



Board Report

File #: 2026-0012, **File Type:** Informational Report

Agenda Number: 14.

FINANCE, BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 19, 2026

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) 2026 operational performance, community engagement 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. 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. 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 121,000 registered riders.

DISCUSSION

Operational Performance (July 2025 - December 2025)

Through December 2025, Access provided more than 2.1 million vehicle trips, a 10% increase compared to the first six months of FY25 and 2.5% over forecasted ridership projections for FY26. This ridership increase is attributed to growing rider confidence in the service as evidenced by a historic low in customer complaints and continued demand from high trip generators, like adult day health programs. Access' contractors have been able to hire and retain enough drivers, both dedicated and nondedicated (e.g. taxis), to meet this increase in demand. With year-to-date (YTD)

ridership exceeding budget projections, Metro staff will continue to closely monitor ridership growth trends, pursue cost efficiencies and external funding opportunities through the end of the fiscal year.

Attachment A includes 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 all the KPIs through December 2025. 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 2025)

As of December 2025, Access' total expenses are below the FY26 adopted budget. Although ridership is slightly above projections, operating costs remain under budget due to fewer eligibility applications and lower customer service and telecommunications call volume. Capital Rolling Stock (vehicles) will continue to be delivered through the second half of the fiscal year and design approval is pending from the City of Lancaster for the Antelope Valley facility development. See the table below.

Access Services FY26 Semi-Annual Expense Overview (\$ in millions)	YTD December 31, 2025			
	Budget	Actuals	Over / (Under) Budget	% of Budget
1 Direct Transportation	\$ 139.9	\$ 140.8	\$ 0.9	100.6%
2 Contracted Support	7.8	7.3	(0.5)	93.1%
3 Management/Administration	9.2	8.6	(0.6)	93.9%
4 Total Operating Costs	\$ 156.9	\$ 156.7	\$ (0.2)	99.9%
5 Capital Rolling Stock- New	18.9	7.3	(11.6)	38.5%
6 Facilities Development & Construction (Non-Metro)	7.6	0.0	(7.6)	0.0%
7 Total Capital Program	\$ 26.5	\$ 7.3	\$ (19.2)	27.5%
8 Total Expenses	\$ 183.4	\$ 164.0	\$ (19.4)	89.4%

Totals may not add up because of rounding

Operating Costs

Regional paratransit costs have increased due to several inflationary factors. Key drivers include significant wage increases-partly mandated by minimum wage legislation-and the higher cost of replacing retired Dodge Caravan fleet with Dodge Ram ProMasters. Additionally, a decline in taxi participation in certain areas has added to the financial pressure. To manage these costs, Access' contractors have partnered with "dedicated" transportation network companies like SilverRide, which maintain full compliance with Access' safety and training standards, including drug and alcohol testing.

Capital Costs

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 and as

engineering and construction activities begin on Access' planned facilities in the Antelope Valley and City of Compton.

It should be noted that Access has secured nearly \$40 million in grants and FEMA reimbursements to support capital priorities, including operations and maintenance facilities. Access continues to apply for outside grants and is looking to enhance the revenue it receives from the state Medi-Cal transportation program.

Federal Funding

Through the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) new regional Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) competitive process, Access requested \$283.1 million for FY27 and FY28 service operations and capital funding for its Southern Region facility. Metro staff reviewed the application and ranked it as "Highly Recommended," including it in a package of ranked STBG projects for Los Angeles County approved by the Metro Board in July 2025. Following the final submission, SCAG awarded Access a base amount of \$131.8 million for FY27 and FY28- representing 46% of the requested amount. This funding shortfall directly affects the development of the FY27 budget; consequently, Metro is working with Access to secure additional funding to bridge the gap.

Other Initiatives - Update

FIFA World Cup Planning

In June 2025, Access provided shuttle services during the Club World Cup games. Access staff continues to prepare for the eight matches to be hosted at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood in June and July 2026 and is currently working with Metro on the World Cup Operations Plan. Staff have been coordinating with Metro and other regional transit providers and anticipate entering into a formal agreement with Metro to provide additional services. Furthermore, Access' Emergency Operations Center will be activated for each World Cup game to provide an extra level of oversight.

2028 Olympic/Paralympic Games Planning

Access staff continues to work with Metro and other regional partners to prepare for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Access staff continue to meet with Metro and LA28 staff and regularly attends regional planning meetings.

