

AGTA News from the Airport Curb - 9/2/22.



## AGTA News from the Airport Curb



[Meeting Registration](#)

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### **AGTA Announces October 23 - 26 Raleigh Conference Theme**

#### ***"Airport Ground Transportation Preps for ACTION"***

The AGTA Fall 2022 Conference will convene **October 23 - 26, 2022** in Raleigh, North Carolina at the Sheraton Raleigh Downtown. Preliminary programming and registration information is expected to be available the week of August 15. For your planning and budgeting purposes, you should expect conference registration fees for members to remain at \$650 and Non-Members \$850 (pre-cutoff).

Still in the preliminary stages, the program includes primary sessions on ***What an Effective 5-Year Plan Should Look Like, Ground Transportation & the EV Challenge, Developing a***

**Public/Private Airport/Ground Transportation Partnership, Solving Labor Issues in Ground Transportation, and Airport Virtual Queue Taxi Systems.** As always, the six afternoon discussion breakouts will tackle the nuts and bolts of implementing these issues and more, specifically within our delegate provider companies and airports. Members wanting to take part in the presentation and/or discussion of any of these topics should contact the office.

This Raleigh conference will provide a chance to learn firsthand about in-progress and newly-implemented approaches to the issues facing all arms of the industry today. Share your concerns and your insights with your "colleagues in the field". - the current successes and the insights gained through your colleagues' experiences.

Make plans now to attend!

*We doubled the expected participation at our Spring 2022 Meeting - Why not take advantage of this in-person opportunity to promote your services and/or products and **consider sponsoring a portion of this meeting?***

## Fall Conference: Speaker Highlights

**Featured Monday Luncheon Speaker: Lynn Smith**, Sunflower Program Hidden Disabilities Program Director for North America.

Lynn will describe how the Sunflower program works and how it is being adopted by airports across North America and how other airports and ground operators can join the program as a way to improve their services to those traveling with hidden disabilities.



## GROUND TRANSPORTATION NEWS

[Digital distribution key to fixing travel's "weak link"](#)

**Phocus Wire** - August 30, 2022

The digital transformation of ground transportation is under way, and as the world opens up again, the demand from travelers for a seamless ground transportation booking experience is growing.

But some suppliers are missing out on this market opportunity. If a bus operator does not have digital distribution capabilities it cannot sell its seats online. Without a brand dotcom or agreements with third parties such as OTAs or retail agents, a supplier's reach and revenue is limited to what it can sell locally, offline. Commercial partnerships with other travel providers such as airlines are not possible.

To change this, operators need a transport management system (TMS), which acts like an airline's Passenger Service System, storing all the operator's available seats, prices and availability. This is a prerequisite to being able to make that inventory available for sale by OTAs and third-parties in a scalable way.

Travelers expect online capabilities and booking a bus ticket or ferry ride in advance should be as easy as booking a flight or a room. Until TMSs are more widely taken up by these small, independent businesses to make seats available online, ground transportation will remain the weak link in the travel ecosystem.

The fragmented nature of the global ground transportation industry means that TMSs need to serve local market needs at the same time as connecting to global systems. There are layers of difference between countries in the same region, and even a single country operator might have different needs from its TMS for different routes. Similarly, operators will want their TMS to give them some degree of autonomy when it comes to third-party sales. The data and analytics functions, for example, can allow an operator to compare and contrast the value and volumes of tickets sold by their distribution partners.

Looking ahead, there is potential for bus operators to position themselves as a more climate-friendly option than flying, but to do this effectively travelers need to be able to book online and to have the information needed at the point of sale.

### **[San Francisco, Birthplace of Ride-Hailing, Becomes the Center of Its Decline](#)**

**The San Francisco Standard** - *Aug. 30, 2022*

As part of a [new Flywheel partnership](#) in San Francisco, Uber's customers will soon have the option of hailing one of Flywheel's roughly 200 local taxi cabs. It fills Uber's need for more drivers (without the supplemental insurance costs that come with its own driver network), and Flywheel's need for a reliable customer base after years of limping along in the shadow of its much larger and better-capitalized rival.

