO FLUORINE FREE FOAM

- ✓ ARFF Trucks
- ✓ Fuel Storage Tanks
- ✓ Hangars

Contact us for more information.





Cincinnati Int'l Provides “Novel” Amenity for Guests and Staff

BY SCOTT BERMAN



FACTS&FIGURES

Project: The Airport Library

Location: Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Int'l Airport

2024 Passenger Volume: 9.2 million

Airlines: 14

Project Timeline: Discussions began in Sept. 2022; partnership with Kenton County Public Library started in Jan. 2023; airport library formally opened in May 2023

Partners: Kenton County, Boone County, Campbell County; Cincinnati & Hamilton County public library systems; Departure Media

Facility Size: 1,497 sq. ft. (including back-of-house book storage area)

Cost: About \$24,000 to convert empty retail space into library; books are donated by libraries, airport staff, concessions workers, flight crews & travelers

Avg. Inventory: About 1,000 titles (varies with use & donations)

Target Audiences: Adults, teens & young children

Key Benefits: Free books for travelers & airport employees; a distinctive, welcoming space that complements nearby retail shops; forging partnerships with area libraries; donation & volunteer opportunities for airport staff & tenant employees



In the ongoing effort to enrich the passenger experience, Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) spent a mere \$24,000 to turn an empty concessions space into a library that delights travelers and employees alike. While the idea itself isn't new, CVG has added its own spin to the concept in several ways.

The airport partnered with local libraries to create a free collection of donated books there for the taking, no library card required and no late fees assessed. Patrons of all ages can simply come to the roughly 1,500-square-foot space in Concourse B to browse, read and/or take a book—either to borrow or keep as they continue to their destinations. The library, which opened in June 2023, typically has about 1,000 titles on its shelves, including options for adults, teens and young children.

How CVG and other stakeholders created this facility, simply called the Airport Library, is a telling example of how airports throughout the industry are providing a reading respite for people navigating the hustle and bustle of air travel.

The Backstory

When Forever Heather, a women's apparel store in Concourse B, closed in 2020 during

the COVID-19 pandemic, airport executives began looking for creative options to reuse the space.

Carlos Ruiz, director of Commercial Management at CVG, was specifically looking for something outside of the box. “Typically, when a concession space becomes available, the first instinct is to find another retail tenant,” he explains. “However, in this case, we recognized that replacing the store would be challenging since the concourse already offered all of the traditional retail options. That opened the door for us to think differently.”

The goal was to create something that added value for passengers and could be enjoyed by everyone, with a particular desire for options that could “deliver a big impact on customer experience.”

Ruiz reached out for ideas from Departure Media, a niche advertising agency that sells ad space at CVG and other airports around the United States.

“[CVG] is very focused on customer experience, and we were delighted to be



CARLOS RUIZ

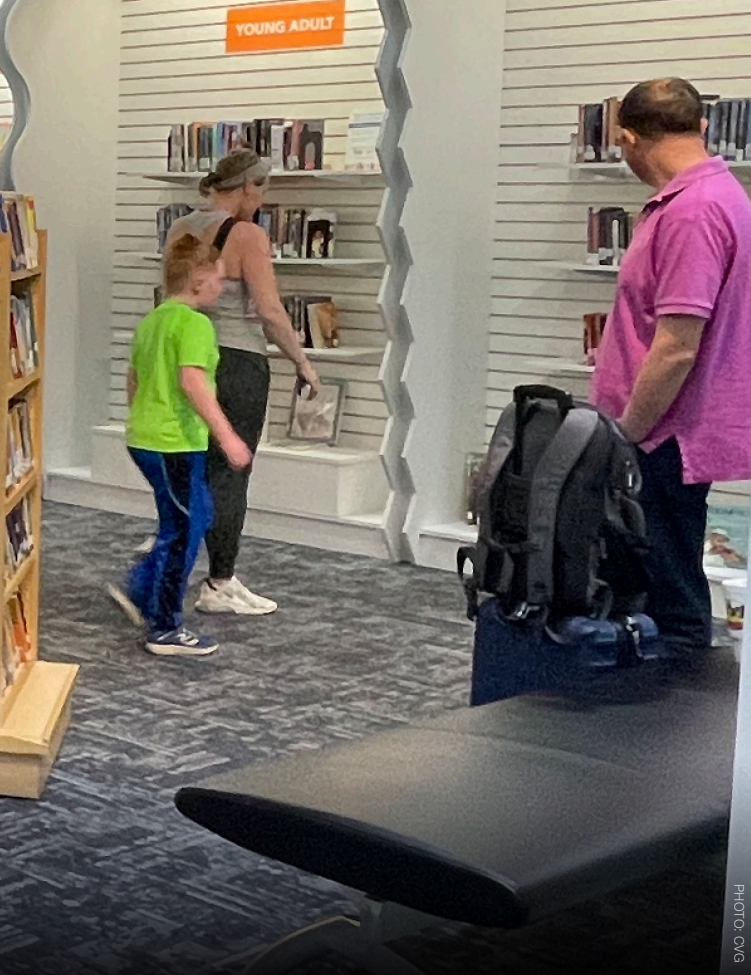


PHOTO: CVG

asked by them to brainstorm on ideas for the empty storefront,” says Nina Himes, director of Sales at Departure Media. The agency’s effort was guided by CVG’s interest in finding something “unique and engaging that would not only improve the passenger journey, but also create that very important sense of place,” she explains.



