



Board Report

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**FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 19, 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 147,000 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 a trip online.

DISCUSSION

FY 20 Operational Performance

Key Performance Indicator	Target	FY 2019	*FY 2020
On Time Performance	≥ 91%	92.0%	91.4%
Excessively Late Trips	≤ 0.10%	0.08%	0.12%
Excessively Long Trips	≤ 5%	3.8%	3.3%
Missed Trips	≤ 0.75%	0.52%	0.49%
Trip Denials	≤ 0	10	11
Access to Work On Time Performance	≥ 94%	95.8%	94.8%

Average Hold Time (Reservations)	≤ 120	80	79
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (Reservations)	≤ 5%	4.5%	4.0%
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (ETA)	≤ 10%	5.5%	4.9%
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips	≤ 4.0	3.3	2.5
Preventable Incidents	≤ 0.25	0.21	0.22
Preventable Collisions (Weighted)	≤ 0.50	0.64	0.72
Miles Between Road Calls	≥ 25,000	54,878	59,558

*as of 12/31/19

On-time performance (OTP) remains strong and most KPIs are being met or are close to being met system-wide. Of particular note, customer complaints, one of the most direct measures of service quality, have improved 24 percent from the prior fiscal year to a historic low.

Preventable Collision Rate and Denials are not being met. 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 and has a standard that is much lower than peer agencies. 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 oversight and audit program, Access learned that the denial statistics do not reflect true denials and that they are a result of reservationist error where the reservationist mishears the requested time from the rider and uses that time as a starting point for the reservation. Even though this is a rare event (11 denials out of 2 million reservation calls), Access expects its contractor to retrain the reservationist.

For providers that do not meet established KPIs, staff requests corrective action plans and assesses liquidated damages as allowed under Access' contracts.

FY 20 Ridership Increase and Budget Impacts

Through the first six months of FY 2020, Access has provided nearly 1.9 million passenger trips, a 10.6% increase over projections in the FY 20 budget. This increase in demand is due, in large part, to an overall improvement in service quality driven by the implementation of an improved suite of KPIs, technology improvements and other factors, which is reflected in significantly lower customer complaints. There has also been a significant improvement in performance in Access' Southern service area (which provides 40 percent of Access' trips) due to the implementation of enhanced KPIs and a transition to a new paratransit software package in early 2019. The Southern Region has seen a 63 percent decrease in customer complaints.

Because of this significant increase in trip demand, Access is projecting it will need an additional \$10-12 million in FY 20 and will work with Metro staff to identify additional funding.

Working with Agency and Community Partners

Mobility on Demand and Microtransit Projects: Access continues to work cooperatively with Metro's Office of Extraordinary Innovation (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. In addition, Access is working with Metro staff on the Microtransit project to ensure Access customers, particularly those in mobility devices, are informed about this program. Access believes these projects offer a more convenient, lower-cost option than traditional next-day paratransit.

Metro's NextGen Project: Access has met several times with Metro Operations staff to discuss Metro's Next Gen project. Metro staff has shared their proposed maps with Access and understand that the paratransit service area is based on local fixed-route bus and rail lines. It is likely that there will be changes to the Los Angeles County service area and Metro staff and Access will work collaboratively to minimize any impact on paratransit customers.

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 was aimed at Access riders who need to travel between the Antelope Valley, Santa Clarita and the rest of Los Angeles County. After six months of enhanced service, weekday ridership to/from the Antelope Valley is up 89%. Trips to/from Santa Clarita have increased by 98%. Access staff will continue to monitor usage and consider appropriate changes as necessary.

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 released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from vendors that would implement the program countywide. A recommendation based on responses to the RFP was brought to the Access Board of Directors in December for discussion. The Board directed staff to confirm funding for the program with Metro and, subsequently, Metro staff confirmed funding of \$3 million per year for the first 5 years of the expanded PWD program. Staff will, again, bring a recommendation for program expansion to the Access Board in February.

Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center (Rancho): Access completed 21,924 trips to and from Rancho in the first six months of the year, with an on-time performance of nearly 92% and continued high customer satisfaction. Access' Southern Region service provider, Global Paratransit, continues to staff a booth on-site to facilitate coordination between riders and drivers. Access continues to collaborate with Rancho's Patient Advisory Committee and recently assisted Rancho volunteers in applying for the Access to Work program, which offers a lower fare and more scheduling flexibility than standard ADA paratransit.

Technology Update

Where's My Ride (WMR) App: Nearly 10,000 customers have registered to use the WMR application. 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. The app has now been enhanced to provide alerts and updates via push notifications regarding emergency events and potential service delays. In order to continue to improve the app, Access has applied for a \$350,000 grant under the FTA's recent Mobility for All grant application program proposing to integrate the Metro Trip Planner as well as implementing trip booking and cancellation as well as mobile fare payment capabilities.

Online Reservations: Since its launch in May 2019, 2,650 customers have booked a trip using Online Reservations, with 87% booking multiple trips. On average, 711 trips are booked per day, which represents 9.3% 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 have provided improved service to Access customers, receive funding from Measure M 2%.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There will be a need for additional funding in FY20. A separate item will be brought to the Metro Board.

Impact to Budget

As discussed above, Access is projecting it will need an additional \$10-12 million for FY 20.

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:

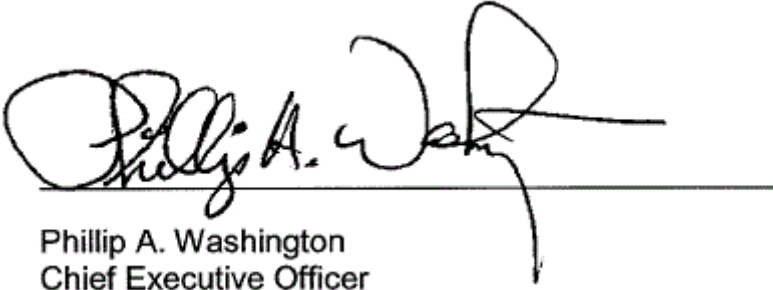
- Continue development and implementation of an online reservations platform to additional service areas;
- Work on integrating online reservations into the WMR application for a more seamless experience;
- Work with Metro government affairs staff and other stakeholders on issues relating to the

implementation of Assembly Bill 5;

- Staff will return to the Board to amend Access' FY20 budget.

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