Evelyn Engel, an executive board member of the San Francisco Taxi Workers Alliance, which opposed approval of the program, said there's a palpable bitterness towards Uber even years after its winner-take-all business tactics nearly destroyed their livelihoods.

Engel wryly noted the irony in the way that, as the free-flowing spigot of venture capital ran out, Uber was forced to move closer to the industry it sought to destroy.

Long gone are the days when, at the push of a button, an Uber would appear in two minutes and deliver you across SF for \$6, thanks to tens of billions in venture capital dollars that subsidized the rides. Average charges for UberX rides in the Bay Area rose more than 38% from \$15.54 to \$21.49 between June 2019 and June 2022, according to market research firm YipitData. The number of Uber rides in the region, meanwhile, plunged 48% between June 2019 and June 2022.

The same was true for Uber's SF rideshare rival, Lyft, which actually invented the concept of personal vehicles as taxi cabs with pink-mustachioed cars where riders and drivers pretended to be friends; Lyft rides dropped by 48% in the Bay Area and average ride costs rose 39% from \$15.12 to \$21.06 between June 2019 and June 2022, according to YipitData.

The drop in ridership is of course partly due to the pandemic. But the rising prices, along with continued issues over how the companies treat their drivers, suggests that critics who have long doubted the ride-hailing business model were largely correct.

Lyft declined to comment on criticisms of its business model, but said most industry analysts are optimistic about the future of the rideshare industry. Uber did not respond to requests for comment.

Uber and Lyft are left juggling a two-sided marketplace in which they must compete for both passengers and drivers. For drivers, that typically takes the form of bonuses or other incentives; for passengers, lower fares.

Rides are more expensive and less convenient, making the apps less a daily utility and more a splurge for a night on the town, a trip to the airport or your company's expense account. Kind of like a taxi.

A [recent investigation](#) into Uber's practices led by the [International Consortium of Investigative Journalists](#) showed that a pattern of rampant rule breaking and disregard for driver safety in its quest for global expansion has only added ammunition for regulators.

There is also a growing body of research on the negative impact of ridesharing on [traffic gridlock](#), [air pollution](#) and [transit ridership](#): In San Francisco, the rise of Uber and Lyft [increased traffic congestion](#) and steadily eroded the Municipal Transit Agency's parking revenue, exacerbating an ongoing deficit.

### [\*\*Leeds Bradford Airport parking: How much does it cost to pick up and drop off, where is the cheapest car park and what are the car park opening hours?\*\*](#)

**The Yorkshire Post** - August 30, 2022

[Leeds Bradford Airport](#) has seven [car parking options](#) in total: Meet and Greet, Short Stay, Mid Stay, Long Stay, Premium Short Stay, Mid Stay 2 and Pick Up and Drop Off.

Meet and Greet and Long Stay parking must be booked hours in [advance of arrival](#) and you can amend or cancel your bookings for free up to 24 hours before arrival for all car parks.

You can turn up and park at the airport's Long Stay, Short Stay and Premium Short Stay car parks. You will need tokens to exit the car parks and payment can be made at car park barriers or with cash or card in the parking payment machine where the airport reception is.

There is a Special Assistance team who can help you from any of the on-site car parks if you are in need of wheelchair access, through check-in and security through to assisting to the seat on the aircraft. You can email [customercare@lba.co.uk](mailto:customercare@lba.co.uk) to discuss any needs you may have.

The cheapest car park at Leeds Bradford Airport is the Long Stay car park at an average price of £36 for one day, then the Mid Stay and Mid Stay 2 car parks come second at average prices of £38 each for one day, the Short Stay car park average price is £40 for four hours up to one day, Premium Short Stay is an average price of £43 for one day, while Meet and Greet is an average price of £84 for one day.