NINA HIMES

By chance, Himes already had been talking with management at the Kenton County Public Library in Covington, KY, about buying advertising space at the airport, and it occurred to her that the concessions vacancy could offer a surprising alternative to traditional advertising. The alternative she envisioned was a tangible, interactive display space in the form of an airport library. “It seemed like a natural fit and...a win-win for everyone involved,” recalls Himes.

After that, the airport, the advertising agency and Kenton County joined forces to make it happen. Later, the regional library systems of Boone and Campbell counties in Kentucky, as well as Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library in Ohio also came on board.

Physical and Digital

The library in Concourse B supplements a program introduced in 2022 that allows guests with an area library card to use an app called Libby at CVG, which provides downloads of e-books, audiobooks and magazines, including Kenton County Public Library collections. This allows travelers to download material to read or listen to during their flights.

Signs in the Concourse B library promote the Libby app and explain that patrons must already have a library card to use the digital service as there is no card approval capability at the airport. That said, the physical library at CVG does not require a library card, with users simply taking books to read—often returning them, but not necessarily.

David Schroeder, director of the Kenton County Public Library, recalls quickly answering “yes” when the airport offered use of its vacant retail shop. “CVG staff spruced up the space with fresh paint and some new furniture, provided Wi-Fi and shelving [to create] an inviting space that is a respite in the middle of the airport.”



DAVE SCHROEDER

Soon, a ripple effect was in full force.

Schroeder describes the response to the airport library as immediate and positive. “In fact, the library had a hard time keeping up with demand,” he recalls. “In time, we reached out to our neighboring libraries to help us supply books. The libraries are on a rotating schedule to deliver materials to the airport. CVG staff shelve the books and keep the space clean and inviting.” A typical monthly delivery contains 60 to 100 books.

By coincidence, Archie Carper, operations manager for Concessions at CVG, was heading off to accept and process a monthly delivery after speaking with *Airport Improvement* for this article. The books arriving that day were from Kenton County Library. Carper also shelves and arranges books, spending roughly 30 minutes each day at the library as part of his job responsibilities.



ARCHIE CARPER

Other Iterations

Although the library at CVG is the first Departure Media has helped set up, Himes and her colleagues are talking with other airports about similar ventures. The timing is right, as several throughout North America have been rolling out libraries and other reading programs.

This past November, Oakland San Francisco Bay Airport announced a partnership with the Oakland Public Library for Libby access to its e-book, digital magazine and audiobook collections. Other examples include free book carts at several airports and, among others:

- a small “Take One, Leave One” collection at Philadelphia International Airport;
- “Flybrary” free lending service at Redmond Municipal Airport in Oregon;
- free “Books with an Altitude” library in Miami International’s South Terminal;
- a children’s library in Terminal A at Newark Liberty International;
- “Books on the Fly” library at Rochester International Airport in Minnesota;

- two library kiosks at Halifax Stanfield International Airport in Nova Scotia; and
- a Flybrary at Fredericton International in New Brunswick that includes English and French titles by regional authors.

In another approach, travel retailer Paradies Lagardère offers a read-and-return program at its bookshops in CVG and hundreds of other North American airports. Passengers who buy a new book can bring it back (with the sales receipt) within six months for a 50% refund. Paradies Lagardère then resells the gently used books at a discount and donates those with more wear to local libraries.

Worth the Effort

As stakeholders of the CVG initiative see it, establishing, stocking and maintaining a library yields many benefits. For instance, it allows the airport to lead a meaningful, civic-oriented initiative that people throughout the region notice.

Participating organizations, such as local libraries, also benefit. "It's a great opportunity to partner with one of the region's largest employers, and to demonstrate the ability of the library to remain relevant in a fast-changing world," says Schroeder.

Carper sees firsthand what the program means to those who use the CVG library. "People who come in are excited," he relates. "I get a lot of comments, and they thank us for having it."

For instance, one section of the library contains storybooks donated from area elementary schools, and teachers are thrilled when they find just what they need for their classes.

Engagement and input from airport employees are also highlights for Carper. In fact, many of the donated books were collected by an airport tower manager who has delivered five carloads of materials to CVG.

Flight crews also have gotten in on the act. Like airport employees, they drop off books at donation bins placed in an employee office, the CVG welcome point and outside of the library in Concourse B.

Support from airport tenants includes participation from United Concessions Group, which operates Chick-fil-A, Frisch's Big Boy and Skyline Chili at CVG. Teams of its employees held an internal book drive to help replenish the library and collectively donated about 200 books across a wide range of genres for different age groups. "This was an independent initiative on their part," emphasizes Carper. There were no incentives or prizes for those who participated; supporting the airport's good cause was apparently enough motivation.

