

**Rotary**  
Club of  
Charlotte



# THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

September 3, 2024

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## *CLT Panel Discussion, featuring:*

*Jack Christine, Chief Infrastructure Officer,  
City of Charlotte*

*Ben Goebel, AIA,  
Gresham Smith, Aviation Senior Architect*

*Stuart Hair, Asst Airport Director,  
Charlotte Douglas International Airport*

by **Elly Clary**

Fifty-three million passengers used Charlotte Douglas International Airport last year and 2024 projections show that will soar to 60 million.

Impressive numbers put the phenomenal growth of Charlotte Douglas International Airport and its years-long construction projects into perspective for Rotarians and guests.

Providing the figures were Jack Christine, chief infrastructure officer for the city of Charlotte; **Ben Goebel**, Gresham Smith's aviation senior architect; and panel moderator **Stuart Hair**, assistant airport director.

They explained the enormity of the airport's Destination CLT Capital Improvement Program, which took off in 2016 and will be completed in 2025.

"We are trying desperately to expand the front door of the terminal," said Goebel. "The challenge is that we have to do it while we use it every day."

The theme for terminal expansion, Goebel added, is "Southern Hospitality, Charlotte Style," and it incorporates elements of the region's textile heritage and its sports teams.

More numbers: The terminal under expansion and renovation opened in 1982. For the lobby, there is 175,000 square feet of new building and another 191,000 square feet of renovation. Five security checkpoints will consolidate into three larger, more efficient stations. There will be eight new baggage claim devices and eight art installations, one of which involved hoisting the iconic Queen Charlotte statue inside, through a skylight.

Christine supplied these numbers: Concourse A Phase I added nine gates in 2018. When Phase II opens later this month, it will add another 10. Design has started on Phase III which includes seven or eight more.

Illustrating the need: American Airlines added 100 flights to CLT this spring. The airport presides over 1,600 landings and takeoffs daily.

"We've got a new runway that's under construction," Christine said. It will be CLT's fourth parallel runway and will cause new nomenclature for all four strips.

"One of the things I get asked is, 'When is construction going to be done?'" Christine said. He hopes never. "As long as the airport is growing, this region is growing. The two are absolutely connected. It's important for us to have a thriving continuing development program."

Concourse C expansion is planned and Concourse B expansion is anticipated. A tunnel is envisioned to handle added passenger traffic heading to the far reaches of these concourses.

"It's all demand-driven," Christine said. "It helps us maintain lower costs. It also means we don't have facilities that are just waiting for people to show up and use. We're trying to maintain our cost structure so we are competitive for the airlines to increase their service to Charlotte."

For Rotarians, Hair planned two Tuesday afternoon airport tours. One was for lobby expansion, the other for airport construction.

A recording of this week's meeting can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/1006407351>  
This week's program begins at approximately 26 minutes and 55 seconds.