

access

AGENDA

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

1:00 pm - 3:15 pm

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

Remote Public Link (click on this link) -
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86962599279>

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

Meeting Number - is 869 6259 9279

***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 12, 2024	Action	5-14
10	3.	General Public Comments	Information	
8	4.	Board Member Report	Information	
10	5.	Executive Director's Report - Andre Colaiace	Information	
10	6.	Operations Report - Anthony Santiago	Presentation	

15	7.	Free Fare & Travel Training Program Update - Eric Haack & Dina Garcia	Presentation
10	8.	Establish Post-Eligibility Calls Ad hoc Subcommittee	Possible Action
8	9.	How are Location Evaluations conducted - Colin Obeso	Presentation
7	10.	Member Communications	Information
8	11.	Future Agenda Items - Yael Hagen	Information
8	12.	Subcommittee Updates - Karen Gilbert, Susanna Cadenas, Garrett Rodriguez, Rogelio Gomez Eric Haack, Matthew Avancena	Presentation
1	13.	Adjournment	Action

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Note: Access Services Community Advisory (CAC) 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 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 CAC by staff or CAC members at the meeting will simultaneously be made available to the public. Two opportunities are available for the public to address the CAC during a CAC meeting: (1) before a specific agenda item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (2) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the CAC is subject to restriction as to time and appropriate decorum. All persons wishing to make public

comment must fill out a yellow Public Comment Form and submit it to the CAC secretary. Public comment is generally limited to three (3) minutes per speaker and the total time available for public comment may be limited at the discretion of the Chair. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the board at a normal rate of speed may request the 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 in the discretion of the Chair.

The CAC will not and cannot 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 CAC may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future CAC Meeting.

"Alternative accessible formats are available upon request."

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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.

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

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Free) or 833 548 0276 (Toll Free) or 833 548 0282 (Toll Free)
Webinar ID: is 869 6259 9279
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.

MINUTES

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
November 12, 2024
1:00 pm - 3:15 pm

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, Olivia Almalel, Gordon Cardona, Scott Barron, Jesse Padilla, Bhumit Shah, Jan Johnson

CAC Members Not Present: Wendy Cabil, Rachele Goeman, Michael Conrad

Board Members Present: None

Access Services Staff Present: Matthew Avancena, Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke, Mike Greenwood, Jimmy Flores, Eric Haack, Art Chacon, Garrett Rodriguez, Karen Gilbert, Dina Garcia, Brian Lopez

Guests Present: None

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 8, 2024

Chair Hagen asked for a motion to approve the October 8, 2024, minutes.

Motion: Member Padilla

Seconded: Member Hudson

Abstention: Member Cardona, Member Shah, Member Aroch, Member Lantz

Motion: Not Passed

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Hudson, Chair Hagen and Vice Chair Lantz stated that there were some errors in the minutes that needed to be corrected. They asked Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke to check the attendees and general public comments. She said she would make the transcripts review and make any necessary corrections.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sherrilyn Edwards made a public comment by stating she's in the northern region and was traveling from the southern region last Sunday. She was in the van for four hours

and she is a diabetic patient who has to take medication. She missed her connecting ride and had to call the supervisor, Daisy. There was nothing she could do. She was very upset that they don't route the drivers better so that a rider doesn't sit in the vehicle for so many hours.

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by thanking them for putting same day service on the agenda. They need to address these issues regarding bad shared riding routes and people being stuck in the van for such a long time. If they could also continue to research how to expand the service hours between the Antelope Valley and Santa Clarita to some of the other regions in the San Fernando Valley, LA and the Southern region.

Lisa Anderson made a public comment by stating that in the west central region, one of the drivers does not wear his seatbelt properly. She filed a complaint against this driver about three times and the same thing is still happening. Concerning the shared rides, sometimes they have a route in place and then on the way to the destination, the dispatcher decides to add another trip. The driver then has to go back to another city to pick up the passenger that is assigned to a different vehicle. She suggests the driver finish their route, and then have them go pick those people up.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

None

PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS FOR SAME DAY SERVICE

Chair Hagen presented this item by stating that they were going to have a preliminary discussion about same day rides. It's something that riders had for a while in the beginning of Access Services when the ridership was different. For many reasons including a response to a class action lawsuit, as well as funding and growth in service, Access eventually eliminated the same-day service option. She feels the riders need this service again and she would like to get input on what kind of trips would be trips that need a same day ride.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating that Access should have been prepared to find out what future population would've looked like. They would have been prepared to get the budget and funding, for the manpower in order to provide this service to riders.

Lisa Anderson made a public comment by stating that if they are hired to be a substitute cafeteria worker and are on call, how can they go to work if they don't have a ride. This is where same day service would be beneficial, in an employment situation.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Padilla said he is glad the same day is being brought up again because if someone needs an item from the store at the last minute, this is where same day service would be helpful.