Under Consideration

Gina Genco, manager of Business Development for CVG, is exploring more partnerships and the possibility of sourcing donations from local bookstores and nearby universities. Discussions are ongoing, and "the concept is something we're interested in pursuing as we continue to build out the airport library program," says Genco.



GINA GENCO

The airport has already confirmed that such efforts do not have to break the bank. "Initiatives like this are achievable and don't require massive resources," Ruiz explains. "It's about leveraging local partnerships and thinking creatively about underutilized spaces."

Along that line, Himes has a suggestion for other airports that lack the physical space for a library: consider establishing a virtual version by using existing seating and adding signage with QR codes and sponsor messaging. "Ask your airport advertising partners for help in connecting the dots with the library system," she advises. "If budget is a consideration, consider finding a local business to donate the seating and tables in exchange for partnership exposure."

Himes adds that a library can be as small or large of a project as an airport wants it to be. "It just takes a good team to bring it all together," she remarks.

Schroeder also has advice for airports kicking the tires on a library of their own: "Partner whenever possible with your local public library system, which often has access to donated books and weeded items that are looking for new lives. For little or no cost, these items can easily become the foundation of a small library collection at an airport."

AVCON
ENGINEERS & PLANNERS

MORE THAN A CONSULTANT
A trusted partner, passionate about aviation,
dedicated to the industry, and committed to your airport

TRANSFORMING TODAY'S IDEAS INTO TOMORROW'S REALITY

1-888-AVCON-99
www.avconinc.com

Such collections can be housed in a variety of spaces. "It can be a small retail space, a nook in an underutilized public area, or even a few shelves in a high-traffic area," he says.

Reading Respite

Himes applauds airports that make the effort to add a library. "CVG could have filled that storefront with a generic shop or simply shuttered the space, but they wanted more for their passengers and their employees," she reflects. "Creativity and inspiration can make even an empty space a work of art!"

Schroeder describes the effort as a valuable service with very little cost, but big impact. "This project clearly demonstrates the importance of partnerships to improve services and experiences in our community," he says. "We couldn't be happier working with the staff at CVG to provide area residents, and those passing through the airport, with a no-cost opportunity to relax, entertain themselves and pick up a good book for their journey."

To that end, the airport has received letters of thanks from library users who found the facility or particular books in it to be a welcoming surprise. That and other feedback points to how a library can complement nearby airport concessions.

The library provides books—and a secluded place to enjoy them.



PHOTO: CVG

"The concept is adaptable and resonates with passengers because it feels authentic, genuine and community-driven," concludes Ruiz. "Airports are often busy and stressful; but in the library, passengers can escape the hustle and bustle, and turn waiting time into an opportunity for enrichment and connection to the community." ✈️



USAP PROGRAM

The U.S. Airport Professional (USAP) Program covers a full range of current airport management topics such as leadership development, business strategy, commercial management, finance, operations, safety, security, and air service.

Find out more information at
[>> www.airportscouncil.org/USAP](http://www.airportscouncil.org/USAP)





Miami Int'l Redefines Int'l Arrivals Process with Largest Deployment of Automated Passport Screening in U.S.

BY RONNIE WENDT



As a major gateway to the United States for overseas flights, Miami International Airport (MIA) must walk a fine line between keeping travelers moving and safeguarding the nation's borders. This challenge is intensified by sustained growth in international travel, concentrated peak arrival periods and MIA's role as the primary U.S. gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean.

In 2024, the airport served 55.9 million passengers—7% more than in 2023—ranking it as the 10th busiest airport in the

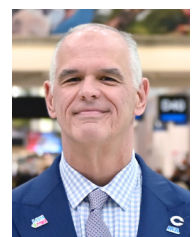
U.S. To keep pace, MIA continually adapts its arrivals operations to balance capacity, security and the passenger experience.

In November 2025, the airport took a major step to modernize by launching the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Enhanced Passenger Processing program for eligible arriving U.S. citizens—the largest single deployment of automated passport screening in the country.

The move reflects a broader strategy at MIA in leveraging automation and biometrics

to increase capacity, reduce traveler friction and enhance border security.

“EPP [Enhanced Passenger Processing] supports MIA's goal of being a global leader in smart airport operations,” says Airport Director and Chief Executive Officer Ralph Cutié. “Biometric processing, leveraging real-time data and automation allow the



RALPH CUTIÉ



airport to handle growth without expanding physical space, improve airline on-time performance and deliver a world-class arrival experience.”

Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava stressed in a press release that Enhanced Passenger Processing is part of a larger commitment to make MIA “one of the most technologically advanced and passenger-friendly airports in the country.”

“It’s all about enhancing the overall experience for the millions of visitors who arrive in Miami-Dade County from around the world every year,” she added.

Modernizing the Border

The airport is using a total of 13 biometric face pods in its international arrivals facilities—seven pods in Concourse D, two in Concourse E, and four in Concourse J.

