



March 21, 2024

The Honorable Mike Simpson
2084 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: FY 2025 Community Project Funding Request for IDA Airport Terminal Expansion Project

Dear Congressman Simpson,

Thank you for considering the City of Idaho Falls' FY 2025 Community Project Funding request. As you know, Idaho Falls is a non-profit entity and, thereby, eligible to receive community project funds.

The City of Idaho Falls is requesting federal assistance for IDA Airport Terminal Expansion. The requested funds will be used to provide needed additional space for outbound baggage operations, improve safety by providing adequate space to load baggage carts, and improve operational efficiency. The expansion will also provide more ground floor passenger hold room space to accommodate additional air service and will provide a second level to provide space for future expansion.

In three of the last four years, Idaho Falls has been named America's Best-Performing Small City by the Milken Institute Best-Performing Cities Index based on economic performance. It is a point of pride for the city that our investment in infrastructure and resources has made Idaho Falls America's top small city with continued strong job and wage growth. With this growth has come a tremendous increase in travelers and new flight service to the airport. In 2022 and 2023, the airport surpassed the FAA Terminal Area Forecast for enplanements for the year 2041. In funding the IDA Airport Terminal Expansion, you will help us better serve our community, support economic growth, and continue to make Idaho Falls a top destination for economic opportunity.

Thank you for considering this important request for our city and the region. If you have any questions, please contact Idaho Falls Regional Airport Director, Ian Turner, at 208-612-8226. We appreciate your leadership and shared interest in making Idaho Falls a stronger, more vibrant community that addresses the needs of all our residents and businesses.

Sincerely,

Rebecca L. Noah Casper, Ph.D.
Mayor, City of Idaho Falls

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
TSA, Boise Airport
3201 Airport Way, Suite 1200
Boise, Idaho 83705-6543



Transportation
Security
Administration

Rick Cloutier
Airport Director
2140 N. Skyline Drive
Idaho Falls, ID 83402

Rick,

Re: Reviewing capacity of checked baggage screening equipment in light of IDA's growth

I was very happy to have the opportunity to reintroduce myself again to you last week during my site visit to Idaho Falls. We have met briefly before, but since my role has shifted and I again have the opportunity to focus on building up and supporting our TSA teams and capacity across the Idaho spoke airports, I am glad to renew the contact.

We in TSA have enthusiastically watched as you and your team's efforts have spurred growth in the number of flights out of IDA, and we look forward to IDA leading the way out of the pandemic travel slump. The airport renovation is timely, and we continue to look forward to screening and collaborating with other IDA stakeholders as American Airlines and Alaska Airlines begin their new operations out of IDA.

During Roger's and my meeting with Jayme last week, we opened a new line of discussion. The rapid growth of IDA's flight ops has led us to conclude that we need to consider whether we are at the point (or whether we will shortly reach the point) at which we need to consider additional equipment or other changes to increase our checked baggage capacity.

As you are aware, we (TSA) screen nearly all checked baggage at IDA utilizing a single CT-80. Recent upgrades have allowed us to use the machine for nearly all checked baggage, including many "oversized" items. The current belt and roller system substantially increases the processing capacity of the CT-80, allowing efficient delivery directly into the machine and easy and efficient egress of the bags following screening from the baggage room.

Based on our current configuration, we estimate that the processing capacity of the extant CT-80 at IDA is approximately 180 checked bags per hour. That number is based on estimates from our headquarters, as we have rarely if ever fully exhausted the capacity of our current configuration to date. The increase in flights, however, leads us to open this conversation with you so that we can jointly determine the appropriate juncture to deploy more equipment. If we do move forward with increasing capacity, our preliminary suggestion is that the most likely suitable solution would be to deploy a second CT-80, along with an appropriate belt and roller system that would allow us to achieve a similar degree of efficiency to the extant CT-80.

In general, TSA provides the screening equipment, including for example an additional CT-80 or other CTX upgrade, but as a general rule TSA funds are not available to cover other costs such as belts, or baggage room expansion or renovation. Thus, partnership will be essential to any plan going forward.

The advertised flight schedule for this summer, including the recently announced flights by American and Alaska Airlines, appears to spread the flights out sufficiently that neither the current checkpoint nor checked baggage capacities are likely to be exceeded. However, we do believe that it is appropriate to consider whether additional capacity is needed, especially if any of the currently scheduled airline departures were to consolidate into a tighter timeframe or even more flights were to be added.

The rates and standards that TSA uses to determine the allocation of screening resources factor in a national average of 0.6 checked bags per passenger. At that rate of checked baggage to passenger, we will likely exceed the capacity of our current checked baggage screening equipment just slightly before we exceed the screening capacity of IDA's 2 lane checkpoint.

IDA checkpoint capacity: 2 lanes each rated at 150 passengers per hour	Hourly capacity of 300 passengers
IDA checked baggage capacity: 1 standalone CT-80 with partial in-line delivery	Hourly capacity of 180 checked bags

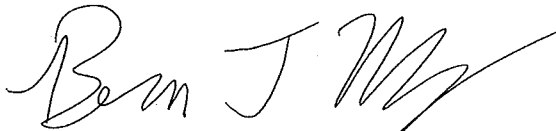
At this point, we offer two recommendations:

- Followup discussion with your team to consider an expansion of baggage screening in the airport's strategic plan; and
- Ongoing consideration of screening capacities (both checked baggage and checkpoint) as IDA flight schedules continue to evolve going forward, with particular attention being paid to times when multiple flights "stack" into the same time frame.

Roger and I, as well as FSD Coose and AFSD-S Mickie Cockrell, look forward to continuing the discussion with you and your team. The expanded operations of IDA make for exciting times for all of us.

Thank you for your ongoing support of aviation security and for working with us to ensure it works!

Respectfully,



Brian T. May
Assistant Federal Security Director - Generalist, Idaho
Transportation Security Administration (TSA)