



Board Report

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Agenda Number: 18.

FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 20, 2025

SUBJECT: ACCESS SERVICES - SEMI-ANNUAL UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

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

ISSUE

This is a semi-annual update on Access Services (Access) focusing on Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 operational performance, community engagement efforts and year-to-date financial status on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit services in the region.

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 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 118,000 registered riders. Access' paratransit service is a next-day, shared-ride, curb-to-curb service with additional assistance available to qualified individuals. The service is operated by six contractors in the following regions: Eastern, Southern, West Central, Northern, Santa Clarita, and Antelope Valley. Access provides service to customers traveling between locations within 3/4 of a mile of local bus routes and rail lines. Customers call Access service providers in the six regions directly to make trip reservations or book trips online.

DISCUSSION

Operational Performance (July 2024 - December 2024)

As of December 2024, Access has provided more than 2.3 million passenger trips, a 12.5 percent increase compared to the first six months of FY 2024. This ridership rebound is driven by a return to pre-pandemic travel patterns and the significant recovery of adult day health programs, whose ridership has substantially increased since the pandemic. Access contractors are currently fully staffed in all six regions. Year-to-date (YTD) ridership exceeds pre-pandemic levels, and Metro staff will continue to monitor ridership trends and pursue cost efficiencies and external funding opportunities through the end of the fiscal year.

Attachment A has the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that have been established to ensure

equitable service levels are provided throughout all regions of Los Angeles County. Access has met nearly all the KPIs through December 2024. For more detailed information on Access' overall system statistics by service region, please see Access' monthly Board Box report at http://accessla.org/about_us/publications.html.

Expense Review (YTD December 2024)

As of December 31, 2024, Access' total expenses are below the FY 2025 adopted budget. Operating costs are under budget, due to slightly lower than projected ridership and reduced customer service/telecom call volume. The capital program is significantly under budget, primarily due to the timing of vehicle deliveries. Capital expenses will increase as vehicles are delivered by the end of the fiscal year. See the table below.

Access Services FY25 Semi-Annual Expense Review Source (\$ in millions)	YTD December 31, 2024			
	Budget	Actuals	Over / (Under) Budget	% of Budget
1 Direct Transportation ¹	\$ 127.1	\$ 123.4	\$ (3.7)	97.1%
2 Contracted Support ²	7.5	6.8	(0.8)	89.7%
3 Management/Administration ³	8.5	8.2	(0.3)	96.5%
4 Total Operating Costs	\$ 143.2	\$ 138.4	\$ (4.8)	96.6%
5 Capital Rolling Stock- Prior Year ⁴	15.8	\$11.5	(4.3)	72.6%
6 Capital Rolling Stock- New ⁵	12.4	0.0	(12.4)	0.0%
7 Capital Construction ⁵	2.1	0.0	(2.1)	0.0%
8 Facilities Development & Construction (Non-Metro) ⁷	1.5	4.0	2.5	267.9%
9 Total Capital Program	\$ 31.8	\$ 15.5	\$ (16.3)	48.8%
10 Total Expenses ⁸	\$ 175.0	\$ 153.9	\$ (21.1)	88.0%

Totals may not add up because of rounding

- ¹ Ridership one percent below projections
- ² Customer Service and telecom receiving fewer calls
- ³ Expenditures within budget
- ⁴ All vehicles now delivered and paying final invoices
- ⁵ Vehicles start arriving in January 2025
- ⁶ Activity pending
- ⁷ Antelope Valley facility in environmental review (NEPA/CEQA)
- ⁸ Operating & Capital Cost below budget

Costs for regional paratransit trips have increased above pre-pandemic levels due to inflation. This includes significant increases in regional wages, partly driven by legislated minimum wage increases, and higher vehicle replacement costs due to switching from the retired Dodge Caravan to the Dodge Ram ProMaster. A decline in taxi participation in some service regions has also contributed to rising costs. However, Access has secured nearly \$40 million in grants and FEMA reimbursements to support operational priorities, including operations and maintenance facilities.

Other Initiatives - Update

Los Angeles County Wildfires: During the recent Los Angeles County wildfires, Access activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to monitor the wildfires' impact on its service area, communicate with riders, and handle any requests for assistance from member/partner agencies. Overall, there was limited impact on paratransit services and Access provided shuttle service to Red Cross shelters to assist evacuees. Throughout the event, Access EOC staff were in contact with partners including the LA City Emergency Management Department, LA County Office of Emergency Management, Metro, Foothill Transit, Pasadena Transit, and Ventura County Transportation Commission.

