

## Gateway Transformation Project Continues

As we near the end of 2016, significant progress can be seen on the Gateway Transformation project. Frequent travelers have noticed construction walls erected and moved various times. Each time the walls have come down, new elements are unveiled. Terrazzo flooring is being installed throughout the Grand Hall and in the corridor of Concourse A. Updated restrooms and remodeled and updated gate hold rooms are also coming to Concourse A.

New flight information display monitors are available, and ceiling work is being done. The pre-security Grand Rapids Magazine Travel Store has been relocated, restroom facilities have been updated and a family restroom was added on the east end of the Grand Hall. On the mezzanine level, the Observation Area is being refreshed and seating is being added.

A look outside shows substantial progress as well. Contractors are done setting structural steel and pre-cast concrete, and the curtain wall (wall of windows) manufacturing is underway. Inside the basement area, new air handling units were installed as part of the HVAC system, and the base panels for the new roof are being welded into place.

On any given day, there are approximately 50 skilled contractors and employees working around the terminal on the Gateway Transformation Project.

For the most recent updates of what is happening throughout our construction activities, and to see additional architectural renderings of the completed project, you can visit our website at: [FlyFord.org/construction.php](http://FlyFord.org/construction.php).



## Records Continue to Fall!

September 2016 is one for the history books as the Gerald R. Ford International Airport served more than 219,000 passengers - a 7.76% increase over last year's total! If our year-over-year growth continues at its current pace (and we believe it will) we expect to break our annual record (set in 2015) of just over 2,550,000.

This unprecedented growth is one of the reasons we are beginning the process of our Master Plan Update (see page four for more information).

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## Signature Flight Support Opens New Facility

On Tuesday, August 16, GFIA aviation tenant Signature Flight Support celebrated the grand opening of its new 23,000 square foot facility. This \$6-million expansion doubles Signature’s capacity in Grand Rapids. Sitting on 2.2 acres, the facility includes a new 18,000 square foot aircraft storage hangar and 5,000 square foot executive terminal. This expansion will allow Signature to accommodate larger aircraft, such as a Gulfstream 650. The existing facilities also received cosmetic upgrades and they expanded their parking lot.



Patrick Sniffen, VP of marketing for Signature, states that, “The new facility is made to be extremely efficient for passengers and crews to expedite their air-to-ground transportation,” he said. “It’s an upgrade and features all the modern amenities.”

He said the design also incorporates green building practices, specifically noting the high-efficiency lighting and natural light utilized in the spaces.

Signature Flight Support operates at 200 locations around the world.

## More Room For Birdwatchers to Spread Their Wings!

In 1995, the airport opened the viewing park at its current location on Kraft Avenue north of 52nd Street. Over the years it has become a popular spot for families to pack a picnic and enjoy some time outdoors watching airplanes. *Grand Rapids Kids Magazine* voted the park the “Best Kept Secret” in 2014. As the park’s popularity comes the need for an expansion. The current park has just over 50 parking spaces, picnic tables and trash receptacles for picnickers, and the new expansion will add a pavilion, permanent restrooms, new seating areas, expanded parking, bus parking, and more.

On October 24, GFIA and the Cascade Community Foundation held a ground breaking event to kick off the renovation and expansion of the viewing park.

“We have heard over the years how enjoyable this viewing park is to our community, and we are happy to invest in our Airport Viewing Park,” said GFIA Acting President & CEO Phil Johnson. “We appreciate our partnership with the Cascade Community Foundation to support this project and make the renovation a reality.”

“Pat Combs and I have been delighted and grateful for the community support that was essential to the success of this campaign,” said campaign chair Pat Combs. “The success of the project has happened without the significant support of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport and their amazing team.”

The Airport Viewing Park should remain open during construction, but parking will be limited and — should closings occur — they will be limited. More photos and information on the project can be found at: <http://www.grr.org/viewing-airplanes.php>.



These two renderings show the new pavilion and seating areas that are an integral part of the Viewing Park improvement project.