SITA Smart Path captures biometric photos of passengers during inspection and uses CBP’s biometric facial comparison to verify their identity against government-issued travel documents already in Department of Homeland Security (DHS) holdings. If all goes according to plan, the process takes about three seconds. For an airport like MIA, which processes millions of international arrivals annually, even incremental improvements in transaction time and throughput translate into significant operational benefits.

Using Enhanced Passenger Processing is voluntary for eligible travelers. If preferred, they can opt for verification by a CBP officer instead. However, officials from the airport, city/county and CBP emphasize that using the new biometric



FACTS&FIGURES

Project: Enhanced Passenger Processing

Location: Miami Int’l Airport

Site: International Arrivals Facilities in Concourses D, E & J

Key Benefits: Improved identity assurance through biometric verification; increased capacity & throughput within existing footprint; improved consistency & predictability of passenger flow; reduced administrative workload for processing staff, allowing greater focus on risk-based assessments

Airport Operator: Miami-Dade Aviation Dept.

Agency Partner: U.S. Customs & Border Protection

Technology Platform: SITA Smart Path

Scope: Largest single Enhanced Passenger Processing deployment in U.S.

Cost & Funding: Undisclosed

Infrastructure: 13 mobile biometric face pods across 3 int’l arrivals facilities

Deployment: Nov. 2025

Eligible Users: U.S. citizens (voluntary participation)

Biometric Match Time: Approx. 3 seconds/traveler

Impact to Facilities: Minimal construction required

technology improves security and creates a smoother, more efficient arrival process for international passengers.

Daniel Alonso, a senior official currently performing director duties at CBP, highlights the operational and strategic aspects. "At one of the nation's busiest international gateways, the goal was simple and ambitious: move travelers faster, more securely and with less friction while preserving CBP's law enforcement mission," he summarizes.



DANIEL ALONSO

Enhanced Passenger Processing helps CBP and MIA process more passengers within the same footprint, with greater accuracy, fewer touchpoints and improved situational awareness, Alonso explains. In addition, automating identity verification reduces manual document handling, shortens transaction times and allows officers to focus on interacting with travelers and making risk-based assessments.

Because facility expansion is typically costly and disruptive, the ability to increase throughput within MIA's existing space has been a critical advantage. Shifting identity verification to a biometric-first strategy via Enhanced Passenger Processing helps reduce bottlenecks at primary inspection points while maintaining high confidence in traveler identity, says Alonso.

New Twist

To date, 22 U.S. airports have Enhanced Passenger Processing capabilities. A defining aspect of MIA's deployment is the use of mobile, wireless-enabled biometric face pods rather than fixed inspection booths. This design gives CBP and the airport operations team greater flexibility in responding to changing passenger flows.

"Pods can be appropriately staffed or repositioned in minutes to respond to fluctuating flight banks, irregular operations or seasonal demand," Alonso explains. "This allows leadership to dynamically allocate capacity where it is needed most without construction or disruption."

The system is designed to be passive and intuitive for arriving U.S. citizens. Passengers approach the camera, and the system verifies their identity in mere seconds. A CBP officer then interviews and releases or redirects them. Typically, travelers opting to use Enhanced Passenger Processing do not need to present a passport.

"The benefit is a seamless, contact-reduced experience that is more efficient, intuitive and consistent," Alonso summarizes.

According to SITA, this streamlined process is possible because the technology creates a unique digital token for each passenger. And the same facial biometric recognition can be used to allow passengers to keep moving when their boarding eligibility needs to be checked.

"Enrollment takes just a few seconds. You can even take it off site with mobile applications," SITA writes in its brochure titled *Your Face is Your Boarding Pass*. "There is no need for passengers to carry a paper boarding pass. It is a self-service streamlining process throughout the airport and beyond."

Reduced Wait Times, Increased Throughput

At MIA, deploying Enhanced Passenger Processing has yielded noteworthy operational benefits.

"EPP has significantly reduced average processing times while increasing throughput," Alonso reports. "Officers can focus on adjudication and risk-based decision-making rather than on administrative functions, such as swiping a document or conducting manual system checks. During peak arrival periods, the system enables CBP to process more travelers per hour without adding staff or booths, resulting in a 25% decrease in U.S. citizen wait times nationwide, shorter lines and more predictable passenger flows."

Improving wait times and throughput directly affects passenger satisfaction, connection reliability and overall terminal congestion. Shorter and more predictable wait times also support better coordination with airlines and ground handling operations, particularly during peak international arrival banks.

While speed is a major benefit, Alonso emphasizes that Enhanced Passenger Processing is designed to improve security.

"Security is not traded for speed. It enhances it," he stresses. "Biometric matching provides a higher confidence of identity

IS YOUR BUSINESS IMAGE EVERYTHING IT COULD BE?

San Antonio Intl Renovated to Create Parity Between

CONCUR

DOM

OPERATION

Helicopter MAINTENANCE

Greener, Cleaner The Cyclone Difference

Camp-California THE CAMPER'S GUIDE TO CHOOSING YOUR CAMPING STYLE

Becker 505 specializes in marketing and design for the aviation industry. Let us create your corporate identity, advertisements and marketing campaigns so you can get back to what you do best — running your business!



