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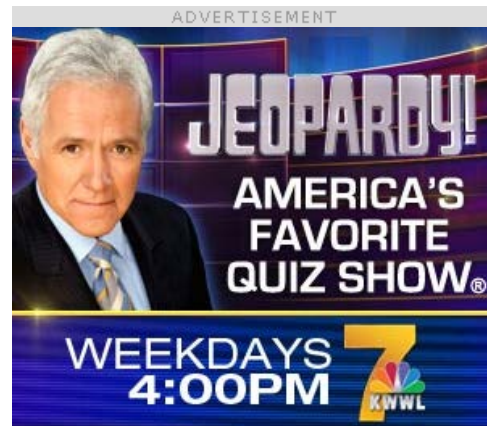
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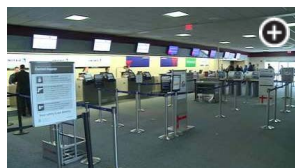
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Eastern Iowa Airport planning remodel, expansion to accommodate flights

Posted: Mar 04, 2014 11:29 AM CST
Updated: Mar 04, 2014 4:39 PM CST

Written by Michelle Corless, Multimedia Journalist - bio | email



CEDAR RAPIDS (KWWL) - The Eastern Iowa Airport is seeing an increase in passengers. Last year more than one million people traveled through the airport. Officials expect that number to rise and say the building needs upgrades to keep up with demand.

Judy Bowers flies out of the Eastern Iowa Airport as much as she can but says having more destinations would make it easier to choose the local airport.

"It would definitely be better if you don't have to transfer planes," said Bowers, who lives in Coralville. "I would appreciate that a lot because that takes so much time."

Travelers want to see more non-stop flights. The airport is working on it, even announcing Tuesday that direct service from Cedar Rapids to Los Angeles will begin in June, but continuing to offer new service is becoming more difficult.

"We're feeling the constraint of capacity issues because we are doing so well, and that's why we're going to build a 'B' concourse, a second concourse, over the next four years," said Tim Bradshaw, the Eastern Iowa Airport director. "We're doing a lot of remodeling to the terminal. It's about \$47 million over the next four years."

The multi-million dollar remodel will add two new gates. The security checkpoint, lobby, and ticket counters will all be upgraded. This summer some exterior work

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will begin including much needed fixes for the parking lot, though no new spaces will be added at this time.

"We've expanded some already with the rent-a-car and the employee lot," said Bradshaw. "We're looking at possibly doing a parking ramp down the road."

During busy times at the airport, like spring break, officials say they have remote parking available in a lot nearby and use shuttles to transport travelers. Any future ramp would come at a steep price. Officials say it costs \$18,000 per parking space so they're looking for funding.

The rest of the renovation is being paid for using airport funds, plus state and federal grants.

Officials hope the upgrades will help draw in new nonstop options for travelers like Bowers.

"Direct flights are ideal," said Bowers.

Renovations in the bathrooms at the airport have already begun. The entire remodel -- including the two new gates -- should wrap up in the summer of 2017.

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Updated: Mar 06, 2014 11:12 PM CST

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Updated: Mar 06, 2014 9:51 PM CST

Police in Iowa City arrested and charged a local cab driver in connection with a January 15 sexual assault.

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Updated: Mar 06, 2014 8:00 PM CST

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Updated: Mar 06, 2014 5:51 PM CST

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