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Despite a \$258 Terminal Improvement Project completed in November 2004 that bumped out the terminals by 15 feet in necessary locations, the facility is still cramped and upkeep is extremely expensive.

"We have a nice floor, some paint and we have expanded some of the gate areas," said Director of Aviation Mark VanLoh of the project. "But it is still very inefficient – the energy costs are just outrageous to heat and cool three separate facilities."

While KCI has 1 million people passing through the facility every month, VanLoh argues that to do well, a cookie vendor would have to have nine cookie stands distributed throughout the three terminals to succeed.

"You could walk in and want a cup of coffee and a cookie, but you can't see it even though it may be 50 feet around the corner," VanLoh said, referring to the linear nature of the KCI terminals. "And restaurant space is so cramped that concessionaires are unable to capitalize on the number of people who may want to stop and have a bite to eat. Because of this, our concession revenues are probably some of the

Best and Worst

Passenger convenience, efficiency shortfalls to be addressed in KCI master plan

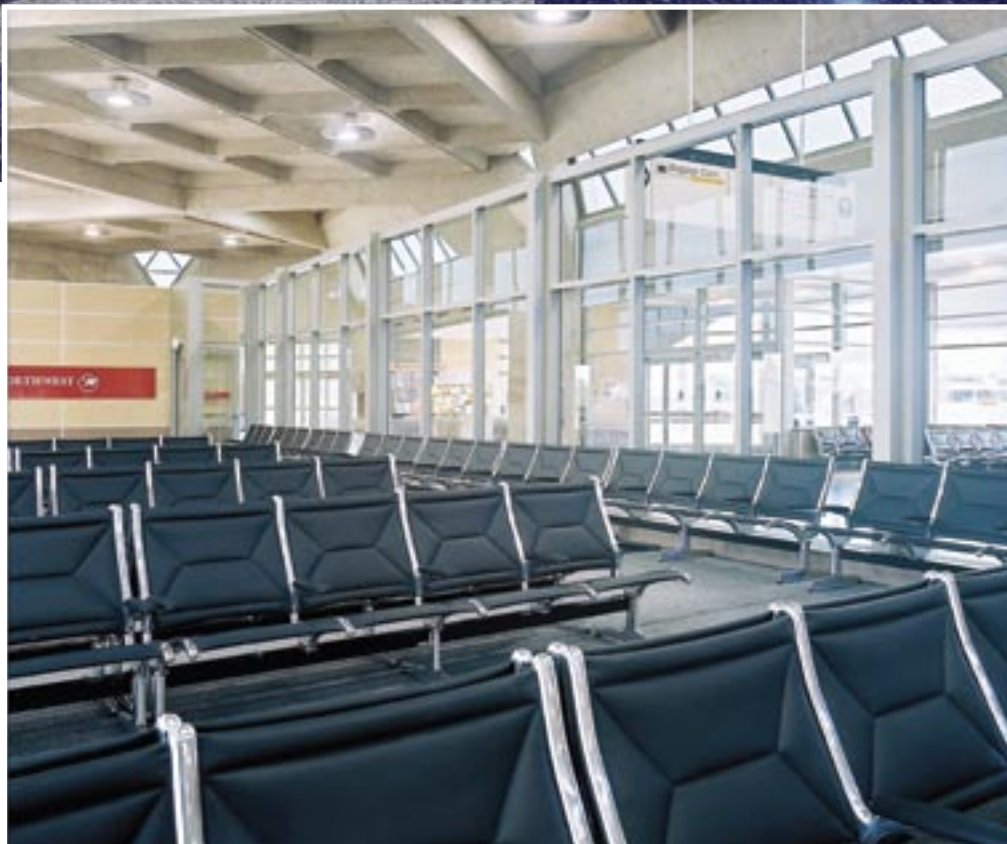
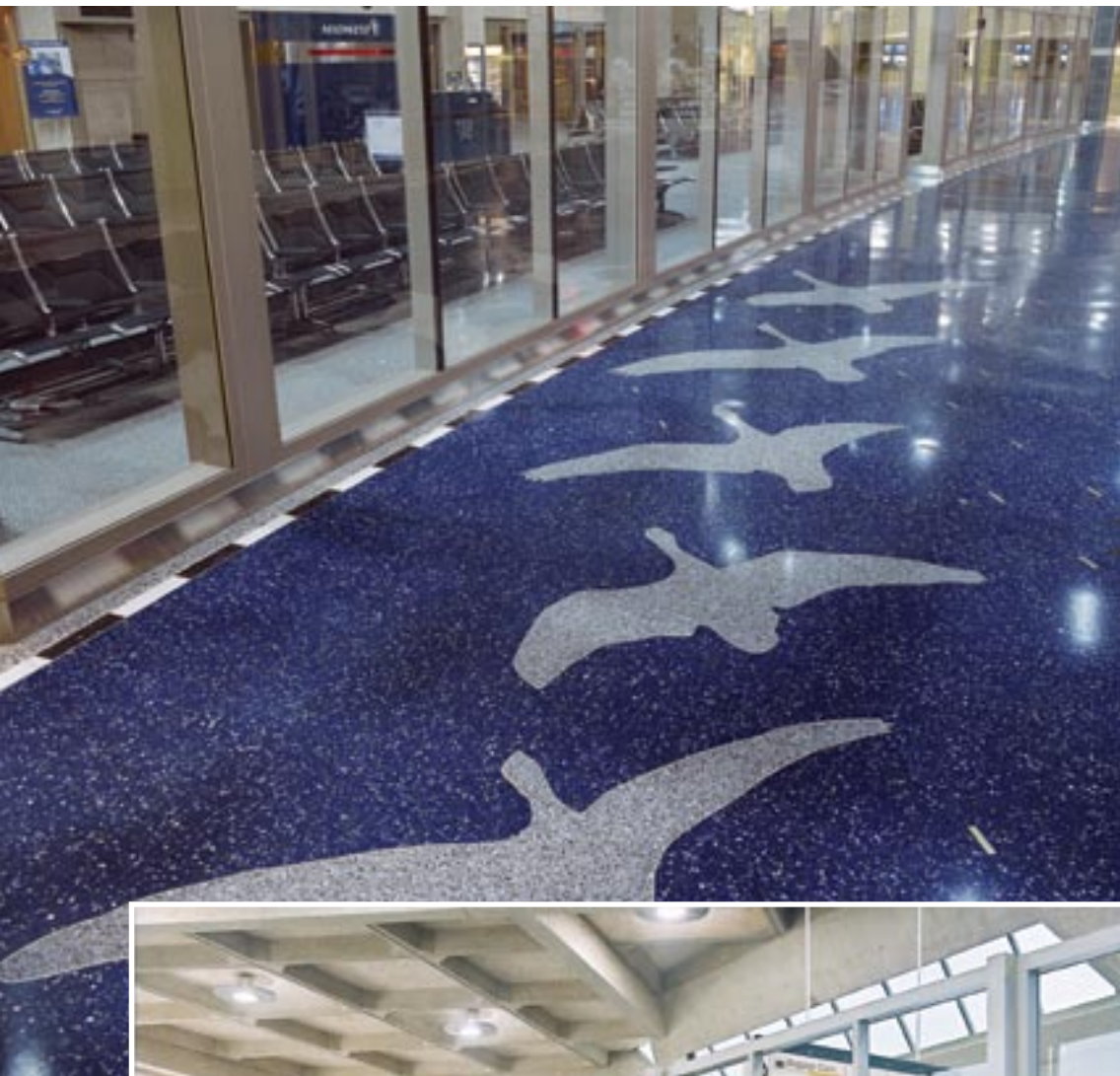
Dave Long is fond of calling Kansas City International Airport's (KCI) terminal layout "the best of the best and the worst of the worst"

