



Board Report

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FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE OCTOBER 14, 2020

SUBJECT: ACCESS SERVICES - QUARTERLY UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

RECEIVE AND FILE status report on Access Services - ADA Paratransit.

ISSUE

This is a quarterly update on Access Services (Access).

BACKGROUND

Access is the Los Angeles County transit agency that provides paratransit services on behalf of Metro and 44 other fixed route operators, as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Eligibility for Access is based on a person's ability to use accessible fixed-route buses and trains in Los Angeles County; Access currently has 140,000 registered riders. Access' paratransit service is a next-day, shared-ride, curb-to-curb service with additional assistance available to qualified individuals. The service operates throughout most of the County of Los Angeles and is operated by six contractors in the following regions: Eastern, Southern, West Central, Northern, Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley. Access provides service to customers who are traveling between locations that are located within 3/4 of a mile of local bus routes and rail lines. Customers call Access' service providers directly to make trip reservations or book trips online.

DISCUSSION

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Starting in the middle of March with the implementation of Los Angeles City and County's Safer at Home directives, Access saw its average daily ridership decline 78 percent from 11,600 trips a day to 2,500 trips a day. Before the pandemic, Access was on pace to transport over 5 million passengers in FY20.

In response, Access proactively redesigned its system to enhance physical distancing and cleaning protocols to help protect the health of customers and frontline employees, particularly vehicle

operators. These initiatives included the elimination of shared rides and funding for enhanced cleaning protocols where vehicles were disinfected twice a day and high contact surfaces were wiped down after each passenger trip. In addition, in response to a change in policy from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), face coverings were strongly encouraged and then, on June 1st, mandated for all customers. Access has been assisting its providers in obtaining the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and has directed them to provide face coverings for customers who request one.

Additional services were also implemented to serve the community:

Meal and grocery delivery: Access has worked with a number of public and private entities to deliver, as of August 31, 240,000 meals and grocery boxes since the start of the pandemic to the most vulnerable populations in the County. These partners include Mayor Garcetti’s office, City of Los Angeles Department on Disability, City of Los Angeles Department of Aging, Lancaster Project Door Drop, Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles and the I Did Something Good Today Foundation.

Same Day Service: On May 4, Access began offering same day service for trips to non-emergency medical/dental appointments, grocery stores, pharmacies or drug stores, the bank, and Los Angeles County Cooling Stations. As of August 31, nearly 14,000 same day trips have been completed.

Recovery Plans: Access will continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and normalize its operations as the pandemic subsides. The goal of restoring service back to pre-pandemic service levels will be to balance operational circumstances, including contractor capacity and ridership, as well as guidance from our public health partners and local authorities. At this time, Access believes that the continuation of its no-shared ride policy should be continued as long as operationally practicable.

FY20 Operational Performance

In FY20, despite the significant ridership drop in mid-March, Access provided more than 3,707,599 passenger trips. Access’ current projections assume a 61 percent decline in ridership (1,462,982 passengers vs. 3,707,599 FY 20 passengers) for FY21. Ridership for July and August was approximately 41 percent of projected pre-pandemic levels.

In FY18, the Access Board of Directors adopted additional key performance indicators (KPIs) and liquidated damages to ensure that optimal levels of service are provided throughout the region. Overall system statistics are published monthly in a Board Box report. A comparison summary of the main KPIs is provided below:

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	FY 2019	FY 2020
On Time Performance - ≥ 91%	92.00%	92.20%
Excessively Late Trips - ≤ 0.10%	0.08%	0.10%
Excessively Long Trips - ≤ 5%	3.80%	2.90%
Missed Trips - ≤ 0.75%	0.52%	0.46%
Access to Work On Time Performance - ≥ 94%	95.90%	95.90%

Average Hold Time (Reservations) - ≤ 120	80	71
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (Reservations) - ≤ 5%	4.50%	3.30%
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (ETA) - ≤ 10%	5.50%	4.10%
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips - ≤ 4.0	3.3	2.5
Preventable Incidents - ≤ 0.25	0.21	0.19
Preventable Collisions (Weighted) - ≤ 0.50	0.64	0.67
Miles Between Road Calls - ≥ 25,000	54,878	60,999

Overall, all main KPIs are being met except for preventable collisions. Access has set an aggressive goal compared to its peers to emphasize the importance of safely transporting its customers.

Working with Agency and Community Partners

Access continues to engage and consult with its community and public agency partners, including the Aging and Disability Transportation Network (ADTN), the Los Angeles City and County Commissions on Disabilities, Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center and various Metro departments, on a variety of issues. Feedback and suggestions from the ADTN, County Commission on Disabilities and Access’ own Community Advisory Committee (CAC) have helped to inform the Agency’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other updates include:

Aging and Disability Transportation Network (ADTN): In response to a June 2016 Metro Board motion (“Countywide Services for Older Adults and People with Disabilities”), Metro and Access staff have met with Network representatives to discuss and study enhancements to the service. In addition, many of these items are now being discussed and studied by Access’ Community Advisory Committee, which is comprised of Access customers.

The current enhancement to emerge from this collaboration is a planned countywide expansion of the Parents with Disabilities (PWD) program, which provides additional assistance to Access customers with school-age children. At its July meeting, the Access Board of Directors approved the expansion of a modified Parents with Disabilities program countywide to be implemented when schools reopen. The modified initiative will achieve the main goals of the program, specifically ensuring that students arrive to school on time and that limited same day service is available to parents, at a significantly lower cost than previously proposed.

Long Beach Civic Center Stand Signs: On July 29, 2020, the City of Long Beach held the grand opening of their new Civic Center located at 411 W. Ocean Blvd. Working with personnel from Long Beach Transit and the City of Long Beach, Access was able to identify three locations for Stand Signs, which make it easier for vehicle operators and customers to locate each other. As of August 17, the signs have been installed and uploaded into Access’ stand sign directory.

Technology Update

DOT Mobility for All Pilot Program Grant Award: The United States Department of Transportation

recently awarded Access Services \$330,000 to fund proposed enhancements to our Where's My Ride (WMR) smartphone application. In-kind matching contributions will be provided by the private sector for a total project budget of \$412,500.

Access plans to convert WMR to an Accessible Traveler Mobile App (ATMA) by expanding WMR's functions, including trip planning, trip booking, trip cancellation and integrated mobile fare payment solutions. Access was one of 17 projects in 16 states to receive funding.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Goal 2: Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system

Goal 3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity

NEXT STEPS

Access is in the process of completing the following:

- A modified Parents with Disabilities program throughout Los Angeles County
- Enhancements to the WMR app using Mobility for All grant funds
- Expanding online reservations to the Northern region (San Fernando Valley)
- The procurement process for the Southern operational region
- Continue to work with Metro Government Relations on AB 5's impact* on Access' use of taxicabs

*Estimated to be a 30% increase in cost for Access (or \$42 million dollars, including additional capital) based on a "normal" year of operational service

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