

## Preparing for takeoff

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 04 March 2022 04:06

---



## Makeover slated for local airport

Gallup residents are getting closer and closer to flying out of their hometown.

During the Feb. 22 city council meeting, the next steps to making that a reality were taken.

C.B. Strain, the city's Planning and Development director, got the City Council's nod to move forward with securing a \$300,000 grant from the New Mexico Department of Transportation for airport infrastructure improvements.

Strain explained that the Gallup Municipal Airport is in need of a new roof; a new HVAC system; an upgrade to the baggage area and ticket counter; interior lights need replaced; the bathrooms need updated to meet ADA regulations; the terminal needs new paint; and finally, a sidewalk needs to be installed between the airstrip and baggage claim area. The \$300,000 would go towards these improvements.

After Strain's presentation, Gallup's Public Works Director Robert Hamblen told the council that an airport feasibility study needed to be done before any renovations could be completed.

## Preparing for takeoff

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 04 March 2022 04:06

---

The study would ensure the building is up to code with the International Existing Building Code, the International Building Code, and the New Mexico Energy Code. The study would also make sure that the building was structurally sound.

“We just want to make sure that the building is structurally sound to put a new roof on it,” Hamblen said. “We gotta do this to support the air service that is coming in.”

City Manager Maryann Ustick expressed her concerns that the \$300,000 wouldn't be enough to complete all of the renovations the airport needs.

“We need to do a complete structural assessment because \$300,000 isn't going to take care of the roof and everything that needs to be done to bring a 1940s building up to code,” Ustick said. “But there might be some things that we might need to do right away.”

She mentioned the ticketing counter and the bathrooms as being priorities.

Ustick also told the council that Advanced Airlines would be the airline that comes to Gallup first. The company's target date is July 1.

Hamblen assured the council that the assessment would be done as soon as possible once they approved it. The council approved the assessment, which has a price tag of just under \$15,000.

By Molly Ann Howell  
Sun Correspondent