

access

AGENDA

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

Tuesday, May 9, 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/86853840951>

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

Meeting Number - 868 5384 0951

***Please see note below.**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Description/Presenter</i>	<i>Disposition</i>	<i>Pages</i>
5	1.	Call to Order/Roll Call	Action	
5	2.	Review & Approval of Minutes of April 11, 2023	Action	5-16
7	3.	General Public Comments	Information	
8	4.	Board Member Report	Information	
10	5.	Executive Director's Report - Andre Colaiace	Information	
20	6.	Brown Act Changes - Jason Gonsalves	Information	
15	7.	FY 2024 Draft Budget - Hector Rodriguez	Presentation	

15	8.	Travel Mode Survey Results - Eric Haack & Great Blue Research	Presentation
15	9.	Operations Report - Kristy DeHaro	Presentation
15	10.	Member Communications	Information
15	11.	Subcommittee Updates - Karen Gilbert, Susanna Cadenas, Matthew Avancena, Mike Greenwood	Information
5	12.	Adjournment	Action

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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.

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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.

MINUTES

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
April 11, 2023
1:00 pm - 3:15 pm

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Yael Hagen called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

CAC Members Present: Chair; Yael Hagen, Kimberly Hudson, Bhumit Shah, Gordon Cardona, Terri Lantz, Jan Johnson, Wendy Cabil, Rachele Goeman, Maria Aroch, Scott Barron, Michael Conrad, Wendy Cabil

CAC Members Not Present: Jesse Padilla, Olivia Almalel and Liam Matthews

Board Members Present: Martin Gombert

Access Services Staff Present: Matthew Avancena, Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke, Mike Greenwood, Karen Gilbert, F Scott Jewell, Alex Chrisman, Garrett Rodriguez

Guests Present: N/A

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 14, 2023

Chair Hagen asked for a motion to approve the March 14, 2023 minutes.

Motion: Member Goeman
Seconded: Member Johnson
Abstained: Member Shah and Member Cabil
Motion: Passed

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen made a correction to the minutes by stating that she was just restating for Member Barron since she was having a hard time hearing what he said on her computer. She also stated that on the corrections of the previous meeting minutes she stated that "Be My Eyes" has volunteers, and Aira has paid agents.

Member Lantz had one minor correction under member discussion, in the second sentence. Her point was that Sylvia Drzewiecki had passed away from Covid at the end of January, and that people are still dying and getting sick from Covid. She made this comment regarding meeting virtually versus meeting in person.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Affi Bell made a public comment by stating that she was forced to move to Valencia because she couldn't get rides. She started a petition eight years ago, when they were trying to stop service in LA at midnight. She was trying to go back home from a counseling session, and she was being told they won't pick her up at 9 p.m., that the only option is 6:00p.m.

Carrie Madden made a public comment by stating that she is from the Cal Life Independent Living Center in Los Angeles. She stated that Access should look into a discount program for frequent riders. With inflation, people on social security are having a difficult time. Approximately 80% of disabled people are on low-income range, and so they don't have optional cash for rides. She asks if they can investigate a discount program.

Joanna Wilkins, representative of Momentum, made a public comment by speaking about Sylvia Drzewiecki. She knows of a couple of people who just got over Covid, and she expressed her concern about lifting the mask mandate. She stated that people with disabilities have compromised immune systems. She understands that the city mandate has been lifted but thinks that a special consideration should be made for people with disabilities since they are such a unique entity.

Steve Bauer made a public comment by announcing his presence and expressing his interest in being part of the CAC.

Troy Wilkinson made a public comment by stating that he is the grandson of a 93-year-old customer that was dropped off at an appointment in Torrance after being picked up in Inglewood. The pickup was about three hours long and the vehicle that picked them up was not adequate since there was a passenger that took up a large part of the vehicle. He had to move his legs to accommodate his brace. He doesn't think this was safe for the other passengers. Also, the driver kept picking up passengers in the area far from their drop-off, and he had to ask him to stop picking up riders and call dispatch. His grandmother is 93 and a diabetic and had not used the bathroom. Thankfully the dispatch agreed to not give him more riders because his diabetic grandmother needed to check her blood sugar. He thinks Access is great, but they really need to improve their routes and length of rides.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

