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# access Behind the Scenes

## Executive Director's Report

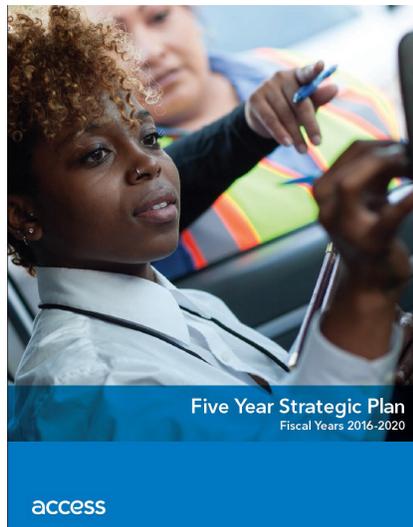
I am pleased to report that the Access Services Board of Directors approved the Agency's FY 16/17 budget at its June meeting.

Overall the budget is based on a funding level of \$163.2 million of which Paratransit Operations represents 83.29% of the total budget. The budget will provide for the projected delivery of 4.64 million passenger trips and 32.3 million contract revenue miles, a 3.6% increase over the FY2015/16 budget. Access will also be replacing 172 vehicles as part of its ongoing vehicle replacement program.

Access' main funding sources include \$82 million in Proposition C Local Sales Taxes; \$63.3 million from a Federal (FTA) Section 5310 grant (flexed from the Surface Transportation Program); \$9.7 million from passenger fares and the remainder from other grant programs.

*By Shelly Verrinder,  
Executive Director*

## Access Board Approves Five-Year Strategic Plan



At the June 27th Access Services Board of Directors meeting, the Board adopted the Access Services Five Year (2016-2020) Strategic Plan. The Plan sets forth some goals that Access intends to pursue over the next several years that are designed to respond to increasing demand for paratransit eligibility and paratransit trips while at the same time improving the customer experience and ensuring that Access seeks out new sources of funding. This is to ensure Access will continue to provide service to its customers at levels of safety and reliability that Access' customers and member agencies have come to expect.

The years ahead for Access Services are expected to be challenging as it is projected that there will be an increase in the number of persons with disabilities seeking paratransit eligibility and more customers seeking paratransit trips. For Access, it is critical that the agency develops a series of goals to meet these challenges and also shares these aims with the public so that our customers and partners are aware of the organization's goals and can comment on them as well.

Throughout the period where the Strategic Plan was being developed, Access staff gathered feedback from the Community Advisory Committee, the Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee, regional transit committees (BOS and LTSS), Access management and Access' Board of Directors. Among some of the innovative goals Access is pursuing are to expand the agency's customer education and develop a mobile application to improve the customer experience with paratransit service.

Persons interested in reviewing the approved version of Access Services' Strategic Plan can see it on Access Services' website at:

[http://accessla.org/uploads/files/Access\\_2016%20Strategic%20Plan\\_Draft.pdf](http://accessla.org/uploads/files/Access_2016%20Strategic%20Plan_Draft.pdf)

*By Eric J. Haack, Strategic Planner*

## Downey Medical Therapy Unit Education Fair

On June 21st, I attended the Downey Medical Therapy Unit Education Fair located at Downey Adult School Career and Education Center (DAS).

The event was coordinated by Physical Therapist and Pediatric Certified Specialist, Julie Woods and Intermediate Clerk, Martha Burgos. This was their first education fair at MTU, which provides high-quality, relevant and accessible programs for youth and adults by providing personal enrichment and gainful employment. Project Administrator Randy Johnson and I spoke with the students about Access and the Downey Dial-A-Ride. The staff at MTU also supplied Dial-A-Ride information and applications to attendees.

Parents expressed gratitude for having their questions answered regarding Access eligibility, standing orders, transportation options for other counties and the Access service area. Access looks forward to participating again in this annual event.

*Stephen Wrenn, Senior Mobility Management Counselor*

## LA County Commission on Disability Awards Scholarship Ceremony



On Tuesday June 28th, Access Board Member John Troost and Senior Manager of Customer Service Sherry Kelley had the pleasure of attending the Los Angeles County Commission on Disability Awards Scholarship Ceremony. This event is held annually at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration in Downtown Los Angeles.

The Commission and award recipients had the pleasure of meeting First District County Supervisor Hilda Solis, who is also currently serving as Chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Solis spoke and congratulated the winners. She delivered a powerful message about how leadership and empowerment are two key elements of success.

All of the recipients expressed their thanks to the County Board of Supervisors and the County Commission on Disability for their awards. Overall, it was a great event and I look forward to attending next year.

*By Louis Burns, Customer Service Administrator*



## State Council on Developmental Disabilities

On Thursday evening I attended a meeting at the Glendale Office of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) to make a presentation and answer questions about Access Services.

During the Q & A period, some service issues and suggestions were brought to my attention, including being able to book trips online. I listened to their suggestions and agreed to gather more information to share with them at a later meeting. This group had much to say, and they

did so with a lot of laughter, which made the evening quite pleasant. It should be noted that Access also received numerous commendations from those in attendance.

The SCDD ensures that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the planning, design, and receipt of services and support systems that they need to promote increased independence, productivity, and inclusion. SCDD is responsible for identifying improvements and to improving services for individuals and their families, including transportation, which are then submitted to the federal government in the form of a State Plan.

*By Louis Burns, Customer Service Administrator*

## Access meets with African and Middle Eastern Delegates



On Friday, June 24th, I participated in a forum on Community Approaches to Social Issues with a delegation representing the countries of Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Mali, Morocco, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

The majority of the discussion focused on the disabled community and the transportation issues that they experience in each country. The delegation also discussed other social issues and the difficulties that they have in obtaining financial support from private companies in assisting the disabled community. Members of the delegation from Morocco, Egypt and Mali also talked about the progress that their countries are making in integrating people with disabilities into society.

It was a unique event and I was pleased that I was able to share Access' perspective with these leaders from other countries.

*Louis Burns, Customer Service Administrator*

**Access Services  
Consolidated Transportation  
Services Agency**  
PO Box 5728  
El Monte, CA 91734

Tel: 213.270.6000  
Fax: 213.270.6055  
Email: [info@accessla.org](mailto:info@accessla.org)  
[accessla.org](http://accessla.org)

## Rider Comments

"Driver Fabian very attentive, very patient, very good driver, and very good at securing scooter. Driver Marcos is a real gentlemen, excellent conductor, secures scooter very well, and is very patient."

Rocio Robledo  
(customer since May 2008)

"Driver was so kind. Driver pulled up and got out and made sure I got out and took me to the front door of the store. His job is to get me there and I'm on my own but he went out of his way to accommodate my personal needs."

Betty Davis  
(customer since June 1996)

## Access Board of Directors Meeting

The Access Board of Directors recently met on June 27th and took a number of actions:

- The Board passed the Consent Calendar which included changes related to eligibility transportation in the Antelope Valley, software licensing and support contracts extensions, purchase of staff and service vehicles, telephone interpreting services contract extension, facility lease extension in Lancaster, and a number of other items.
- The Board approved Access' FY2016-17 budget.
- The Board approved Access' five-year Strategic Plan.
- The Board authorized an increase of the Board stipend for Access-related business.
- The Board authorized the closing of Metro's review of Access Services.

The full Agenda can be found at [accessla.org](http://accessla.org). If you have any questions about these Board actions, please feel free to contact me.

*Andre Colaiace, Deputy Executive Director, Planning and Governmental Affairs*