Member Shah asked if there was a way they could figure out in one month, how many rides the average person takes. Mike Greenwood responded they don't have that number of riders at hand. They could calculate it by checking how many confirmed unique riders rode in the month of October, and then divide that into how many total trips were taken on Access. He will have that for the next meeting, but it's not something they have at their fingertips.

Member Shah proposes they offer a maximum of four same day rides a month. That would be one same day round trip ride per week if they have the resource. He thinks if they start prioritizing what's important to each individual, that's going to be very difficult. Chair Hagen stated they mentioned it at a subcommittee that worked on what same day trips would look like. The proposal is that people will have four or six, one-way trips a month per rider. The riders could use it in their discretion, in terms of same day. They did have something like this during COVID but then it was canceled when ridership went back up. They didn't pursue the same day service because up to now, they have been concentrating on bringing the service back to normal and making sure they had enough drivers, and enough vehicles. Member Shah stated the goal would be comparable and to provide reasonable accommodation to the fixed route bus system. He knows there are a lot of other factors, and a lot of resource limitations in place.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that Access is supposed to mirror, as best as possible, the fixed route system. On Access, they have had to become a next-day mentality and on a bus, they could get a ride that same day. As an older senior, she realizes there are things that aren't always emergencies but are crucial to someone's life. They are probably more important to someone if they have a disability than they are for someone who doesn't have one. The Board should research this themselves and test out if they could not go somewhere on that day they needed to and see how they feel about it.

Member Hudson was on the same day subcommittee and her idea was to know how many vans are empty, returning from another route. Maybe some of those trips could be opened up to same day rides because there are times when vans are empty except for the driver.

Member Johnson stated that the fact that they are not requesting the next day tends to make it either urgent or an emergency. For instance, if she had a service dog and the dog became ill and needed to go to the vet, they couldn't wait until the following day. Sometimes you go to the doctor and then they cancel on you at the last minute, and you end up being stuck there for hours. It is not an emergency, but it is still urgent because she has been in that situation a few times.

Mike Greenwood responded that riders do contact the contractor to adjust their pickup time based on a variety of needs. The example that Jan gave is a good example of needing an earlier pick-up because the appointment was canceled, and our contractors will schedule the next available as resources allow.

Member Almalel stated that sometimes they make a doctor's appointment many months out and sometimes they receive a call from them telling them there is an opening for an earlier time. It is not urgent, but it would be great to be able to go to the doctor earlier.

Chair Hagen stated that these are usually not emergency medical situations, but more flexibility of getting to get medical attention or a doctor's appointment earlier. Another theme is employment. It is something that is important for someone who is trying to make their way independently in the community and live their life. There are not a lot of other services that are available to provide this service. Perhaps they should look at it from a flexibility point of view. This topic isn't just an Access topic, but also a Metro topic. Metro needs to make same day flexibility within paratransit a priority.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that when Measure M was passed, they had been told that they would try to make same day rides possible for people who have disabilities and use Access. If it is short of being an emergency but involves pain or extreme discomfort that is a substantial thing. The example given concerning a service animal is also a good example. She thinks that not restricting it just to medical is important because sometimes you have other situations that are very important but not medical.

Chair Hagen stated that another situation is when you need to go to the pharmacy to pick up medication. She had a situation where they changed her medication for another one and she had to go that same day to get the new medication, so she had to make an arrangement for that.

Member Almalel stated that Metro had discussed the idea of Metro Micro for on-demand and limited-service areas. If there was any update on that. Vice Chair Lantz responded that unfortunately the problem with that is that not many areas have them and this could restrict the same day service. Additionally, they are not always wheelchair accessible.

Member Hudson asked if there were any funding streams explored to be able to fund this service. Mike Greenwood responded that the funding stream for Access to Work

and Parents with Disabilities dried up some time ago. Both those programs are just being funded by the general Access annual funding stream they get from Metro. Chair Hagen responded that they need to be creative when looking for funding, not only the funds for transportation but grants put in place for work or medical reasons.

Member Shah stated that in essence they need to prioritize what's important and what's not important as far as same day service. He understands people's medical needs are important and people need to get to work, but if they start favoritism towards one category, it won't be fair. They should just give people eight trips a month, so four round trips that they can use at their discretion. Maybe they should begin with two round trips a month and see how this capacity is able to meet demand. They can easily go down to a deep rabbit hole if they start talking about reasons for the trips.

Chair Hagen stated that they are trying to make incremental changes in flexibility to the service instead of being able to tackle the whole same day, which is huge because it all boils down to funding. If Metro allows the funding, then resources can be bought and infrastructure can be put in, for same day services to occur. That is not an Access issue, that's a Metro issue.

