

access

AGENDA

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

1:00 pm – 3:15 pm

3449 Santa Anita Avenue
3rd Floor Council Conference Room
El Monte, CA 91731

Remote Public Link – <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82468230329>

Dial In - 888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or
669 900 6833

Meeting Number – is 824 6823 0329

*Please see note below.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Description/Presenter</i>	<i>Disposition</i>	<i>Pages</i>
4	1.	Call to Order/Roll Call	Action	
2	2.	Review & Approval of Minutes of November 14, 2023	Action	5-14
10	3.	General Public Comments	Information	
8	4.	Board Member Report	Information	
13	5.	Executive Director's Report - Andre Colaiace	Information	
11	6.	Operations Report - Barrett Tate	Information	
5	7.	Recommendations for Future Agenda Items - Yael Hagen & Terri Lantz	Discussion	

7	8.	How to increase participation from the public - Yael Hagen	Discussion
9	9.	Establish Ad-hoc subcommittee on Customer Survey - Matthew Avancena/Eric Haack	Action
10	10.	Member Communications	Information
8	11.	Subcommittee Updates - Karen Gilbert, Susanna Cadenas, Mike Greenwood, Matthew Avancena	Information
1	12.	Adjournment	Action

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2. Enter an email address and your name. Your name will be visible online while you are speaking.
3. When the Committee Chair calls for the item on which you wish to speak, click on "raise hand." Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak. Mute all other audio before speaking. Using multiple devices can cause audio feedback.
4. Please note that the "Chat" feature is not enabled during the meeting for general public attendees. If you cannot use the "raise hand" feature, then please submit a written comment as outlined above.
5. When called, please limit your remarks to three minutes. An audio signal will sound at the three-minute mark and the Chair will have the discretion to mute you at any point after that. After the comment has been given, the microphone for the speaker's Zoom profile will be muted.

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3. When the Committee Chair calls for the item on which you wish to speak, press *9 to raise a hand. Speakers will be notified shortly before they are called to speak. Speakers will be called by the last four digits of their phone number. Please note that phone numbers in their entirety will be visible online while speakers are speaking.

4. When called, please state your name and limit your remarks to three minutes. An audio signal will sound at the three-minute mark and the Chair will have the discretion to mute you at any point after that. After the comment has been given, the microphone for the speaker's Zoom profile will be muted.

5. If you cannot use the "raise hand" feature, then please submit a written comment as outlined above.

<p style="text-align: center;">MINUTES Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting November 14, 2023 1:00 pm - 3:15 pm</p>
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CALL TO ORDER

Chair Yael Hagen called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

CAC Members Present: Chair; Yael Hagen, Vice-Chair; Terri Lantz, Wendy Cabil, Olivia Almalel, Kimberly Hudson, Gordon Cardona, Jesse Padilla, Bhumit Shah, Michael Conrad, Maria Aroch, Rachele Goeman

CAC Members Not Present: Jan Johnson, Scott Barron

Board Members Present: Theresa DeVera

Access Services Staff Present: Matthew Avancena, Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke, Brian Lopez, Mike Greenwood, Andre Colaiace, Art Chacon, Karen Gilbert, Susanna Cadenas, Eric Haack, Rycharde Martindale

Guests Present: None

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2023

Chair Hagen asked for a motion to approve the October 10, 2023 minutes.

Motion: Member Goeman
Seconded: Member Padilla
Motion: Passed

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen stated there was a comment towards the end, it says Vice Chair Hagen, but she thinks it was Vice Chair Lantz who made the comment. Matthew Avancena said it would be corrected.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Member Hudson made a public comment for Tyra (a rider) stating that she is a caregiver, and she has other clients that are nonverbal. Oftentimes she calls and they're not able to get the timeframe that they need and unfortunately, she isn't always there

