

United and HAS invest US\$2 billion in Terminal B transformation



United Airlines and Houston Airport System (HAS) are transforming IAH's Terminal B to accommodate 36 million passengers

[United Airlines](#) and [Houston Airport System \(HAS\)](#) announced a significant investment in United's aviation hub at George Bush Intercontinental Airport ([IAH](#)) this week. The investment of more than US\$2 billion toward United's Terminal B Transformation Program will cater to an estimated 36 million passengers in the future, the press release said.

The transformation program includes the construction of 40 new gates at IAH's Terminal B, for both domestic and international travellers.

"This investment further supports United's position as Houston's carrier of choice," said Phil Griffith, United's Vice President of IAH. "On behalf of our more than 14,000 employees who call Houston home, I can't wait to continue to do all we can to serve our customers flying to, from and through our hub on more than 400 flights each day."

Passengers transiting through IAH can expect convenience and additional amenities upon the project's completion. The Terminal B transformation includes expanding curbside and roadway capacity, expanding the ticketing lobby, and directing passengers efficiently through dynamic signage, wayfinding systems and a ground-level check-in area. There will also be a streamlined security processing area on the third floor of the terminal.

The Terminal B expansion encompasses two passenger concourses to replace the 1969-era Flight Stations. The Terminal B North Concourse, which spans approximately 765,000 square feet over three levels, is set to accommodate 22 narrow-body gates.

The largest club in the United System, United Club, at the mezzanine level will give passengers views₁

of the airfield. offer unobstructed views of the airfield.

For the Terminal B South Concourse project at IAH, thirty gates currently housing small regional fifty-seat jets will be converted to accommodate larger, two-class regional jets. All flights will be boarded via a jet bridge upon the project's completion.

Other amenities in the concourse are set to include a sensory room, a multimedia interactive United-branded "park" and comfort zones for passengers with disabilities.

The transformation project also includes two major concessions hubs, covering 115,000 square feet. The concession hubs will house state-of-the-art food and retail spaces. In addition, the baggage claim hall will be expanded and feature a new baggage handling system, with advanced tracking technology.

"The expansion of Terminal B underscores the shared commitment between United Airlines and the City of Houston to enhance Bush Airport and Houston's economy," said Houston Mayor, Sylvester Turner. "This redevelopment program will bring nearly 3,000 new jobs to Houston. The bigger and more modern domestic terminal will amplify Houston's reputation as a premier destination and cultivate even more opportunities for future economic development. As a global city and a sought-after destination, larger and more efficient aircraft flying to Houston will improve the passenger experience and support our promise to advance sustainable practices."

United Airlines said in its press release it plans to invest more than US\$1.9 billion in the Terminal B Transformation Program and the City of Houston expects to contribute US\$624 million towards the program. On November 15, the Houston City Council approved and authorized a Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Houston and United Airlines.

"The City of Houston intends to submit, for City Council approval, requests for the appropriation of funds in several tranches over the course of the project," the press release said. "The enabling project costs assumed by the City of Houston are fully recoverable over time and after the project's completion through rates and charges payable by airlines and other operators at IAH with whom the City has agreements. The funding to be provided by the Houston Airport System enterprise fund is consistent with federal law as an appropriate use of airport revenues."

Mario Diaz, Aviation Director for the City of Houston commented on the agreement, "The redevelopment of one of Bush Airport's oldest terminals is a symbol of the crucial role air service plays in the economic vitality of Houston. Our long-standing partnership with United Airlines has led to this historic growth and revitalization opportunity for Houston Airports."

Diaz continued, "As we make significant progress on the new international terminal at Bush Airport to meet the growing demand for international travel, United Airlines' Terminal B transformation will help Houston meet the growing demand for domestic travel. Today's decision underscores our strategy to gain passengers' trust by providing safe, clean, world-class facilities with outstanding 5-Star customer service."

Construction and design of Terminal B

There are three key components of the IAH Terminal B Transformation Program, spearheaded by the Program Management team at AvAirPros and STV:

- The Terminal B arrival and departures hall is designed by Page, a full service design, architecture and engineering firm based in Houston; and Grimshaw Architects, a London-based architectural firm and will be constructed by Clark Construction.
- The Terminal B Concourses designed by PGAL, a Houston-based international design firm

specializing in architecture, interiors, engineering, and to be built by Manhattan Construction, a Houston-based company.

- The Baggage Handling System, will be designed by Siemens', employing their expertise in design and construction of these highly technical systems.

"At Clark Construction, we pride ourselves on building projects that matter to the communities where we live and work," said Cara Lanigan, CEO of Clark Construction's Central Group. "We're humbled by the opportunity to work alongside United Airlines and the entire IAH Terminal B Transformation Team to enhance the traveler experience while creating job opportunities for the local Houston community."

Jason Fuller, Vice President of Manhattan Construction Company also commented on the construction aspect of the Terminal B transformation at IAH: "Manhattan Construction Company is extremely proud of the successful and award-winning projects that we have constructed alongside United at IAH over the past 25 years."

Continued Fuller, "We look forward to continuing this legacy on the Terminal B Transformation program. This is a milestone project that will provide great economic opportunities for local Houston businesses, as together we build an expanded and innovative concourse complex that will benefit our entire community. Manhattan's core team for this project are Houstonians who have spent the bulk of their careers constructing aviation projects here at IAH, and we truly appreciate the opportunity to partner with United Airlines, the Houston Airport System, and all of our local trade contractors to deliver this landmark program."

Sustainability during the project

Sustainability will be a cornerstone of the Terminal B Transformation project, with the two parties hoping to achieve LEED Silver certification for the new buildings. United said in its press release that the target of achieving the certification represents the environmental responsibility in building design and construction.