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Final Pieces Now In Place

First discussed 17 years ago in the airport's Master Plan, and reaffirmed in the 2004 Master Plan Update, Gerald R. Ford International Airport broke ground for this, the largest single airport development project to date, on 9/26/07. Now, a little more than two years later, airport passengers and visitors are sure to appreciate all of the amenities included in the **Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program** project.

Beginning with the **Vehicle Entrance Plaza**, airport visitors will receive a warm West Michigan Welcome. In the event that the national security threat level for aviation travel is elevated, GFIA will be able to perform vehicle security checks at the plaza in an efficient and effective manner. But that is just

final pieces
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Dedication Ceremony Highlights Airport's Important Role

Tuesday, December 1, 2009 marked the official dedication of the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program (TAPIP) project, and while there is

inarguably a lot of new concrete and steel on the airport, the most celebrated additions

were not "bricks and mortar," but instead the new and improved customer services and amenities incorporated into the design (see article *Final Pieces* for a complete overview) and the long-term impact of this airport development on the West Michigan region.

"This front door says to everyone who passes through it that we are confident in our future."

--Jeanne Englehart, President
Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce



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the beginning, as **Close-in Covered Parking**, offers airport visitors the option to park their vehicle in the new garage, providing protection from the unpredictable Michigan weather. Once parked, travelers may wayfind to the terminal building via the climate-controlled **Sky Bridges**, allowing them easy and safe crossing away from the vehicle roadway traffic below. **Elevators and stairs** are available on both the garage- and terminal-ends of the sky bridges, with **Escalators** also available in the terminal lobbies.

For patrons parking in the short-term area or returning a rental car on level one of the garage, and those being dropped off in the commercial vehicle lane or at the terminal curbside, the **Roadway Canopy** offers protection from the elements as they navigate to the terminal. Passengers and employees needing to catch a hotel or economy-lot shuttle can proceed to the **Shelters** located in the commercial lane to await their transportation. In addition, a comfortable new **Intermodal Transit Station** has been added for those using the Rapid bus service. **Rental Car** counters are now conveniently located in the new customer service center on the east end of the parking garage, just a short walk from the vehicles.

Other functional features of the project include a **Car Count/Revenue Control System** that will provide up-to-the-minute information on available parking spaces in the garage via signage as you approach the airport terminal. Throughout the parking garage, **Security Cameras, Call Boxes, and Fire Extinguishers** have been installed to provide additional levels of safety and security.

