

access

PERFORMANCE MONITORING COMMITTEE

Monday, September 20, 2021

11:00 a.m.

Webinar

Committee Members: L. Burner, Chair
A. Del Castillo
J. Wisdom

	<u>DISPOSITION</u>
1. CALL TO ORDER	ACTION
2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT	INFORMATION
3. CONSIDERATION TO AWARD ANTELOPE VALLEY REGION SERVICE PROVIDER CONTRACT (AS-4143) (page 4)	ACTION
4. CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI) PLAN (page 11)	ACTION
5. PERFORMANCE UPDATE	PRESENTATION
6. CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER REPORT	PRESENTATION
7. ADJOURNMENT	ACTION

Access Services does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Accordingly, Access Services seeks to ensure that individuals with disabilities will have an equal opportunity to participate in the range of Access Services events and programs by providing appropriate auxiliary aids and services for communications. Primary consideration is given to the request of individuals with disabilities. However, the final decision belongs to Access Services. To help ensure the availability of any auxiliary aids and services you require, please make every effort to notify Access Services of your request at least three (3) business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting in which you wish to utilize those aids or services. You may do so by contacting (213) 270-6000.

Note: Access Services Board committee meetings are held pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act [Cal. Gov. Code §54950] and are open to the public. The public may view and obtain all written information supporting this agenda provided to the Board committee both initially and supplementally prior to the meeting at the agency's offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte, California and on its website at <http://accessla.org>. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to the Board committee members by staff or Board committee members at the

meeting, will simultaneously be made available to the public. Three opportunities are available for the public to address the Board committee during a Board committee meeting: (1) before closed session regarding matters to be discussed in closed session, (2) before a specific agenda item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (3) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the Board committee is subject to restriction as to time and appropriate decorum. All persons wishing to make public comment must fill out a goldenrod Public Comment Form and submit it to the Secretary of the Board. Public comment is generally limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and the total time available for public comment may be limited at the discretion of the Chairperson. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the Board at a normal rate of speed may request an accommodation of a limited amount of additional time from the Chair but only by checking the appropriate box on the Public Comment Form. Granting such an accommodation is at the discretion of the Chair. The Board committee will not and cannot respond during the meeting to matters raised under general public comment. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act governing these proceedings, no discussion or action may be taken on these matters unless they are listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. However, the Board committee may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future Board committee meeting and the staff may respond to all public comments in writing prior to the next Board committee meeting.

Alternative accessible formats are available upon request.

*NOTE

NOTICE OF ALTERNATIVE PUBLIC COMMENT PROCEDURES

Pursuant to temporary revised Brown Act requirements, Board committee members will be participating via webinar. The public may submit written comments on any item on the agenda - 1) through email by addressing it to - board@accessla.org or 2) via US Postal mail by addressing it to - Access Services Board Comments, PO Box 5728, El Monte CA 91734. Please include your name, item number and comments in the correspondence. Comments must be submitted/received no later than 9:00 am on Monday, September 20, 2021 so they can be read into the record as appropriate.

The public may also participate via the Zoom webinar link, or by teleconference. Please review the procedures to do so as follows -

How to Provide Public Comment in a Board Meeting via Zoom

Online

1. Click the Zoom link for the meeting you wish to join. Meeting information can be found at: https://accessla.org/news_and_events/agendas.html. Make sure to use a current, up-to-date browser: Chrome 30+, Firefox 27+, Microsoft Edge 12+, or Safari 7+. Certain functionality may be disabled in older browsers including Internet Explorer. You may also use this direct link - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82409082029>
2. Enter an email address and your name. Your name will be visible online while you are speaking.

3. When the Committee Chair calls for the item on which you wish to speak, click on “raise hand.” Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak. Mute all other audio before speaking. Using multiple devices can cause an audio feedback.
4. Please note that the “Chat” feature is not enabled during the meeting for general public attendees. If you cannot use the “raise hand” feature, then please submit a written comment as outlined above.
5. When called, please limit your remarks to three minutes. An audio signal will sound at the three-minute mark and the Chair will have the discretion to mute you at any point after that. After the comment has been given, the microphone for the speaker’s Zoom profile will be muted.

Note: Members of the public will not be shown on video.

