

T&E COMMITTEE #3
September 22, 2016

MEMORANDUM

September 20, 2016

TO: Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment (T&E) Committee
FROM: Glenn Orlin, ^{GO} Deputy Council Administrator
SUBJECT: Briefing – MetroAccess Program

Committee Chair Berliner has requested a briefing on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) MetroAccess Program, which provides regional paratransit service to those unable readily to use the fixed-route transit (rail and bus) transit system. The eligibility requirements for the program are on ©1-3.

Periodically the Committee has asked for updates to the program, mainly addressing concerns about performance. The program is overseen by WMATA's Accessibility Advisory Committee that meets monthly, and at each meeting it receives a Complaint Resolution Report, an recent example of which is on ©4-6. There is also a regular Performance Report; the June 2016 report is on ©7-10. With one exception, the performance appears have changed little during the last fiscal year, meeting most of the stated goals.

The exception is the number of collisions, which have increased by nearly 17% per 100,000 service miles. At the same time, WMATA reports that "preventable" collisions have declined by more than 21%, suggesting a large increase in collisions not due to driver error. Nevertheless, the MetroAccess passenger injuries increased in FY 2016 by about 69% per 100,000 service miles.

Christian Kent, WMATA's Assistant General Manager, Access Services, will conduct the briefing and answer questions. His presentation is on ©11-16.

MetroAccess Eligibility Requirements

MetroAccess is the region's complementary paratransit service offered in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Unlike non-emergency medical transportation, MetroAccess is a shared ride **public transportation** service for people who are unable to use the accessible fixed-route Metrobus and Metrorail public transit due to disability. MetroAccess can be used for any trip purpose within 3/4 of a mile of areas serviced by Metrobus and Metrorail, during the same hours of operation as regular Metrobus and Metrorail service. "Shared ride" means that multiple passengers may ride together in the same vehicle.

The service provides daily trips throughout the Washington Metropolitan region, including the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. Rides are offered in the same service areas and during the same hours of operation as Metrorail and Metrobus. MetroAccess is a service of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro), and is the region's complementary paratransit service offered in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To be eligible for MetroAccess service, an applicant **must**:

Have a disability as defined by the ADA, and be unable to utilize the Metrobus and Metrorail system some or all of the time as a result of their disability.

OR

Need to use a ramp or wheelchair lift to board or exit a public transit vehicle, but an accessible public transit vehicle is not being used at the time, date, and on the route you would travel. (All Metrobuses are wheelchair accessible.)

OR

Be unable to travel to or from a bus stop or rail station due to a disability, or an accessible pathway to a bus stop or rail station is not available.

top ▲

Applying For MetroAccess Services
 In Person Interview and Assessment
 Changes in MetroAccess Eligibility
 Recertification for MetroAccess Service
 Applying for Visitor's Status

Applying for MetroAccess Service

To determine if a customer is eligible to use MetroAccess, an application must be completed and certified by a health care professional. You can obtain an application by:

downloading online MetroAccess application . If you have a visual disability and require a Microsoft Word version or large print version of the application please email eligibility@wmata.com or contact our office so we can accommodate your request.
 calling 202-962-2700 and select option 1 or TTY 202-962-2033 or
 by email eligibility@wmata.com
 by requesting in writing to:
 Metro Transit Accessibility Center
 600 Fifth Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20001

The applicant must ensure that the healthcare provider documents all of their disability(ies) and how it prevents them from using the accessible Metrobus or Metrorail systems. Please ensure to download the application only from the Metro web site. Outdated applications from external websites/agencies will not be accepted. Please ensure to read and follow the instructions on page 2 of the application. The current application version is dated July 2012.