As a frequent passenger, Long loves the easy accessibility the unique three-terminal configuration provides. With mere steps from the curb to the ticket

counter, and just a few more steps to security screening checkpoints complimented with low average wait times, the condensed layout within the C-shaped terminal facilities has earned KCI a reputation for being one of the nation's most passenger-friendly airports.

But as KCI's deputy director of aviation overseeing properties and

commercial development, Long is not enamored with the inefficiencies the three separate terminals retain. From an airport view, the three terminal concept equates to three times the energy costs, three times the personnel necessary to man the airport – TSA contracts out 550 screeners which is unheard of for an airport of its size – and arguably



According to Mark VanLoh, the \$258 Terminal Improvement Project completed in November 2004 produced "a nice floor, some paint and expanded gate areas."

lowest in the industry per passenger."

The 2004 improvement project brought in new eateries including Budweiser Brewhouse, Jose Cuervo Tequileria, Burger King and Starbucks which increased revenue, but not to the revenue per passenger mark found at other airports. Since the Terminal Improvement Project was completed in November 2004, concession revenues have been up 42 percent year over year. But the revenue totals are still far below what they should be.

"I know Interspace, HMSHost and Paradis feel the same pain," VanLoh said. "You are only going to get one-third of the traffic if you put your wares in one location. It is very difficult to manage the three terminals."

VanLoh, who arrived at the airport as the project neared completion in 2004, said he would have scrapped the remodeling effort and put the capital into a new, bi-level facility under one roof.

"I am very prejudiced that a one-terminal facility is the way to go," VanLoh said, emphasizing the cost savings on energy and personnel and a tremendous increase in concessions revenue.

Phil Muncy, KCI Assistant Director of Aviation for Planning and Engineering, is leading the master plan efforts for the airport with the assistance of aviation planning and consulting firm Landrum & Brown.