By phone

1. Call the Zoom phone number and enter the webinar ID for the meeting you wish to join. Meeting information can be found at: https://accessla.org/news_and_events/agendas.html
2. You can also call in using the following information -
Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or 888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or 833 548 0276 (Toll Free) or 833 548 0282 (Toll Free) or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free)
Webinar ID: 824 0908 2029
3. When the Committee Chair calls for the item on which you wish to speak, press *9 to raise a hand. Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak. Speakers will be called by the last four digits of their phone number. Please note that phone numbers in their entirety will be visible online while speakers are speaking.
4. If you cannot use the “raise hand” feature, the please submit a written comment as outlined above.
5. When called, please state your name and limit your remarks to three minutes. An audio signal will sound at the three-minute mark and the Chair will have the discretion to mute you at any point after that. After the comment has been given, the microphone for the speaker’s Zoom profile will be muted.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**FROM: MIKE GREENWOOD, CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER
BRUCE FRINK, SENIOR MANAGER OF FINANCE
KIMBERLIE NIMORI, PROCUREMENT COORDINATOR**

**RE: CONSIDERATION TO AWARD ANTELOPE VALLEY REGION SERVICE PROVIDER
CONTRACT (AS-4143)**

ISSUE:

Board approval is required to execute a contract for specialized ADA paratransit services in the Antelope Valley Region.

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize staff to execute Contract No. AS-4143 for transportation services in the Antelope Valley Region service area for a five (5) year and six month base period beginning November 1, 2021 and ending on April 30, 2026 (with revenue service beginning on May 1, 2022) with First Transit, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$105,091,953.

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

This action is consistent with the budget estimates for the proposed contract’s base term. Trip volume utilized in producing cost proposals was based on the projected number of trips calculated by Access’ paratransit demand consultant HDR Engineering, Inc. Contract payment terms will include start-up costs and the rates listed below. Subject to Board approval, the contract may be extended for up to an additional four (4) years in one (1) year increments. The proposed rates of compensation are as follows:

Contract Year	Monthly Fixed Rate	ADA & Access-to-Work Per Trip Rate	Eligibility, & Out-of-Service Area Rates
1	\$506,020	\$37.49	\$37.49
2	\$562,835	\$39.36	\$39.36
3	\$639,095	\$41.00	\$41.00
4	\$703,666	\$42.67	\$42.67
5	\$788,866	\$44.40	\$44.40

Contract Year	Transfer Trips	Emergency Services	Parents with Disabilities
1	\$37.49	\$63.93	TBD
2	\$39.36	\$67.10	TBD
3	\$41.00	\$69.90	TBD
4	\$42.67	\$72.75	TBD
5	\$44.40	\$75.70	TBD

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

No alternatives were considered as the current contract has no option years available. However, the Board may choose to extend the current contract on a limited term basis to re-procure the solicitation or allow for additional negotiations. Should the Board choose to extend the current contract, it is important to note that funding for the contract extension would likely have to be solely through local sales tax funds, due to applicable Federal requirements.

EFFECT OF APPROVAL OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

If the Board approves the staff recommendation, staff would be authorized, but not required, to negotiate and enter into a written contract upon terms and conditions no less favorable to Access than those proposed above. Access would not be legally bound to the contract herein proposed unless and until it is incorporated into a formal written agreement executed by all parties thereto and approved as to form by this entity’s legal counsel.

BACKGROUND:

Keolis Transit Services, LLC currently provides service in the Antelope Valley Region under Contract No. AS-3116; this contract ends April 30, 2022. In order to continue this service, Access issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on March 9, 2021.

Scope of Work Changes

The RFP made changes to the Scope of Work currently in place in the Antelope Valley Region, including:

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

1. Excessively Late Trips - changed standard from 0.10% to 0.00% with liquidated damages assessed for each occurrence.
2. Missed Trips - the standard remains at 0.75% but *preventable* missed trips will result in liquidated damages assessed for each occurrence.

Liquidated Damages

1. Additional liquidated damages were added to address issues that result in poor service quality and responsiveness.

Staffing requirements

1. Added several manager positions to the required staff to focus on service quality.
2. Added additional Road Supervisor positions (increasing from four (4) to eight (8) positions). Road Supervisors respond to collisions and incidents, as well as perform critical passenger transport to avoid late and missed trips.
3. Added a Warranty & Parts Clerk position to be responsible for the management of parts, inventory, and all manufacturer warranty claims. This is a critical position needed to meet federal guidelines, as well as properly manage maintenance costs.

Training Hours

1. The new contract requires minimum training hours for drivers, dispatchers, road supervisors, and call takers. New drivers, for example, will complete a minimum of 90 hours of training prior to being certified for service.

Other Enhancements

1. Added a cyber-security plan requirement to ensure the contractor is consistent with Access' internal policies to protect customer data.
2. Added a continuity of operations plan requirement to ensure the contractor's ability to maintain operations in the event of a wide variety of disruptions, including natural and man-made disasters.
3. Added a security plan requirement to ensure the safety of Access' vehicle assets, as well as the safety of contract and non-contract employees.