Once the application has been completed, please contact the Transit Accessibility Center at (202) 962-2700 and select option 5 to talk with one of our specialists, at which time an assessment appointment and interview will be scheduled. Please do not mail or fax the application. Spanish applications are also available upon request. **All assessments for MetroAccess eligibility are by appointment only.**

1

Aplicaciones de español también están disponibles bajo petición. Spanish 

top ▲

In-Person Interview and Assessment

The final stage in the application process is the in-person interview and functional assessment. The interview and assessment appointment will be conducted at our main headquarters building in Washington DC, where the applicant's independent travel skills and ability to use public transportation will be evaluated, including the ability to walk or travel a measured distance. During the interview, the applicant will also be given information regarding Metro's Reduced Fare Program for Metrobus and Metrorail service.

If a mobility aid is used, it must be brought to the assessment, along with the completed original and signed application.

MetroAccess will provide transportation to the interview free of charge from all locations within the core service area. The specialist will inform the applicant when scheduling the appointment if the pick-up address falls within the core service area. Applicants also have the option of providing their own transportation to the appointment.

Once the assessment is complete, the applicant will receive written notification of the accessible travel option that best fits their travel needs within 7 to 10 business days after assessment. If it is determined that the applicant qualifies for MetroAccess, we also will send you a MetroAccess Identification Card.

If the applicant is found not eligible for paratransit services they may be eligible for the Reduced Fare Program for People with disabilities. If eligible they will be automatically enrolled and will receive a Reduced Fare (Disability) ID card. Applicants have the right to appeal if found ineligible for MetroAccess and information on the appeal process will be sent along with notification of ineligibility.

Our office is located at:

Metro Headquarters
Transit Accessibility Center (Lobby Level)
600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

top ▲

Changes in MetroAccess Eligibility

MetroAccess reserves the right to require a new eligibility assessment at any time. Reasons a new eligibility assessment might be required include, but are not limited to:

- instances when there may have been possible improvements in a customer's ability to use public transit and/or
- removal of physical barriers that previously prevented using accessible public transportation.

Recertification for MetroAccess Service

All MetroAccess customers are required to recertify for service periodically. Approximately 60 and 30 days prior to the expiration of a customer's eligibility, a reminder phone call will be made informing the customer that their eligibility for service is due to expire. At that time they will be directed to contact the Transit Accessibility Center to obtain an application for service. It is important to note that while we attempt to contact each customer, it is the customer's responsibility to ensure that they are recertified for the service prior to the expiration of their eligibility period. As a reminder to customers all MetroAccess ID cards have the expiration date printed on the front of the ID card.

Applying for Visitor's Status for Paratransit

Visitors to the Washington, DC metropolitan area who are unable to use the accessible Metrorail, Metrobus or other local bus service because of their disabilities, are eligible to use MetroAccess service for 21 days in a rolling 365 day period. To apply for visitor's status please have the current paratransit provider mail, fax, or email verification to our office. In order to process the request we will need to obtain the following information:

1. Applicant's full name
2. Applicant's full address and phone number
3. Applicant's paratransit ID number and expiration date
4. Type of disability
5. Type of mobility aid used, if applicable

2

- 6. Authorized a Personal Care Assistant (PCA)
- 7. If applicant uses a service animal

If the visitor does not have paratransit in their home area, they will need to have their healthcare provider provide a certification of the disability. We will also require the applicant to provide items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 above. Once we receive the information we will enter the applicant into our system and mail an authorization letter and instructions on how to use our service to you. Alternately, we can email a PDF copy of the authorization letter to the customer home or work email address if supplied. In order to provide adequate time to process it is recommended that the visitors request visitor's status at least 3 weeks before their visit.

Our contact information is:

Metro Headquarters
Transit Accessibility Center
600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202-962-2700
Fax 202-962-6393
Email: eligibility@wmata.com

[top](#) ▲



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-6060

METROACCESS COMPLAINT RESOLUTION REPORT – July 2016

Accessibility Advisory Committee Public Comment: July 11, 2016

Customer #1

Comment/Complaint: The customer stated on June 10, 2016, her trip was moved onto another operator's route, and she was not shown. The customer stated she was not advised of the trip movement and she had to pay for someone to take her home.