The master plan team has identified five potential future terminal concepts. While there is yet to be an evaluation of the concepts, an open field south of the runway appears to be a leading site candidate.

Kansas City

VanLoh says the linear nature of KCI's terminals makes it difficult for passengers to see concessions 50 feet around the corner.



Muncy likes the idea that the state has recently completed Highway 152, a limited access, four-lane highway south of the airport.

"I believe it would be nice to create some form of interchange and come off of that up into the South Terminal," Muncy said. "It is also a clean slate, a green field to work in. Any airport person knows that if you are trying to build where you are trying to maintain operations, there are a lot of premiums to pay."

As the existing structures are 35 years old, the master plan design is anticipated to kick in within 10 to 20 years.

VanLoh hopes starting anew will help KCI attract hubbing airlines.

"Kansas City hasn't had much luck with hubbing airlines," VanLoh said, noting Braniff International Airways, Eastern, TWA and Vanguard have come and gone over the years. "This layout does not work for airlines."

VanLoh mentioned that KCI is fortunate to have

been chosen by Midwest Airlines for its hub. While Midwest has been growing by leaps and bounds, Southwest Airlines has had more difficulty managing its 70-plus flights as they operate from two separate gate areas.

"If you are flying from Fort Lauderdale to Seattle and you stop in Kansas City, you would probably have to leave security and walk to the next gate area to hop your next flight to Seattle," VanLoh said. "That is maddening. And while you are transferring, you are looking for a bite to eat and the choices are very limited. We think these issues combined will help us get a one-terminal complex."

While this proposal makes perfect sense to the airport, VanLoh realizes the citizens of Kansas City aren't as inclined to embrace the approach.

"One checkpoint means they will have to stand in line like every other airport," VanLoh said. "They



Concepts including CNBC News joined Budweiser Brewhouse, Jose Cuervo Tequileria, Burger King and Starbucks in the 2004 Terminal Improvement Project. These additions increased revenue, but not to the revenue per passenger level found at other airports.

are very spoiled here with check times less than three minutes, and I have to admit I love it, too. But it will be Landrum & Brown's charge to figure out a way to have a 21st century design incorporating all of the

things that passengers love here."

Deputy Director Long reiterated VanLoh's sentiment: "What we need to do is take the best of the best and mitigate some of the worsts." ■



Airport Director Mark VanLoh has brought a number of innovative and revenue generating ideas to KCI.

The Wizard of Kansas City

Airport Director Mark VanLoh uses imagination, natural resources to put gold at the end of KCI's rainbow

When Mark VanLoh landed the director role with the Kansas City Aviation Department in 2004, he came into the position with a tornado of energy and interesting ideas.

Upon arrival, VanLoh had the courage to commence construction on the contemporary consolidated rental car facility that had been on the drawing board since 1996.

"Three years ago, we decided to just do it," VanLoh said, calling himself a 'trigger puller.'

Completed in May, the \$60 million state-of-the-art facility joins a host of other pet projects VanLoh has initiated to improve both the aesthetics and bottom line for Kansas City International Airport (KCI). One of his specialties includes a knack for finding airport revenue in non-traditional areas. As a matter of fact, animal sperm and beef manufacturing are contributors to the airport's cash cow revenues.

Office space

"We have been watching the show *Flip this House* a little too much on The Learning Channel," VanLoh said with a laugh, describing a nearly-new Class A office building the airport acquired in September 2006.

"It was built for a company that went bankrupt, and had been on the market for years with no takers," VanLoh said of the 280,000 square foot building adjacent to the airport perimeter. "Finally, it came up on the auction block where they were looking for sealed bids. We drive by that place every day coming to work and we said, 'Let's put a bid on that – wouldn't that be crazy?'"

The auction took the airport's price and the building that started with 6 percent occupancy is now 60 percent occupied and climbing very quickly. Leaseholders include an animal life sciences business that hold animal sperm

KCI has an 800-acre, multi-use development in the works with master developer Trammel Crow.





The Ambassador building is Class A office space the airport acquired in September 2006.

in nitrogen tanks, a beef manufacturing company, a mortgage company, and the manufacturers of steel rope for suspension bridges. The General Services Administration will join the lineup in the fall.

"It is a hodgepodge," VanLoh said. "People may think you need to have something to do with aviation, but you don't. We'll take anybody."

VanLoh said the office space has been quite a successful endeavor and expects to reach 80 percent occupancy this fall.

Race track

Another project the airport is playing with is the development of a motor sports park.

Not to be confused with a professional track such as Kansas Motor Speedway, the planned FastTrack motor sports park is more akin to a private country club where

car enthusiasts may gather to test the speedometers on their own vehicles.

There are 16 facilities of this kind throughout the country, and the next location is planned to be near the end of KCI's two intersecting runways to mitigate noise.