Procurement Overview

On March 9, 2021, Access issued Request for Proposals (RFP) No. AS-4143 to retain a qualified transportation service contractor to operate in the Antelope Valley Region. A Pre-Proposal Meeting was held virtually on March 31, 2021. Approximately 35 people attended the virtual meeting. Access issued six addenda to provide additional information, respond to proposer questions and extend the proposal due date.

Both printed and electronic proposals were due on June 4, 2021. Access received proposals from the following firms:

1. First Transit, Inc. (First Transit)
2. Keolis Transit Services, LLC (Keolis)
3. On-Demand Transportation Solutions, LLC

Two of the three proposals submitted were deemed responsive and the proposers responsible. The proposal submitted by On-Demand Transportation Solutions, LLC was deemed non-responsive as it did not include the required bid bond or evidence of bonding capability/capacity.

An evaluation panel was convened and a comprehensive technical evaluation followed. The evaluation panel consisted of five members: three Access staff from the Operations department,

one Access staff from the Government Affairs & Outreach department and one external technical expert from the Orange County Transportation Authority. In addition, three non-voting internal subject matter experts from Access' Finance department, Fleet Design & Maintenance department, and Information Technology department examined the proposals and reported their findings to the evaluation panel.

The proposals were evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria and associated weights:

	Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
1.	Quality of Technical Approach	15
2.	Staff Qualifications and Availability	10
3.	Quality of Proposed Operating Facility	5
4.	Employee Pay and Benefits	20
5.	Financial Qualification of Proposer	5
6.	Proposer's Paratransit Operating Experience	15
7.	State Mandated Bidding Preference	10
8.	Cost/Price Proposal	20
	TOTAL	100

During the period from June 7, 2021 through August 13, 2021, the evaluation panel conducted its independent evaluation of the proposals.

Best and Final Offers (BAFOs) were requested from both proposers. Based on the evaluation criteria and the BAFOs submitted, First Transit ranked the highest. A summary of scores is set forth below.

Evaluation Criteria	First Transit	Keolis
1. Quality of Technical Approach	13.35	12.00
2. Qualifications and Availability of Proposed Staff	9.30	7.70
3. Quality of Proposed Operating Facility	3.75	4.55
4. Employee Pay and Benefits	16.80	16.00
5. Financial Qualifications of Proposer	5.00	2.80
6. Proposer's Paratransit Operating Experience	13.65	12.15
7. State Mandated Bidding Preference	10.00	10.00
8. Cost/Price Proposal	18.81	20.00
Total	90.66	85.20

First Transit's price has been determined to be fair and reasonable based upon an independent cost estimate (**ICE**), competition, financial analysis, fact-finding, negotiations, and best and final offers. Proposer prices for the five-year base term are set forth below.

Table 1

Proposer	ICE	Original Price	BAFO
1. First Transit	\$98,970,967	\$98,625,026	\$105,091,953
2. Keolis	\$98,970,967	\$102,057,790	\$98,835,047

First Transit’s proposal includes two DBE subcontractors. The first DBE subcontractor, JCM and Associates, Inc. (dba Blue Goose Uniforms)¹, would supply driver and staff uniforms and the second DBE subcontractor, Islas Tires ², would supply tires.

Financial Analysis

Access staff analyzed all of the proposals and performed a detailed analysis of the recommended proposer. Table 2 below details the final submitted proposed costs:

Table 2

Proposer	Startup Costs (S/U)	Total 5 Year Service Cost (incl. S/U)
First Transit, Inc.	\$811,908	\$105,091,953
Keolis Transit Services, LLC	\$294,306	\$98,835,047

Regarding the variable cost component, staff found that First Transit’s proposed 36.6% increase in the per-trip rate was largely driven by the need to be competitive in the labor marketplace, the potential impact of unionization, particularly in benefits, and the rising cost of fuel. In fact, the average hourly rate for a driver in Year 1 is approximately 30% higher than what was assumed in the last year of the previous contract. Table 3 below provides more detail.

Table 3 - Variable Trip Rates

Region	FY22 Current Rate	FY23 Proposed Rate
Antelope Valley	Keolis \$27.45	First Transit \$37.49
	FY22	FY23
Southern (Global)	\$33.35	\$34.20
Eastern (SGT)	\$34.23	\$36.19
Northern (MV)	\$38.28	\$39.26
West/Central (CTI)	\$34.51	\$35.86
Santa Clarita	\$42.40	\$43.67

¹ JCM and Associates, Inc. is also a Small Business Enterprise and Minority Business Enterprise.

² Islas Tires is also a Small Business Enterprise.

Table 4 provides an overview of the Fully Loaded Rate (Fixed and Variable) for each of the six regions. As seen below, the proposed Antelope Valley Region fully-loaded rate would increase by 51% over the current fully-loaded rate. Under the FT proposal, the number of Fixed Staff is more than double the current number of Fixed Staff; this is partially attributable to new Access requirements and partially due to Fixed Labor staffing not keeping pace with the growth of ridership and fleet size, which has more than doubled since the start of the contract. Such an increase in staffing is necessary for the provider to be able to provide the proper level of support for the region.