CALL OR EMAIL US TODAY FOR A FREE QUOTE AND CONSULTATION
INFO@BECKER505.COM | 608.205.2788 | BECKER505.COM

verification than visual document inspection alone. Officers at EPP pods can fully process biometrically confirmed travelers while redirecting travelers requiring additional screening to an inspection booth, enabling officers to tailor each inspection appropriately. Travelers who require added screening receive it, while low-risk travelers move efficiently. This is risk-based border security at scale."

Passenger and Staff Response

Early feedback from eligible travelers at MIA has been positive, reinforcing the value of reducing friction at one of the most stressful points in the passenger journey.

"Travelers consistently report the process feels faster, easier and more modern," Alonso remarks. "Many travelers, particularly those who fly regularly, note that they moved through the inspection process more quickly and with less confusion. For families, older adults and connecting passengers, the simplified flow reduces stress and uncertainty."

The deployment is also boosting operational monitoring.

"Real-time dashboards give CBP supervisors and airport operations teams visibility into queue length, throughput and

system status," Alonso specifies. "This enables proactive staffing, rapid troubleshooting and continuous optimization of passenger flow. It turns the arrivals experience into a strategic operation rather than a reactive environment."

He adds that this type of operational intelligence aligns with broader airport trends toward data-driven decision-making, enabling teams to anticipate congestion, adjust staffing and respond to irregular operations more effectively.

Integration with Existing Infrastructure

Much to the delight of MIA and other airports, Enhanced Passenger Processing typically requires minimal physical changes to facilities.

SITA's Smart Path technology can operate in the cloud, on-premises, in hybrid fashion or as a service. Marketing materials from the company note that open application programming interface architecture enables it to integrate with existing infrastructure. Because the technology is interoperable with third-party biometric services, airports can start small and scale up as their goals and challenges change.



JUNE 10-14, 2026

National Harbor, MD

41ST ANNUAL AMAC

AIRPORT BUSINESS CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY BWI THURGOOD MARSHALL AIRPORT

PROGRESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP: REFRAME, REFOCUS, REBUILD

The **AMAC Airport Business Conference** connects **nearly 1,600** aviation professionals, businesses, government officials, and changemakers to explore the future of our industry through the lens of innovation, access and opportunity. The conference remains a platform for advancing minority and women-owned small businesses and their vital role in fueling local economies – connecting aviation to community growth while offering rich opportunities for advocacy, learning and networking.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ DBE/ACDBE & UCP Administrators Training
- ▶ Airport Concessions Business Capacity Accelerator Training
- ▶ BWI Airport Tour
- ▶ Speed Mentoring
- ▶ Legends & Leapers
- ▶ AMAC PAC Power Breakfast
- ▶ Airport Directors 20/20 Vision Forum
- ▶ Experience Hall Exhibit Expo & Programming
- ▶ Business Matchmaking
- ▶ Workshops & Industry Updates
- ▶ Networking Receptions
- ▶ Runway to Success Supplier Pitch Competition
- ▶ Catalyst Awards
- ▶ AMAC Foundation Events:
 - Bill Walker Memorial Golf Experience
 - Celebrating Women in Aviation & Scholarship Awards Breakfast
 - Silent Auction

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ▶ Aviation/Airport Executives & Emerging Leaders
- ▶ Architect, Engineering & Construction Firms
- ▶ Food, Retail & Travel Service Brands
- ▶ Aviation Professional Services
- ▶ Concessions & Revenue Team Members
- ▶ Project Managers & Change Agents

