

Memphis airport unveils 'green' plans for Ground Transportation Center

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The **Memphis and Shelby County Airport Authority** unveiled its \$89 million Ground Transportation Center Wednesday at the Memphis Hilton.

The seven-story facility at **Memphis International Airport** will house parking and rental car operations within walking distance of the main terminal.

Self Tucker Architects Inc., Looney Ricks Kiss Architects Inc. and **Walker Parking Consultants** are designing the facility while Flintco Inc. is the general contractor.

By eliminating bus and shuttle traffic between the facility and the terminal, like most airports, it will reduce emissions.

"Some airports have parking garages," authority chairman Arnold Perl said. "We will not have a parking garage; we'll have a ground transportation center."

The center, which will be located between the existing three-level parking deck and the new 336-foot airport traffic control tower, will have 4,500 public parking spaces and 2,500 return spaces for rental cars.

Levels one and two will house the rental car services, with room for 124 rental agents.

The center will have valet parking, as well as additional services such as auto detailing and oil changes.

Construction will start in early March is expected to take two years.

The center will also have covered canopies and an 840-foot moving walkway leading to the terminal.

The airport authority is working with **UrbanArt Commission** on public art at the site, which will have extensive landscaping.

"The Ground Transportation Center will be not only be very pleasing to the eye, highly functional and customer-centric, it is also the most environmentally responsible approach to ground transportation possible," said Larry Cox, the authority's president and chief executive officer. "This center eliminates all rental buses, reduces needs for virtually all remote parking buses, and saves the rental car companies the expense of transporting their customers off the airport.

"When you combine it with our cell phone parking lot and the improved overall entrance and exit flow, we will be eliminating a tremendous amount of traffic exhaust from the airport experience."

aashby@bizjournals.com | 259-1732