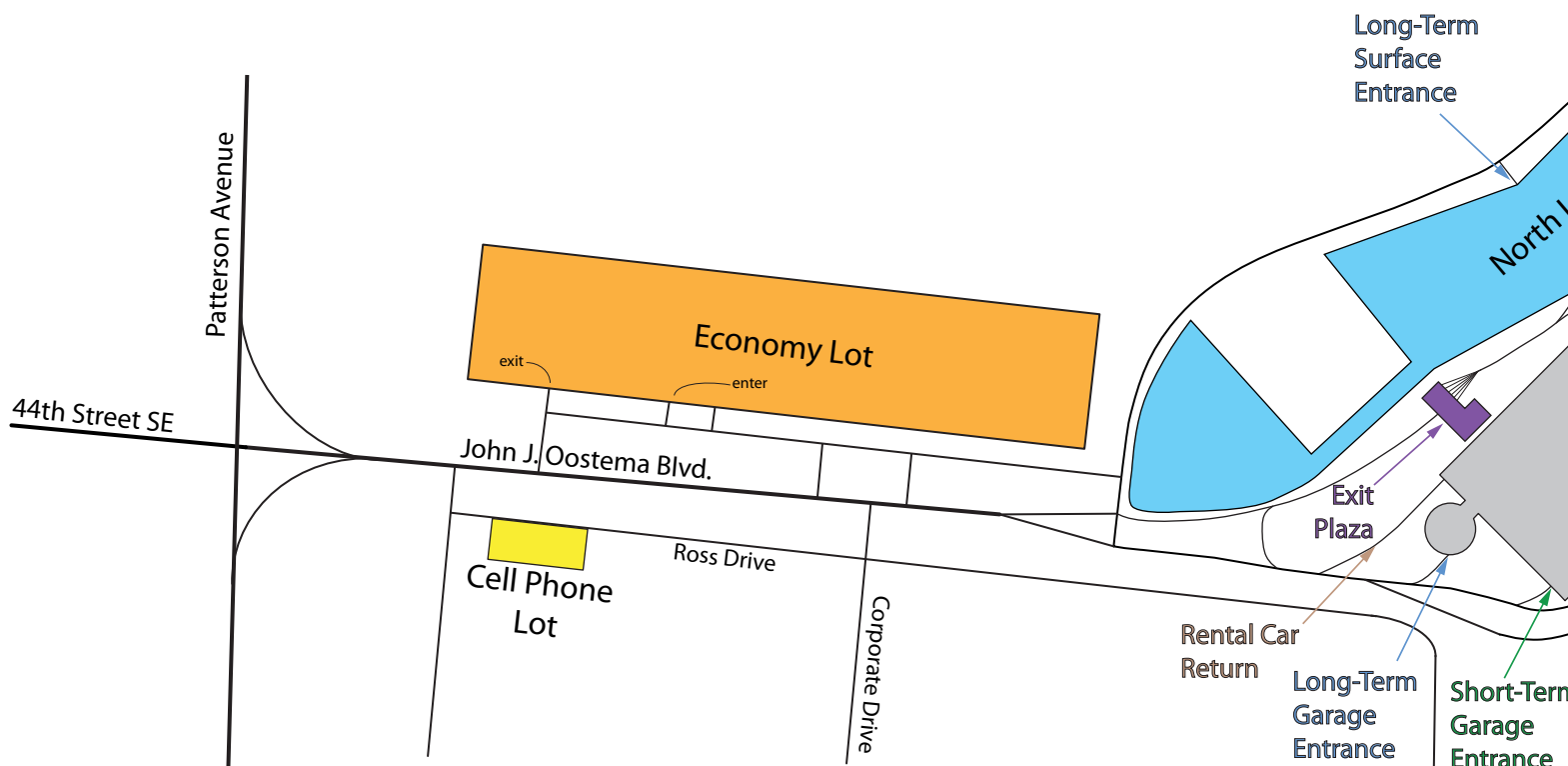
Patrons exiting the airport terminal facility will be greeted by a **Welcome Wall**. This 150-foot long collage of 16 photos highlighting regional culture, arts, events, and activities gives visitors a taste of what is in store for them during their stay in West Michigan. Brand new **Landscaping and Streetscaping** add polish to the project with the use of hundreds of various native trees, shrubs and other plantings.

Another new amenity found near the passenger terminal is the airport's **Animal Relief Area**. This small, fenced, park-like area is provided in accordance with recent changes to the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) Air Carrier Access Act Rule. The wheelchair-accessible area provides for the needs of both assistance animal and owner with natural ground cover and surroundings – even a faux fire hydrant – for Princess and Kujo, while Mutt Mitts, trash receptacles, and benches are provided for their human counterparts. The designated Animal Relief Area is located at the far west end of the terminal curb front. GFIA customers with pets are free to access the designated Animal Relief Area.

With all the pieces settled into place, the picture at Gerald R. Ford International Airport is one of first-class facilities, services, and amenities.



New Maps Help Guide Airport Travelers





New Transit Station Adds Comfort To The Wait

One of the many new features of the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program is the addition of an Intermodal Transit Station. Previously, airport patrons and employees who used The Rapid for transportation to and from the airport waited beneath an open shelter for the bus to arrive. Now, The Rapid's passengers are able to await the bus in the comfort of a 520 square-foot Transit Station complete with comfortable seating, interior lighting, and climate control.

At a dedication ceremony on November 17th, Peter Varga, The Rapid CEO, said, "The Rapid is very pleased with the forward-thinking on the part of the Aeronautics Board in planning for this new transit station at the airport. As we continue to work collaboratively to improve transportation in and around the city, facilities like this will play a vital role and serve as an example to be replicated."

"As we continue to work collaboratively... facilities like this will play a vital role and serve as an example to be replicated."

**--Peter Varga, CEO
The Rapid**

The Rapid provides public transportation services for the Grand Rapids metro area and beyond. The Rapid's service area is 185 square miles, and their annual ridership for 2008 was nearly 9.1 million passengers.

Complete route and schedule information is available online at www.ridetherapid.org.