Table 4

Fiscal Year	Santa Clarita	Northern	West Central	Eastern	Southern	Antelope Valley (Proposed)
2022	\$53.70	\$49.84	\$45.94	\$44.72	\$44.02	\$41.52
2023	\$57.15	\$51.66	\$48.24	\$46.57	\$45.07	\$62.53
2024	\$58.03	\$54.24	\$50.65	\$48.70	\$46.10	\$63.78

The significant cost differential between the two proposals is primarily related to labor/benefit costs, with First Transit offering a 17% premium for the Average Hourly Rate in Year 1 and investing over \$4,308 more per driver in Health Benefits than Keolis.

Table 5

Variable Cost Staff	First Transit	Keolis
Average Annual Employee Drivers	84	108
Driver Labor per Trip	46 Min/Trip	58 Min/Trip
Average Wage (Year 1)	\$20.41	\$17.37
Overtime Usage	5.3%	5.5%
Avg Cost of Health Benefits/Driver	\$10,995	\$6,687

The evaluation panel had additional concerns about the Keolis proposal:

1. Keolis did not elaborate on how it would respond to the effects of increasing ridership as we come out of the pandemic and did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the challenge, nor did it offer a strategic response to a question posed during their interview regarding their approach to this challenge.
2. Keolis’s proposed General Manager changed during the BAFO process. Although the resume of the newly proposed General Manager includes recent paratransit experience, dating back to 2017, the bulk of this person’s experience is over twenty years old. Given the

unique challenges of this service area, combined with the rapidly changing demands of paratransit services, lack of more recent experience was a concern to the evaluation team.

3. Keolis' proposed driver wage plan was deemed as significantly inferior to First Transit's plan. Access has learned from many years of experience that keeping the driver ranks fully staffed is a key to achieving high performance on behalf of Access riders.

Overview of Recommended Proposer

Headquartered in Cincinnati, OH, First Transit is a national transportation provider specializing in paratransit and fixed route services with decades of experience in California. First Transit currently operates paratransit service in San Diego and San Mateo Counties in California, as well as in Chicago and New Jersey, to name just a few of their areas of operation.

First Transit's proposal satisfies the Antelope Valley region scope requirements. First Transit's management approach includes an experienced group of managers, several of whom have worked on Access contracts in the past. A strong layer of external corporate oversight will also ensure compliance and is based in Southern California.

First Transit's technology approach utilizes multiple redundant systems to limit service downtime. First Transit also has a strong corporate safety culture and an analytics suite that will be available to Access' management team.

First Transit, in a clear proposal differentiator, offered a superior wage scale for drivers, and an appealing benefits plan, to attract and retain an engaged workforce.

First Transit's proposed facility will be located in the City of Lancaster, and is the same facility currently being used by the incumbent. Prior to move-in, First Transit and the landlord have committed to extensive property improvements that include fencing off the operating yard from an adjacent tenant's operation, the addition of a secondary ingress/egress point, and building improvements to the administrative offices.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**FROM: ALVINA NARAYAN, MANAGER OF TRAINING AND COMPLIANCE
MATTHEW AVANCENA, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & COORDINATION**

RE: CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI) PLAN

ISSUE:

At the request of the Board, staff has developed a draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) plan for the Agency. Staff is seeking Board feedback and approval of the plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the attached draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan.

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

There is no impact on the budget.

BACKGROUND:

Access is committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. To further this commitment, the Board of Directors requested that Access staff develop a DEI plan for the Agency, which is attached.

Initial concepts were brought to Board Committees earlier in the year for review and comment. Board feedback was received and staff was directed to develop a final DEI policy for Board review.

Staff reviewed plans from other transit agencies and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and the California Transit Association (CTA) to assist in the development of Access' plan.

Access Services Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan (Draft, 9/9/21)

Introduction

And today, America welcomes into the mainstream of life all of our fellow citizens with disabilities. We embrace you for your abilities and for your disabilities, for our similarities and indeed for our differences, for your past courage and your future dreams. Last year, we celebrated a victory of international freedom. Even the strongest person couldn't scale the Berlin Wall to gain the elusive promise of independence that lay just beyond. And so, together we rejoiced when that barrier fell.

And now I sign legislation which takes a sledgehammer to another wall, one which has for too many generations separated Americans with disabilities from the freedom they could glimpse, but not grasp. Once again, we rejoice as this barrier falls for claiming together we will not accept, we will not excuse, we will not tolerate discrimination in America.