to keep calling back for them. She says it's difficult for them because they can't call themselves. It seems that the availability of time is an issue.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Board member Theresa DeVera gave the Board report. She stated that on October 23 they extended the term rates and increased funds for California Transit and the northern region, which is MV. They approved the contract for five years for the Eastern region. They also eliminated separate Board committee meetings such as performance monitoring, planning and development, and the external stakeholders. Their meetings may run longer since they are now combined in one meeting. For the November 1st annual meeting, they had a financial report and operations report. The Access Spotlight Award was given to Sonya Hackett of Global Paratransit. The Spirit of Accessibility Award was given to Metro's on the Move Program. Their next Board meeting is scheduled for December 4th.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Hagen stated that she was glad that she was there today and thanked her for her report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Andre Colaiace stated that Hector Rodriguez and he were invited to attend the second annual Transit Leadership Summit at the California Endowment in downtown Los Angeles. They were joined by Metro executives and leaders from quite a few of their member agencies, including Vice Chair Doran Barnes and former Board member Adrian Aguilar. They discussed several important, regional topics related to zero emission buses, integrated regional fares and the 2028 Olympic Games and the customer experience. He asked that Access Services and the municipal local operators be at the table in terms of Olympic and Paralympic operational planning. It is great that Access is now included in these types of summits and gatherings so that they can share a perspective with the member agencies. He thanked Metro CEO Stephanie Wiggins and her team for putting together this regional planning session. Coming up the Foothill Transit and Pasadena Transit will be hosting the 58th Annual Fall California Transit Association Conference and Expo at the Pasadena Convention Center. It is the first time that Access Services has been a host agency for anything. The CTA helped pick them along with Foothill Transit and Pasadena Transit. Chair DeVera will be welcoming attendees at the opening session and Vice Chair Barnes will be moderating several sessions as well. He will be moderating and presenting on a panel entitled The Human Element: Enhancing the Paratransit Rider and Provider Experience. He will also talk about our working relationship with the Community Advisory Committee. Lastly, it

was great seeing everyone at the annual meeting. They decided to have it virtually again and it seems to be something that everyone enjoys because of the convenience.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Hudson asked what Access was doing in terms of the downtown freeway closure. If there would be instructional messages on the hold line or website. Rogelio Gomez responded that the West Central region is the one that's been impacted the most because it serves that area. All the drivers have been notified on the best routes to travel.

Andre Colaiace added that they are monitoring the traffic and when there are issues with the traffic, the contractors are dealing with it. Through Everbridge, they can send targeted messages to customers about impacts such as this. The overpass is being reconstructed, and if people are in those affected areas, they just need to plan and be prepared to encounter traffic.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that her husband works in transportation, and they believe it will take about 3-6 weeks to fix the bridge, but it doesn't need to be torn down.

Member Padilla stated that he was concerned for riders' pickups being late because of the closure, and they were also encouraging riders to use public transportation like the free fare program while they're fixing it. Vice Chair Lantz responded that Metro is encouraging people not to travel unless they have to.

Vice Chair Lantz thanked Andre Colaiace for updating them on what is going on with Access Services. She really enjoys the virtual Annual meetings because they are much more convenient. It takes her the whole day to attend with travel time. Andrea Colaiace stated that there are both those who like to attend virtually and in person. He understands everyone's viewpoint. They will speak to the Board members to see what they decide for next year.

Chair Hagen said she is sure they will be able to find a happy medium with the best of both worlds, and there is room for socialization and doing something positive that can help with bonding, a kind of activity or something that can be done virtually.

Member Padilla stated he likes to enjoy the food provided at the event, but he sees how much money is saved from having it virtually.

Member Cardona asked if there would be extra routes added to the area where there is a freeway closure. Andre Colaiace responded that he is not sure.

