



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

On May 1st and 2nd, the FTA conducted a Triennial Review of Redondo Beach's fixed route service known as Beach Cities Transit. The Triennial Review is a process conducted by the FTA to assess the compliance and performance of recipients of federal transit funding. Conducted once every three years, consultants hired by the FTA examine up to 23 areas, including financial management, procurement practices, safety and security, civil rights compliance, and ADA complementary paratransit services.

Since ADA paratransit services are operated by Access Services on behalf of the County's 46 fixed route operators, it is customary for Access staff to participate in the reviews. During the review, which was conducted virtually, the FTA reviewers interviewed staff about Access' No-Show Policy, and Visitor Policy for out of area visitors who want to use Access while traveling in L.A. County.

I am pleased to report there were no findings related to Access' provision of ADA paratransit services. I would like to thank Access staff Susanna Cadenas and Rycharde Martindale for addressing the reviewer's questions; and Onnika Payne and Alvina Narayan for sending the necessary documentation.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

access

Access Fleet Department "relentlessly" pursues new vehicles



The white board at Sunset Vans in Corona, CA said, "Be relentless in the pursuit of parts." Due to the continuing effects of the pandemic, parts and new vehicles have been hard to come by for Access.

For Rick Streiff, Senior Manager of Fleet Design and Maintenance, failure is not an option. Vehicles only last so long, and riders and drivers deserve new vehicles and equipment. Access always plans to replace vehicles, but it has been harder than ever in the last few years. Access has a special program to keep the Dodge Caravan and other vehicles in service longer, by reimbursing contractors who repair critical components, but there are limits, and over time, the law of diminishing returns becomes apparent.

"Chassis are hard to get for any version due to the chip shortage that has plagued all builders right now...Stellantis [parent company of Dodge/Ram] has more orders than they can fill," explained Streiff. Making matters more difficult, vehicles are in high demand from nationally known delivery companies. The team has to strike when the iron is hot, hence the recent acquisition of 58 vans that were originally destined to be recreational vehicles.

Riders and the greater community associate the Dodge Caravan with Access. The ubiquitous white vans are emblematic of the agency just as the Ford Crown Victoria was with police departments. Going forward, however, because the Dodge Caravan has been discontinued, riders will see more and more Ram ProMasters on the road. These vehicles are significantly different in appearance than the Caravans. They are roomier inside and require adjustment from drivers,

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owing to their increased height and length. A new and sturdier ramp design is being deployed, which will help with the daily wear and tear of paratransit service. They are being outfitted with advanced camera systems to show all sides of the vehicle and improve safety. Finally, a seatbelt monitor will be used to alert the driver if any passengers remove their seatbelts.

Staff visited the Sunset Vans facility recently and were able to provide feedback and view the production of two ProMaster models, the 136-inch wheelbase model and the 159-inch wheelbase unit. Dozens of employees work for Sunset creating these vehicles for Access and other transit agencies and private businesses. The 136-inch unit is closer in dimension to the Caravans, but those smaller units are harder to come by since the manufacturer, Stellantis, prefers to make the larger version.

A total of 170 new vans are being built, which is a process requiring extensive modification from stock in order to serve the paratransit-riding public. Rick and his team continue to work daily in the relentless pursuit of new and improved vehicles for Access and its riders.

Alex Chrisman
Emergency Management Coordinator

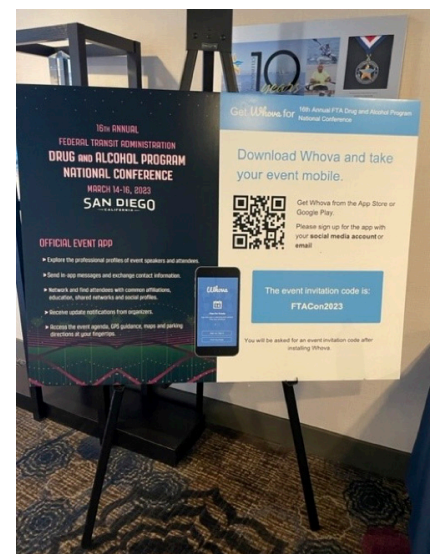
Access attends 16th Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference

The FTA recently held its annual Drug and Alcohol conference in San Diego, California. This was the first year the conference was held in-person since the COVID-19 pandemic. FTA provided attendees with an option to attend either the in-person or virtual sessions.

Over the course of three days, each breakout session was led by federal and industry experts from across the nation. Some of the session topics included: Beginner Drug and Alcohol Program Manager (DAPM) Training, Records Retention, Trends in Cannabis Use; Beating the Cheaters, and Small Transit Employers: Challenges and Best Practices.

During the last session, attendees had the opportunity to ask the experts' questions from any of the previous breakout sessions. The diversity and inclusion at the conference was amazing. We networked, shared drug and alcohol scenarios, and understood the importance of a safe, compliant Drug and Alcohol program.

Onnika Payne
Transportation Planner



Commendations

"I am filing a Smile for my driver Miguel Campos. He has picked me up on several occasions and is always polite. I know I am going to have a good day when I see Miguel."

Elizabeth Wible

Rider since March 2015

"My driver was excellent, and I would like to give him a commendation. I was so happy with my service."

Terry Ballman

Rider since July 2014