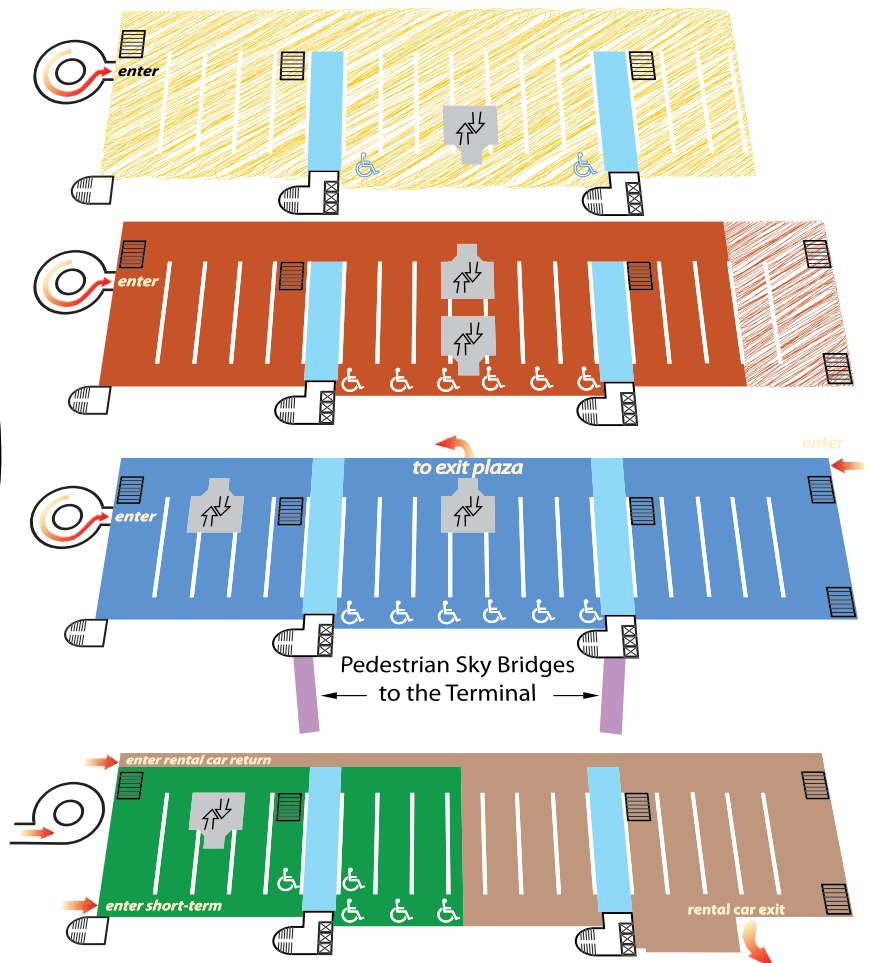
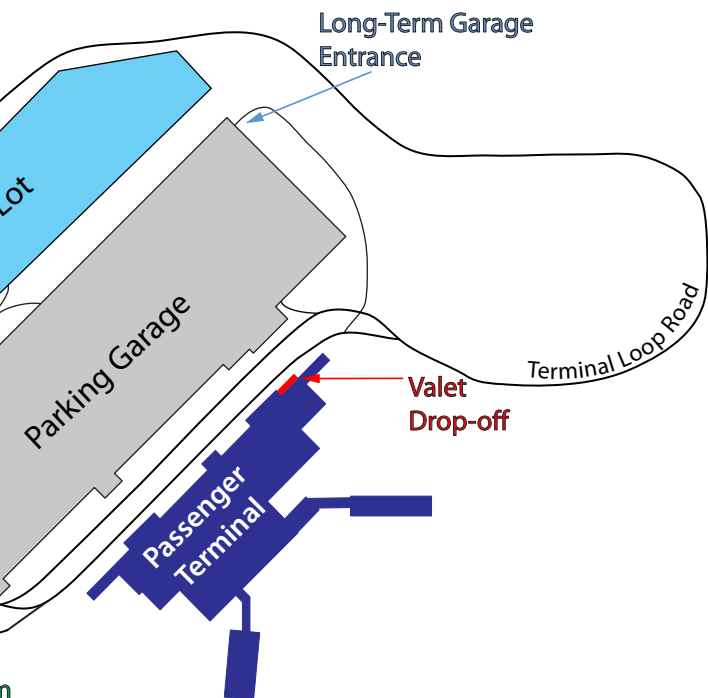
Sounds Of The Season

December 7 - 11, the airport's Grand Hall was filled with many things: the aroma of Starbucks coffee, the greetings and farewells of travelers, and the sights and sounds of the 14th annual Airport Holiday Music Festival.

