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Airport OKs upgrade to gate system

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Fort Wayne International Airport wants to invest more than \$300,000 to make it easier for airlines to use the facility – and hopefully easier to attract more carriers.

The airport's board of directors on Monday approved a contract with Air IT to install a new shared-use computer system. The contract calls for spending up to \$350,789 on the project, which will in essence free the airport's gates for use by all airlines.

Craig Williams, director of administration and finance, said currently different airlines use specific gates and it is not simple to switch them. The new system will provide a way for each airline to log into a gate to provide service there, thus increasing flexibility.

In addition, the new system will be used as a way to attract airlines to the airport, Williams said. While not likely a major incentive, he said the program will make it much simpler for any airline to begin service in Fort Wayne, shortening the startup time to as little as a month.

About \$200,000 of the cost will be paid by a federal transportation grant and the project is expected to be completed by mid September.

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