Member Shah stated that they are in a different political climate from the Federal government that will impact the state's ability to provide services on some level. They need to take that into consideration when requesting more money for things like transportation. The question is if in 2028, when they have a lot of visitors coming from other countries, is that going to be a bug on the paratransit system. They need to figure out what the demand is for same day. They need to discuss how many rides the average rider takes and how many trips they take a month. We need data on that, and we need to figure out if there's room in the Metro budget to provide more funding to contractors for that unique type of service because other on-demand services are not available to people with disabilities.

Member Johnson stated she thinks many of the funding resources may be cut or dried out because of the new presidency.

Chair Hagen asked if the same day subcommittee should come back or if they should go to Metro. She wants to clarify what she asks for this topic should be. Member Shah stated that maybe they should create a survey for same day so that they can have data on this topic. They also need to see if there is room in the budget to provide more drivers.

Vice Chair Lantz suggested they resume the same day subcommittee and come up with a proposal based on the needs of riders. Every meeting they have had someone speak up and request same day services. They can't restrict rides or do preferred rides under the ADA law but in proposing this and discussing it with Metro, they should give all the examples riders have offered. They need to show them they are not comparable to fixed routes and it is a major difference in a person's life. She thinks the medications,

the prescriptions, the medical appointments, the service dog issue, are all good examples. Someday they may be in their place and if they could get some people to start thinking of some options. She suggested they gather some stories and examples; they can discuss at their next meeting.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Brian Lopez presented this update. Some highlights were that they added nine new Access stand signs at Dodger Stadium. The Dodgers organization wanted to develop and create their own design to fit the stadium's aesthetics. The information on these new signs can be found on the [accessla.org](https://www.accessla.org) website under, I'm a rider, then stand directory. He also shared that Access conducted a tabletop exercise via Zoom on October 3rd, 2024, simulating an active shooter event near Access Headquarters in El Monte. The overall objectives for this exercise focused on readiness, operations and flexibility. There were 12 access staff members that participated in this serious exercise, each serving an individual purpose within the Emergency Operation Center or EOC. The tabletop exercise yielded positive results as well as areas of improvement for the Access emergency management coordinator. To consider this type of incident is not something anyone wants to think about. However, it is important that they should be prepared for an unfortunate event like this.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating the emergency training should include some of Access clients especially after what happened with that Metro bus.

Lisa Anderson made a public comment by asking what she should do if there is a shooting, and the driver decided to get out of the vehicle while she was still in the vehicle. She asked how she is supposed to protect herself.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Cardona said, "Are there stand signs at the new dome for the Clippers?" Mike Greenwood responded, "We're working with the Clippers to establish one and he said he's going to the game on Monday."

Vice Chair asked how many rides Access successfully delivered in the month of September. Brian Lopez responded there were over 309,000 vehicle trips completed.

TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

Dina Garcia, Administrative Assistant with Access's Planning Department and Eric Haack, Manager of Strategic Planning for Access Services gave this presentation. The presentation was on Access's upcoming customer survey. The focus of next year's 2025 survey will be a technology focused survey. This survey will be available through

multiple methods including text, email, Access's, website QR code, flyers, and via telephone, as well.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Johnson asked if there was any chance that she could have it in the original medium or choice in braille. The emails when they're in columns and information scattered around are really hard to follow. Eric Haack suggested she look over the word document version of the survey and if she was trouble they could send it to her in Braille.

Chair Hagen asked if it is biased if most of the methods of which people answer the survey used the same method of technology, like a computer or QR code. Her recommendation is to increase the phone option, so they can get the perspective of those who are not able to have technology.

Member Cardona mentioned that "Not everyone is able to access a QR code."

Madam Chair suggested they find different options on how to diffuse information to the riders by different formats such as through the website, through recorded information on the hold message, also a podcast. Something like a printed newsletter, videos, those types of things.

Member Johnson added that a number they can call for information would be great, except if you want to hear a specific message, you have to go back all the way to the beginning, again.

Eric Haack stated that some of the questions can be follow-ups. They could make a comment about how you prefer to receive your information if it's a hold message and then that could be a follow-up to that.

Member Hudson agrees with the Chair that older seniors may not be as savvy with a lot of the technology that younger people are. She suggests they do a more random sample for phone surveys and so they could capture that group of people. She asked them to do the phone surveys on random days including weekends so they could reach different people. She added that they have a subcommittee on the website but it has a lot of information so they should address it if they are using it and if they have any questions.

Eric Haack stated that historically Great Blue Research will do text and emails, and then there will be a pool of respondents who do not respond to those initial methods. Then they start the telephone surveys, randomly sampling those who have not completed the text or email or Access website approach. They can request that they increase the number of telephone surveys of that random sample.

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

Vice Chair, Lantz, thanked everybody for all they do to help with their meetings and subcommittee meetings, and thanked the staff for what they do every day.