## Expanding Our Fleet



The new EZ-liner paint truck is driven by Lonny Shirey while the rear painting equipment is operated by Rory Wolters. Lonny and Rory received 40 hours of specialized training on the operation and care of the new equipment prior to using it on the airfield.

## Painting by the Numbers

In early August, the Airport Authority invested in new painting equipment that brings the latest technology to GFIA. The new EZ-liner paint truck offers some great features to improve the efficiency of painting runway and taxiway markings. Manufactured in the USA in Orange City, IA, this new system includes:

- » Two 250-gallon heated paint tanks
- » One 1,500 pound bead tank
- » Eight air blasters to clean the pavement prior to spraying the paint
- » Four paint pumps
- » Eight adjustable paint spray nozzles
- » Six bead guns to apply the reflective beads to the wet paint
- » A water flush tank to clean the paint lines and nozzles
- » Three separate guidance systems to ensure straight lines. These include visual, laser guided and camera guided systems.
- » Radio headsets for driver / painter communication
- » Computer tracking of the amount of paint that has been used

This truck replaced the paint truck that was purchased in 1998. The new system allows the paint colors to be changed out in 1-2 hours (used to take nearly 1/2-day). By heating the paint, our team can start painting earlier in the season and still be assured of good paint and bead adhesion to the pavement. Just the taxiway sideline painting used to take three weeks to complete. With the new EZ-liner, this task can now be completed in three days!

ular spot for area workers to take a lunch break, or  
in Grand Rapids” (July 2015). With its growth in  
and portable bathroom facilities. This renovation

e Airport Viewing Park.

ark to make it even better for future generations,”  
ect, and all of the generous donors who made this

ign co-chair Sheila VanZile. “The project couldn’t

e posted via the Airport’s social media accounts.



vements included in the expansion.



Shown above from left are GFIAA Board Chair Roger Morgan, former Cascade Community Foundation Board Chair Curt Monhart, Campaign Co-Chair Pat Combs, Cascade Community Foundation Chair Laura McDowell, campaign donor David Bottrall, Mathison | Mathison Architects Principal and Co-Founder Tom Mathison, and Owen Ames Kimball President Frank Stanek.



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## News In Brief

- » The next meetings of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority Board are currently scheduled to occur on November 30 and December 21. Board meetings begin at 8:30 a.m. All meetings are held in the International Room in the passenger terminal facility and are open to the public.
- » The 2016 Airport Holiday Music Festival is scheduled for December 5 - 9. More than a dozen area middle and high school choral groups will be performing at various times throughout the week.
- » Seasonal flights are returning! Allegiant Air brings back nonstop service to Punta Gorda (PGD) on November 17 and to Fort Lauderdale (FLL) on December 14. Southwest Airlines begins Saturday nonstop service to Fort Myers (RSW) on November 12 with daily nonstop service to both Fort Myers (RSW) and Tampa (TPA) returning on January 5, 2017.

## Airport Master Plan Update Process Begins

As is the case with all major airports in the United States, airports must formulate master plans to prepare for future growth. Since the Gerald R. Ford International Airport's original master plan in 1959 it has been necessary to update the plan several times to accommodate airport growth. After several years of unprecedented growth along with the Airport having started or completed most of the previous Master Plan's recommended development program the Authority recognized the need for the update. Therefore, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority (GFIAA) is embarking on a comprehensive Airport Master Plan Update (MPU) study. The process will take approximately two years to complete.

It has been said that nothing happens at this airport by accident. The GFIAA and the study team will be looking through a "Regional Lens" throughout this MPU process. The very nature of the study mandates a process which is visionary and inclusive of all modes of transportation. To that extent, the MPU team will be looking carefully at all opportunities, technologies, and potentials that would cement GFIAA's place as the premier airport in West Michigan.

Updates on the MPU process and notices of public meetings will be available on our website at: [FlyFord.org/environment-zoning.php](http://FlyFord.org/environment-zoning.php).

**Airport Connections** is the quarterly newsletter of the Gerald R. Ford International Airport. We encourage our readers to contact us with comments, suggestions, and submissions. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for *Airport Connections*, please contact the Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority:

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