### [\*\*New Omnitrans Shuttle Connects Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink Station to Ontario Airport\*\*](#)

**AviationPros** - August 30, 2022

A new Omnitrans shuttle is meeting commuters at the Rancho Cucamonga Metrolink station and whisking them to Ontario International Airport terminals two and four.

Powered by the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority, ONT Connect shuttles meet each Metrolink train at the Milliken Avenue station for a quick, no-wait connection to the airport.

Return service from the airport also is available.

The ride is free for anyone transferring from or to Metrolink or Omnitrans.

The ONT Connect schedule will be coordinated with train arrivals.

On weekdays, 18 trains in each direction serve Cucamonga Station. Eight trains in each direction run on weekends.

A daily parking permit at Cucamonga Station is \$4.50. General parking at ONT ranges from \$3 for 30 minutes to \$16 for the day.

In a statement, Erin Rogers, Omnitrans CEO and general manager, credited multi-agency partnerships for bringing "an effective, convenient way for travelers and commuters to get to the airport without traffic and parking challenges."

**[Skylink bus company announces cancellation of services in East Midlands Airport area](#)**  
**Leicestershire Live - August 28, 2022**

Skylink bus services in the [East Midlands Airport](#) area are among those being scrapped after failing to recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Transport operator Trent Barton says some routes serving [Loughborough](#), Diseworth, Long Whatton and East Midlands Gateway are making a loss.

It has announced it will be making changes to its network after complaining that local services have not recovered their pre-[Covid pandemic](#) customer numbers. The shake-up includes an announcement that Skylink Derby will no longer serve Diseworth and Long Whatton.

Journeys from East Midlands Gateway to [Loughborough](#) on Skylink Nottingham are also set to be cancelled. Meanwhile, [evening journeys](#) between the logistics park at East Midlands Airport and [Coalville](#) will also no longer run after 8pm.

The changes will be effective from Sunday, October 2. They include the withdrawal of other bus routes across the region. But Trent Barton said more bus services, along with extra drivers, would be laid on for popular routes such as that between East Midlands Gateway and Kegworth.

A spokesperson for the bus company said: "In order to adapt to post-pandemic patterns of customer travel and due to several services having not returned to their pre-pandemic customer numbers, we're having to make changes to our network. Over the last few months we've been working with local authorities and other public transport operators to match resources with projected usage.

"Through these discussions, we have been able to retain more of the network than would otherwise have been possible. We regret having to make these changes, however, they are necessary to ensure our network can be sustainable long-term, so we can help as many people travel as possible."

**[Taxi drivers and holiday makers greeted by HIGHEST EVER airport drop-off fees](#)**  
**[Taxi-Point.co.uk](#) - August 27, 2022**

Taxi drivers and holiday makers will be greeted by the highest ever drop-off fees as more than two-thirds of the UK's 21 busiest airports have put prices up, according to new RAC research.

London Stansted continues to top the drop-off charges table with a whopping initial fee of £7 for 15 minutes (in summer 2019 it was £4 for 10 minutes), but travellers will not find other London airports much cheaper. London Luton has increased its initial drop-off charges to £5 for 10 minutes (2019 - £4 for 13 minutes) while Britain's two busiest airports Heathrow and Gatwick have finally succumbed to

introducing drop-off fees with both charging £5, which will get you just 10 minutes at Gatwick and an unspecified number of minutes at Heathrow. Dropping off passengers at these two airports was free in 2019.

Across other parts of the country, sky-high charges are also prevalent. Manchester Airport gives drivers just five minutes for dropping off at a cost of £5 (an increase from £3 in 2019), while Liverpool John Lennon has raised its fees to £4 for 10 minutes (an increase from £3 for 20 minutes). Bristol and East Midlands Airports have both put up their charges to £5 for 10 minutes and 15 minutes respectively – Bristol Airport's hike is especially galling as it was charging £1 for 10 minutes in 2019.