Board Director Martin Gombert presented the Board report. He stated Board member

Theresa DeVera gave an update at the last Access meeting of February 27th. He gave an update on what will be covered at the next Board meeting, on May 22nd. The first was the approval of the FY 23-24 budget, which is now over 300 million for the coming fiscal year. They will also be discussing the award of the architectural and engineering contract for the Antelope Valley, which he is very excited that the agency is acquiring and building their own facilities. Another item on the agenda will be the service area map policy, and the changes related to Metro's next-gen system. They will discuss how it can impact Access services' service area, and a presentation on the customer survey, which was reviewed by the CAC several months ago.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Afi Bell made a public comment by asking for clarification on the route changes from Metro. F Scott Jewell stated that Metro made some route changes that might affect the Access service area however, Access has agreed to not make those changes to their routes.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen thanked Director Gombert for always attending the CAC meetings to give reports. She really appreciates that.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

F Scott Jewell made the report on behalf of Andre Colaiace who could not attend the meeting. He stated that this was their first hybrid meeting and there was nobody in the public, so it is completely virtual except for him and Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke. The TPAC and Board meetings will be the same as this one with the Board meeting on April 17th being attended by the Board members. The Brown Act is still being looked at by the state legislature to allow for these types of meetings to move forward. There are two bills that would contribute to that. Assembly Bill 2449 only applies to if there is an actual emergency like Covid. If the County declares an emergency again, they could go back to being virtual only, but the notification or authorization of that must be taken by the Board of Directors and would be changed from 30 days' notice to 45 days' notice. There is also State Senate Bill 411, which goes a lot further and would allow even in the non-pandemic emergency times for local participation without requiring posting of addresses of people who are attending remotely or provide accommodations for the people who show up to watch the meeting. They do have a public location in El Monte for people to observe the meeting or participate during public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Hudson made a comment by stating she really appreciates the Board and Access staff efforts to keep these dual versions of the meeting open so that people can call in via Zoom and people, if they wish, could be there in person. It will keep them all safe in terms of their health, but also will open the meetings up to a greater attendance because people will not have to travel just to El Monte to attend the meeting.

Member Lantz stated that she thinks that leadership in Access has been wonderful and tremendous in supporting riders. She knows that for some of the CAC members, it was not an easy thing to deal with and she appreciates the efforts everyone has made to allow them to continue to participate in the meetings. She asked Director Gombert to thank the Board for listening and supporting riders and those with disabilities that would be able to join in person meetings.

Member Goeman asked about State bill 411 and if it was stated wide. F Scott Jewell responded State Bill 411's for the whole state. There are additional ways to support these measures. He will send out a link Chair Hagen sent him and will be sure to forward this to the CAC member.

Member Cabil thanked F Scott Jewell and all those in support of the hybrid option and extending the service for all of them to continue with this option. Things have changed for her physically since the pandemic. This hybrid option has been helpful to her.

Member Lantz stated that she would like to have information on how to support the bills.

Chair Hagen responded there were quite a few legislative bills out there at the moment. The Brown Act is a state issue and there are a lot of state bills and local bills as well that will address that. The way to support these bills is to look for their local representatives, state representatives, city council and local Board of Supervisors. She stated that she would work with Matthew Avancena after the meeting to come up with a website or a way to give them some more information by email so people can get involved.

ESTABLISH CUSTOMER SERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE

Matthew Avancena presented the item to establish a customer service subcommittee led by Susanna Cadenas and possibly Mayra Calderon. They will discuss coupons, how no shows are being processed and other customer service issues. There will be staff who will lead the discussion and schedule the meetings and they will take place once a month, no more than an hour each. He asked for volunteers for the subcommittee, then staff would go ahead and schedule the first meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Carrie Madden from Cal Life made a public comment by stating that she supports the creation of this subcommittee. She would like them to discuss the selling of coupons at Independent Living Centers. They have six ILC's plus many of them have satellite offices, so they cover a lot of regions in LA County.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen encouraged the CAC members to participate, especially those who have never participated in a subcommittee. It is only one hour a month and really encourages their participation to hear their input.

Chair Hagen asked for volunteers and Members Hagen, Goeman, Lantz and Shah volunteered with Member Hudson as an alternate.