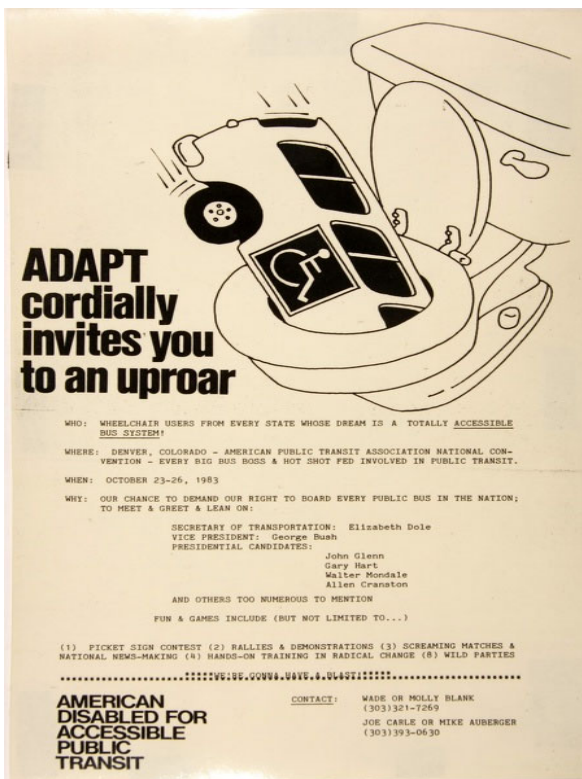
Remarks of President George H. W. Bush at the Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26, 1990)

Passed in 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was a landmark civil rights bill whose aim was to bring down barriers that prevented Americans with disabilities from being full and equal participants in society. One of the legislation's most significant accomplishments was its mandate that public transit services be accessible to people with disabilities and a requirement that all fixed-

route transit systems create a complementary paratransit system for people whose disability prevents them from using the regular fixed-route bus or rail system.

Prior to the passage of the ADA, most transit systems - both bus and rail - were not accessible to people with disabilities, particularly those in mobility devices. Disability rights advocates, led by Denver's American Disabled for Accessible Public Transit (ADAPT), began calling on their local systems to purchase accessible buses and staged protests at annual American Public Transportation Association (APTA) meetings starting in 1983.³ This activism played a significant role in the passage of the ADA and the creation of the accessible fixed-route and paratransit systems that exist today.

In 1991, the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) (which would soon merge with the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD)) funded a paratransit pilot project in the Eastern San Gabriel Valley



³ *To Ride the Public's Buses*, Edited by Mary Johnson and Barrett Shaw

called Metro Access. Subsequently, Access Services, Incorporated was created by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) as a nonprofit public benefit corporation in 1994 to fulfill the requirements of the ADA for a complementary paratransit system for Los Angeles County. Access was created as one of the few coordinated paratransit systems in the United States, fulfilling the ADA paratransit obligations on behalf of over 20 member transit agencies and allowing its customers to travel transfer-free throughout the massive Los Angeles-basin area.

Over 27 years later, the agency, now called Access Services, continues to fulfill the vision of the ADA by serving 46 member transit agencies and continuing to be a national leader in providing safe, effective and innovative paratransit to people with disabilities in Los Angeles County. Despite Access' success in serving an underserved community, it is still imperative that Access Services continue to examine both its external operational practices and its internal practices to ensure its actions are consistent with diversity, equity and inclusion principles and, where possible, go beyond existing federal mandates (e.g. Title VI, EEO, DBE). This plan will examine Access' current practices and successes and also suggest future DEI goals for the Agency. Staff has consulted policies developed by both the American Public Transportation Association and the California Transit Association as a guide in drafting Access' policy.

External Operations and Practices

As the nation's largest coordinated ADA paratransit system (and 2nd largest paratransit system overall), Access Services, from its inception, has gone beyond the federal ADA paratransit regulations. The very act by Metro to create a coordinated paratransit system for Los Angeles County provided a huge benefit to paratransit customers by allowing transfer-free paratransit throughout the Los Angeles basin. (In the absence of a coordinated system, every fixed-route transit system would have had to have formed its own paratransit system which would have created both administrative inefficiencies as well as led to limited mobility within Los Angeles County due to transfers between paratransit systems.)

Over the last five years, Access has continued its tradition of being a national leader in providing quality services to people with disabilities, a traditionally underserved population who, in Los Angeles County, are made up of one of most diverse populations in the United States.