Operations and Maintenance Facilities: One of the main goals of Access' adopted 2022-2026 Strategic Plan is the development of Access-owned or controlled paratransit operations and maintenance facilities.

- *Antelope Valley Region:* National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review is underway for the proposed 6.8-acre facility in the City of Lancaster, that is projected to be fully operational by late 2026.
- *Southern Region:* Access has also acquired a 6.1-acre property in the City of Compton that will be developed into an operations and maintenance facility.

The facility program has been largely funded with outside grants and reimbursements to Access from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Medi-Cal program.

Electric Paratransit Vehicle Pilot Project: In September 2024, Access' Board approved the purchase of two accessible electric vehicles (Dodge Ram ProMaster), which are expected to be delivered by Spring 2025. Once they are received, the vehicles will be placed into service in Access' Southern and Santa Clarita regions as part of a pilot project to test electric vehicle technology in ADA paratransit services. Access staff continues to work with vehicle manufacturers on accessible hydrogen vehicle technologies and has had discussions with autonomous vehicle providers, such as Waymo. Overall, the vehicle procurement bottlenecks experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic have eased and replacement vehicles are being delivered on a consistent basis.

2028 Olympic/Paralympic Planning: Access staff continue to work with their regional partners to prepare for various upcoming international events, including the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Access met with Metro and LA28 staff and attended regional meetings, such as the Games Mobility Executives (GME) Regional Transportation Assembly in November. Access will continue to participate in the planning process to ensure that the Games are accessible to all.

FTA Triennial Review: Metro Triennial Review is conducted every three years by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to ensure Metro complies with federal requirements. On September 10, the FTA conducted an ADA Complementary Paratransit review, which looked at how Metro monitors Access' delivery of complementary paratransit services in the County. Overall, there were no findings and FTA complimented Metro staff on their oversight of the paratransit program.

Other Community Initiatives - Update

Customer Satisfaction Survey: Access also completed its biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey.

There were 2,128 Access customers from across Los Angeles County that participated either digitally or by telephone. The survey respondents were 58.5 percent females and 36.9 percent males. Seventy-six percent of respondents were English speakers, while 12.6 percent were Spanish speakers, and 6.9 percent spoke other languages at home. The respondents were 28.9 percent Hispanic, 25.5 percent Caucasian, 18.3 percent African American and 12 percent Asian American. The data indicates that 82.4 percent of customers reported being satisfied with the overall paratransit services provided by Access. In analyzing the results, Access will be looking to see if additional KPIs should be added to its contracts to further improve paratransit services. To see the full report, please visit the Access website at [Access Services 2024 Biennial Customer Satisfaction Study Report of Findings.pdf](https://accessla.org/sites/default/files/Agendas/Access%20Services%202024%20Biennial%20Customer%20Satisfaction%20Study%20Report%20of%20Findings.pdf) <<https://accessla.org/sites/default/files/Agendas/Access%20Services%202024%20Biennial%20Customer%20Satisfaction%20Study%20Report%20of%20Findings.pdf>>.

Community Meeting: On August 24th, Access hosted a virtual Community Meeting to inform and educate the public and Access riders about the agency's services, policies, and procedures. More than 100 guests called in or participated via Zoom. Access staff presented on a variety of topics to ensure customers were updated and well-informed about Access. These topics included presentations about the Free Fare Program, Travel Training and Group Travel Training Programs, and the new Text-To-Chat Customer Service Pilot Program. After the presentations, Access staff addressed customer comments, questions, and any other service concerns with customers individually.

Free Rides to the Polls: On Election Day, Access once again provided free rides to the polls, completing 373 paratransit trips systemwide. Riders were informed about this free service via reservation call center hold messages and at public meetings.

EQUITY PLATFORM

By federal mandate, Access exclusively serves people with disabilities. Most recently, Access analyzed its service area map to determine the percentage of riders served in Equity Focus Communities (EFCs). From January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024, about 45.1 percent of all trips taken by 58,998 Access riders were picked up in EFCs. As EFCs comprise approximately 40 percent of Los Angeles County, this shows that EFCs are proportionately and well served by Access services.

