



## Board Report

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### FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE OCTOBER 16, 2019

**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), as requested by the Finance, Budget and Audit Committee.

#### **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 150,000 registered riders to date. 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.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### Agency Overview

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**FY19 - Operational Performance Year in Review**

For Fiscal Year 2019, Access provided more than 4,503,721 passenger trips, approximately a 1.7 percent increase over FY 18.

Access monitors its contractors' compliance with federal law and regulations and their service to Los Angeles County paratransit customers through regular audits and the monitoring of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Over the last year, Access has adopted and negotiated into its contracts additional KPIs in order to enhance service quality and safety.

<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>*FY20</b>
On Time Performance	≥ 91%	92.0%	91.5%
Excessively Late Trips	≤ 0.10%	0.08%	0.16%
Excessively Long Trips	≤ 5%	3.8%	3.1%
Missed Trips	≤ 0.75%	0.52%	0.47%
Denials	≤ 0	10	3
Access to Work On Time Performance	≥ 94%	95.8%	96.2%
Average Initial Hold Time (Reservations)	≤ 120	81	80
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (Reservations)	≤ 5%	4.2%	4.7%
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (ETA)	≤ 10%	5.3%	4.5%
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips	≤ 4.0	3.3	2.7
Preventable Incident Rate	≤ 0.25	0.21	0.13
Preventable Collision Rate	≤ 0.50	0.63	0.67
Miles Between Road Calls	≥ 25,000	55,228	66,172

\*as of 9/1/19

For FY 19, on-time performance (OTP) remained strong and all key performance indicators are being met except for Preventable Collision Rate and Denials. Regarding preventable collisions, Access counts any contact as a collision (even if there is no damage), regardless of dollar value, to emphasize the importance of safety. Denials occur when a rider has made a trip request for a specific time and the transit contractor does not offer, as required, a time up to an hour before or an hour after that request. As part of its planned oversight and audit program, Access learned that the denial stats do not reflect true denials and that they are, instead, a result of

reservationist error where the reservationist mishears the requested time from the rider and uses that time as a starting point reservation. Even though this is a rare event, Access expects its contractor to retrain the reservationist. Both the Preventable Collision rate and Denial rate continue to be considerably lower (lower is better) than the rates experienced by peer transit operators. For providers that do not meet established KPIs, staff requests corrective action plans and assesses liquidated damages.

### FY 20 Operational Performance

In Fiscal Year 2020 thus far, Access has provided 810,218 passenger trips, a 5.1% increase over the same period a year ago and a 6.6% increase over the estimate in the FY 20 budget. Notably, customer complaints continue to decline from the prior year. Overall, the first quarter of the fiscal year coincides with the beginning of the academic school year for almost all of Los Angeles County. The traffic and greater than expected demand have led to a slight decrease in certain KPIs system-wide. As discussed above, for providers that do not meet established KPIs, such as excessively long trips, staff requests corrective action plans and assesses liquidated damages as allowed under Access' contracts with its providers.

### Working with Agency and Community Partners

*Metro's Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI):* Access recently worked cooperatively with Metro's OEI to increase the number of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) requests for the Mobility on Demand (MOD) Pilot Project with Via which launched on January 28, 2019. Access sent direct mail, contacted its customers who lived in the areas being served by the pilot, informed them of the new service and, if the customer agreed, forwarded their name and contact information to OEI staff for further follow-up. After this outreach, the number of WAV requests quickly jumped to an average of 23 per week. (Prior to this outreach, there had been no WAV requests.) There have now been a total of 185 WAV requests and OEI has scheduled a series of focus groups with Access customers to educate them about the MOD program.

*Aging and Disability Transportation Network (Network):* 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 first enhancement to emerge from this collaboration is an expansion of transfer service between the North County and the Los Angeles Basin. Transfer trip service based at Olive View Medical Center in Sylmar was expanded effective July 1, 2019. The expansion is aimed at Access riders who need to travel between the Antelope Valley, Santa Clarita and the rest of Los Angeles County. So far, after ten weeks of increased service, weekday ridership to/from the Antelope Valley is up 43%. Trips to/from Santa Clarita have increased by 11%. Staff will continue to monitor usage and consider appropriate changes to the schedule after six months.

As discussed in prior reports, Access staff and community partners will continue to discuss additional improvements. The Network and Access have also been working together on strategies to expand the Parents with Disabilities (PWD) program, which provides additional assistance to Access customers with school-age children. Access has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from vendors that would implement the program countywide. This new program model will give vendors the flexibility to “broker” trips to existing transportation resources, including taxis and TNCs, such as Uber and Lyft. A recommendation based on this RFP will be brought to the Access Board of Directors later this year.

Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center (Rancho): Access completed 1,839 trips to and from Rancho between May and August 2019, with an on-time performance of 91% and high customer satisfaction. Access continues to provide new signage for Rancho to accommodate building closures and construction to ensure that Access customers and drivers can identify multiple pick-up and drop-off locations. Access’ Southern Region service provider, Global Paratransit, now staffs a booth on-site to facilitate coordination between riders and drivers. Finally, this summer Access partnered with Rancho to develop a driver training video to highlight best practices for securing wheelchairs and other mobility devices. The video was completed in early September 2019 and reflects the cooperation between Access and Rancho’s Patient Advisory Committee. The video will serve as a valuable training tool for all Access contractors by focusing on the safe securement of the many different types of mobility aids that are not as common as a standard wheelchair.

### Technology Update

Where’s My Ride (WMR) App: More than 8,200 customers have registered to use the WMR application, and 93% have used the application more than once. The app allows customers to obtain an estimated time of arrival (ETA), vehicle location for their trips, and provide feedback and comments after the trip is completed. WMR has provided over 3.3 million ETAs since its launch in January 2018. Based on customer feedback, the latest enhancement will make the app more accessible for visually impaired riders by providing distance and cross street data. In addition, the app will provide alerts and updates via push notifications regarding emergency events and potential service delays.

Online Reservations: Since its launch in May 2019, 1,400 customers have booked a trip using Online Reservations, with 88% booking multiple trips. On average, 480 trips are booked per day in Online Reservations, which represents 4% of total trip volume. The platform is currently available for Eastern, Southern and West Central region customers. The remaining Access regions (Northern, Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley) are on different software platforms and are scheduled to have online reservations in the near future.

All of the above initiatives, as well as the expanded suite of KPIs that will assist in providing enhanced service to Access customers, receive funding from Measure M 2%.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There are no financial impacts.

Impact to Budget

There is no impact to the budget.

**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:

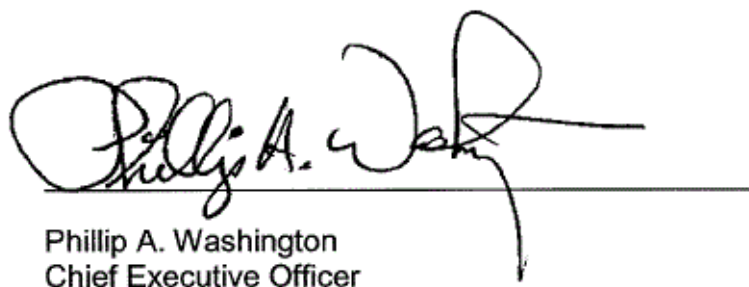
- Continue development and implementation of an online reservations platform to additional service areas;
- Work on integrating online reservations into the WMR application for a more seamless experience;
- Monitor results of expanded North County transfer program;
- Continue to work with Agency and community partners, including participation in the On the Move Riders' program Forum in October and subsequent events throughout the year.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Metro Access PowerPoint Presentation-October 2019

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