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# Behind the Scenes

## Executive Report

Good news! On Thursday, June 27th the Metro Board of Directors unanimously approved the Access funding for Fiscal Year 2013/14 and on Monday, July 1st the Access Board of Directors approved the Budget for Fiscal Year 2013/14. I would like to thank everyone who assisted Access staff in making phone calls, attending Committee/ Board meetings, and educating the Metro Board of Directors about Access Services. Your contributions are truly appreciated and we could not have done it without you.

The budget is based on demand projections, available funding, existing programs, and capital needs. Overall the budget will provide for delivery of 3.6 million passengers and 25.5 million contract revenue miles, a 3.5% increase over last year. The \$136.7 million budget represents the following:

- 81.2% Paratransit Operations
- 9.2% Capital Projects
- 5.2% Eligibility Determination
- 4.0% Administration
- 0.4% Consolidated Transportation Services Agency

Thank you again for your support and we look forward to working together to make this year better than ever.

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## Southern Region Community Meeting - Summer 2013



Approximately 220 customers and PCA's attended the Access Community Meeting in the Southern Region on June 19th. The Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center in Downey was an excellent facility to host the meeting and has been for several years. The facility was able to accommodate all our customers with a large room, pick-up and drop-offs went smooth, and the entire facility was accessible to our customers.

The meeting started out with a presentation covering Access' latest efforts to provide quality ADA paratransit service and information promoting other accessible forms of transportation. Access Operations Supervisor Phillip Rice covered our safety programs including SmartDrive and the wheelchair

marking and tethering program. Operations Supervisor Hamilton Franco presented two of Access' recognition programs, the customer focused Helping Hands Program and frontline staff targeted Superior Service Awards. Information was also presented on Southern California 511 and the Free Fare Program.

After the presentation, Alfredo Torales, Access Project Administrator, and Luis Garcia, General Manager for Global Paratransit, the service provider for the Southern Region, led the question and answer portion of the meeting. A lively discussion on issues related to late trips, travel times, and call hold times took place. Mr. Torales and Mr.

(cont. on pg 2)

## Southern Region (cont.)

Garcia offered valuable advice on how to best utilize the service, including information on when to call Customer Service and the Operations Monitoring Center. Plenty of customers also offered numerous commendations for drivers and reservationists and were thankful for the overall service improvements. Many customers shared that they would not be able to get around without Access. Overall, the goal of the meeting was met: to receive valuable feedback on how to improve the service and to find out where Access is doing a good job of providing quality ADA service.

*Alfredo Torales*  
Project Administrator



## Traffic Comes To A Stand Still In Mid-City



On June 24th, in the Los Angeles Mid-City area, traffic came to a stop when two LAPD officers were shot early that morning. This incident, in the Access Services West Central Region, caused mayhem in major traffic congestion because of the 25-block street closure. The perimeter was blocked off for hours starting before 6:00am and went on throughout the afternoon and some areas into the late evening. These types of events often make it difficult for Access to operate on-time and efficiently. This caused other neighboring streets and the Westbound 10 Freeway to become backed up. When events such as

this occur, Access and its service providers go into high gear. Access Customer Service and the Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) are also notified in the event customers call in to inquire about the event itself or their trip that may happen to be in the affected area. Service providers attempted to contact customers in the affected area to avoid major service disruptions or customer inconvenience. This is just one of many challenges Access faces on a daily basis.

*Geoffrey Okamoto*  
Project Administrator

## West Central Community Meeting - Summer 2013

On June 20, 2013, Access Services held a community meeting in its West Central Region at Plummer Park in West Hollywood, California. It was a well-attended meeting in which Access presented some of the projects and programs they are working on as well as provided information about the service. These meetings are to get a pulse of its customer base, to meet and greet, and to put a face to the service that we provide everyday. Access enjoys meeting its customers to discover what we are doing right, but also to find out what we can improve. The service Access provides is one that requires the assistance and cooperation from its customers as well as its service providers. The more knowledgeable our customers become about what we do and what we don't do, the more

successful Access Services will become.

*Jessica Thompson*  
Operations Supervisor



## FTA Grantee Management Review

On June 18th, 19th and 20th, Access hosted representatives from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the DMP Group (an auditing firm hired by the FTA) for a three day intensive Grantee Management Review, which served as an audit of the work that Access performs ensuring that Access is following Federal guidelines.

Access receives a special audit of this kind directly from the FTA once every three years because Access receives approximately half of its funding directly from the FTA. Much of the remainder of Access' funding comes through Metro by way of local Los Angeles County sales tax monies. It is because Access purchases vehicles and funds provider operations with Federal money, that the FTA performs this audit to ensure that Access is wisely spending taxpayer dollars.

After Access staff effectively responded to questions

raised by the auditing team, the audit team visited two of Access' service providers: MV Transportation in Van Nuys and Diversified Transit in Lancaster. The auditors were impressed with the operations handled by the providers both in terms of their attention to detail in performing regular maintenance on Access vehicles and also on effectively providing paratransit services over an area as large as Los Angeles County.

At the time of this writing, representatives of the DMP Group and FTA are working on drafting a final report for Access following the audit and Access should have a copy of such by the end of July.

For further information on Access' Grantee Management Review process, please feel free to ask me or Matthew Avancena.

*Eric Haack*  
Strategic Planner

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## Rider Comments

I called in to say that Access has been very humanitarian with the elderly, I love you guys very much and am very appreciative of all the services you provide for me.

Consuelo M.

## Helping Hand Winners!



Our April winner, Ms. Katie Wheeler of Lancaster, she frequently travels in the Santa Clarita region and enjoys her drivers. She has accomplished many trips from December of last year to now without a "no show or late cancellation".

She has been using our services since 2008, and has expressed deep and sincere appreciation for the level of service and professionalism she has experienced with Access Services. Operations Supervisor team will present Ms. Wheeler with our signature "Helping Hand" pin.



Our May winner, Ms. Neda Rasmi of Valencia, she has used our services since 2008 enjoying our long-term relationship and is thankful for our professionalism, services and support. Ms. Rasmi has befriended many of our drivers and call takers and continues to enjoy and respectful those relationships. In the last six months, Ms. Rasmi has taken 127 trips with no occurrences of "no shows or late standing orders". Access Services will honor, Ms. Rasmi with our signature "Helping Hand" award during the week of June 25th, for her friendship, dedication and loyalty.

*Hamilton Franco*  
 Operations Supervisor

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