On a semi-annual basis, Access conducts countywide community meetings designed to allow customers and stakeholders to receive information about Access and ask staff direct questions about their service experience. Closed captioning, language translation services, braille, and large print materials are available upon request to ensure all customers throughout Los Angeles County can participate. The next community meeting is planned for March 2025.

Access continues to consult and work with community partners on a variety of issues with its community and public agency partners, including its own Community Advisory Committee (CAC), the Aging and Disability Transportation Network (ADTN), the Los Angeles City and County Commissions on Disabilities (LACCOD), Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center, and various Metro departments.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through operational activities that will benefit and further encourage transit ridership, ridesharing, and active transportation. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

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 working on the following:

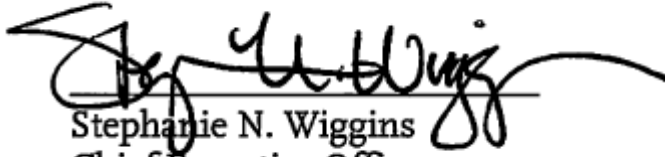
- Continuing to work with Metro and LA28 on 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games planning
- Initiating Access' 5-year Strategic Plan (FY 2026 - FY 2030) process
- Seeking grant funding for Access-owned operations and maintenance facilities
- Developing the FY26 budget request
- Implementing an electric vehicle pilot project

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A - Access Services Key Performance Indicators

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Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

Attachment A

Access Services Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

A comparison summary of the main KPIs is provided below:

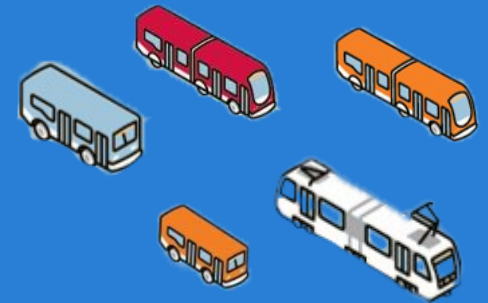
Key Performance Indicators	Standard	FY24	FY25 YTD*
On-Time Performance	≥ 91%	92.3%	92.3%
Excessively Late Trips	≤ 0.10%	0.02%	0.02%
Excessively Long Trips	≤ 5.0%	3.8%	3.7%
Missed Trips	≤ 0.75%	0.33%	0.33%
Denials	0	6	1
Access to Work - On-Time Performance	≥ 94%	95.8%	96.4%
Average Hold Time (Reservations)	≤ 120	54	54
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (Reservations)	≤ 5%	2.6%	2.8%
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (ETA)	≤ 10%	2.7%	3.0%
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips	≤ 4.0	2.0	2.1
Preventable Incidents per 100,000 miles	≤ 0.25	0.21	0.26
Preventable Collisions per 100,000 miles	≤ 0.75	0.80	0.92
Miles Between Road Calls	≥ 25,000	47,940	46,034

*Statistical data through December 2024



Access Services Semi-Annual Update Finance, Budget & Audit Committee

February 2025



Key Performance Indicators

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Preventable Incidents per 100,000 miles	≤ 0.25	0.21	0.26
Preventable Collisions per 100,000 miles	≤ 0.75	0.80	0.92
Miles Between Road Calls	≥ 25,000	47,940	46,034

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Expense Review

		YTD December 31, 2024				
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3	Management/Administration	8.5	8.2	(0.3)	96.5%	Expenditures within budget
4	Total Operating Costs	\$ 143.2	\$ 138.4	\$ (4.8)	96.6%	
5	Capital Rolling Stock- Prior Year	15.8	\$11.5	(4.3)	72.6%	Final vehicles to be received in January from Carryover order
6	Capital Rolling Stock- New	12.4	0.0	(12.4)	0.0%	Vehicles started arriving in January 2025
7	Capital Construction	2.1	0.0	(2.1)	0.0%	Activity pending
8	Facilities Development & Construction (Non-Metro)	1.5	4.0	2.5	267.9%	Antelope Valley facility in environmental review (NEPA/CEQA)
9	Total Capital Program	\$ 31.8	\$ 15.5	\$ (16.3)	48.8%	
#	Total Expenses	\$ 175.0	\$ 153.9	\$ (21.1)	88.0%	Operating & Capital Cost below budget

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Other Initiatives

Los Angeles County Wildfires Update

- Activated Emergency Operations Center
- Provided shuttle service to Red Cross shelters
- Working with regional partners including Metro, Foothill Transit, Pasadena Transit, Ventura County Transportation Commission, LA City Emergency Management Department and LA County Office of Emergency Management