Resolution: Following the AAC meeting, Mr. Leland Petersen, MV Regional Vice President, discussed the purpose of trip movement with the customer. Mr. Petersen also provided information regarding the MetroAccess No Strand Policy. Ms. Jennifer Weber, MTM Quality Assurance, confirmed the customer's complaints had been formally reported and investigated. After further investigation, it was determined that the proper protocol was not followed by the employees involved. These findings were reported to appropriate management personnel for review and corrective action. Mr. Carlton Brown spoke with the customer on July 22, 2016 to discuss the findings of the investigation.

AAC Member #1

Comment/Complaint: The AAC member stated she spoke with a customer who had been experiencing problems with MetroAccess. The AAC member stated she spoke with Ms. Jennifer Weber over the phone in regards to the customer's complaints. The AAC member provided staff with written documentation detailing the customer's experiences with MetroAccess.

Resolution: The customer's complaints were investigated by MTM Quality Assurance. It was determined that the cause of the customer's service issues were attributed to improper geocoding of the home address. The geocoding was corrected to mitigate the service delays outlined in the letter. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer on July 22, 2016 to discuss the findings of the investigation and corrective measures taken.

MetroAccess Subcommittee Public Comment: July 18, 2016

Customer #1

Comment/Complaint: The customer's Grandmother stated she experienced issues with rude dispatchers. She disagreed with the policy that required an operator to leave after five minutes even though the customer was expected to be prepared to leave during the entire 30-minute pick-up window. She reported a complaint was filed and a call back received from an investigator stating MetroAccess was unable to change the policy. The customer's Grandmother stated operators were rude and would benefit from additional sensitivity training. She reported dispatch told an operator to pull over because he left his ID behind at the last stop. Subsequently, they had to wait for another vehicle. The customer's Grandmother stated a male employee told the customer not to complain and that she should be quiet. She has filed many complaints.

Resolution: Ms. Allison Anderson, Operations Manager – Operations Control Center, apologized for the customer's inconvenience and advised that an investigation would be completed into the customer's service issues. Ms. Anderson spoke with the customer and her Grandmother following the meeting to discuss means to improve the service she was receiving. The Operations Control Center Subscription Department assisted the customer with booking by subscription, to maintain consistent trip times. An investigation was conducted into the concerns brought forth by the customer's Grandmother. It was determined that the customer's Grandmother's calls with dispatch and the complaint investigator were not handled appropriately. The calls were shared with MV-OCC and MTM management for coaching and counseling. The out of service event that impacted the customer's trip was reviewed, and the investigation was shared with MV-OCC and Service Delivery management for coaching and counseling of the personnel involved. Ms. Jennifer Weber spoke with the customer and her grandmother on July 21, 2016 to discuss the findings, and they were both encouraged to contact Ms. Weber with any additional questions or concerns. Additional follow up will be made with the customer to ensure service improvement.

AAC Member #1

Comment/Complaint: The AAC member asked if the alternative programs like Transport DC and Abilities-Ride needed to be ADA compliant if they received government funding.

Resolution: Mr. Christian Kent, Assistant General Manager, Access Services, stated the requirement for ADA compliance was less dependent on the funding

source and more dependent on the level and type of service provided. Mr. Kent explained how MetroAccess was funded by local governments, but alternative programs were not defined as paratransit services by ADA, and therefore not subject to the same set of policies.



