



COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Item No. 7a

BRIEFING ITEM

Date of Meeting February 14, 2017

DATE: February 7, 2017

TO: Dave Soike, Interim Chief Executive Officer

FROM: Jeffrey Brown, Director, Aviation Facilities and Capital Programs
Keith Gillin, Architecture Manager, Aviation Facilities and Infrastructure

SUBJECT: Accessibility Assessment for Seattle-Tacoma International Airport

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To assure that Seattle-Tacoma Airport is accessible to all people, the Airport is embarking on an assessment of its current level of accessibility, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the extent to which Sea-Tac accommodates people with disabilities as part of its overall customer service. The Commission recently stated its interest in making Sea-Tac the “most accessible” airport.

The Open Doors Organization (ODO) has been contracted to evaluate Sea-Tac’s facilities and operations. ODO will provide recommendations and best-practice solutions for enhancing the usability and accessibility of Sea-Tac for non-English speaking travelers, families with children, travelers with disabilities, and older adults. This work supports the Port’s Century Agenda goal to advance this region as a leading tourism destination and business gateway.

BACKGROUND

Current Accessibility Status

The Airport maintains compliance with the ADA. ADA requirements are incorporated into all building projects and improvements, and periodic internal inspections are conducted by Port facility and operational staff. A major accessibility audit was completed by the FAA in 2010, a standard process performed periodically at U.S. airports.

ADA updates change requirements that must be implemented when other construction modifications are made in the same part of the building. And increasingly, we are exploring ways to improve accessibility beyond ADA compliance for higher-quality overall customer service. A comprehensive assessment of existing accessibility will identify outstanding deficiencies and recommendations for enhancing this vital part of serving our customers.

Open Doors Organization

ODO is an internationally known expert in accessibility. It is a non-profit organization, founded with the purpose of making travel, transportation, and tourism accessible to all. Heavily

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involved since 2000 in aviation, ODO works closely with airports and airlines to achieve accessibility beyond simple compliance with the ADA and other requirements. Sea-Tac has benefited from a working relationship with ODO over a number of years.

According to the ODO 2015 Market Study on Travelers with Disabilities, 65 percent of travelers with disabilities encounter obstacles when in an airport. This includes physical obstacles such as lack of seating, personnel obstacles such as lack of disability awareness, and communication obstacles such as difficulty understanding baggage claim information. Accessibility goes beyond physical access, reaching new depths in technology, transportation, and customer service.

SCOPE OF WORK

Staff intends to retain ODO to provide:

- (1) Assessment of all Airport facilities
- (2) Interviews with Airport staff, including Port Aviation, airlines and other tenants, U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and U.S. Transportation and Security Administration (TSA)
- (3) Public engagement, including: Airport customers; disability affinity/advocacy groups, such as Lighthouse for the Blind; travel and tourism industry and international trade groups; and ethnic chambers of commerce.
- (4) Comprehensive research of current and upcoming practices at airports (national and international)
- (5) Comparison of Sea-Tac's current accessibility with other airports (national and international)
- (6) Recommendations for potential upgrades, enhancements, and innovations; include options reviewed but not recommended
- (7) Financial analysis of all potential upgrades, enhancements, and innovations, including total project costs
- (8) Recommended implementation plan with immediate, 2-, 5-, and 10-plus-year goals; to include coordination with other airport projects, the Airport's Sustainable Airport Master Plan (SAMP), and the 2018 Special Olympics in Seattle

SCHEDULE

- (1) Information gathering at Airport – inventory and interviews: February and March 2017
- (2) Preliminary report with findings: April 2017
- (3) Preliminary recommendations and implementation plan: August 2017
- (4) Final completion and Commission briefing: September/October 2017

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Anticipated cost of study: \$35,000-50,000.

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Recommendations from the study will be presented for Commission consideration in connection with the 2018 operating and capital budgets in the fall of 2017, or as scope and budget increases to existing capital projects.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING

None

COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

Upon completion of the study, staff will be back to brief the Commission in September/October on the final report.