Member Almalel stated the brunt of their work really gets done with the subcommittees, so it's nice to be here to meet all together. She is proud of the work that's being done, and the conversations being had. Good luck to everyone on the upcoming holiday season.

Member Aroch said it was nice to see everyone in person after a few years at the Annual meeting and she really enjoyed the meeting.

Member Hudson stated it was pleasure to be there and thanked everybody for all their work, staff and CAC members. Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

Member Cardona stated it was really great to see everybody and Happy Thanksgiving and be safe.

Chair Hagen thanked staff and CAC members in the spirit of Thanksgiving. The backbone is having riders participate and speak and share their experiences. She encourages the riders to spread the word and reach out to other riders, to share their experiences.

CAC ORIENTATION PACKET & SURVEY

Matthew Avancena stated they formed the CAC Orientation Packet Subcommittee. They met to redo and try to improve and update the CAC orientation packet. The packet is what is sent to new members when they join the CAC. He stated the packet was finished and asked if they preferred it via email or paper copy.

Member Hagen stated there are links in the packet, and there are some things like a roster so she suggests they might want more than one format. Matthew Avancena said the packet included basic items such as the roster, the CAC bylaws, the Board of Director's bylaws, and they also included links and inserts from the website. Matthew Avancena stated there were links to the Brown Act, the circular on the ADA policies from the FTA and the ADA, linked to the federal regulations. If it was in an email format, they can just click on the link, and it will take them directly to that website. Robert's Rules of Order, a short history of Access services are included as well. There is obviously a Rider's Guide included as well.

Vice Chair Lantz asked that they email it to them and once they get it, they could take a poll next month, whether people need it in printed form. She knows they have a lot going on during the holidays and if they want it printed they could contact Veronica

Guzman-Vanmarcke or Matthew Avancena.
SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Karen Gilbert stated that the subcommittee met on October 23rd. They discussed how to assist customers that require Braille to read the Access top card. Some ideas discussed were to use Access merchandise to place the Braille information next to the top card to carry all together. The Access merchandise discussed was a linear ID, multi pocket wallet holder or a retractable badge holder with clear sleeve. She was asked to discuss with the outreach or the mobility management department about this merchandise availability, and she provided the update to the subcommittee via email.

Jimmy Flores provided an update for the customer service subcommittee. They continued to discuss FAQ from the website. This discussion of determining the most impactful topics to display resulted in members sharing the need to have Access as contact information readily display on the homepage of the website, which is separate from the FAQ. Contact information, such as the number for making a reservation, getting immediate assistance with OMC, and general assistance with customer service were points of the focus for the talk. He announced that the website will soon be updated, and many of the planned changes will incorporate the items discussed at last month's meeting.

Garrett Rodriguez stated there has been no Operations Subcommittee meeting since the last CAC. The Operations Subcommittee will meet tomorrow afternoon.

Eric Haack discussed the Video Communications Subcommittee met to make updates and improvements to the script for a future video of how to avoid a no-show. They are working on the script for the video, how to avoid a no-show, there were revisions made to the script, especially focusing on categories for tips on how to avoid a no-show at the reservation period, as well as giving extra time or additional time for trips so that they don't miss a trip.

Matthew Avancena stated that the Goals Retreat Subcommittee met to discuss potential speaking topics. The next Goals Retreat is tentatively scheduled for February, the same day as the actual CAC meeting. They have a running list of topics and one of the topics is the drivers not reading the notes on the tablet. Other topics are being picked up at large venues or large locations or region-specific issues that are unique to the service regions. The general managers would like to bring in more into the conversation instead of more of a CAC focused discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Andrew Shi made a public comment by stating that he recently applied to become a CAC member. He is a new user to Access, and had some questions on ridership and number of complaints.

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating that he is glad they brought up the issue of the tablets because that's another issue he was going to bring up to the CAC months ago. He thinks the tablets in the vans need to be tweaked a little bit because he doesn't like the way some of the GPS is handling certain routes. Also, he thanked them for adding more stand signs at Dodger Stadium. He encourages them to continue with the surveys, because those are helpful.

Lisa Anderson asked what a subcommittee was and if only CAC members could be a part of it. Vice Chair Lantz responded that any public comments made here at the meeting are discussed in the subcommittees.

DECEMBER CAC MEETING REMINDER

Matthew Avancena announced that the next CAC meeting is one week earlier than usual. Instead of December 10, it's on Tuesday, December 3, because staff have an event happening at the regularly scheduled CAC meeting.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Vice Chair Lantz stated that what they heard from the community was that long share rides or multiple pickups making it a long share ride. Maybe that's something they need to discuss again.

FREE FARE & TRAVEL TRAINING UPDATE

Postponed

ADJOURNMENT

The Chair asked to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.