



Board Report

File #: 2021-0605, File Type: Informational Report

Agenda Number: 18.

FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE OCTOBER 20, 2021

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 45 other fixed route operators, as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Eligibility for Access is based on a person's ability to utilize accessible fixed-route buses and trains in Los Angeles County; Access currently has 124,000 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 can book trips online.

DISCUSSION

Recovering from the COVID-19 Pandemic

In FY22, Access has been operating its pre-pandemic, next-day, shared-ride service model. Access is also planning for the restart of its in-person eligibility process on December 1st.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to some challenges in the transportation market. Qualified vehicle operators and other personnel are in short supply and the taxi industry, which provided 50 percent of Access' trips pre-pandemic, has been slow to recover. Despite these headwinds, Access' contractors

have been trying their best to recruit and retain qualified employees and, as of this writing, are meeting most operational KPIs.

FY22 Operational Performance

In FY22, through August 15th, Access has provided 267,010 trips, which is approximately 6 percent more than projected. This is about 60 percent of the number of trips provided during the same pre-pandemic period in 2019.

In FY18, the Access Board of Directors adopted additional key performance indicators (KPIs) to ensure that optimal and equitable 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 through mid-August 2021:

Key Performance Indicator	Goal	FY21	FY22 (YTD)
On Time Performance (Next Day Trips)	≥ 91%	92.60%	91.5%
Excessively Late Trips (45+ min late)	≤ 0.10%	0.07%	0.05%
Excessively Long Trips	≤ 5%	0.50%	2.60%
Missed Trips	≤ 0.75%	0.36%	0.36%
Denials	≤ 0	4	1
On Time Performance (Access to Work)	≥ 94%	97.80%	96.10%
Average Initial Hold Time (Reservations)	≤ 120 sec	52	49
Calls On Hold > 5 Minutes (Reservations)	≤ 5%	2.20%	1.90%
Calls On Hold > 5 Minutes (ETA)	≤ 10%	1.50%	1.20%
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips	≤ 4.0	2.5	3.3
Preventable Incidents Per 100,000 Miles	≤ 0.25	0.15	0.29
Preventable Collisions Per 100,000 Miles	≤ 0.50	0.5	0.70
Miles Between Road Calls	≥ 25,000	64,040	59,930

Overall, despite the challenges mentioned above, service remains strong. The increase in Excessively Long Trips, while well below standard, reflects the reintroduction of shared rides and increased traffic congestion. The increase in preventable incidents and collisions reflects an increase in passengers and traffic. Contractors who do not meet certain KPIs must provide a service improvement plan and are also assessed liquidated damages.

Working with Community Partners

Parents with Disabilities Implementation: With the beginning of the school year, Access has launched the Parents with Disabilities program countywide. The program, originally a pilot program in the Northern Region (San Fernando Valley), is specifically designed for Access customers who are parents or guardians to help get their children to school on time in the mornings and pick their children up from school in the afternoon. After the first few weeks of operation, the program is running well with high customer satisfaction. Currently, there are twenty-seven Access customers qualified for the program.

Virtual Community Meeting: On Saturday, July 30, Access staff hosted two virtual community meetings via Zoom. Both Spanish and English language meetings were held. The agenda included an operations update and overview; information on Eligibility and Renewals; updates on the Where's My Ride App, and a Customer Service presentation. At the same time, Access riders were given the opportunity to ask questions of Access staff. More than eighty members of the public participated. Another community meeting is planned for the November/December timeframe.

Metro Micro Meeting: A number of Access staff joined staff from Metro's Office of Civil Rights and Inclusion on a tour of the new Metro Micro service. After a briefing and Q & A session, staff were able to book a trip and ride the service. Access staff believes Metro Micro could provide many Access customers with an accessible, convenient transit option and looks forward to working with Metro Micro staff on marketing this service to their customers.

Access continues to consult on a variety of issues 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. Feedback and suggestions from these groups and Access' own Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee continue to inform the Agency's policies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

EQUITY PLATFORM

By federal mandate, Access paratransit exclusively serves people with disabilities so decisions made about its services will have an equity impact. In general, decisions by the Access Services Board of Directors to enhance Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and technology offerings have improved services to Access customers thus improving equity outcomes for people with disabilities in Los Angeles County, many of whom are minority and low-income individuals. The enhanced KPIs are included in every Access operations contract to ensure equitable service throughout the County. The enhanced technology, which includes online reservations and the Where's My Ride application (real-time trip information/trip rating/customer comments via smartphone), are now available to most Access customers and Access is working to expand access to all customers by the end of this year. Riders who do not have access to technology like a smart phone or the internet can call the reservation line to get the same information regarding their trips. More recently, the decision to expand the Parents with Disabilities program to the entire county will also improve equity outcomes. Access customers who need assistance to transport their child to and from school or school activities can now utilize this program to ensure equitable educational opportunities for their children.

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:

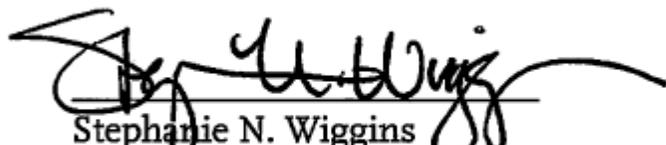
- A restart of its in-person eligibility process;
- An Agency strategic plan and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan;
- An analysis of the impact of Metro's NextGen plan on the Access service area;
- Enhancements to the *Where's My Ride* (WMR) app using \$330,000 Mobility for All federal grant funds;
- Beta testing online reservations in the Northern region (San Fernando Valley);
- Awarding a paratransit operations contract for the Antelope Valley operational region;
- Implementation of a recently-awarded paratransit operations contract in the Southern operational region.

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