VanLoh said he had seen a similar facility outside of Omaha, Neb., while driving home to South Dakota. On weekends, he has noticed BMW motorcycle rallies, Corvette clubs and Porsche clubs, among others.

"The next thing you know we're contacted by Wilson Motorsport who does these," he said, noting that the developer has been trying to locate a racetrack in Kansas City for some time, but have run into problems because of 'not in my backyard' opponents. "We said, we make noise, too, and we have 11,000 acres. They loved the idea."

VanLoh said the FastTrack land that won't be needed by the airport until a third parallel runway is built according to demand. Master planners Landrum & Brown don't anticipate this need to occur for nearly 20 years.

"It is really just occupying property and we're generating a tremendous amount of revenue just from the land lease," VanLoh said. "And because it is asphalt, when the FAA says it is time for that parallel, it will be easy to remove.

"It is a lot like having a golf course at the end of a runway. It is just something taking up space until we need it and works really well for us."

Wilson Motorsport is performing its due diligence on the project and selling memberships for the 300-acre, Le Mans-style course. Course members will have the option to drive their vehicles to the track or utilize

on-site garages, and there will be a clubhouse, a dining facility and maintenance yards.

Thus far, it has been reported that the developer has several million in membership money.

"If you happen to have a Lamborghini in your garage that you never get to play with and you have \$85,000 for a founding membership, you can join," VanLoh said.

FastTrack expects to break ground this fall.

Trammel Crow

VanLoh said beyond the "fun things," KCI also has an 800-acre, multi-use development in the works with master developer Trammel Crow.

"As an airport, we are very fortunate to have all of that property at our disposal," VanLoh said.

On an aggressive schedule, Trammel Crow will start building a 400,000- to 500,000-square-foot building. When that building becomes 90 percent occupied or if two years pass – whichever option comes first – Trammel Crow will begin construction on another building and so forth.

Planned development includes warehousing, manufacturing, industrial and retail space along the interstate and both runways.

A groundbreaking ceremony for this project is anticipated to take place in October.

Billboards

VanLoh said billboard revenue is much like cell phone tower revenue.

"It takes up a space of 10 square feet and goes straight

up in the air, and the monthly revenue is tremendous for not doing a lot of groundwork on our part," he said. "We have four sites up now and another couple coming with CBS Outdoor.

"With all of the traffic coming through here – 1 million passengers per month – this is a great place to be to do advertising. It is a great revenue enhancement for the airport for not a lot of sacrifice."

Farming

KCI is the largest farmer in the region with 6,800 acres of various cash crops. As far as profit sharing and land rental, the airport has 400 to 800 head of cattle in any given period of time.

"A lot of people want to get rid of the cow town image we're truly tied to, but I say embrace it because that's who we are," VanLoh said. ■



KCI has 400 to 800 head of cattle in any given period of time under profit sharing and land rental agreements.

KCI Provides New Front Door for Car Rental Patrons

Kansas City's new rental car facility combines customer convenience with beautifully designed regional aesthetics. Photos by Michael Spillers.



When Mark VanLoh arrived at KCI in June 2004, rental car agencies operated out of boxy little individual units spread across airport property.

"The old facilities were pretty awful," he recalled. "They were scattered all over and we would see people driving around like vultures trying to figure out how to get in."

VanLoh is excited about the replacement to the confusing eyesores: a spacious and beautiful \$90 million consolidated rental car facility designed by Coover-Clark & Associates, Inc.

Led by Carol Coover-Clark and Dave Clark, the Coover-

Clark team acted as design architect subcontractor to architect of record Bucher Willis & Ratliff on the rental car facility.

"There is a signature terminal-quality entrance and a design investment in the image of Kansas City," said Edward Balkin, Coover-Clark & Associates' design director. "We didn't want it to just look like a rental car facility that could be anywhere. We really wanted it to have customer convenience and we wanted it to be beautiful and have some regional quality to make customers aware of Kansas City."

Coover-Clark used a

site plan rendition from an aerial photo to design a 12-color Terrazzo floor pattern representing the convergence of the Kaw and Missouri rivers.

"We wanted to impress that water imagery on the floor and make the building brilliant using a lot of polished stainless steel and high-quality surfaces," Balkin said, drawing on Kansas City's status as the second city only behind Rome for fountains.

The facility also gives a nod to the Spanish design of Kansas City's Country Club Plaza with an abundance of colorful tile work throughout the facility.

Beyond aesthetics, Coover-Clark achieved ease and accessibility. Ten rental car agencies are intuitively located around the perimeter of an open and airy mall configuration.

"One of the successes of the building is that the architecture is homogenous and the service centers are all the same pre-cast with very controlled design guidelines," Balkin said. "We're very delighted conceptually. There are other consolidated facilities that operate similarly, but the service of this facility is invisible to the customer. There is no back door – it is a front door all around." ■