Holidaymakers using the three largest airports in Scotland fair little better. Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow Airports have all doubled their drop-off fees to £4 for 10 minutes.

More positively, Birmingham and Belfast International Airports have kept their fees the same since 2019 (£3 for 15 minutes and £1 for 10 minutes respectively) while drivers can take still advantage of free-drop off areas near the terminal entrance at Cardiff, London City and Belfast City airports.

RAC Head of Roads Policy, Nicholas Lyes, said: "Doing your research on the fees charged before heading to drop off at an airport has to be the best advice. It's good to see some airports offering cheaper drop-off rates in mid-term or long-stay car parks though these tend to be further away from the terminal and might require a shuttle bus connection.

"Drivers should also be aware that many airport forecourts have no stopping areas enforced by cameras, so trying to drop passengers off without paying could result in a hefty charge."

### [Stuck in a long rental car line? Here are 3 ways to get out](#)

**The Points Guy** - August 27, 2022

Given my own disdain for waiting in long lines, you can imagine my horror when my father told me about his experience last month at the rental car center at O'Hare International Airport (ORD) in Chicago.

Arriving late at night, he encountered a wait at the Dollar counter he suspected could last a good two hours; fellow customers a bit farther up in the line told him they'd already waited some 90 minutes.

If you're not a member of your rental car company's loyalty program but find yourself waiting in a long line, the first thing I'd suggest trying is enrolling in the company's loyalty program right there, on the spot, with your phone, in hopes of immediately earning yourself counter-skipping privileges.

#### **See if you can cancel for free and book at another company**

This is something to consider if, for some reason, the previous option doesn't work. There's no reason why it shouldn't, but we all know technical glitches and the like can happen.

The key question here: Did you prepay for your car? Certainly prepaying can be a way to save a good chunk of money on your car rental. However, some travelers like the flexibility of not prepaying. This can be a case where that choice pays off.

#### **Consider a neighborhood car rental location**

We'll call this the "last resort" option. Maybe you're at a rental car center that doesn't have any skip-the-line options, and all the lines are incredibly long.

While averse to brainstorming the reasons this might become necessary, I'll just point out that when all else fails, you can always check to see if there is affordable availability at any nearby neighborhood rental car centers.



If the price is right, I actually love renting from these locations because they're usually quiet, low-key and easy. I've rented cars from major rental car companies in a hotel basement, a tiny booth in a shopping center and a business park storefront.

Sometimes the prices are much higher than what you'd find at an airport location, but I've also had cases where there was little difference. If you've locked in a reservation, it likely wouldn't be too difficult to reach a location like this with a quick Uber ride.

### **[Thieves target parking lots near Toronto Pearson airport to steal catalytic converters](#)** **CTV News Toronto - August 26, 2022**

Thieves are stealing catalytic converters from vehicles parked in driveways, dealerships and now they appear to be stealing them from from parking lots near airports.

Criminals cut off the converters which are designed to help reduce pollution from vehicle's exhaust systems because they contain precious metals like platinum, rhodium and palladium thieves sell on the black market.

After returning from a month-long trip, an Ontario woman was shocked to find the catalytic converter in her vehicle had been stolen while it was parked in a fenced lot at Toronto Pearson International Airport.

Upon learning of the incident, Park'n Fly told Servos Jones they would pay for the month of parking and agreed to pay her insurance deductible.

Frank DeCesare, Vice President, Marketing & Sales with Park'N Fly told CTV News in a statement, "We take the security of our customers' vehicles seriously. Our parking lots are fenced-in compounds that are only accessible via gated entry. All lots are patrolled and accessed by our staff on a 24/7 basis, to move vehicles between our safe and secure off lots."

"Park'N Fly transported Jennifer and her family safely home, and at no time was Jennifer going to be out of pocket for any incidentals associated with the incident," they said.