In December 2025, Access brought a revised Visitor Policy to its Board to ensure that all local and international visitors can use the Access paratransit system when they come to Los Angeles County. Changes include modifying Access' systems to use international phone numbers, giving international visitors access to the Where's My Ride application and online reservations, enhancing interpreter services for non-English speaking visitors, and updating the Access website and other materials with these revised policies.

FTA Triennial Review

In May 2025, Access underwent its FTA Triennial Review, which examines how recipients of Urbanized Area Formula Program funds meet statutory and administrative requirements. The review examines 23 areas, including Financial Management and Capacity, Technical Capacity and Program Management, Maintenance, Procurement, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance. As reported by the FTA, Access achieved full compliance and no findings.

Operations and Maintenance Facilities

Access is developing agency-owned paratransit facilities as part of its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. These projects are largely funded by FEMA, Medi-Cal, and outside grants.

- **Antelope Valley (Lancaster):** NEPA review is complete and plans are under city review. Construction bids are expected in **2026**, with the facility fully operational by **Summer 2027**.
- **Southern Region (Compton):** A 6.1-acre site is currently under development in three phases. Partial occupancy is scheduled for **Summer 2026**.

Other Community Initiatives

Customer Technology Survey

Access' technology initiatives, such as Where's My Ride and online reservations, are backed by a current survey of 1,261 customers, which identified a significant, ongoing trend toward digital self-service. With high user satisfaction reported for existing tools, the agency is leveraging these insights to prioritize future enhancements like mobile ticketing. The full survey report is available at https://accessla.org/about_us/publications.html.

Community Meeting

On August 23, 2025, Access hosted a virtual Community Meeting with over 70 participants, including riders and stakeholders. Staff shared essential updates on Heat Safety Awareness, provided tips for using the Where's My Ride app, and highlighted the benefits of traveling with a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). The session concluded with an interactive Q&A where staff addressed service concerns and gathered valuable feedback on improving paratransit operations.

Access will host its next virtual community meeting on February 28, 2026. This session will focus on resources for using the Where's My Ride app and online reservations, followed by an open forum for customers to ask questions and receive individualized assistance from staff.

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, 2025, through December 31, 2025, about 44.5 percent of all trips taken by 59,997 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 virtual 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 virtual community meeting is planned for February 28, 2026.

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.

As part of these ongoing efforts, this item is expected to contribute to further reductions in VMT. This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through operational activities that will benefit and further encourage transit ridership by providing high quality shared ride services between locations within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of local bus routes and rail lines. 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:

- Developing the FY27 budget request
- Developing the 2026-2030 Access Strategic Plan

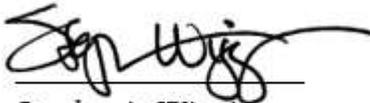
- Collaborating with Metro on Mega events planning for the 2026 World Cup and 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Seeking grant funding for Access-owned operations and maintenance facilities
- Completing the 2026 Customer Satisfaction Survey

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A - Access Services Key Performance Indicators

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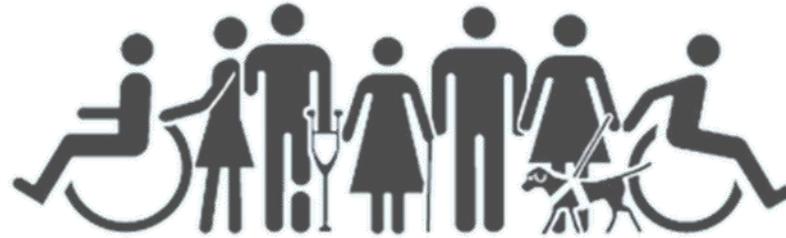
Attachment A

Access Services Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

A comparison summary of the main KPIs is provided below:

Key Performance Indicators	Standard	FY25	FY26 YTD*
On-Time Performance	≥ 91%	92.8%	92.0%
Excessively Late Trips	≤ 0.10%	0.02%	0.03%
Excessively Long Trips	≤ 5.0%	3.2%	2.9%
Missed Trips	≤ 0.75%	0.29%	0.29%
Denials	0	2	0
Access to Work - On-Time Performance	≥ 94%	96.2%	95.3%
Average Hold Time (Reservations)	≤ 120	56	57
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (Reservations)	≤ 5%	3.0%	2.9%
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (ETA)	≤ 10%	2.9%	3.6%
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips	≤ 4.0	1.9	1.8
Preventable Incidents per 100,000 miles	≤ 0.25	0.22	0.19
Preventable Collisions per 100,000 miles	≤ 0.85	0.81	0.70
Miles Between Road Calls	≥ 50,000	50,535	69,795