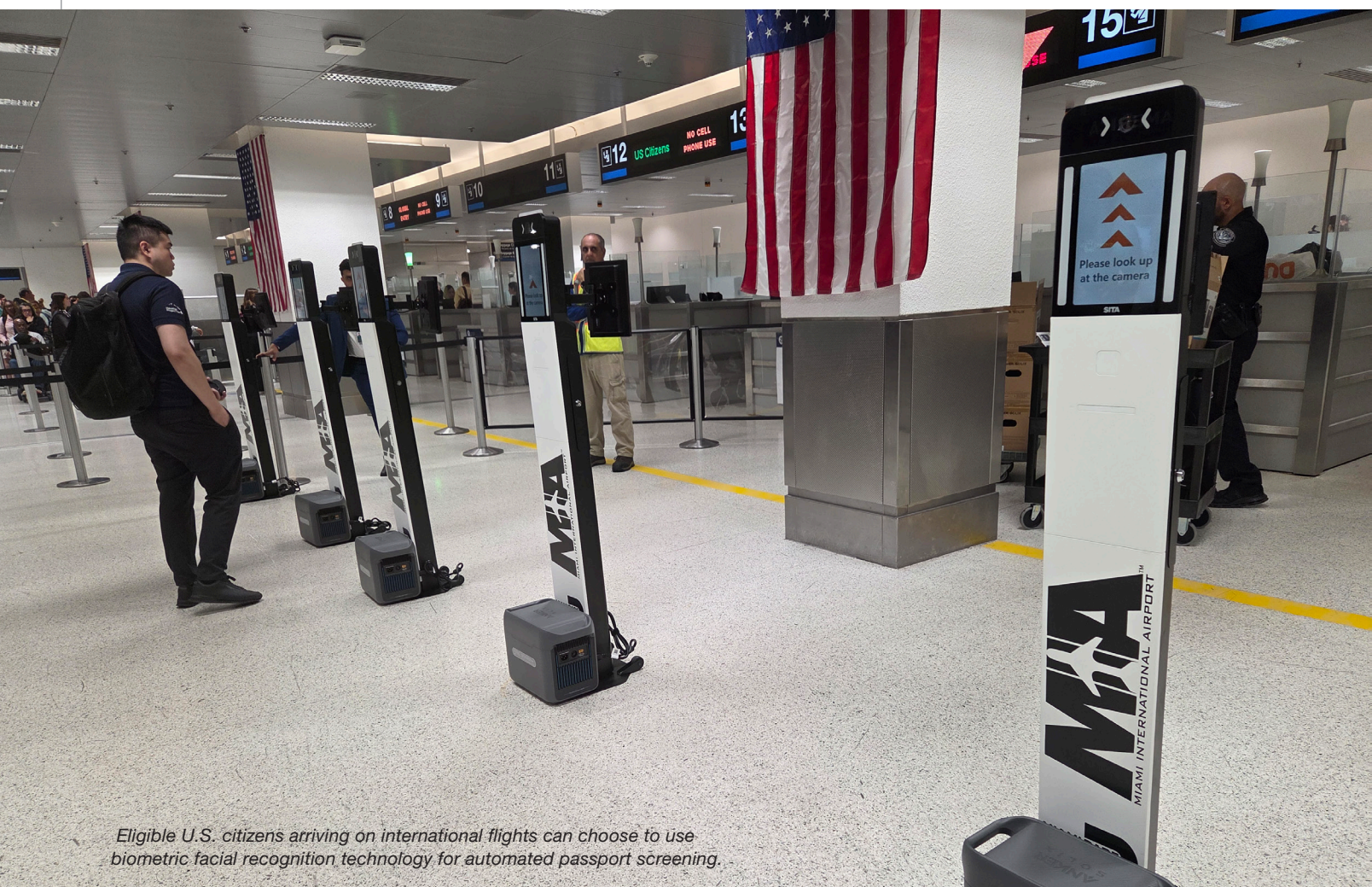


SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



amac-org.com/annualconference





Eligible U.S. citizens arriving on international flights can choose to use biometric facial recognition technology for automated passport screening.

This and other flexibilities simplified MIA's implementation, notes Alonso.

"CBP developed EPP to augment and automate traveler processing by reconfiguring data flows and leveraging existing systems to automatically capture travelers' faces, verify identity, conduct standard primary system vetting, confirm the traveler and create a biometric cross-reference record in CBP systems," he explains. "At MIA, CBP, airport officials and SITA coordinated to ensure a smooth launch by proactively testing, training, [making] queue changes and updating technology."

In the end, only limited facility modifications were needed. "Minor changes were made to the queueing to ensure travelers move through the EPP process more quickly," Alonso notes.

CBP and MIA emphasize that collaboration was critical to the success of the deployment.

"This was a true partnership," he adds. "CBP and MIA aligned on shared objectives: security, efficiency and passenger experience. From facility design to data integration and staffing models, both organizations worked side by side to ensure the system met operational, regulatory and customer service requirements."

Broader Digital Transformation

The recently added Enhanced Passenger Processing program is just one part of MIA's larger strategy focused on smart airport operations and long-term scalability.

"International travel at MIA is projected to continue its upward trend. EPP allows MIA and CBP to scale capacity digitally rather than physically—and maintain a consistent traveler experience even as volumes increase," says Cutié. "It represents the future of border processing: secure, data-driven, flexible and traveler-centric. It enables CBP to better protect the border and gives MIA a competitive advantage as a global gateway."

The deployment at MIA seems to reflect broader trends across the continent. According to SITA's latest annual benchmark report, 53% of North American airlines are investing in biometric and digital identity management, while nearly 60% have implemented touchless passenger flow technologies.

According to Shawn Gregor, SITA's president for the Americas, Enhanced Passenger Processing is setting a new standard for efficiency at the border by using biometrics to make arrivals smoother, faster and more secure for everyone. It can also easily scale over time to additional terminals and to handle increased capacity, he adds. ✈️



SWIFT

EUROPE 2026

LONDON 22-23 APRIL

HEADLINE SPONSORS



2026 SPONSORS



EXHIBITORS & SUPPORTERS



PARTNERS



WWW.SWIFTEUROPE.ORG

Do You See Blue or Green?

No, this isn't a sequel to the heated Twitter debate years ago about the color scheme of a dress. That was an optical illusion; this is more of a philosophical question. The main structure of *Treasure Map* at Albany International Airport (ALB) is, indeed, blue. But the sculpture itself is green because it's primarily made of upcycled leather from the seats of retired or refurbished airplanes.

