

access

EXTERNAL/STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Monday, September 18, 2023

2:00 p.m.

Access Services Council Conference Room, 3rd Floor 3449 Santa Anita Avenue El Monte CA 91731	
Disabled Resource Center 2750 E Spring St # 100 Long Beach, CA 90806	3650 Fairland Boulevard Los Angeles CA 90043

See [*Note below for remote public link.](#)

Committee Members: D. Nason, Chair
L. Matthews
J. Troost

	<u>DISPOSITION</u>
1. CALL TO ORDER	ACTION
2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT	INFORMATION
3. CONSIDERATION TO REAPPOINT TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TPAC) MEMBERS (page 5)	ACTION
4. ACCESS TO WORK PROGRAM CHANGES (page 7)	ACTION
5. LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATES	PRESENTATION
6. ADJOURNMENT	ACTION

Access Services does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Accordingly, Access Services seeks to ensure that individuals with disabilities will have an equal opportunity to participate in the range of Access Services events and programs by providing

appropriate auxiliary aids and services for communications. Primary consideration is given to the request of individuals with disabilities. However, the final decision belongs to Access Services. To help ensure the availability of any auxiliary aids and services you require, please make every effort to notify Access Services of your request at least three (3) business days (72 hours) prior to the meeting in which you wish to utilize those aids or services. You may do so by contacting (213) 270-6000.

Note: Access Services Board committee meetings are held pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act [Cal. Gov. Code §54950] and are open to the public. The public may view and obtain all written information supporting this agenda provided to the Board committee both initially and supplementally prior to the meeting at the agency's offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte, California and on its website at <http://accessla.org>. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to the Board committee members by staff or Board committee members at the meeting, will simultaneously be made available to the public. Three opportunities are available for the public to address the Board committee during a Board committee meeting: (1) before closed session regarding matters to be discussed in closed session, (2) before a specific agenda item is debated and voted upon and (3) during the time allotted for general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the Board committee is subject to restriction as to time and appropriate decorum. All persons wishing to make public comment must fill out a goldenrod Public Comment Form and submit it to the Secretary of the Board. Public comment is generally limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and the total time available for public comment may be further limited at the discretion of the Chairperson. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the Board at a normal rate of speed may request an accommodation of a limited amount of additional time from the Chair but only by checking the appropriate box on the Public Comment Form. Granting such an accommodation is at the discretion of the Chair. The Board committee cannot and will not respond during the meeting to matters raised under general public comment. Pursuant to provisions of the Brown Act governing these proceedings, no discussion or action may be taken on these matters unless they are listed on the agenda, or unless certain emergency or special circumstances exist. However, the Board committee may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future Board committee meeting and staff may respond to all public comments in writing prior to the next Board committee meeting.

Commitment to Civility

To assure civility in its public meetings, staff and the public are also encouraged to engage in respectful dialog that supports freedom of speech and values diversity of opinion. To achieve compliance with these Rules, Directors, staff, and the public are encouraged to:

- Create an atmosphere of respect and civility where Directors, staff, and the public are free to express their ideas;
- Establish and maintain a cordial and respectful atmosphere during discussions;
- Foster meaningful dialogue free of personal attacks;
- Listen with an open mind to all information, including dissenting points of view, regarding issues presented to the Board;
- Recognize that it is sometimes difficult to speak at Board meetings, and out of respect for each person's feelings, allow others to have their say without comment, including booing, whistling or clapping; and
- Adhere to speaking time limit.

Alternative accessible formats are available upon request.

*NOTE

The public may also participate via the Zoom webinar link, or by teleconference. Please review the procedures to do so as follows -

How to Provide Public Comment in a Board Meeting via Zoom

Online

1. Click the Zoom link for the meeting you wish to join. Meeting information can be found at: https://accessla.org/news_and_events/agendas.html. Make sure to use a current, up-to-date browser: Chrome 30+, Firefox 27+, Microsoft Edge 12+, or Safari 7+. Certain functionality may be disabled in older browsers including Internet Explorer. You may also use this direct link - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87183603901>
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 an accessibility tool for comments on items by committee members and the general public attendees who need to use this tool. 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.

Note: Members of the public will not be shown on video.