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the formation of the customer service subcommittee and Member Goeman made the motion to approve the forming of the Customer Service Subcommittee meeting. There was a second by Member Lantz. Motion passed.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Operations Service Monitor, Garrett Rodriguez presented the Operations report. Access staff attended the Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting held in Santa Clarita on March 2nd. Access staff assisted with the pickups and drop-offs, totaling just over 560 completed trips at the Abilities Expo from March 10th to March 12th. Access also shared a booth across from Metro to speak to participants at the expo along with answering questions from riders. In addition, Access executive management had a chance to take a brief ride in a new autonomous accessible vehicle that Lilly Systems is building in San Jose in partnership with Access. Plans are being considered to bring the vehicle to Los Angeles so the community can take part in demos. And lastly, three new Access stand signs were installed at the Long Beach Convention Center.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Goeman asked what 3 KPIs were not being met. Garrett Rodriguez responded that it was on time performance, preventable collision rates and denials. Member Goeman also asked why they are saying from February to February, and if they are considering any denial trips if she missed that part. He responded that for February, it was for the fiscal year, and they are tracking it but still not meeting on-time performance at 90.9%, however, they are almost there. For the denials they have a total of three, and the preventable collision rate was not met in February.

Chair Hagen asked what Access staff attended the Santa Clarita event. Garrett Rodriguez responded it was Faustino Salvador, the Project Administrator, and their newest OSM, Brian Lopez. She also asked if the unreasonable shared rides are tracked and asked if this could be added to the operations report. She is curious if they have increased or decreased. Garrett responded he would look into adding it to next month's report.

Member Lantz stated that this might be an issue for the customer service subcommittee to deal with. Chair Hagen stated that this could be discussed at the subcommittee meeting but she would still like to hear the numbers in the report so they could keep track of them and that is why she made her comment.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Emergency Coordinator, Alex Chrisman, presented this item. He stated he was now responsible for maintaining the agency's emergency preparedness and situational awareness. He updated that as of March 31, the emergency declaration in Los Angeles County ended. Face coverings were now optional on Access rides and riders are encouraged not to ride while sick. He continued with other updates on the emergency preparedness issues.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen stated that depending on the area, there are places that give battery packs to people with disabilities during certain emergencies where there's no electricity because of power outages. The batteries were for medical equipment, wheelchairs and such, but obviously any of that would be important. She asked if Access was aware of this service and if this was something that Access could get involved with. Alex Chrisman responded that he has heard of this through the county Office of Emergency Management, so he will follow up. Chair Hagen added that the DWP also offered something similar to this and it would be interesting to look into them as well.

Member Lantz stated that LA City has a committee for emergency preparedness. She used to serve on it, and he might want to check in with them to see if they know of any programs and she thinks it would be interesting information for them.

MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Member Lantz thanked Access for supporting riders and for all they do. She has received some comments from people via messages wanting to thank Access for their leadership on the issues that were discussed that day.

Member Cabil stated that she is glad that they could connect again and stated Access staff and partners were doing a great job.

Member Hudson thanked Access again for keeping the meetings virtual. She agrees that it would be advantageous for the mask mandate to remain to protect the health and safety of the drivers and the riders because Covid still exists. She encouraged there be some sort of stronger indication to maintain mask wearing because of the proximity and the length of time that people are on a vehicle.

Member Goeman stated that she is very concerned about the length of rides. She took a ride that took about 4 hrs. recently. She hopes that they are still looking into this and making sure that these unnecessarily long share rides get fixed. She thinks that five hours for a ride is a little ridiculous in her opinion.

Member Cardona stated that he hoped everybody had a good Easter or Passover.

Member Johnson stated that the excessively long share rides are ridiculous where they keep picking up and dropping off riders and are nowhere close to dropping her off. She recently had a ride that took about 4 hrs., and she didn't get home until almost 1 am in the morning.

Chair Hagen thanked everyone that came to make a public comment. She stated that the whole point of the meetings was to get input from riders. Their thoughts reflect a lot of other people's thoughts and experiences. They have a lot of work to do, and it takes everyone volunteering for committees and people being engaged to improve.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Matthew Avancena gave an update on the communications/video subcommittee by stating that they had finally completed the script. It was an accomplishment, and the not so good part is since the script was so detailed, they were asked by the communications and marketing team and the consultant to try to trim the script. They would like it to be at least a 13-minute video. Peter and Josh from the communications team have been editing and trimming down the script so that it's not so long. They made a couple of changes to the script and are hopeful that with those changes they can move forward with filming. At the meeting they will talk about scheduling the video shoot will happen and asking for volunteers to model or participate in the shoot. For the website subcommittee, staff is having difficulties with contacting the website developer. They suspect there may be some staffing issues on the developer's end, but staff made some changes to the Access events page of the website. Staff changed some of the colors and are proposing to cut down the number of slides that are on the carousel. At the goals retreat subcommittee, they talked about the draft agenda for the meeting and there are some concerns about the length of the actual retreat. Some members feel that they should have it in the morning and some feel that it should be in the afternoon. They are hopeful that the next meeting will come to some sort of consensus so that they can finalize the agenda and move forward with scheduling the actual retreat.