Current Practices

Enhanced Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators that measure paratransit on-time performance and customer complaints are common in the paratransit field. Until recently, Access had six main Key Performance Indicators, which are as follows:

On Time Performance (Next Day Trips)
Excessively Late Trips (45+ min late)
Denials
Reservations Average Initial Hold Time
Reservations Calls On Hold > 5 Minutes
Complaints Per 1,000 Trips

In consultation with community groups like the CAC and the Aging, Disability and Transportation Network and the Board, Access now has seven additional KPIs, leading to enhanced quality and safety, as follows:

Excessively Long Trips
Missed Trips
On Time Performance (Access to Work)
ETA Calls On Hold > 5 Minutes
Preventable Incidents Per 100,000 Miles
Preventable Collisions Per 100,000 Miles
Miles Between Road Calls

The implementation of these new KPIs provides enhanced paratransit services to people with disabilities, an underserved community, and, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, reduced customer complaints to a record low. Furthermore, the KPIs have been integrated into nearly every regional paratransit contract to ensure equitable service is provided to every part of Los Angeles County. (One contract was awarded before the implementation of the new KPIs.)

Enhanced and Accessible Technology

Access' recent technology efforts could also be considered an act of equity and inclusion. The Agency has rejected the idea that people with disabilities don't need or want technology. Over the last several years, Access has introduced and implemented several technology enhancements like *Where's My Ride* and *online reservations*, which have made the system more useable for its customers by giving them access to technology that is taken for granted by the public at large. In addition, the Agency recently redeveloped its website to ensure it is more useable for its customers and compliant with the latest website accessibility guidelines. Furthermore, Access has been on the forefront of new accessible vehicle technology, working with vendors to develop a fully-electric paratransit vehicle as well participating in the development of accessible autonomous vehicle technology.

Special Programs

Using federal grants, Access has also created specialized programs that help customers get to work and get children to school - activities which are easy if you can drive a car but are harder on a traditional paratransit system. Access' Access to Work program, funded by a federal Section 5316 Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grant, assists Access customers who meet certain income requirements get to their jobs. The Parents with Disabilities program, originally funded by a federal Section 5317 New Freedom grant as a pilot program in the Northern Region (San Fernando Valley), helps Access customers get their children to school on time and to school activities. This program, in a modified form, was recently expanded to every region of Los Angeles County.

Emergency Preparedness

Through partnerships with the Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management, City of Los Angeles Emergency Management Department and City of Los Angeles Department on Disability, Access' Emergency Preparedness program has raised awareness and put emergency actions into

place to assist the disabled community in times of natural and manmade disasters and emergencies.

Small Business/Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Contracting Opportunities

One of the cornerstones of a successful DEI program should be ensuring that businesses from disadvantaged communities are able to compete on a level playing field for agency contracts or have opportunities to become subcontractors on prime contracts. While Access' main FTA-funded "turnkey" operations contracts (which constitute over 90 percent of the Agency's spending), have limited opportunities for subcontracting, the Agency continues to focus on improving and strengthening the Agency's small business and DBE programs.

Over the last year, Access has enhanced its DBE program to improve the participation of diverse firms on Access contracts. Recent enhancements include:

- Requiring prime contractors to list DBE subcontractors in their proposals. In addition, Access now actively monitors the use of these listed DBE subcontractors and requires that prime contractors report DBE subcontractor payments monthly. Prime contractors are prohibited from terminating DBE subcontractors without "good cause". When a termination of a DBE is requested, the prime contractor must exercise good faith efforts to substitute another DBE subcontractor.
- Including DBE networking as part of pre-proposal meetings. This is being done through video conferencing now, but this facilitates the attendance of DBEs and has increased the participation of DBEs. Access provides time for DBEs to network with primes during the pre-proposal meetings to help them identify potential DBE partners.
- Monitoring and collecting other diverse firm participation, so we have a better understanding of the types of vendors interested in Access contracts. Our proposal and contract forms have been revised to expand the categories of firms being monitored. We now track awards and payments to DBE, SBE, MBE, WBE, DVBE and other firms. This has provided us with a database of diverse firms that are interested in contracting with Access, allowing us to outreach to these firms when new procurement opportunities arise.
- Implementing a web-based award and payment tracking system, which has made reporting easier for contractors and has allowed Access to collect and track data more effectively and efficiently.
- On August 1st, Access expanded opportunities for DBEs and small businesses by implementing a small business preference program.

These enhancements have provided Access with the tools to increase opportunities for small businesses, including diverse businesses, and comply with the FTA DBE Program requirement under - "Fostering Small Business Participation" (49 CFR Part 26.39).

Future External DEI-Related Initiatives and Goals

As the transit industry continues to evolve, Access will continually assess its operations to ensure we exceed, to the extent possible, DEI minimums to provide superior paratransit service to the community we serve. Working with community advocates and the Board, Access will continue to review its practices to ensure they are consistent with DEI principles.