By phone

1. Call the Zoom phone number and enter the webinar ID for the meeting you wish to join. Meeting information can be found at:

https://accessla.org/news_and_events/agendas.html

2. You can also call in using the following information -
Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 669 444 9171 or +1 719 359 4580 or +1 253 205 0468
or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 360 209 5623 or +1 386 347 5053
or +1 507 473 4847 or +1 564 217 2000 or +1 646 931 3860 or +1 689 278 1000
or +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 305 224 1968 or +1 309 205 3325
or +1 312 626 6799 or 888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or 833 548 0276 (Toll Free) or 833
548 0282 (Toll Free) or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free)
Webinar ID: 871 8360 3901
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. If you cannot use the "raise hand" feature, the please submit a written comment as outlined above.
5. 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.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: MATTHEW AVANCENA, DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND COORDINATION

RE: CONSIDERATION TO REAPPOINT TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TPAC) MEMBERS

ISSUE:

Eight Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee (TPAC) members have terms that will expire on October 28, 2023. The reappointments recommended below are for two-year terms beginning October 2023. These terms will expire in October 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the reappointment of the following eight (Group A) members.

- Silva Baghdanian, Glendale Beeline
- Rhoda Tong, East L.A. Regional Center
- Gracie Davis, Orange County Transportation Authority
- Fayma Ishaq, Metro
- LaShawn King Gillespie, Foothill Transit
- Diane Amaya, Beach Cities Transit
- James Lee, Torrance Transit
- Janna Smith, L.A. Department of Transportation

IMPACT ON BUDGET

None

BACKGROUND

TPAC was created in September 2001 by the Access Services Board of Directors to provide input regarding operational and policy issues. TPAC is comprised of two sets of members, Group A and Group B, which serve two-year terms. Group A members have term expiration dates which occur on odd numbered years. Group B members have term expiration dates which occur on even numbered years. TPAC meets bi-

monthly and is comprised of representatives from social service, community transportation and fixed-route transportation providers.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: ERIC HAACK, STRATEGIC PLANNER
RE: ACCESS TO WORK PROGRAM CHANGES

ISSUE:

Access Services has operated its successful Access to Work program since its launch in 2012. The program was launched with the assistance of Federal grant funding provided through Metro. Over the course of the program's operation, grant funds have been exhausted for the Access to Work program.

Access staff recommends continuing the program designed to help customers reach places of employment and job training on time with some modifications to the program.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff requests the Board authorize Access to continue the Access to Work program with proposed changes, including removing the grant-required low-income requirement for participants, and changing the per trip fare from \$2.00 per trip to Access' traditional \$2.75/\$3.50 per trip.

IMPACT ON BUDGET

There is no material impact to the budget. The majority of participants on the Access to Work program already use traditional Access paratransit services in order to reach their places of employment. The Access to Work program permits these customers to continue to travel using Access while having trips designed around their work start times.

BACKGROUND:

In 2010, Access Services was awarded a Federal Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grant through a competitive grant award coordinated by Metro. With the assistance of the grant which permitted 50% of operating costs and 80% of capital (vehicle purchases) to be covered by the JARC grant, Access was able to launch the Access to Work program in 2012.

Access applied for and was successful in receiving additional Federal grants through L.A. Metro to continue the program in 2012 and again in 2017. In total, Access received \$8 million in operations funding and \$10.6 million for the purchase of 50 new minivans and 65 replacement vans.

Program Features

The Access to Work program was designed for paratransit customers who use Access to travel to and from their places of employment or job training. The Access to Work program is available in all six regions of Access' service area.

Principal features of the current program include:

1. Trips to work are scheduled around a customer's work start time, so they arrive at or before their work start time;
2. Access to Work trips have a discounted \$2.00/one-way trip fare;
3. The program operates with 94% On Time Performance related to work arrival times (Note: This is an existing Access Key Performance Indicator with service providers);
4. Vehicles purchased for (or used for) Access to Work trips, may be used for traditional Access trips as well as Access to Work trips;
5. Targeted (per federal grant guidelines) to benefit persons with low income earnings.

Current Program Status

The Access to Work program has on-average 120-160 customers per month, providing between 2,500 and 3,400 trips per month (or between 30,000 and 40,000 trips annually).

