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COMMISSION

AGENDA MEMORANDUM Item No. 11b

BRIEFING ITEM Date of Meeting July 12, 2022

DATE: July 5, 2022

TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

FROM: Kathy Roeder, External Relations Communications Director

Michelle Hart, Commission Clerk

SUBJECT: Bringing Access Equity to the Port's Website Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Port's website is the first and usually last stop for any member of the public looking to research our services, opportunities, and policies. In this briefing we will update Commissioners on changes to content, design, and features to ensure that our website and Commission Meetings Portal are accessible to all members of the public.

BACKGROUND

On July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted to "prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government programs and services." (Source: U.S. Department of Labor).

The Port of Seattle has made a purposeful and concerted effort to make its facilities like Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) accessible to people with disabilities and is committed to becoming the most accessible airport in the country. In 2021 we began investing in a third-party effort to improve digital accessibility on our external website and Commission Meetings Portal, the primary portals for information on the Port and its facilities.

The current website was launched in 2018 and is an important communication asset for the Port of Seattle and SEA Airport. The webpage www.portseattle.org experiences approximately 1 million average page views per month. An overwhelming majority of those visitors, as many as 75 percent, come for information about using the airport.

In addition to airport customer service, the external Port of Seattle website also plays an essential component of the Port's public outreach and disclosure strategy. It is the primary platform for conducting business and providing information to the region's residents and visitors, public officials, businesses, and partners of the Port's services and programs, providing services such as:

- Educating the public and the community on how the Port benefits the region

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- Informing constituents of opportunities to provide feedback and outreach including Commission meetings
- Providing information on all port facilities and amenities, including online maps, parking, incident response, and accommodations for people with disabilities
- Port events including commission meetings, outreach events, WMBE business training, and educational opportunities like Port 101
- Online bill payment and conducting business with the Port
- Information about accessibility in Port facilities
- Information about revenue producing facilities and centers like parking, conference center, moorage, and real estate tenants
- Public access to information about complaints and the public disclosure process

Audit Background and Findings

The Port's External Relations team commissioned Open Doors Organization and Ablr.com to perform an audit of the existing website in April 2022. We focused on the external website for this audit because of the wide variety of content types on the page, such as widgets, forms, image carousels, PDFs, and text copy. To make this assessment the pages were tested manually by people with disabilities using a variety of browsers and screen readers. The website was also tested using automated accessibility software developed by Ablr.

The audit detected 27 critical issues, 107 series, and zero blocker issues that the Port must address to be compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, the current standard for Washington state. Blocker issues are defined as a design flaw that would make it

impossible to conduct a task using our website. Due to the templated nature of the website, one change in the code base may resolve multiple errors. Examples of changes expected to be complete by October 2022 include adding alternative text to images, and fixing headers to make screen reader navigation more efficient.

The External Relations and ICT will need to also collaborate on design changes related to color contrast, the simplicity of widgets and forms, carousels, and other topics that require hard coding and navigation. We will implement these changes in 2022 and 2023.

Future External Relations and ICT budgets will now need to fund regular accessibility testing for all digital properties in the future. This plan should include:

- Purchase a subscription to automated accessibility testing software so the team can continue with quarterly review;
- Continued testing every two years to meet the evolving and changing WCAG standards;
- Accessibility testing for the FlySEA app and VendorConnect;
- Testing and maintenance of other websites and digital properties built in the future;

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Commission Meetings Portal Highlights

Separate from the audit project, the Port's meetings portal vendor, Seattle City Colleges Cable Television (SCCTV), who has supported the Commission's meetings website since prior to 2008, has embarked with the Commission Office on a redesign of the site. The goal of the redesigned site being increased ADA accessibility, language translation capability, website search engine visibility, mobile device functionality, video access tools, and other application-friendly capabilities. The Commission Meetings Portal now meets most of the criteria of WCAG2.2 standards. An instructional video of the redesigned site features is available at: Commission Meetings Portal Site Improvements.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

The Accessibility Report produced by Open Doors and Ablr can be found at: Port of Seattle Accessibility Audit.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING

(1) Presentation

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

None.

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