### **['Taxi Appreciation Day' At Newark Airport Celebrates Drivers](#)** **Patch.com - August 25, 2022**

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey gave a big "thank-you" to the taxi drivers who serve Newark Airport on Wednesday.

Taxi Appreciation Day at Newark Airport included gifts, refreshments and giveaways for the "yellow cab" drivers who "have been working tirelessly throughout the pandemic," officials said. Representatives of the Elizabeth Taxi Association and Newark Taxi Association were on hand to help celebrate.

The event was also held to highlight improvements taking place at the airport, [including a new taxi dispatch system](#).

### **[American Airlines – Your Next Flight Might Be On A Bus](#)** **Godsavethepoints.com - August 24, 2022**

If you're flying American to or from a regional airport near Philadelphia, your next plane may look slightly different. Namely, there will be a single pilot and wheels that don't retract after takeoff. In fact, your connecting partner may not be a plane at all, thanks to [Landline](#)

. Welcome to a new “flight experience” and the American Airlines Bus.

Following in the footsteps of United and Sun Country, American Airlines has linked up with Landline, a bus service that provides “last-mile” service for passengers to regional airports. American started “connections” to Atlantic City (ACY) and Allentown/Bethlehem (ABE) in June and added Lancaster (LNS), an [essential air service](#) city, in mid-August.

The buses are likely to be a far more comfortable way of reaching these destinations, which are 60-80 miles from the city. These aren’t school buses. You’ll have leather seats configured 1-2, free Wi-Fi, and power at your seat. Travel time ranges from just over an hour (Atlantic City) to about two hours (Lancaster).

The process is virtually the same as it would be for any other connecting flight at Philadelphia Airport (PHL). You will even have a boarding pass that looks exactly like any other “flight” boarding pass. The buses depart **airside** at Philadelphia from the F concourse.

Since the buses depart airside, you can even visit the Admirals Club or your favorite lounge on the way to your (bus) gate. Your checked bags will be transferred from your connecting flight to the bus.

If you’re traveling *from* one of the three airports *to* Philadelphia, just show up at your home airport and board your bus. American will take your bags and, if necessary, transfer them in Philadelphia to your connecting flight. Depending on what regional city you depart from, you might be dropped at the PHL F concourse and have to clear security before going to your connecting gate.

### [I Rode The JFK Airport Air Train, NYC's Little Known 5th Rail Line, and This Happened](#) AutoEvolution.com - August 25, 2022

I was stuck taking public transportation to the airport, which involved riding on [New York City](#)

's little-known fifth rail-based mass transit system. This is the MTA's JFK Air Train, a cute little one-to-two-car tram system dedicated entirely to servicing commutes to and from John F. Kennedy International Airport. Safe to say, most tourists don't have much use for this tram line unless they're catching a flight.

Being neither part of the Subway, the Long Island Railroad, the Metro North, or the New Jersey Transit systems, the Air Train is a pariah in the middle of the NYC Borough of Queens. An 8.1-mile-long (13 km) stretch of rail encapsulates the bulk of JFK airport and eight of its terminals. Helping connect the airport to the [LIRR](#) and the Subway to help get locals and flocks of tourists wherever it is they need to go.

Getting from the LIRR platform to the Air Train was simple enough, with ample signs everywhere to direct you to its location that are actually fairly helpful for once. The meager fare of \$5 didn't hurt either, especially because I managed to save a dollar by using an old metro card I'd kept in my wallet from the last time I was in town. The Air Train terminal that morning was marginally crowded, but it wasn't like the 1 train during rush hour, thankfully.

The glass outer doors slid open, allowing us to enter one of two [Bombardier](#) Innovia ART 200 people-mover tram cars. The automated cars can also seriously hoof it, with an operating speed of 60 mph (97 kph). The seats situated around the circumference of both cars looked fairly plush and comfortable.