Specific Goals are as follows:

Operations

- On an ongoing basis, Access will review operational performance to ensure that equitable service is being provided to each of the regions it serves and to Los Angeles County as a whole.
- At least annually, Access will review its suite of Key Performance Indicators and make modifications as necessary to ensure they are still fulfilling their function to deliver reliable and safe paratransit.
- Access will serve as a resource for its member agencies and others as the region strives for a more inclusive and accessible transportation system.
- Access will continue to engage with its customers and advocacy groups to improve accessible transit options for people with disabilities.
- Access will continue to work with County partners to engage in inclusive emergency planning for the disabled community.

Technology

- Access will continue to work to see that all of the recent technological improvements, such as WMR and online reservations, are implemented in every region in Access' service area.
- Access will continue to ensure that its technology offerings, from its website to smart phone applications, meet or exceed requirements for accessibility. Access will continue to solicit diverse feedback when developing and implementing new technologies.

DBE Contracting Opportunities

- In the event that Access engages in any construction activities, Access will focus on creating contracting opportunities for DBEs. In addition, staff will include very specific language related to DBE goals in each solicitation to maximize DBE utilization.
- Work with existing contractors to find creative ways to engage DBEs or small businesses to perform paratransit trips.
- Further examine contractual requirements that may impede DBE participation, such as insurance requirements.

Customer Surveys

- Ensure that future customer surveys collect essential information about the customers we serve.

Internal Operations and Practices

This plan also sought to look at Access' own internal operations through a DEI lens.

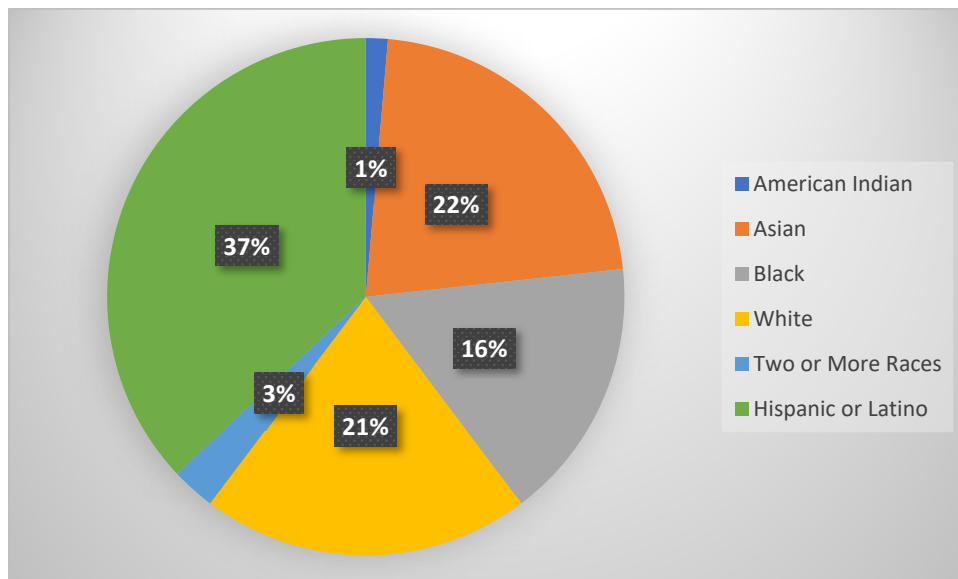
Current Practices

Governance

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Access starts at the top with the Agency's governance. Access is one of the only agencies in the United States that reserves two Board seats (out of nine) for advocates for people with disabilities via appointments by the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities and the Los Angeles County Independent Living Centers. These seats have historically been filled by persons with disabilities who are also Access customers. Other Access Board seats are and historically have been filled by persons with disabilities and Access customers. Currently, the Access Services Board of Directors is reflective of the diversity of Los Angeles County and the customers that Access serves.

Ensuring a Diverse Workforce

Access has a workforce that reflects the diversity in Los Angeles County:



Access Services' recruitment methods are focused upon drawing candidates from the largest available source of candidates possible. Job listings outside of the agency are posted with a variety of sources. Access currently advertises notices of job opportunities in a variety of places. Locations used for job postings include the Access Services website (Accessla.org), the Access Services list-serve group, recruitment websites such as LinkedIn.com, Monster.com, CareerBuilder.com, ZipRecruiter and CraigslistLA.org; industry-specific websites such as TransitTalent.com, Governmentjobs.com, Passenger Transport, Conference of Minority Transportation Officials

(COMTO) and Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) as well as advertising open positions with the California State Employment Development Department (EDD).

Pre-pandemic, Access partnered with the Millennium Momentum Foundation to implement an internship program that expressly recruits students from diverse backgrounds to explore a career path in paratransit, develop knowledge and skills with the ultimate goal of transitioning to full time employment. Access has had great success with this program, and recently hired and promoted a former MMF intern, Onnika Payne, as our Strategic Planner. It is expected that once the pandemic subsides that Access will restart this partnership if possible.