*Statistical data through December 2025



Access Services

Semi-Annual Update

Finance, Budget & Audit Committee
February 2026



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Denials	0	2	0
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Average Hold Time (Reservations)	≤ 120	56	57
Calls On Hold > 5 Min (Reservations)	≤ 5%	3.0%	2.9%
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Expense Overview

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8 Total Expenses ⁶	\$ 183.4	\$ 164.0	\$ (19.4)	89.4%

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¹ Ridership 2.5% above FY26 forecasted projections

² Vehicles are expected to be delivered in second half of the fiscal year

³ Antelope Valley facility - Awaiting final approval of design from City



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Other Agency Initiatives

Mega Events Planning

- Developing operations and shuttle service plans for FIFA World Cup 2026 and the 2028 Olympic/Paralympic Games

Revised Visitor Policy

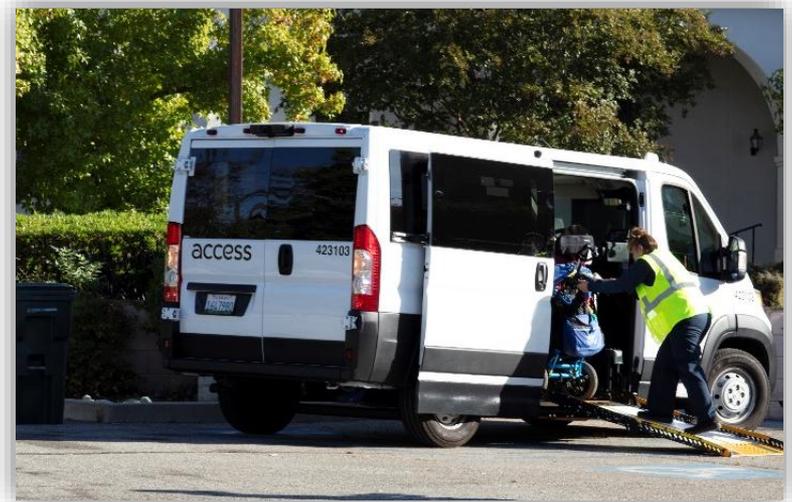
- Improved international guest access: international phone support, online booking, and enhanced interpreter services

FTA Triennial Review

- Audit of 23 functional areas (ADA, Finance & Procurement)
- Full Compliance and No findings

Operation & Maintenance Facilities

- Southern Region: Partial opening Summer 2026
- Antelope Valley: Opening Summer of 2027



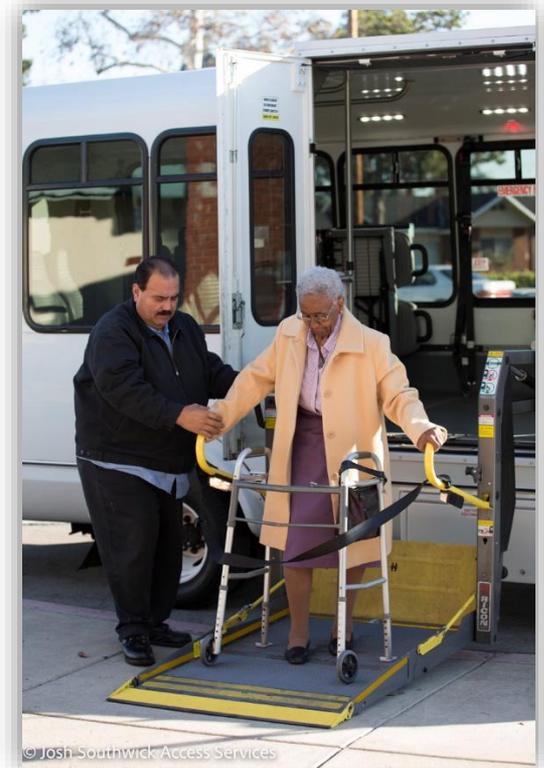
Working with the Community

Customer Technology Survey

- Approximately 1,261 customers participated
- Conducted survey to gain feedback on technological improvements
- Increased satisfaction with digital booking and tracking tools

Community Meeting

- **August 2025 Recap**
 - Heat Safety, Technology and Personal Care Attendant Updates
- **Next meeting - February 28, 2026**
 - Tips on *Where's My Ride* app and online reservations



Agency Update/Next Steps

- Developing the FY27 budget request
- Developing the 2026-2030 Access Strategic Plan
- Seeking grant funding for Access-owned operations and maintenance facilities
- Completing the 2026 Customer Satisfaction Survey



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Thank you!



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