Operations & Maintenance Facilities

- Lancaster facility opening in early 2026
 - Pending NEPA review
- Access acquired 6.1- acre parcel in Compton (Southern Region)

Electric Paratransit Vehicles – Pilot Project

- Launch in Spring 2025
- Southern and Santa Clarita Regions

2028 Olympic/Paralympic Games Planning

- Serving on the LA28 Games Accessibility Subcommittee
- Attended the Games Mobility Executives – Regional Transportation Assembly
- Continuing to work with regional partners



Working with the Community

Customer Satisfaction Survey

- 2,128 customer responses
- 82.4% satisfaction with Access

Virtual Community Meeting

- Held in August 2024
- Provided one-on-one customer service

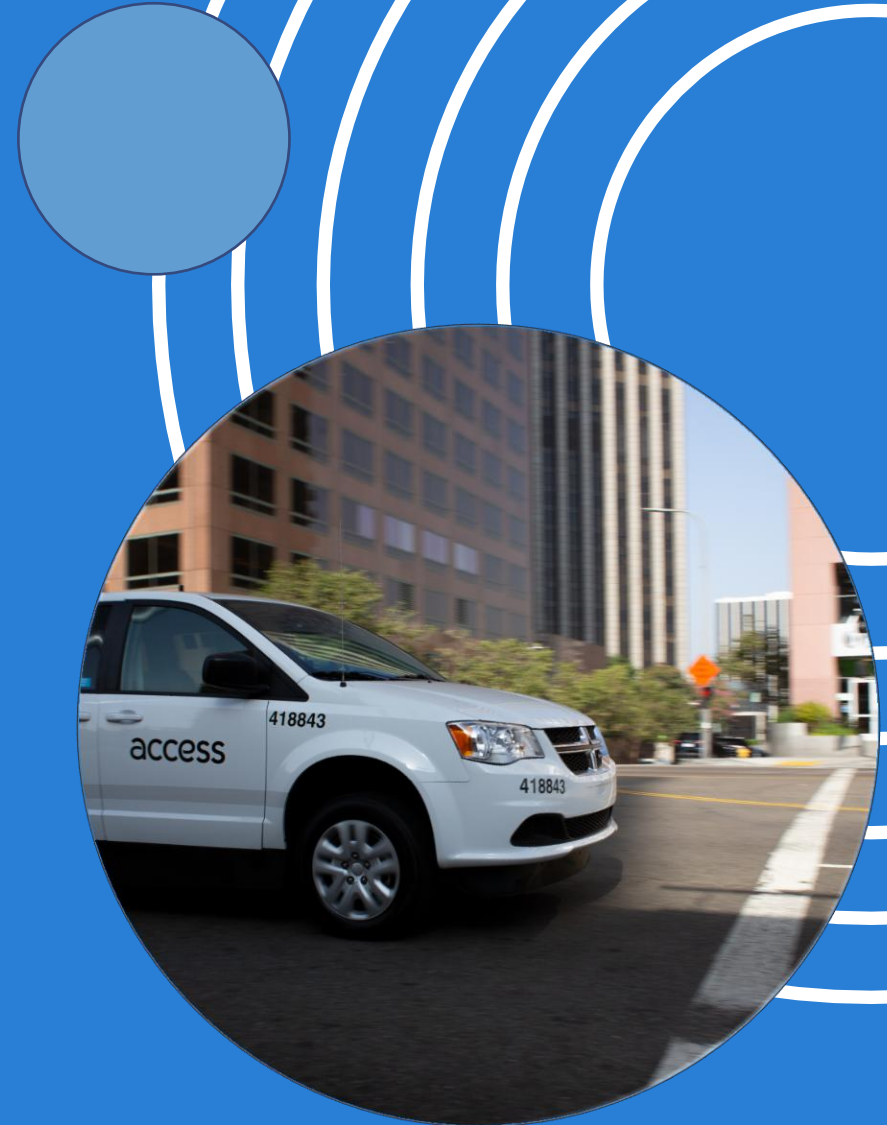
Free Rides to the Polls

- 373 trips provided on Election Day



Agency Update/Next Steps

- Continuing to work with Metro and LA28 on 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games Planning
- Initiating Access' 5-year Strategic Plan (FY 2026 - FY 2030) process
- Seeking grant funding for Access-owned operations and maintenance facilities
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Thank you!

