2. PURPOSE AND NEED

The Purpose and Need for a proposed action is identified by describing the current problems and the proposed objectives. The Purpose and Need is used as the primary foundation to develop reasonable alternatives as required by NEPA and FAA Orders 1050.1F and 5050.4B.

2.1 Statement of Purpose and Need

Airport facilities do not and/or will not meet existing and future demand. As passenger activity grows, current congestion will be exacerbated and spread to additional facilities. The level of service within terminal areas, including the passenger departure lounge, ticket counters security screening checkpoints and baggage areas, will continue to degrade as passenger levels increase. The purpose of the proposed project is to accommodate the expected demand such that the level of service is acceptable.

2.2 Support for Purpose and Need

DRO's terminal building was originally constructed in 1987, with a temporary tent structure added in 2013 to accommodate the increased enplanements and expansion of the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) security checkpoint (**Figure 2-1**). The original building consists of three concourses, shown in **Figure 2-2**.

FIGURE 2-1 - DRO TERMINAL BUILDING

Source: Jviation, 2017

FIGURE 2-2 – TERMINAL CONCOURSE

Source: Jviation, 2017
Note: Not to scale

As identified in **Chapter 4**, **Facility Requirements**, of the 2017 Master Plan, the existing terminal building, terminal parking area, and terminal apron do not meet the existing passenger demand due to the size and aging infrastructure.

In general, the terminal is an aging building and in need of improvement. The terminal has undergone routine maintenance to keep the essential systems functional; however, despite the continual maintenance, the ever-increasing passenger loads on this facility are apparent in the deterioration and poor condition of many of the public spaces. There continue to be portions of the ceiling and gypsum soffits showing water marks indicative of leaks, and the plumbing systems within the walls have sprung leaks requiring significant maintenance. The flooring, countertops, display cases and kiosks, and paint throughout the building are all worn and in need of replacement. All of these factors contribute to the perceived comfort of the passengers utilizing the facility.

In addition to the aging facilities, the existing passenger demand has outgrown the current terminal space. **Table 2-1** details the passenger enplanement forecast and **Table 2-2** provides further details on the existing and needed terminal space.

TABLE 2-1 – DRO PASSENGER ENPLANEMENT FORECAST

	Year	DRO Forecast	TAF	AF/TAF (% Difference)
	2013	192,797	192,797	0.0%
Base year	2015	205,594	205,594	0.0%
Base year + 5 years	2020	241,427	231,186	4.4%
Base year + 10 years	2025	283,505	253,344	11.9%

Source: Durango-La Plata County Airport 2017 Master Plan

TABLE 2-2 – DRO TERMINAL FACILITY REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

Type of Occupancy	Existing Space (square feet)	Current Need 2015
Airline Space	17,000	26,924
Transportation Security Administration Space	2,500	14,830
Concessions	4,200	3,500
Public Space	13,500	28,160
Airport Administration	2,400	5,000
Utilities and Support Spaces	1,900	3,686
Total Terminal Area (Rounded)	**41,500** [1]	**82,100**

Source: Durango-La Plata County Airport 2017 Master Plan
Note: [1] The areas described above are approximate based on available archived drawings and CAD files for the existing terminal building, therefore rounded totals were used for the existing facility.

These constrained facilities lead to decreased levels of service during peak periods. As stated in the 2016 DRO Terminal Area Master Plan:

> "The deficiencies experienced by passengers occur in several areas within the terminal, especially the ticket & baggage claim lobbies, TSA passenger screening, and the passenger departure lounge. The existing ticket lobby operates at a depth of roughly 28 feet, which significantly limits both the ticket counter active area and ticket counter queuing area. Currently the ticket counter queuing area encroaches on the circulation space of passengers passing through the ticket lobby. Similarly, on the other side of the terminal, the rental counter queuing space interrupts the circulation path of arriving passengers on their way to baggage claim. Passengers operate within one fifth (1/5) the required TSA space, straddled between the terminal's landside circulation core and airside departure lounge. The queue for passenger screening frequently extends into the circulation core, blocking access to restroom facilities, land side concessions and other support facilities. The undersized deplaning corridor also encroaches into this landside circulation core. The existing passenger departure lounge, a portion of which is occupied by TSA passenger screening, is also undersized, requiring a temporary hold room tent just south of the terminal building.
>
> The deficiencies experienced by airport operations occur both within and outside the existing terminal, including the airline ticket offices (ATO), ground service equipment (GSE), and administrative & TSA Offices. The ATOs currently operate with one quarter (1/4) the required space, limiting the efficiency of certain operations. The GSE is stored outside and uncovered, causing increased maintenance and preparation times due to exposure to the elements (snow, ice, etc.). Airport administration is currently operating out of an office space on the

second floor which is half the required size. Additionally, much of this office space is shared with TSA, limiting both the office operations of the Airport and TSA. Though these deficiencies primarily affect airport operations, they have a direct impact on the passenger experience. For example, in winter months, unsheltered GSE often requires longer startup times and more frequent maintenance, causing delays in ground services and longer wait times at bag claim."

The FAA, along with IATA, developed standards for analyzing airport space requirements. IATA defines standards in relation to the LOS that should be maintained by the airport operator.[1] The LOS indicator for DRO's overall passenger terminal is estimated to be a "D during peak periods due to the current constraints experienced throughout the terminal." This assessment was made from several site visits to observe passenger flows combined with a detailed analysis of the facility using industry standard planning factors. A "D" LOS is considered an adequate level of service, with conditions of unstable flow, acceptable delays for short periods of time, and adequate levels of comfort.

DRO's significant growth is anticipated to continue, consistent with the growth experienced by the surrounding communities. DRO is the welcome gate to the Four Corners Region and is the first impression for many visitors to the area. This region includes the southwestern corner of Colorado, the northwestern corner of New Mexico, the northeastern corner of Arizona, and the southeastern corner of Utah. The new or redeveloped terminal would be an improved first impression from the existing facilities, a desire the City, County, and Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) expressed during the completion of the 2017 Master Plan.

2.3 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action consists of:

- New or expanded:
  - Terminal building
  - Automobile parking
  - Terminal apron
- Utility improvements
- New or realigned terminal loop road
- Partial parallel taxiway (east side terminal option only)
- New access road (east side terminal option only)

2.4 Proposed Federal Actions and Time Frame

DRO is the project sponsor for these Proposed Action, and the FAA is the federal lead agency for the proposed federal actions. DRO is requesting the following federal actions from the FAA:

- Approval of the Proposed Actions as shown on the Airport Layout Plan
- Potential funding for construction of various elements of the Proposed Actions

[1] International Air Transportation Association's *Airport Terminal Reference Planning Manual*, 9th Edition, 2004