



Behind the Scenes

Access Funding Update

I am happy to report that the Metro Executive Management Committee unanimously approved funding for Fiscal Year 2014 at its meeting on June 20, 2013. The approved motion will now be presented to the full Metro Board of Directors, on the Consent Calendar, on June 27, 2013. Access staff is supportive of the motion and looks forward to working with the Metro Board of Directors and staff on planning, coordination, education, and funding issues. Passage of full and continued funding for Access will help ensure we are able to provide essential paratransit service throughout Los Angeles County for 135,000 riders with disabilities. The approved motion is as follows:

Metro Executive Management Committee

June 20, 2013

MOTION RELATED TO ITEM 67 (Access Services)

Director Knabe, Chairman Antonovich and Director Katz

Access Services is the agency that administers Los Angeles County's Coordinated Paratransit Plan on behalf of the County's 43 public fixed-route operators, including Metro. Access provides these federally-mandated paratransit services to certain eligible persons with disabilities who cannot ride the accessible public fixed-route buses and trains. This is a critically-important transit service for many of the County's most vulnerable residents

and we need to ensure that this service is not only maintained but is also of the highest quality.

Access receives funding from Metro to provide this service according to the minimums established in the Americans with Disabilities Act, which defines that the paratransit service area as % of a mile on either side of a local transit route. We were recently notified that due to Metro's development of a new standard Los Angeles County transit map (511), Access is now providing service to customers who are now no longer in the service area or who travel to locations not in the service area. Access has determined that approximately 2,085 individuals are now technically no longer eligible for their services.

This Board needs to be aware of how changes to local transit routes may impact our paratransit services. Metro needs to do this proactively, but to date, this analysis has only been done after the fact, which is one reason why we are in this predicament today. It simply does not make sense that one person is eligible for this service while their neighbor that is only ten feet away is not.

We need to make sure we are doing all that we can to ensure that this service is provided in a consistent, yet compassionate manner. At the same time, this Board needs to ensure that Access is given the appropriate oversight to make certain that it is operating in the highest possible manner.

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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
accessla.org

Access Funding cont.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the MTA Board of Directors approve the Access budget for Fiscal Year 2014 subject to the following.

Instruct the CEO to:

A. Ensure that any future discussions regarding changes to any fixed-route

service include a thorough cost benefit analysis of the impact to our ADA

paratransit services.

B. Closely coordinate with local transit providers, including municipal dial-a-rides and other paratransit service to assist patrons.

C. Identify supplemental federal and state funds, including grants, to augment

the Access budget that can be used in the near-term to Grandfather-In current Access clients that now find themselves out of the service area.

D. Return at the December Board Meeting with an independent review using an outside contractor that includes the following:

- Customer satisfaction survey of Access patrons;
- Review and analysis of projected demand for Access for the next five years;
- Listing of all federal and state funds eligible for Access and their projected uses;
- Funding plan, including cost and demand mitigation strategies;

- Performance and financial review of Access, including review of their eligibility certification criteria, Access service provided compared to the ADA requirements; and

- Longer term strategy and options to apply future service changes to current Access clients.

E. Work with Access to incorporate findings and recommendations of the above review into Access operations and budget request for Fiscal Year 2015.

Shelly Verrinder
Executive Director