Mike Greenwood stated that at the last operations subcommittee they spent the hour reviewing and discussing Access's newest vehicle, which is the small Ram ProMaster, 136-inch wheelbase vehicle. This is used for ambulatory riders and one mobility device. The vehicle they currently have is currently being driven around by an Access staff member. It's a 2021 model year vehicle and they are going to schedule a couple of field trips to get some feedback from the riders, including some CAC members. They have already recommended some changes to that vehicle and expect a couple of other changes to be added before their order of 58 small Ram ProMasters is sent to the manufacturer. There are a few differences between the 58 that will be built and the one that they are currently testing. They have an order of 101 additional small Ram ProMasters, but that order is on a waiting list. Only 58 of them are starting to be built in Corona. The last report from the fleet manager Rick Streiff, is that they were starting to develop the jigs to cut the floor pieces. Among the items discussed with the subcommittee were the new grab rails to the left side of the door that the rider will be able to grab a hold of when they enter the vehicle. They have incorporated an intermediate step so that there's not a large single step in the back of the vehicle. The ramp is much heavier duty than what they have on a Dodge Caravan. They are going from four seats to three seats, in the back that makes each seat a couple of inches wider to provide more hip and elbow room for our riders. There are new safety features in these vehicles as well. In the past operations subcommittee meetings, they focused on no-shows and missed trips, how to avoid them, techniques to reduce them. They are hoping to get bids next month from prospective contractors to provide five to nine more years of service in the eastern region.

Karen Gilbert provided an update on the eligibility subcommittee meeting from March 22. The subcommittee shared that Metro offers marking and tethering services of mobility devices at the customer's home. She suggested that this information should be available in different places for the community and riders to be aware of it. They also discussed auto-renewal criteria and the list of diagnoses and medical conditions was edited. The final list was sent via email immediately after the meeting to the subcommittee members for review. The subcommittee requested information on eligibility evaluators as it pertains to experience and educational background. They will start the next meeting, discussing this item and concluding the auto-renew list of medical conditions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lisa Anderson made a comment by stating that she would like to file a complaint about the rides. She has been getting picked up late and they keep adding passengers when the vehicles are full. They arrive at their destination very late.

Chair Hagen responded that at the moment they were taking public comments on the agenda item at hand. She thinks her issue is very important so she should bring it to a customer service representative. She will, however, make sure someone reaches out to her after the meeting on her issue.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Goeman asked when the website subcommittee meets because she didn't get a notification. Matthew Avancena said he would call her about that. She asked Mike Greenwood if there would be room in front of the seat for the dogs. He responded that there will be sufficient room in front of several of the ambulatory seats, but they are planning on taking a couple of field trips to get rider feedback. He would like her to join so they get her input.

Member Lantz thanked F Scott Jewell, Matthew Avancena, Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke, Mike Greenwood and Karen Gilbert for their support of the subcommittees so they could meet virtually. They could not do what they do if it was not virtual.

Chair Hagen stated that as much as they want to make the script very concise, she wants to be sure that the content is what drives the video and not the time that it takes. It should be the quality of the content and not the length of video. She also stated that the goal subcommittee came to a consensus in terms of the time that they were going to do the training and then have a break and return to the meeting afterwards. As far as the website goes, they did not want the slides period. Slides present too many accessibility issues and are not a very accessible way of having information presented on a website. She just wanted to make those corrections to the report. Contrast was an issue that was discussed on the website and that can only occur if the print is simple and clean and there's no color in the background or pictures in the background.

Member Lantz stated that the communications subcommittee was challenging to get through everything and make sure that the quality is there. They want to make sure they are giving people the tips they need to be successful but also have it be concise enough where people can focus and get through it in a timely manner. All committee work has led to better service. They have a ways to go to improve the website and they would welcome any rider input for all these issues.

Member Goeman stated that as far as the website is concerned, she agrees with Chair Hagen, and she stated that slides are incredibly confusing. It makes it 10 times harder to find what you want and get what you need to get done in a timely manner.