The commissioned artwork was a collaboration between ALB and Southwest Airlines to commemorate the carrier's 25 years of service at the Upstate New York airport. "For a quarter century, Southwest Airlines has been a trusted and valued partner of Albany International Airport," said Sam Fresina, chair of the Albany County Airport Authority Board, at the September 2025 unveiling of the new sculpture. "This creative project is a fitting celebration of our long-standing partnership and shared commitment to sustainability."

The artwork was created through Repurpose with Purpose, Southwest's global initiative to help keep its seat upholstery out of landfills. Since the program began in 2014, the airline has donated 1.4 million pounds of leather and more than \$2 million in grants to help create employment opportunities and on-the-job skills training in communities throughout the world. This, however, is the first time its unneeded seat material ended up in a major art installation.

Hudson Valley artist Ruby Palmer leveraged her experience making cut-paper pieces when creating the perforated sculpture that now hangs in ALB's Ticketing Lobby (near the Southwest counters, of course). She hand-cut, painted and layered the donated seat leather, using her signature process of first building and then subtracting material to produce the intricate map-like silhouette.

The result is a buoyant piece that Kathy Greenwood, director of ALB's Art and Culture Program, describes as a vivid network of linear pathways reminiscent of a bejeweled landscape. "Ruby's material sensibilities were key to meeting this very specific challenge," says Greenwood. "Her integrative approach to sculpture and painting, and openness to experimentation resulted in this remarkable new work."

Like the airport, Southwest was thrilled with the sculpture Palmer created. "[It] highlights the art of upcycling in a beautifully unique way," remarked Ana Schwager, senior manager of the airline's Corporate Responsibility Program, in a press release. "We hope that travelers passing by *Treasure Map* are inspired to consider the possibilities for upcycling and creative reuse in their own lives." ✈️



PHOTO: BETH MICKALONIS

AIRPORTS LOVE RECEIVING *AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT* IN THE MAIL

That's right. We give our airport subscribers a choice on how to read us.
And 80% of them choose to receive print copies of the magazine.



Want your own copy? Subscribe (print or digital) for free!

airportimprovement.com/subscribe

AirportImprovement.com

THE SHOW & TELL OF AIRPORT PROJECT WORK

What Makes SnowPo So Special



In a conference landscape crowded with panels, presentations and product showcases, the Northeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives Annual International Aviation Snow Symposium has carved out a distinctive and important niche. Although its agenda and keynote speaker are important to the continued grow of snow removal teams, the combination of symposium content and an authentic spirit of collaboration between airports, industry consultants and suppliers is what showcases the importance of this week.

Recent weather events have reinforced why this symposium is so important. In late January, the East Coast was hit with a nearly record-breaking snowfall. A week later, record snowfall across southeastern North Carolina and northeastern South Carolina impacted the region. Lessons learned and contacts made from previous symposiums provided expertise and guidance that allowed airports to remain open, or open as soon as possible.

Now in its 58th year, the Snow Symposium delivers conference content that is practical and relatable. Sessions are grounded in real-world experience, addressing the challenges airport operators face when winter weather threatens safety, efficiency and continuity of service. Rather than abstract theory, discussions focus on what works, what doesn't, and what can be improved—often drawing content directly from recent storm events and operational case studies. Attendees leave not just informed but better equipped to make decisions when airfield conditions are at their worst.

A colleague from a North Carolina airport recently visited and thanked me and the Snow Symposium for helping him deal with the unprecedented snow event the Carolina airports experienced this year. He incorporated the curriculum and applied knowledge learned from our Snow Academy to manage the storm's impact on his airport operations, opening much sooner than would have been possible without the shared knowledge.

What truly elevates the Snow Symposium, however, is its foundation of volunteerism. Many of the conference's planners, speakers and moderators are practitioners who donate their time and expertise for the benefit of the broader aviation community. This volunteer-driven model fosters a sense of shared ownership and pride. It also reinforces trust. Participants know the conversations are shaped by peers who understand the pressures of snow operations firsthand, not by distant observers or purely commercial interests.

Equally important is the healthy collaboration that defines the event. The symposium brings airports together with industry consultants and suppliers in a setting that encourages open dialogue rather than sales pitches. Suppliers gain valuable insight into operational realities, while airports benefit from early exposure to emerging tools, technologies and strategies. This two-way exchange creates partnerships that often extend well beyond the conference itself, leading to innovations that improve winter operations across the industry.



In addition to his role as vice president of airport operations for the Allegheny County Airport Authority at Pittsburgh International

Airport (PIT), James Moorhead also serves as chairman of the International Aviation Snow Symposium. He has assisted with the development and curriculum of the International Snow Academies during more than 15 years on the Snow Symposium committee, and still teaches classes for the American Association of Airport Executives and Snow Symposium.

Together, these elements give the Snow Symposium its unique position within the conference circuit. It is not just a place to learn, but a place to contribute. Not just a forum for ideas, but a catalyst for collaboration. And in an industry where preparation and shared knowledge can make the difference between disruption and resilience, that combination is not only refreshing, it's *essential*.

