



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

Yesterday, the Metro Finance, Budget and Audit Committee approved regional funding for Access' FY 27 budget. The Access budget, along with subsidies for other transit operators, was heard in July instead of June this year because of the 2026 World Cup schedule. Next week, Access' regional funding will go to the full Metro Board for approval.

These actions come after the Access Services Board of Directors approved the proposed FY2027 budget in late June. As reported in the last edition of Behind the Scenes, Access is planning to provide over 4.4 million vehicle trips to the region. Overall, the operating budget is based on a funding level of \$346.9 million of which Contract Operations represents 90.6% of the total operating budget. Capital funding is budgeted at \$30.8 million for vehicle replacement and the continued development of Access' facilities in the Antelope Valley and Southern Regions.

More detailed information about the 2027 Access budget can be found on the Access website at www.accessla.org.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

access

Access staff attends WTS International Conference in Los Angeles

Los Angeles recently hosted the 2026 WTS International Conference, bringing together over 1,200 transportation professionals from across North America to advance the role of women in the industry and explore the future of mobility. Set against the backdrop of the region's preparations for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the conference highlighted key priorities including infrastructure investment, multimodal integration, and inclusive planning.



Attendees from public agencies, private firms, academia, and nonprofits engaged in discussions on climate resilience, equitable access, and the evolving role of transportation professionals. Equity emerged as a central theme, with panels emphasizing inclusive design, community engagement, and strategies to better serve historically underserved populations.

Innovation and accessibility were also a key focus. Sessions highlighted advancements in zero-emission fleets, microtransit, and data-driven solutions, as well as technologies supporting independent travel for people with disabilities and older adults.

Workforce development remained a cornerstone, with leadership workshops, career panels, and mentorship opportunities aimed at strengthening professional growth and fostering inclusive workplace cultures.

The conference concluded with a strong message: the future of transportation relies not only on infrastructure and technology, but on a diverse, empowered workforce. Participants left with new insights, strengthened connections, and a shared commitment to building a more inclusive and sustainable transportation system.

I would like to thank Latisha Anderson and Onnika Payne for volunteering at the conference.

Alvina Prasad
Senior Manager, Training & Compliance

Access staff moderated and presented at the 2026 APTA Mobility Conference

Hector Rodriguez, Deputy Executive Director and I recently attended the 2026 APTA Mobility Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. The conference focused on key priorities and challenges facing bus and paratransit systems, as well as the evolving mobility landscape. Attendees participated in specialty workshops, APTA's bus display, products and services showcase, and technical tours.



As Vice Chair of APTA's Technologies for Vehicle Automation and Connectivity committee, I was invited to moderate "The Rise of Autonomous Transit Networks" panel discussion. I also presented Access Services' Accessible Autonomous Vehicle pilot project and several assistive technologies designed to improve the ADA rider experience. Panelists included Dav Jackson, Managing Partner at Gartner; Chris Burls, Vice President at MV Transportation; Rob Bryans, Principal at VIA; Michael Godemberg, Planner at NYC; Matthew Kalish, Project Manager at VHB; and William Frazer, CIO at JTA. The discussion covered regulatory compliance, vehicle availability, infrastructure readiness, technology trends, and lessons learned from several FTA funded AV pilot projects.

Bill Tsuei
Director of IT

Commendations

ALTA - Customer Service

"I want to give John K. a smile. He was very polite and very patient. I like it when I get John because he takes his job to heart. He is a very nice man."

Kathryn P.
Rider since August 2014

Eastern Region

"The driver was amazing. He was picking up another rider who had just come out of surgery, and he was so kind and patient with her. He was very gentle, making sure she had everything she needed and was comfortable with her ride. I know he was on a schedule, but he still made time to be kind. I was in awe of his actions and wanted to commend him."

Dominique L.
Rider since June 2012