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Taxiway work under

completed in two weeks.

By CHRISTINIA CRIPPES

The Southeast Iowa Regional Airport finally is getting some needed taxiway repairs, after a contract was awarded last spring.

Despite numerous delays in a long-term reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration funding for airports, that's not the cause of the wait for the local taxiway project.

Instead, it simply was a matter of timing.

'We were awarded that contract, it would have been in the spring of 2011, so we were awarded the contract, and then it was bid in July," said Airport Manager Mary Beaird. "It was late enough in the year we did not want to risk weather-related issues."



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So the project was delayed until this spring. Beaird said the work started almost a month ago, but the first noticeable work began on site this week.

Beaird said previously that due to the shortterm FAA extensions, the department was behind on issuing grants, so it was slow getting the go-ahead last summer. There had been 20-plus short-term extensions by last summer, when Beaird put the blame on the FAA for the project not starting late last summer.

Even with the delay, the project was expected to be completed this year.

Overall, the \$975,000 project will be done by Shipley Contracting Corp. of Burlington

and will take six weeks to complete.

The taxiway rehabilitation is part of the airport's capital maintenance improvement plan.

"The pavement was actually crumbling," Beaird said. "What you have with a crumbling taxiway, runway is FOD. FOD is foreign object debris, and that damages aircraft. Actually, it's for safety related to our aircraft."

Of the nearly \$1 million project, the local match is \$48,750, or 5 percent of the project cost. In the new FAA reauthorization, the federal government will pay 90 percent of airport projects,





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with a 10 percent local match. The local match will come from the airport authority, which receives funds from Burlington, West Burlington and Des Moines County.

Because this project was bid last year, it will be Burlington airport's last with the 5 percent match.

The airport's next capital projects will be land acquisition and a \$1.7 million apron rehabilitation project, for which the local match will be \$86,681. The apron rehabilitation project is expected to get under way in 2014, but it will depend on the airport's ability to have in place the matching funds.

Congress finally approved and the president signed a four-year FAA reauthorization in February.



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