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-6060

METROACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE PERFORMANCE REPORT: June 20, 2016

NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS:

As of April 30, 2015: 38,081
As of April 30, 2016: 40,386
Change: (+6.05%)

SERVICE PROVIDED:

Ridership	(Passengers	 	Completed Trips):
April 2015:	198,999		169,763
April 2016:	196,301		167,907
Change:	(-1.36%)		(-1.09%)
2015 FYTD:	1,850,403		1,576,288
2016 FYTD:	1,882,267		1,606,519
Change:	(+1.72%)		(+1.92%)

Average Weekday Ridership:

April 2015: 8,006
April 2016: 8,212
Change: (+2.58%)

2015 FYTD Average: 7,450
2016 FYTD Average: 7,655
Change: (+2.75%)

Reservations:

April 2015: 285,427
April 2016: 282,850
Change: (-0.90%)

2015 FYTD: 2,713,062
2016 FYTD: 2,747,035
Change: (+1.25%)

Trips Scheduled:

April 2015:	219,046
April 2016:	214,849
Change:	(-1.92%)

2015 FYTD:	2,050,892
2016 FYTD:	2,066,218
Change:	(+0.75%)

No-Shows (as a percentage of scheduled trips):

April 2015:	3,703	(1.69%)
April 2016:	3,503	(1.63%)
Change:	(-5.40%)	(-0.06%)

2015 FYTD:	36,252	(1.77%)
2016 FYTD:	34,038	(1.65%)
Change:	(-6.11%)	(-0.12%)

Late Cancellations (as a percentage of scheduled trips):

April 2015:	11,787	(4.87%)
April 2016:	10,921	(5.08%)
Change:	(-7.35%)	(+0.21%)

2015 FYTD:	106,356	(5.19%)
2016 FYTD:	109,921	(5.32%)
Change:	(+3.35%)	(+0.13%)

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES:

Safety - Collisions per 100,000 Service Miles [Goal ≤ 2.9]:

April 2015:	3.03
April 2016:	3.53
Change:	(+16.75%)

Safety - Preventable Collisions per 100,000 Service Miles [Goal ≤ 2.0]:

April 2015:	1.74
April 2016:	1.37
Change:	(-21.38%)

Safety - Passenger Injuries per 100,000 Passengers:

April 2015:	1.51
April 2016:	2.55
Change:	(+68.96%)

On-Time Performance [Goal \geq 92.0%]:

April 2015:	92.01%
April 2016:	92.54%
Change:	(+0.53%)

2015 FYTD:	91.66%
2016 FYTD:	92.76%
Change:	(+1.10%)

Percentage of Missed Trips [Goal \leq 0.75%]:

April 2016:	0.45%
-------------	-------

Percentage of Excessively Late Trips

(More than 20 minutes beyond the pickup window) [Goal \leq 0.75%]:

April 2016:	1.16%
-------------	-------

Customer Complaints**

Complaints per 1,000 trips requested [Goal \leq 5.00]:

April 2015:	4.69
April 2016:	4.33
Change:	(-7.82%)

2015 FYTD:	4.65
2016 FYTD:	3.91
Change:	(-16.10%)

**Valid complaints only. Determination of validity is continuously subject to WMATA review.

AUTOMATED PROCESSES:

Trips Booked by Internet (as a percentage of total reservations):

April 2015:	39,682	(13.90%)
April 2016:	38,329	(13.55%)
Change:	(-3.41%)	(-0.35%)

9

Trips Cancelled by Internet (as a percentage of total reservations):

April 2015:	16,237	(5.69%)
April 2016:	18,216	(6.44%)
Change:	(+12.19%)	(+0.75%)

Trips Cancelled by Interactive Voice Response System (IVR):

April 2015:	7,756
April 2016:	7,469
Change:	(-3.70%)

EZ-Pay	(Transactions	 	Value Added)
April 2015:	5,746		\$388,120.42
April 2016:	6,129		\$422,180.87
Change:	(+6.67%)		(+8.78%)

FARES (PAYING PASSENGERS ONLY):

Average Fare:

April 2016:	\$4.79
-------------	--------

Percentage Paying Maximum \$6.50 Fare:

April 2016:	35.50%
-------------	--------



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

MetroAccess Update

Montgomery County Council
Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee

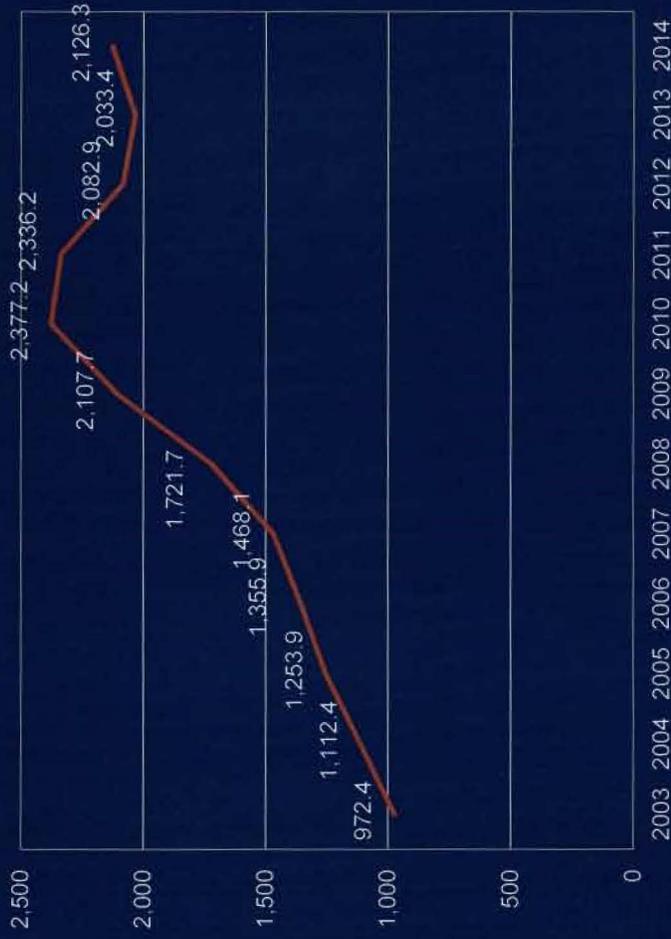
September 22, 2016



Growth in Demand

- Demand management has delivered an effective, visible impact
- The most significant gains from this approach have already been realized
- Demand is slowly increasing again
- A combination of strategies will be necessary to ensure ongoing sustainability