The most recent EEO analysis of Access' workforce can be found in [Table 1](#).

Educating Access and Los Angeles County Transit Agency Staff

As the designated Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) for LA County, Access has sponsored a number of educational programs focusing on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for both our own staff and staff from other transit agencies. In recent months we have hosted *Intergenerational Training, Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace* and a class on *Unconscious Bias*. These classes will be a regular part of the CTSA curriculum moving forward.

Supporting Diverse Organizations and Staff Education

Access has supported its staff's participation in organizations like APTA, COMTO, WTS, Latinos in Transit (LIT) & ENO to further their education and professional development. In addition, Access has embraced continuing education for its staff members, offering education assistance and supporting scholarship opportunities, particularly through APTA. Access employees have received tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships from APTA to assist with obtaining their college degrees.

Future Internal DEI-Related Initiatives and Goals

Governance

- The Agency should examine and develop as part of its Mission, Vision and Values statement a commitment to DEI principles. This could be a topic at a planned retreat of the Board of Directors.

Ensuring a Diverse Workforce

- Although Access has a diverse and representative workforce, Access' recently submitted Equal Employment Opportunity Plan for 2021-2024 identified specific areas of "underutilization" of female employees at the Executive level in the Agency. Access leadership will work with the Manager of Human Resources to develop strategies to ameliorate this underutilization. Access leadership will also work to develop strategies to increase the employment of people with disabilities at the Agency. Challenges to these efforts include the fact that turnover at the Agency historically has been very low and the number of FTEs at the Agency has declined over the last ten years due to the outsourcing of the customer service call center.
- The Director of Administration and the Manager of Human Resources will review Access' Employee Handbook and develop a DEI policy/statement to include in the handbook.

- As soon as practicable, Access will restart its internship program to recruit and develop students from diverse backgrounds into the Agency.
- Access will consult with its contractors to ensure a diverse and representative workforce, particularly for people with disabilities, and look at how it can serve the Los Angeles County community at large as an advocate for employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Educating Access and Los Angeles County

- It is critical for Access to maintain knowledge and awareness of evolving DEI perspectives. Access will continue its education efforts by implementing additional DEI educational opportunities through its CTSA. Providing DEI education opportunities will allow transit professionals to learn about these critical topics in a positive and constructive environment that enables them to take DEI knowledge back to their respective agencies.
- In an effort to advance DEI growth at Access Services, all staff will complete annual educational classes. The DEI classes will further cultivate and advance DEI initiatives amongst staff.

TABLE 1
CURRENT ACCESS SERVICES EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS (MARCH 2021)

Job Categories	Salary	Current Employee Numbers as of March 2021															Current Percentage		Availability Factor		Percent of Underutilization			
		All Employees			Minority Employees																			
		Total	Male	Female	Male						Female													
					White	Black	Hispanic	Asian / Pacific Islander	American Indian	Recognized Dual Race	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian / Pacific Islander	American Indian	Recognized Dual Race								
Minority	Female	Minority	Female	Percent Minority	Number Minority	Percent Female	Number Female																	
Executive & Senior Officials & Managers*	\$112,551 - \$305,000	9	9	0	5	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	44.4%	0.0%	28.0%	51.3%	-16.4%	-1	51.3%	5
First & Mid-Officials/Managers**	\$89,604 - \$173,086	7	4	3	2	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	85.7%	42.9%	47.9%	50.7%	-37.8%	-3	7.8%	1
Professionals**	\$50,265 - \$143,046	26	15	11	3	2	4	5	0	0	0	4	3	5	0	0	88.5%	42.3%	47.9%	50.7%	-40.6%	-11	8.4%	2
Technicians**	\$48,834 - \$85,460	11	7	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	63.6%	36.4%	47.9%	50.7%	-15.7%	-2	14.3%	2
Administrative Support & Service Workers**	\$40,695 - \$85,460	19	8	11	2	3	5	0	1	0	0	1	7	1	0	1	100.0%	57.9%	47.9%	50.7%	-52.1%	-10	-7.2%	-1
TOTAL		72	43	29	12	6	15	8	1	1	1	6	13	8	0	1	81.9%	40.3%	47.9%	50.7%	-32.5%	-26	14.9%	8

	Total	Male	Female	Minority Employees												
				Male						Female						
				White	Black	Hispanic	Asian / Pacific Islander	American Indian	Recognized Dual Race	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian / Pacific Islander	American Indian	Recognized Dual Race	
Persons with Disabilities	4	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Veterans	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Notes:
 * - Executive Availability Factor calculated against National census numbers.
 ** - Managers, Professionals, Office & Clerical Job Categories Availability Factor calculated against Los Angeles County Census population numbers.