



**COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

Item No. 10c

ACTION ITEM

Date of Meeting November 9, 2021

DATE: September 8, 2021

TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

FROM: Laurel Dunphy, Director Aviation Operations
Jeffrey Hoevet, Senior Manager Airport Operations

SUBJECT: SEA International Airport – Light Rail Electric Cart Service

Amount of this request: \$2,300,000

Total estimated cost: \$2,300,000

ACTION REQUESTED

Request Commission authorization for the Executive Director to execute a contract for electric cart service between the SEA International Airport’s Main Terminal and Sound Transit’s Link Light Rail Airport Station. This proposal authorizes an estimated amount of \$2,300,000 for a 2-year agreement with options for three 1-year extensions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SEA International Airport (Airport) has offered electric cart transportation between the Airport’s Main Terminal and Sound Transit’s Airport Station since February 2017. To date, the system has transported more than 1.3 million customers and provided passengers with an amenity that makes it easier to access the Airport and public transportation. A cart operates between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and midnight daily. A second cart adds capacity from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Electric cart service supports light-rail transit accessibility and mobility for all customers as well as the Port of Seattle Commission’s goal for the Airport to be the most accessible airport in the United States.

JUSTIFICATION

Since the beginning of Link Light Rail service to the Airport in 2009, there has been considerable public feedback related to station accessibility and the perception of a long walk from the Airport Station. Consequently, the Airport initiated a number of capital and operational improvements to address customer concerns. In 2016, the walkway connecting the Airport’s Main Terminal and Sound Transit’s Airport Station was improved with windbreaks and epoxy surfaces to protect riders from the elements. In addition to making the walkway easier to navigate, the Airport established an electric cart service to provide customers with a free and convenient alternative to walking—an important service for customers with mobility concerns. Staff plans to include

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specific Americans Disability Act requirements in the contract language. In 2019 the cart service transported an average of over 31,000 customers per month. Demand is still high, with more than 19,000 customers transported in July 2021 alone.

DETAILS

To support Link Light Rail customer demand and access, the Port of Seattle contracts with a third-party vendor to supply and staff the electric cart service. As the initial effort has been successful, we’re seeking a new contract that will continue to offer a similar level of service and demonstrate our commitment to supporting customers who utilize Link Light Rail as a mode of transportation to and from the Airport.

Scope of Work

The vendor agreement will support at minimum one (1) electric cart and at maximum two (2) electric carts, which have dedicated staffing to provide safe, reliable transportation to and from Sound Transit’s Airport Station. Carts will be available for service as assigned between the hours of 5:00 a.m. to midnight daily, with seasonal adjustments as directed by Airport staff.

Core contractual elements:

- (1) Dedicated electric carts that hold up to 7 passengers
- (2) 31 hours of daily consistent service
- (3) Trained staff on customer service & safety
- (4) Safe, reliable transportation

Schedule

Activity

Commission authorization	2021 Quarter 4
Request for proposal	2021 Quarter 4
Contract award	2022 Quarter 1
Service commencement	2022 Quarter 1

Cost Breakdown

	This Request	Total Project
Anticipated 5-year agreement	\$2,300,000	\$2,300,000
Total	\$2,300,000	\$2,300,000

ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

Alternative 1 – Eliminate electric cart service and rely solely on existing wheelchair and mobility services.

Cost Implications: Eliminate an estimated \$460,000 annual expense.

Pros:

- (1) Decreased costs – Funding for electric cart service would no longer be required

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Cons:

- (1) Eliminates a popular option
- (2) Relies on single provider for timely transportation
- (3) Relies on existing wheelchair contract to support customer access
- (4) Decreases level of service due to inconsistent and labor-intensive process

This is not the recommended alternative.

Alternative 2 – Seek a new service agreement for limited hours (19 hours) of each day

Cost Implications:

Pros:

- (1) Continues to offer electric cart service to customers
- (2) Supports transit accessibility during normal hours (5:00 am – midnight)

Cons:

- (1) One electric cart during peak periods
- (2) May reduced customer service levels during peak periods due to full carts

This is not the recommended alternative.

Alternative 3 – Offer a 5-year agreement to support customer transportation with electric carts and trained staff up to 31 hours/daily

Cost Implications: Estimated \$460,000 per year (5-year agreement at \$2,300,000)

Pros:

- (1) Consistent and predictable electric cart service to customers during the Link Light Rail operational day
- (2) Supports SEA accessibility goals

Cons:

- (1) Increased contract expenses (see Financial Implications below)

This is the recommended alternative.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Annual Budget Status and Source of Funds

Airport Operations has allocated the amount of \$192,000 in the 2022 Operating Budget for electric cart services. However, the current contractor has indicated that they will no longer provide these services, prompting a need to secure a new agreement. It is anticipated that the rate in a new agreement will be significantly higher due to competition for other airport-related services. Additional budget will be planned in future years. The funding source will be the Airport Development Fund.

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Financial Analysis and Summary

Project cost for analysis	\$2,300,000
Business Unit (BU)	Aviation Operations – Landside
Effect on business performance (NOI after depreciation)	NOI after depreciation will decrease by the amount of the annual expenditure.
IRR/NPV (if relevant)	N/A
CPE Impact	N/A

Future Revenues and Expenses (Total cost of ownership)

- (1) Expenses are anticipated to be \$460,000 per year over a 5-year period

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST

- (1) PowerPoint Presentation

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

A similar commission memo titled Link Light Rail Electric Cart Service Contract was authorized by the Port Commission on January 30, 2018. The action that requested authorization for the Executive Director to execute a contract to support electric cart service between the airport’s main terminal and Sound Transit’s Link light rail airport station. This proposal authorized an estimated \$2,000,000 for a two-year agreement with options for three one-year extensions