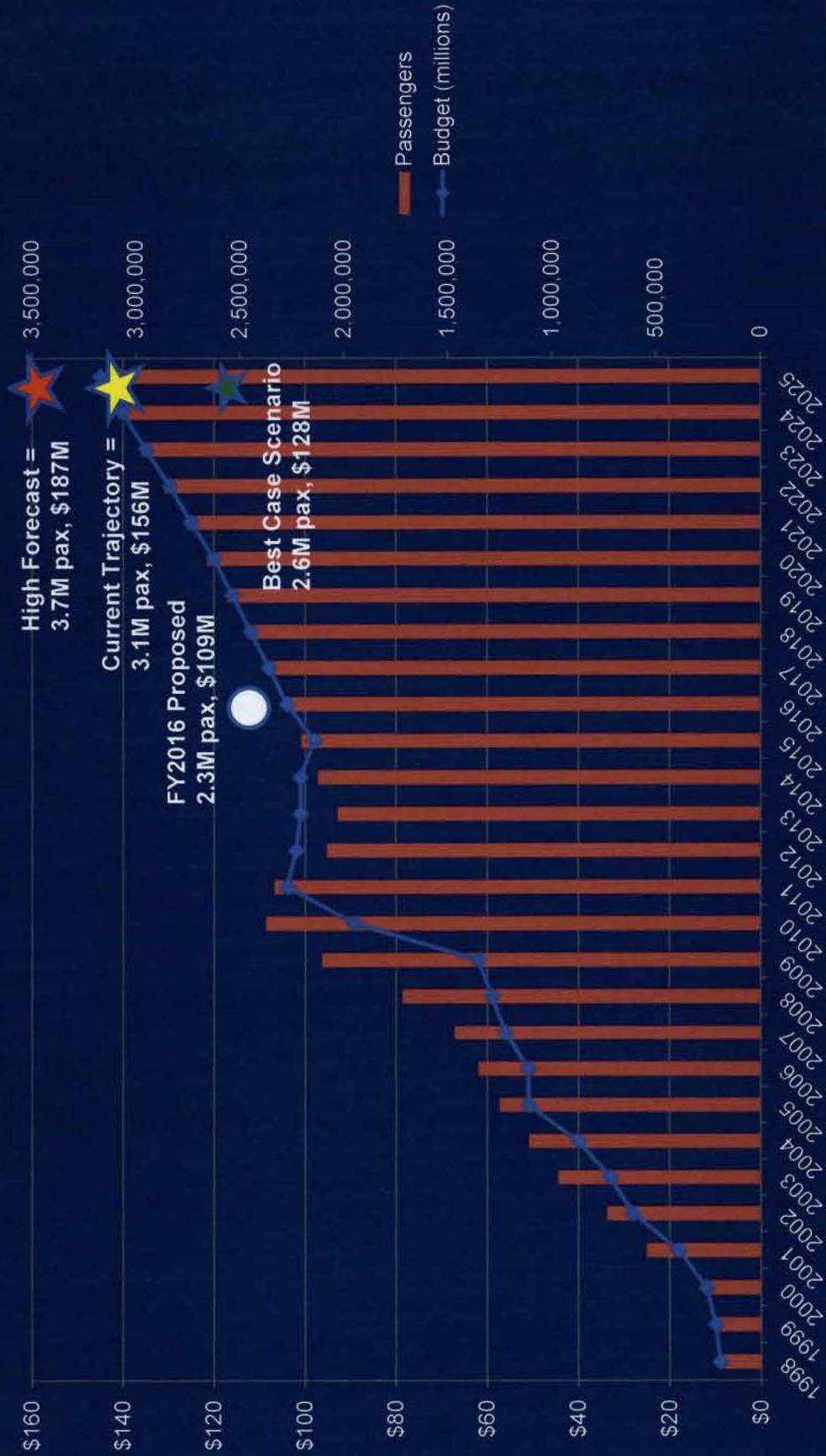
MetroAccess Ridership by Fiscal Year
FY2003-FY2014 (000s)



Source: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; GMU Center for Regional Analysis



Ridership and Cost Outlook





Actions Taken

- 1M trips per year are taken on bus and rail by conditionally-eligible MetroAccess customers using the Free Ride Benefit
- MetroReady Travel Training
- Coordinated Alternatives to Paratransit Service (CAPS) with Community Support Services (MC) and the Prince George's ARC
- Partnered with District of Columbia on TransportDC
- Abilities-Ride Pilot



Abilities-Ride

Background

- Subsidize a portion of trip cost on specific non-Metro Access transportation services
- Decision totally up to the customer (volunteer usage)
- None of the vehicles used will be owned or operated by Metro
- Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles will be made available
- Service will initially be limited to Maryland

Travel Experience

- Same-day service
- Trip reservations primarily by accessible mobile app
- Option of direct trips or shared-ride service
- Metro fare subsidy of up to \$15 per trip
 - Customer pays the first \$5 of fare and any fare above \$20



Abilities-Ride

Drivers

- Required to accept all customers traveling with service animals
- Required to have training related to serving customers with disabilities

Financial Impact

- Metro anticipates between 150,000 – 250,000 trips in the first full year
- \$29 gross savings per trip
- Between \$4M and \$6M in potential first year net savings

Next Steps

- 9/30/16 Issue RFP
- 10/13/16 Pre-Proposal Conference
- 11/09/16 Proposals Due
- 1/12/17 Award Contracts
- 3/1/17 Start Program