Chair Hagen congratulated Access for hosting the conference in Pasadena and that says a lot about the agency.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Brian Lopez gave the Operations report with the statistics. Some of the highlights that he shared were, the new 2023 RAM ProMaster 136 driver training video was distributed to all the contractors the week of October 2nd, 2023. The video showcases the new high and standard roof design and new added features such as an auditory message to alert customers to watch their steps when boarding or onboarding the vehicle in both English and Spanish. Added handrails, a redesign mobility device ramp, new LED, interior floor lights and an auxiliary box next to the driver with added technology features. On October 23rd, MV driver Claudia Rocha was awarded the Superior Service Award at the board of directors meeting. Ms. Rocha has been with Access as a northern region contractor with MV Transportation since 2018, and in that time has built a reputation of dependability with the focus on safe vehicle operations, and they thanked her for her service. Lastly, three new Access stand signs were installed at California State University of Northridge. There is a stand sign on the corner of Prairie Street and Bertrand Avenue at the White Curb loading zone. There is another stand sign located on Plummer Street at the White Curb loading zone. There is also a stand sign located at the D1 parking lot along Nordhoff Street.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Almalel was very happy about the new stand sign addition at CSUN and she has noticed all the students are very excited about it.

Chair Hagen stated that most of the pickup locations are more in the western or eastern part of the campus, so this is meeting people's needs. She reminded riders that they can be picked up even where there are no stand signs.

Director Theresa DeVera stated that there are stand signs, but they don't always know where they are. Sometimes the drivers don't know where the stand signs are, and they need to be educated more on this, so they are updated.

Chair Hagen asked how drivers would know where the stand signs are located. Rogelio Gomez responded that they inform the contractors when the stand signs are installed, and it is their responsibility to inform their drivers. They do train the drivers to go to the location of some of these stand signs to get better acquainted with their location. Rogelio Gomez added that the driver has a log of stand sign locations to provide guidance to riders as well.

Member Hudson is happy that there was a 20% increase in online reservations since it is very convenient through the app. She asked if they could put in the app or in the online reservation to make online reservations for places they have not already visited. Rogelio Gomez was under the assumption that there was a way to book online under Where's My Ride app. He will investigate it and get back to her.

Member Almalel asked if the new stands were added to the website already. Rogelio said it was.

Member Cardona stated that he was not able to add new addresses to the online booking. Rogelio stated that it was only possible on the app but not the computer.

Member Goeman stated that she is having the same problem. If they are not using Wi-Fi, it is incredibly slow to do a new address on the app. She has had this issue many times and wonders if others have the same problem. This is an issue when she is using her mobile phone outside with no Wi-Fi, it's slow. She does love this app and is glad that they're starting to be able to book rides this way.

Chair Hagen asked if there were issues with the voice over and Member Goeman responded there were not issues with it.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Eric Haack presented this item by speaking on the upcoming Customer Satisfaction Survey and getting some feedback from the members. This survey is to determine overall satisfaction with Access's service, and to hear the opinions on specific services such as Beyond the Curb, or the Where's My Ride mobile app. Of three main parts of the survey, approximately 70 questions relate to a customer's experience with using Access. Access's main transportation service from booking trips to taking a ride, to filing a complaint or a commendation in the reservation section. There's also been one question asked in the vehicle section describing difficulty of an experience of getting in or out of the vehicle. The last of the main sections of the satisfaction survey try to get information about the specific respondent to the survey. This would be age, income, racial information if they're comfortable sharing that information. There is also a last opportunity in the survey to expand upon their overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with Access and why.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Hudson asked if in the past, people have expressed concerns with the length of the survey. Also, if there is a section about difficulties with getting the time of reservation they request.

Eric Haack responded that the Great Blue Research has conducted 3 surveys for them already and it hasn't been a problem in the past. Keep in mind that there are skip patterns where the answers might be no, therefore making it a shorter survey. The real number is closer to 40 questions and the company stated that people have not discontinued the survey because of the length. People can do it at their own pace as well. As far as the reservation question, he doesn't have a direct question on this, but it could be a question that is missing and can be included.

Chair Hagen stated that this would be a very helpful question to add. They could additionally look at the issue from the goals retreat and see if there are any questions, they can come up with to help them with those goals.