In-between JFK terminals two and four, our tram suddenly slammed on the brakes and went from what must have been 30 to 40 mph (48.2 to 64.3 kph) down to zero in what felt like no time at all. The



only logical explanation is someone must have pressed the emergency brake button. The force wasn't quite enough to rip my grip away from the vertical metal pole.

The Air Train promptly dropped me off at [JFK Airport](#)'s Terminal four, completing my first airport tram ride with an experience unlike I'd ever had in the Big Apple. Overall, the Air Train is a fast, convenient, cheap, and comfortable way to get to the JFK airport quicker than a bus or combination of the Subway or LIRR and taxis can manage.

When all was said and done, it was one of the least stressful parts of my travels that morning, despite everything. But good lord above, if someone hits the e-brake in that machine, you can only pray it doesn't end with a claim to your dental insurance company.

## AIRPORT NEWS

### [Lambert airport's plan to maintain operations while a new terminal is built](#)

[ksdk.com](#) - August 31, 2022

St. Louis Lambert International Airport has released [a multi-year plan](#) for how it could maintain operations while a new terminal is built, with one suggestion that airlines could move into a Terminal 1 concourse that is currently closed.

Lambert is to complete a master plan mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration this fall, with plans to include the new single-terminal pitch. Negotiations with airlines over how to finance the reported \$3 billion airport overhaul, with consolidation to a single, 62-gate terminal, could then take two years. A 12-month environmental review process could occur during that window.

Most noteworthy might be the suggestion that Terminal 1 airlines at one point move into concourse D, which is currently closed, "but still functional," Hamm-Niebruegge said.

As an alternative, part of the new terminal could be built, with airlines taking those gates instead of moving into D, she added.

Hamm-Niebruegge on Tuesday also addressed inflation's potential impact on the massive project.

She said the \$2.8 billion price tag for the single-terminal vision had been developed fairly recently, and considered inflation. "Could the cost of the terminal change? Absolutely," Hamm-Niebruegge said.

### [KPF and heatherwick studio to extend singapore airport as cluster of lush 'neighborhoods'](#)

[DesignBoom.com](#) - August 30, 2022

[Kohn Pedersen Fox \(KPF\)](#) and [Heatherwick Studio](#) reveal the first visualizations of their newly designed terminal for [Singapore](#)'s Changi Airport. The existing airport is most widely known as the [Jewel](#), with its design by [Safdie Architects](#) housing the world's tallest indoor waterfall. Now, the upcoming Terminal 5 will introduce what the architects describe as a 'bold re-imagination of the [airport](#) experience,' becoming as a social extension of the city rather than a disconnected facility solely for the processing of travelers.

Like the rest of the airport, the new terminal will take shape as a collection of micro-villages at a human-scale which will be infused with lush plant-life. Even with this innovative organization, the terminal will be capable of welcoming 50 million more passengers annually. It will be well-connected to the rest of Singapore, with a dedicated ground transportation center where passengers can access rail, bus, and other transportation.

Changi Airport's new Terminal 5 by KPF and Heatherwick Studio will seek a Green Mark Platinum Super Low Energy certification from the Building and Construction Authority. The group explains: 'To reduce its carbon footprint, solar panels; smart building management systems; and district cooling combined with thermal energy storage will be deployed.'

*'T5 will also be ready for environmentally friendly solutions such as providing fixed ground power and cooling, as well as viable alternative fuels including the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel for aircraft.'*

### [Airport executives race to keep up with post-pandemic travel demand](#)

**Business Observer** - August 30, 2022

Air passenger traffic through June at Southwest Florida International Airport, operating under the call letters RSW, is up 17.6% year to date over last year.

To handle this growth, the airport announced an update to its master plan, along with several new improvement projects. The biggest chunk is a new 16-lane layout of Transportation Security Administration checkpoints. The project will include extra seating, concession spaces and a business lounge. Overall, the \$331 million project is expected to remodel 164,000 square feet of existing space and add 117,000 square feet for walkways and concession space. Construction started last October.

