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# NASA'S SUPPORT FOR COMMERCIAL LEO DESTINATIONS

**Abstract**

The International Space Station is planned to be operated through 2030. To ensure there is a sustained US presence in low earth orbit (LEO) beyond the ISS end of life, NASA is enabling the development of safe, reliable, and cost-effective Commercial LEO Destinations (CLDs) that will be owned and operated by the private sector. The goal is for NASA to meet its research and technology needs as a customer, not an operator, of CLDs, and to be one of many customers.

The primary purpose of NASA's Commercial LEO Destinations project is to stimulate U.S. private industry development of free-flying orbital destination capabilities and create a market environment in which commercial LEO destinations services are available to both Government and private-sector customers.

NASA is using a two-phase strategy:

- Phase 1 – A period of formulation and design by private industry, in coordination with NASA, of CLD capabilities determined to be most suitable for potential Government and private sector customer needs.

- Phase 2 – A competitive procurement by NASA of services in LEO which would include certification by NASA of the transportation and accommodations of NASA crew and payloads on CLD

Four companies are developing CLDs, one under contract and three under funded Space Act Agreements.

This paper will describe the role that NASA is playing to encourage development of CLD services in LEO and demand for those services. The paper will also describe questions to be addressed in the transition of the government-operated ISS to CLDs, such as whether an international partnership would continue.