I would like to invite everyone involved in airport snow removal to attend this year's Northeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives Annual International Aviation Snow Symposium. Once again, Buffalo, NY, has graciously agreed to host the event, which will be held April 24 to 29.

For more information, please visit www.snows Symposium.org. 

AEROCADÉ[®]

AIRPORT BARRICADE



- **LOW-PROFILE**

- **FOD-FREE**

- **INTERCONNECTED**

LOW-PROFILE, HIGH VISIBILITY AIRPORT BARRICADE

The Aerocade[®] Airport Barricade is a low-profile, water-filled, channelization device used to delineate work zones for construction and maintenance on airport runways and taxiways. The Aerocade[®] can be interconnected end-to-end for use as a demarcation device and can be accessorized with warning lights and flags.

The Aerocade[®] Low-Profile Airport Barricade is designed to FAA Advisory Circular 150/5370-2G.

WWW.VALTIR.COM
888.496.3625

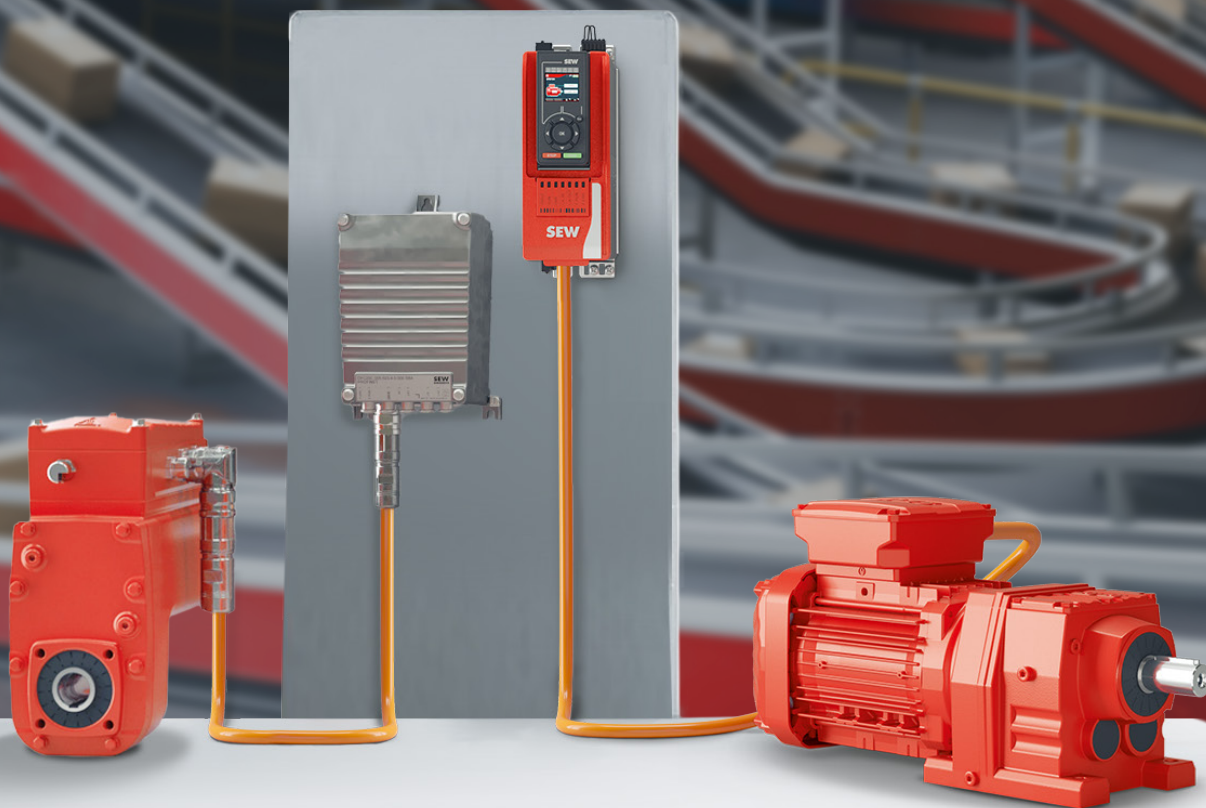


Scan for More Info

Complete single-cable solution

SEW
EURODRIVE

One-cable. Endless possibilities.



Contact Us to
Learn More

Power, data, safety, and diagnostics. All in one cable.

MOVILINK® Digital Data Interface (DDI) single-cable technology is the world's most flexible and complete single-cable solution. It streamlines installation, eliminates wiring errors, accelerates commissioning, and enables diagnostics and safety with fewer components. One cable delivers motor power, encoder feedback, brake control, temperature monitoring, digital nameplate data, and more—digitally transmitted between the drive and motor. The same DDI cable works seamlessly with induction motors, servos, and MOVIGEAR® mechatronic units.

→ Join us at: MODEX - Booth # B-16112 \ AAAE - Booth # 428

SEWEURODRIVE.COM \ INDUSTRIAL DRIVE AUTOMATION \ ENGINEERING \ SERVICE