There doesn't seem to be a month that goes by where the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport, SRQ, isn't breaking a passenger record. The month of May alone was up 15.21% over last year in passenger traffic, while year-to-date the airport is up 57.3%. SRQ reported 1.8 million passengers this year through May.

Enter a \$72 million project expected to provide enough stretch to support about five million annual passengers. The project will add a ground-based boarding facility capable of serving upward of 2.5 million passengers a year through five new gates being built behind the current airline ticketing area.

Piccolo says there's a number of parking lot improvements coming, as well as more restaurant spaces.

The biggest challenge, much like at RSW, is the time it takes to construct these projects and a worker shortage. Piccolo says the airport added 60 positions to take care of operations, including traffic control to help ease the burden of construction.

### [Gatwick Airport's accessibility promise paying off](#)

**Runway Girl Network** - August, 2022

The good news is that airports everywhere are progressing in making their facilities more inclusive and more accessible, with everything from special assistance desks and assistive wayfinding services to the new mock airplane cabin installed in Terminal 1 [at Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport](#), which invites passengers with autism and other travel challenges to practice before they fly.

Some airports are making more of an effort than others. But on its website, London's Gatwick Airport (LGW) goes all in, stating: "We aim to be the UK's most accessible airport, giving everybody an equal opportunity to fly."

Today, there are hundreds of airports around the world that offer and [embrace the Sunflower, or Hidden Disability lanyard program](#).

The system identifies a lanyard wearer as someone who might need or appreciate some extra assistance or consideration as they make their way through an airport or other public space.

The lanyards have a sunflower on a green background and Gatwick Airport was the first airport in the world to adopt the program, back in 2016.

In the United States, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) was the first to adopt the Sunflower lanyard program, in 2019.

Dozens of US airports are now part of the program, including Denver International Airport (DEN), which added it in May 2022 and Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU), one of the newest to join, in July.

Gatwick Airport offers staffed special assistance reception areas in both its North and South terminals.

These calm, lounge-like areas offer a quiet and comfortable waiting area for people who may need some assistance checking in or getting to their gates. And users are given pagers that light up, emit a sound, or vibrate when it's time for them to meet the customer service attendant who will take them to their gate.

Sensory rooms are designed for passengers with autism, dementia, or cognitive impairments who might benefit from a calm, quiet, safe, and distracting space to spend time before traveling.

Sensory rooms, such as [Presley's Place](#) at Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT), which debuted in 2019, are another amenity popping up at many US airports. Gatwick opened its sensory room in January 2018 and was the first airport in the UK to offer this amenity to travelers.

Gatwick's sensory room, in the North Terminal, has cushions, bean bags, and colorful digital display panels. The room must be pre-booked, is used by one family at a time, and is cleaned between uses.

### **[As Airports Rush To Electrify, Important Questions Remain Unanswered, And Unasked](#)**

**Forbes** - August 29, 2022

As with many other industries, the airport industry is rushing to electrify. Nearly every airport conference contains a session on airport electrification. As nearly every commercial service airport in the United States is owned by public entities in some fashion, there also is political pressure on airport administrators to limit their use of fossil fuels in everything from their rental car facilities to new or expanded terminals and the vendors who lease space in them to making room for electric airplanes.

As many, if not most, new airport expansion and renovation projects include some substantial component consisting of renewable energy as well as electrification of the energy mix, it is imperative on airport executives to plan for the truth about energy availability and reliability.

Despite the huge enthusiasm about new electric-powered airplanes that are being developed, the possibility that electric aircraft will replace jet fueled aircraft in the near future is practically zero. The reason is a matter of simple physics, and not public policy, as it is dependent on the size and weight of the battery that would need to be carried on an electric-powered airplane that is designed to cover any substantial distance. It likely will be decades before that can happen, if the physical limitations on battery size and weight for electrical storage can be overcome at all.