While inclement weather conditions and school snow days prevented some groups from participating this year, Airport patrons and employees were treated to a wide range of musical stylings from classical Latin arias to classic carols to some new twists on old favorites. The choral ensembles ranged in size from 10 to 80 students and hailed from area middle and high schools

For some students, this was their first time ever to visit the airport. For others who will be graduating, it was their last year to come and perform for airport patrons. But we hope that for all students, it was a performance they will never forget.

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One Tough Truck...

New Airport Fire Truck Combines Form And Function

Buying a new specialized vehicle is never easy...and for the airport, the concerns went far beyond the normal decisions of color, number of doors, and conventional vs. satellite radio. For starters, this replacement vehicle had to handle various terrain. Next, it needed to be able to function as a medical response vehicle and an incident command vehicle. Finally, it needed to be able to carry 2,400 pounds of permanently-mounted hardware and accessories to enable it to fight fires.

That's one tall order! Speaking of height, did we mention it also has to have a short enough profile to fit beneath the 9-foot ceilings of the new parking garage?

So, what exactly fits the bill for these special needs? A Ford F350 XL Super Duty, single-axle, 1-ton pick-up truck outfitted with a 6.8-liter Triton V-10 engine.

Securely bolted to the 8-ft. truck bed is a skid unit that serves as the mounting platform for the 200-gallon water tank, 25-gallon foam concentrate tank, the 120-gallons-per-minute pump, and 150-ft. fire hose that transform this ordinary truck into a mini fire response vehicle. Two storage boxes carry additional firefighting equipment including air tanks for the rescue workers.

Inside the cab, custom-built boxes have been added to hold first aid equipment ranging from blood pressure cuffs to a portable defibrillator, as well as the plethora of manuals they keep with them at all times. To ensure coordination with all necessary entities, the vehicle is equipped with three radios, allowing communications with the air traffic control tower, all airport ground equipment and safety personnel, and area mutual aid providers.








Outside, the vehicle is non-traditional white with reflective striping in blue and federal safety yellow (a standardized color) along with LED safety lights and a frame-mounted push bar, all sitting atop high quality snow tires.

Airport personnel provided diligent oversight throughout the customization process to ensure that the vehicle met all NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) standards.

And it all fits neatly in a truck that is just over 6-½ feet tall. Now that's one tough truck.



-  Level 1
Covered, Short-term parking
-  Level 1
Rental Car Facilities and accessways
-  Level 2
Covered, Long-term parking
-  Level 3
Covered, Long-term parking
-  Level 3
Uncovered, Long-term parking
-  Level 4
Uncovered, Long-term parking

-  Elevator
-  Stairs
-  Handicap Parking
-  Vehicle Ramp
-  Pedestrian Walkway

2009/2010 Parking Rates

Parking rates at Gerald R. Ford International Airport are as follows:

Short-term Parking:
 \$2 first hour
 \$1 each additional ½ hour
 \$24 daily maximum

Long-term Garage Parking:
 \$2 per hour
 \$12 daily maximum
 \$72 weekly maximum*

Long-term Surface Parking:
 \$2 per hour
 \$10 daily maximum
 \$60 weekly maximum*

Economy Lot Parking:
 \$2 per hour
 \$9 daily maximum
 \$54 weekly maximum*
 * 7th day free

Complimentary shuttle service is available from bus shelter locations.

Valet Parking:
 \$18 per day
 \$12 five hours or less

*** A Lost Ticket Fee of \$10 will be added to the parking fee if original ticket cannot be produced when exiting the parking facilities.*

dedication

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In her remarks, Birgit Klohs, president of Right Place, Inc. stated, “We are in a global economy and excellent air service and airport facilities must be one of the core competencies of West Michigan for our companies to compete globally. Every meeting Right Place has with a potential new business looking to expand in West Michigan, at some point includes the topics of infrastructure and accessibility and the airport is a critical part of that infrastructure.”

