

With days to go, will St. George airport be ready?

Lexi Peery St. George Spectrum & Daily News
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A summer of construction at St. George Regional Airport is just 10 days away from being over.

The airport has been closed now for 110 days to redo the runway, which after only eight years of use had started to shift due an infamous type of soil known by many as “blue clay.” Contractors worked through the summer, digging 17 feet down to remove the soil and create a more stable and long-lasting runway.

But the runway wasn’t the only project at the airport this summer. The city ended up tacking on a few additional projects since the airport was already closed and under construction.

Despite the additional projects, Cameron Cutler, the city’s public works director, said construction is right on schedule.

Extended ramp, expanded security

Just after construction started this summer, airport manager Rich Stehmeier said SkyWest Airlines brought up extending the terminal ramp. Since SkyWest will be adding a daily Dallas/Fort Worth flight, there needed to be a place to store jets overnight when needed.

“It was kind of short notice,” Cutler said of extending the terminal ramp. “[But doing it now] saved us some time and money since it had to be done any-

way.”

Along with the ramp extension, an interior wall was moved in the security terminal to add a TSA-precheck line. Two large ceiling fans were also installed in the terminal to help with hotter days.

The grant provided by the Federal Aviation Administration covered 90% of the runway project but didn’t include the latest add-ons. The city ended up paying around \$175,000 for these projects, but Cutler said the additions will be “really beneficial.”

Opening day will be on Sept. 26 and the new DFW flight will be taking off early that morning and coming back that afternoon. St. George City Council will be holding its weekly meeting on the observation deck to see the flight come

back to the airport.

Looking forward to the opening, Stehmeier said the cosmetic touch-ups – new paint and display screens – along with the other construction projects will give the eight-year-old airport an updated look.

“We’re happy to be reopening. Hopefully, the community will come out and support the new [features at the] airport,” Stehmeier said.

Lexi Peery is the environment and politics reporter for The Spectrum & Daily News, a USA TODAY Network newsroom based in southern Utah. You can reach her at lpeery@thespectrum.com and follow her on Twitter @LexiFP. And if you want to support and sustain this work, consider subscribing today.