

FIRST CLASS UPGRADE FOR THE TSA



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CUSTOMER

Gerald R. Ford International Airport (GRR)

PROJECT

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
Relocation

CONTRACT VALUE

\$110,000

LOCATION

Grand Rapids, MI

COMPLETION DATE

June 2019

PARTNERS

Owen-Ames-Kimball Co., General Contractor;
Johnson Controls Inc., Fire Alarms



OVERVIEW

Over the past several years, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Grand Rapids, MI (abbreviated GRR in airport codes) has been undergoing substantial renovations. The multi-phase project will ultimately revamp and modernize many parts of the airport, from the ticket counters to the baggage claim to the security checkpoint, all the way to the terminal. The renovations have also affected the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), requiring personnel to vacate the space at GRR that they had previously occupied. Owen-Ames-Kimball, the general contractor on the project, worked with the TSA to determine a different location in the airport where personnel could have their offices and employee break room. Windemuller worked to help turn the new space into a suitable spot for airport security personnel, handling lighting, power receptacles, and communications work.

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CHALLENGES

Since this part of the project was in the heart of the airport, past the security checkpoints, the biggest challenge was arguably airport security. Our entire crew needed to get badged for the project so that they could move through daily security checks in a quick and efficient manner. That process required background checks for our employees, as well as a several-week waiting period. During that period, it took longer than was ideal to get to the workspace each day, leaving it to our crew to make up time elsewhere.

There were also extenuating project delays along the way. The job was initially scheduled to be done in February 2019, but due to a variety of factors, TSA was not able to move into their new space until April. Even at that point, the project wasn't entirely finished. A few on-the-fly changes to the project design—mostly concerning specific lighting fixture choices—meant we had to wait for late-order parts to arrive. Consequently, we weren't able to finish lighting installations in the new space until June.

SOLUTIONS

Fortunately, the process of getting through security each day became markedly easier as the project moved forward. Once our team members were badged—and as airport personnel became more familiar with our employees and where in the airport they were working—the daily security checks could occur much more smoothly and quickly.

Beyond the faster day-to-day checks, we also had to realign our crew plans due to project delays. Since Windemuller tends to get busier with projects in the spring—and since this project was supposed to be finished by mid-February—we did not initially have any manpower allocated for the job after around March. We ultimately needed to go back to the drawing board and move our employees around to make sure we had a crew that could not only continue working this project, but focus on it completely. Finally, our crews worked overtime to get the project done as soon as possible.

The hard work paid off: the new TSA space is attractive, well-lit, and secure for GRR's TSA personnel.



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