The importance of regional airports to economic development are clearly recognized. In October of this year, *Site Selection* magazine surveyed corporate real estate executives to determine which factors are most important when they are involved in location decision-making. While state and local taxes were listed and so were existing work force skills, the item at the top of the list was transportation infrastructure.

Jeanne Englehart, president of the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, remarked, “This front door – the gateway to the region – says to everyone who passes through it that we are confident enough in our future to make this investment. The message we are sending is that West Michigan is vibrant, successful and growing.”

“We are in a global economy. Excellent air service and airport facilities must be one of our core competencies”

**--Birgit Klohs, President
Right Place, Inc.**



Aeronautics Board members cut the ribbon at the TAPIP dedication ceremony. Shown (from left) are Commissioner Dean Agee; Commissioner Dick Vander Molen; Board Chair John Van Laar; Joe Tomaselli; Floyd Wilson, Jr.; Jeanne Englehart, president of the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce; Roger Morgan, Kent County commission chair; and Birgit Klohs, president of Right Place, Inc. Aeronautics Board member Commissioner Ted Vonk was unable to attend.

West Michigan is vibrant, successful and growing.”

As Michigan retools its economy for the future, its transportation infrastructure cannot just keep pace; it has to lead the way. Jim Koslosky, executive director of Gerald R. Ford International Airport, stated, “17 years ago the Kent County Aeronautics Board embarked on implementing a 20-year airport redevelopment plan that has resulted in essentially rebuilding GFIA on-site, and the final piece of this puzzle – the Terminal Area and Parking Improvement Program project – is dedicated today.”

Throughout this time, the Aeronautics Board has remained committed to providing regional aviation capacity, improving customer service and growing access to the West Michigan region while remaining financially self-sustaining.



This 150-ft. long, 16-image photo mural is displayed on the face of the new parking garage and highlights the wide variety of cultural, athletic, and leisure events and activities that are available throughout the West Michigan region.

News In Brief

- » Brian Picardat, finance and administration director for GFIA, has been elected president of the Michigan Association of Airport Executives. MAAE is a professional organization for airport executives throughout Michigan whose primary goal is to assist airport executives in fulfilling responsibilities to the airports and communities they serve. Membership includes executives from large, medium and small airports.
- » Bruce Schedlbauer, marketing and communications manager for GFIA, has been elected chairman of the West Michigan Tourist Association (WMTA) Board of Directors. WMTA is the oldest continuously-operating tourism marketing organization in the U.S. With a current membership base of approximately 800 tourism-related businesses and organizations, WMTA is responsible for marketing the western half of Michigan's Lower Peninsula as a tourism destination.
- » Bruce Applebach, operations manager for GFIA, was presented with the Airport Partnership Award by the FAA Great Lakes Region, Airports Division in recognition of his participation in the Takeoff and Landing Performance Assessment Aviation Rulemaking Committee. The FAA noted, "Mr. Applebach's contributions to the resolution of safety issues in the area of airport winter operations has been crucial to the enhancement of safety at airports across the country."
- » The GFIA Marketing and Communications division was presented with a 3rd-place Excellence in Airport Marketing and Communications Awards for *Airport Connections*, the very newsletter you are reading now. Airports Council International - North America issues awards in various categories "in recognition of excellence in the creation of programs to enhance the image of airports and the communities they serve."
- » Eric Vander Stel, airport field maintenance supervisor, has been selected as a member of the International Aviation Snow Symposium (IASS). The Snow Symposium, sponsored by the Northeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives, is an annual event which provides a forum for dialogue on the numerous aspects of winter operations at airports. Recent events have included airport representatives from the United States, Canada, Russia, and Scandinavia.

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The Department of Aeronautics would like to thank the following schools for sharing their talented groups with us:

- » Creston High School
- » East Grand Rapids High School
- » Grand Rapids Christian High School
- » Legacy Christian Middle School
- » Moline Christian Middle School
- » Northpointe Christian Middle School
- » Northpointe Christian High School
- » Ottawa Hills High School
- » Potter's House Middle School
- » South Christian High School



The Creston Chorale performs under the direction of Darla Jewel



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 Kent County Department of Aeronautics:

Phone: 616.233.6000

Fax: 616.233.6025

Web: www.flygrandrapids.org

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