Proposed Terminal Under Review by Yuma County Airport Authority

The Yuma County Airport Authority is currently reviewing a proposal for a new air carrier terminal building conducted by Edward Just Associates of Dallas, Texas, and A.F. Kick and Associates of Yuma. If approved, the plan would immediately commence with the initial design phase of the new facility.

The existing terminal building, originally constructed in 1993, has served the travelling public for 31 years. The terminal consists of a single story pre-engineered steel frame building. In 1986 the building was expanded to accommodate a passenger holdroom and baggage claim area, and in 1991 was cosmetically remodeled along with the renovation of the airport restaurant.

Since 1963, the building utilities and safety systems have only been marginally upgraded. As a result, the terminal is highly energy inefficient and requires continuous maintenance. The maintenance and operating costs of the terminal and administration building are approximately 300% higher than current energy efficient buildings in the Southwest.

On an operational basis, the existing terminal presents major inconveniences and space limitations. Airlines must exit and access the air carrier apron through a secured gate each time baggage is delivered to the terminal or to a parked aircraft. The lack of delivery areas for vans and trucks quickly creates congestion at the limited enplaning curb and two lane roadway. Because the enplaning and deplaning curbs are at right angles to each other, the unfamiliar public is at times unaware of the deplaning curb. Further, the orientation of the curbs, short and long term parking lots, rental cars, and airport exit are often confusing to both passenger and public.

Within the terminal, the 12 foot wide lobby area must accommodate airline ticket counter lines, and general circulation through the lobby. FAA standards for airports of similar size suggest a 28 foot minimum functional clear dimension.

The terminal functions to serve current passenger demand, but can not be considered adequate or appropriate for the long term. Forecasts of scheduled passenger enplanements and aircraft operations, based upon historical data and FAA projections, predict a 224% increase within a 20 year period. In order to accommodate this demand for terminal space, the proposed terminal will require an increase from the current 17,600 sq/ft to 34,000 sq/ft.

The proposed two-level facility will combine both enplaning and deplaning curbs as one continuous curb in front of the building. Curb space will be increased by 260 feet to help accommodate the public during peak hour demand. The location of the new facility will be to the east of the existing facility, beginning at what is now the arriving passenger and meter area.

Increased area will also be available for public circulation within the terminal. Increased operating and ticketing areas will be available for the airlines as well. Auto rental counters will be located adjacent to the baggage claim area for deplaning passenger convenience. The baggage claim area itself will be expanded and include a mechanized delivery device. The airport restaurant will be expanded and feature a bar and lounge. Other features will include a business center, Airport Authority offices, emergency command center, airport security and communications center, and kids port.

The Airport Authority will continue discussions, and review more of the financial aspects of the proposal at future working sessions.