Member Goeman doesn't know what the difference is between this survey vs the other surveys, but her JAWS program was having trouble getting through the survey this time. She had to finish it on her computer because it wasn't working too well. Eric Haack responded they have done 3 surveys with this company and have used weblinks though email or text. There is usually a background in the weblink so he asked if that could have possibly interfered with the JAWS reader.

Member Goeman stated that could have been the issue because JAWS doesn't do well with colors. Eric Haack stated that there was a color added this time so that could have been it. He will be sure to mention that to them next time. He will probably send the CAC members a sample to see if there are any issues.

Member Padilla stated that he was glad it ends up being a total of 40 questions instead of 70 because it is a bit too much. Maybe even less would be better so it doesn't feel like a test. Eric Haack responded that Member Cardona stated the same. They have added sections to it each year so he invites the members to take a look at the questions and see what they would like to remove.

Chair Hagen stated that the amount of phone calls should be increased. She would have loved to participate in the last survey, but no one called her, so she figured they didn't want to hear from her. The wording of compliments vs. commendation is also something that she has suggested should be changed because most people don't understand. The language needs to be consistent throughout all of Access. Another comment she had was that the Beyond the Curb and acronyms like OMC, ETA line, backup vehicle, etc. are not terms that all riders understand. They need to be clearer on not always using abbreviations or jargon.

Eric Haack responded that it is because they are trying to ensure that the riders who are responding to the survey, are familiar with the elements of Access so that they can provide an accurate response when they ask them about something like OMC.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that they can use initials for something when they write out the term the first time. They can then use the abbreviation or the letters afterwards. Eric

Haack stated that at first, things like Beyond the Curb were terms that nobody was familiar with, so he understands that it first needs to be introduced. She added that questions should be asked a bit more precisely so that they can think of specific situations they might have experienced.

Eric Haack stated that he is very happy to work with them all and review more of the questions. He would love to hear more about any suggestions on this survey.

RIDER NO STRANDING POLICY REVIEW

Mayra Perez-Calderon presented on the No Stranding Policy review. She provided some general information regarding Access's operations monitoring center, also known as OMC, and asked for feedback to further discuss at the CAC/OMC subcommittee. OMC is a function of the customer service call center whose primary role is responding to real-time trip issues, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Issues include providing an estimated time of arrival, coordinating alternative transportation resources for riders, and after-hours assistance reporting incidents requiring immediate response.

Chair Hagen stated that they were focusing on the function of OMC of when people are stranded. Riders can be stranded under different types of circumstances. Her understanding was that Access Services had an actual no stranding policy, but there seems to be a little bit of confusion around that. They will be looking for some ideas and feedback on what happens when a rider schedules a trip, and the trip doesn't go well or doesn't get completed for some reason.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Goeman stated that her biggest concern is if a rider must get a backup ride from OMC, are they strictly using cabs and if so, how do they proceed if they have a large walker or a large manual wheelchair. Her backup rides have been cabs in the past.

Mayra Perez-Calderon responded that backup vehicles are booked similar to regular trips. They provide details regarding any assistive aids or mobility devices in which the rider had initially booked their trip with to that backup driver. If the information was provided, there should be no reason for a backup vehicle to be denied due to the device or mobility aid being oversized.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that she had a former client who is in a power wheelchair, and her aide and her were stranded on Wilshire Boulevard after going to a doctor, in the West Central area. They were told they would be picked up shortly and it still didn't show and each time they called; they kept telling them "2 minutes". They were waiting over an hour for the ride they kept hearing it would take a couple of minutes to arrive. She asked OMC why they kept giving them a 2-minute response, but it took longer.

They told her that it was the information that was on the app, and they were going off that. She said they should not be using this information to respond to the riders because it's not accurate.

Mayra Perez-Calderon stated that this is a topic that will be discussed during the OMC subcommittee meeting. They have spoken with ALTA Customer Service and told them that this is an issue that should be taken care of so that they provide accurate information. They should be calling the provide directly instead of looking at the app.