Understandably, during the COVID-19 pandemic there was a large drop in customers using Access to travel to and from work. However, since the height of the pandemic has passed, customer and trip numbers have grown and the program is operating very close to pre-pandemic levels.

System-wide on time performance is consistently over 95%.

In December 2022, the last Federal grant funds for the Access to Work program were exhausted. Access staff began discussions at that point on the future of the Access to Work program.

It was determined that Access would prefer to continue this successful program for its paratransit customers following the completion of grant funding support.

Proposed Access to Work Program Changes

Access staff from multiple departments (Operations, Customer Service, Planning) reviewed the existing policies related to the Access to Work program and suggested changes that could be introduced for the program.

1. Remove Low-Income Requirement

A condition of the Federal Job Access Reverse Commute (sec. 5316) grant that provided funding for the Access to Work program was that any program developed with this form of grant funding was to be designed to assist customers with low-income earnings. Customers on the program were those with annual income earnings at or below 150% of the Federal (national) poverty level. This restriction prevented some customers who used paratransit to travel to and from work from using the Access to Work program.

Going forward, Access staff would recommend removing this low-income requirement, and permitting the Access to Work program to be open to all paratransit customers who use Access to travel to or from work.

If approved by the Board, the removal of the income requirement could go into effect as early as November 2023.

2. Employment Confirmation for Non-traditional/Residential Locations

In most cases a person's place of employment is at a commercial building, such as an office, bank, or retail store. There are some infrequent cases where a customer's place of employment may be a private residence or other location that would normally not be an expected destination for a work trip. In cases where a person would seek to travel to a private residence or other non-traditional location as their place of employment, Access proposes to request an employment confirmation from the customer. This confirmation would be an email or other proof from the customer showing that they work as an in-home care assistant or similar prior to authorizing the Access to Work trips.

If approved by the Board, this added confirmation for non-traditional locations could go into effect as early as November 2023.

3. Revise Access to Work Fare to Match Traditional Access Fare.

Access launched the Access to Work program with a per-trip fare of \$2.00. This fare was lower than Access' traditional fare because (a) Access was receiving financial assistance to operate the program from the Federal grant and (b) Access was also using the lower fare to encourage participation in this new program.

After over 11 years of service and no additional grant funding, Access is recommending that fares for this program be changed from the \$2.00 per trip fare to its traditional paratransit fare. Currently, Access' traditional paratransit fare is \$2.75 for trips up to 19.9 miles and \$3.50 for trips that are 20 or more miles.

Traditional paratransit trip fares in the Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley regions are \$2.00 per trip and Access to Work trips in those regions would continue to have a \$2.00 per trip fare.

If approved by the Board at their October meeting, adjustment to the Access to Work fare could go into effect after notification of customers of the fare change and be introduced no later than April 2024.

Access to Work Customer Survey Findings

In June of 2023, Access staff launched an Access to Work mail-out/mail-in customer survey. Surveys were mailed to 200 Access to Work-eligible customers, including all customers currently using the Access to Work program. A total of 58 completed surveys were mailed back to Access with a response rate of 29%, a very high response rate for a mail-in survey.

The survey revealed valuable information about the customers who have used and rely on the Access to Work program:

- The majority of Access to Work customers take either 5 to 6 Access to Work trips per week (30.3%) or 9 to 10 Access to Work trips per week (28.8%);
- 92% of respondents indicated that without the Access to Work program, they would have no other reliable source of transportation to reach work;
- 85% of respondents indicated that it would be difficult to keep their employment without the Access to Work program;
- 89.9% of respondents stated the Access to Work program met (74.6%) or exceeded their expectations (15.3%);
- 82.5% of respondents stated the Access to Work program was either excellent (35.1%) or a good program (47.4%).

When asked what respondents liked about the Access to Work program, the top answers were 1) it is a dependable/reliable program (30%); the service is prompt and on-time (15.6%); and the drivers are courteous and professional (14.4%).

When asked what respondents disliked about the program, the top answers were 1) They had no dislikes regarding the program (22.4%); there are too many share rides (14.5%); the routes are inefficient and/or long commutes (13.2%).

Finally, one question asked respondents what would be the impact of a fare change. The majority of respondents indicated that the fare change would not impact the number of trips that they would take using Access to Work (71.9%), with 18.8%

indicating that the fare change would result in them taking fewer trips using Access to Work.