ACCESS PODCAST

Chair Hagen stated that the idea of Access services creating a podcast was brought up a while ago and they have been talking about the feasibility of doing it. The podcast would bring information to riders that is relevant to enhancing their experience in transportation. She stated that they could discuss what sort of assisted technology or agencies are out there that they could discuss to help them improve transportation. Also, this could be a good way for Access to give information about what is happening at Access. She stated that podcasts were free and are available through different

mediums and media platforms such as smartphones or computers. They make sure that there's low-tech and high-tech accessibility to podcasts. Podcasts are also archived and once recorded, can always be listened to. She asked what the CAC thought of this idea and what were some of resources that would be good to bring into this podcast.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Goeman stated that explaining the Where's My Ride app, for people who have never used it but want to, could be a good discussion. She knows there is a hotline, but sometimes these things happen at six o'clock in the evening and you can't get a hold of anybody. If there could be step-by-step instructions on how to use it for people who are sighted, it could be useful to go back to a podcast for help. Additionally, as far as screen readers are concerned, maybe if there was a podcast that gave the JAWS commands. She didn't know they had those commands on Zoom until Chair Hagen told her. She has heard that riders love the Access website, but people have also asked her why they don't have a podcast.

Chair Hagen stated that there are many apps for people with visual disabilities, such as Be My Eyes, which is a free volunteer-based app, that can assist people to find their vehicles. AIRA is another app but a bit more sophisticated and they have paid agents. There are apps such as Google Lens and Seeing AI that could also do things like recognize vehicles or vehicle numbers. There are apps for people with hearing disabilities that can help an individual hear or be able to do interpreting to increase communication. They can interview someone who has a lot of knowledge about apps and what they can do in transportation.

Chair Hagen stated that Metro has a lot of different programs for seniors and people with disabilities and they can also explain their low-fare system. Another topic to speak about would be some of the ways that they can interact with Access Services. They can talk about other technologies such as grabbers and dressing sticks that could be useful during transit. They can also speak about the loan library, ability tools and other places where people can loan assistive technology. People want to know about these things because they can really make a big difference in how they use Access and make their life easier as they do that.

Member Lantz stated that another idea where they could do either a video or a podcast is on how some riders fear traveling and making transfers. They could discuss ways to make people more comfortable when traveling. Chair Hagen added this could be done in partnership with Metro.

Chair Hagen stated that the podcast, if done monthly, could be prerecorded to make 12 in a year. They could record about three podcasts in one day's worth, so it could be done quarterly. The equipment needed is very minimal in terms of cost and in terms of ease of use. There are many companies and agencies that help put it all together and produce it. There is a possibility also of doing advertisements and things like that that would basically have the podcast pay for themselves. She believes the time commitment and budget commitment would be very minimal. Most of the information can also come from interviewing Access staff.

Matthew Avancena responded that an endless number of topics could be discussed in a podcast. He understands there are a lot of sites and agencies now using the podcast medium to disseminate information to their customers. From a staff perspective, the podcast could be a useful tool, but staff does not have the time to support the project at the time. Given the day-to-day tasks and other things that Access is doing outside of that, supporting the CAC with the meetings, the subcommittee meetings and so on. While he agrees with the group, the podcast is an excellent medium to disseminate information, staff cannot support the effort at this time. However, if it's informational materials that the group is looking to produce, they have other forums to do that. They have the communications/video subcommittee. Some of the issues Member Goeman suggested concerning the Where's My Ride app, they are currently developing videos on that already. There are opportunities for staff to develop videos and tutorials on certain aspects of the agency. As far as talking about other things that are not Access related, such as Metro and other products and services, staff does not have enough time given the number of projects they manage.

Chair Hagen stated she cannot imagine the time it takes to do a video, but the time it takes to do a 45-minute interview on a podcast would not be available. This is a discussion they can have outside of the meeting. She stated she believed this was cleared to be on the agenda as a topic that was supported by staff, which is why they are having the discussion. She stated that they don't expect to have a podcast produced by tomorrow, but this is something that is of interest and value.

Member Lantz stated that she understands about the staff time but is wondering if there are ways of doing the podcasts where it would not take staff time, where the support could come from somewhere else.

She stated that since they are already making videos, a lot of the issues in the videos could be turned into podcasts. She is trying to think of other options so that they could somehow get support for this project.

Chair Hagen stated that one CAC member has already volunteered to be involved in the podcast. She thinks a few of them would probably be willing to do some of the interviews, bring information and be involved in some of that process.

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 Member Lantz. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.