Member Padilla stated that he too had that same experience back when he used to be a rider and he doesn't miss it at all.

Member Goeman stated that she has been stranded before she hopes that they are really working on this to make it better. She has had to wait for a backup before and it doesn't help her anxiety issues and it is a very scary situation to be in. She really appreciates that this issue is being discussed because it is an issue that needs to be fixed.

Chair Hagen stated that being stranded is a very scary situation.

Member Hudson stated that she is not an anxious person, but this particular subject does cause her anxiety, especially if it is in a very large location or venue. She knows they have a limited window for the driver to find the rider without a way to communicate between themselves.

Member Padilla stated he has anxiety and just hearing about this situation causes him anxiety.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that she had a situation where they were not picked up where they thought they would be, and they had to go to another part of the venue to get picked up. She and some people in wheelchairs were not picked up and they started losing cell service. They had to call the police and the police called Access and they were finally picked up around midnight after waiting since 5pm. They were in a dangerous area and thankfully the police were with them, but they were all very frightened. She knows there have been clients who haven't been picked up for their day program and they were stranded. They were without any help at home, and it is important to really define what being stranded is.

Member Almalel was stranded at the Hollywood Bowl once and the staff and security there had already left. The call takers should be able to assist with their situation and then get a follow-up call to see what could have been done to prevent these situations from happening again.

Member Cardona stated that, "Many times back in the day with WMR (Where's My Ride), at least I know they are coming." and he also wrote "I've been there, Olivia thinking."

Chair Hagen stated that they need to think about more solutions for this issue. She asked for feedback and ideas to improve this experience.

Member Goeman stated that places like the Hollywood bowl or big venues, are putting stand signs that are obvious because of her and Member Conrad's disabilities, it can be a very anxiety-driven situation to be stranded and especially in the dark.

Vice Chair Lantz asked if they could bring this item back for more discussion because it is a scary situation to find yourself in. She asked if there was a possibility to have an actual person go out and wait with the stranded person because it can be a very long wait all alone.

Mayra Perez-Calderon responded that this was a possibility that they were discussing this option as well. She really appreciates all the feedback they have received and will take it all into consideration when discussing it at the OMC subcommittee.

Chair Hagen stated that there are some things that can be done differently or be prevented, and this is an issue they will speak about in the subcommittee. They brought it up for discussion for that reason. She asked that they table the items for the next meeting, and everyone agreed.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

This item is postponed for the next agenda.

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

Vice Chair Lantz thanked all the committee members and staff.

Member Almalel thanked everyone and wished everyone a happy thanksgiving. She is looking forward to the Olympics in 2028.

Member Padilla stated "Can you bring up the share ride issue? Because I'm hearing from friends and coworkers, they are experiencing increases in rates."

Member Cabil shared that yesterday was World Kindness Day. It's a movement that's in place and it's all week long. She looks forward to continuing out the rest of this year healthy and safely with all of us and in good spirits. Wished everyone a wonderful holiday season, and safe travels wherever they go.

Member Goeman wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and reiterated that without Access, she would not be able to be as independent. She has a new addition to their family, a beautiful yellow lab. Her name is Cuddles, and she is 7 and she's fabulous.

Member Hudson wished everyone a happy thanksgiving.

Member Cardona stated ""Access did an outstanding job dropping off and picking up people at the Adaptive Sportsfest near the Rose Bowl on November 4th. Happy Thanksgiving to everybody. I'm very thankful."

Chair Hagen thanked everyone again and is very proud to be a part of the CAC. She also stated that there is a Transportation Summit that's being put together by the Aging and Disability Transportation Network as well as Metro. It is going to be tomorrow from 1:00pm - 2:00pm. She encourages attendance and also there's a three-question survey.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

This item is postponed for the next agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Goeman made the motion to end the meeting. There was a second by Vice Chair Lantz. The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 p.m.