Following the lead of Pittsburgh International Airport, airports seeking to expand existing terminals or construct new terminals are exploring establishing electrically powered micro-grids, where the entire power supply to the airport is self-contained. Unlike Pittsburgh, however, which both possesses and relies on natural gas located directly on its airport property that is obtained by hydraulic fracturing, most airports don't possess such largesse, and are attempting to power themselves and their new additions by adding large amounts of solar panels or other renewable fuels to produce electricity.

It is here that the airports must be especially careful. The energy sector is one in which much that is written is long on wishful thinking and short on reality. Many renewable sources remain intermittent, and power storage capability either remains unavailable or is not yet scientifically feasible. While Pittsburgh can power itself using its own energy sources, other airports that attempt to do this using solely renewable sources have had trouble keeping the lights on into the afternoon, or even keeping parking garages working. Until there is a clear way to obtain and preserve power to be used on a 24/7 basis, relying primarily on energy from renewable sources appears quite problematic for most airports.

Electricity gets produced primarily in power plants, and the key element there is the input. In many states, especially in the Midwest, coal remains the primary source of fuel producing electricity. Any switch to electricity and away from jet fuel for planes or gasoline for rental cars in states like Indiana and Wisconsin actually may hurt the environment instead of helping it, at least until new environmentally friendly sources of supply match up with the increased demand.

For the long term health of the planet then, moving toward cleaner sources of energy is very important. In the short run, however, the rush to electrify is fraught with problems. Before airports rush headfirst into this process, it would be wise to ask, first, if this actually will help the environment given the current and projected new power sources that will be generating the electricity, second, whether there will be sufficient electricity to provide the power the airport once all of these new electrical uses and needs have been implemented, and, third, if the power would be reliable at all times that it is needed.

### [Airport CEO talks modernization, post-Covid growth](#)

**StPeteCatalyst.com** - August 29, 2022

Tampa International Airport's (TPA) passenger activity is recovering faster than the national average, it now offers more destinations than before the pandemic and its leadership continues to implement technological changes.

Those are some key highlights Joe Lopano, CEO of TPA, presented to members of the Tampa Bay Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) during its Aug. 26 meeting. The Federal Aviation Authority and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) require the 2022 master plan update, which analyzes TPA's capacity, operational and customer needs and emerging industry trends.

Lopano reiterated his commitment to embracing new technologies during the presentation – including air taxis – or electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) vehicles.

Lopano called the airport's new Blue Express Curbsides a "one-of-a-kind" feature in the country. The FDOT recently named the expansion its 2022 Commercial Service Airport Project of the Year.

The express curbs, explained Lopano, allow passengers without checked luggage and a boarding pass saved to their phones to avoid ticket counters. The new feature allows travelers to directly proceed to the transfer level, where they are greeted by a recently completed 21-foot-tall flamingo sculpture.

Construction on the nine-story SkyCenter One building is also complete, and Lopano said the Aviation Authority occupies three floors. He added that TPA has leased 93% of the space and will buy the facility from the developer. "And it will become a profit center for us."

The airport, said Lopano, will reach 39 million annual passengers in the next 20 years. That underscores the need for the proposed Airside D terminal, which will provide 16 gates and encompass 213,700 square feet.

Lopano relayed that the nation's 28<sup>th</sup> busiest airport generates \$14.4 billion in economic activity and supports 121,000 jobs. When he assumed the helm in 2011, Lopano said the airport took in \$173 million in operating revenue. That number is now up to \$317 million.

Statistics show that after serving 22.1 million passengers in the fiscal year 2019, just 13.4 million people utilized the airport in 2020 and 15.4 million last year. TPA now projects it will handle 21.6 million travelers in FY 2022.

Lopano also expressed his excitement over offering nonstop flights to London Heathrow for the first time later this year. Virgin Atlantic, which he called a "premier brand," is facilitating the service.