

access

AGENDA

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

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/85952997299>
Dial In - 888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or
669 900 6833
Meeting Number - is **85952997299**
*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 March 11, 2025	Action	5-13
10	3.	General Public Comments	Information	
8	4.	Board Member Report	Information	
10	5.	Executive Director's Report - Andre Colaiace	Information	
15	6.	Appoint New Members to CAC - Matthew Avancena	Action	14-15
8	7.	Establish Ad hoc Member Participation Subcommittee - Matthew Avancena	Action	

10	8.	West Central RFP Preview - Jessica Volanos	Presentation
10	9.	Emergency Preparedness Video - Alex Chrisman	Video
10	10.	Operations Report - Kristi DeHaro	Presentation
5	11.	Member Communications	Information
5	12.	Future Agenda Items-Yael Hagen	Information
8	13.	Subcommittee Updates - Susanna Cadenas, Mike Greenwood, Eric Haack, Matthew Avancena	Information
6	14.	Riders Guide Update - Matthew Avancena	Information
1	15.	Adjournment	Action

Access Services does not discriminate based on 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 devices and services to facilitate communication. In determining the type of auxiliary devices and services for communication that will be provided, primary consideration is given to the request of the individual with disabilities. However, the final decision belongs to Access Services. To help ensure availability of those auxiliary devices 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 devices or services. You may do so by contacting (213) 270-6000.

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 agendized 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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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 8, 2025
1:00 pm - 3:15 pm

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Yael Hagen called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

CAC Members Present: Chair Yael Hagen, Vice-Chair Terri Lantz, Gordon Cardona, Jesse Padilla, Jan Johnson, Kimberly Hudson, Bhumit Shah, Olivia Almalel, Scott Barron, Wendy Cabil

CAC Members Not Present: Rachele Goeman, Michael Conrad, Maria Aroch

Board Members Present: None

Access Services Staff Present: Matthew Avancena, Veronica Guzman-Vanmarcke, Mike Greenwood, Andre Colaiace, Eric Haack, Art Chacon, Kristy DeHaro, Randy Johnson, Susanna Cadenas, Karen Gilbert

Guests Present: None

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2025

Chair Hagen asked for a motion to approve the March 11, 2025, minutes.

Motion: Member Padilla

Seconded: Member Barron

Abstention: Vice Chair Lantz, Member Cabil, Member Cardona, Member Shah

Motion: Passed

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating it was a great community meeting. A lot of riders spoke up about new vans and the extensions on the Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley lines during the weekend. Hopefully they will implement some changes soon.

Parshva Shah made a public comment by stating that everyone has their own issues, but he is very passionate about same day rides and he hopes it is something that happens soon.

BOARD MEMBER REPORT

No Board meeting in March.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Andre Colaiace stated that they recently had their community meeting and thanked Access staff that helped put it together, particularly Randy Johnson. He thanked Karen Gilbert for doing an excellent job and cementing her place as the permanent MC for the community meetings. He and Hector Rodriguez recently attended the Annual Transit Leadership Summit, at Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles. Board member, Valerie Gibson, along with a number of Metro and member agency staff, including Metro CEO, Stephanie Wiggins, were also in attendance. They were updated on critical issues faced in the region such as safety, security and planning for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic games, and it also generated several important discussions. He was grateful that Access Services was included to join the discussions on regional issues. There is new leadership at the Department of Transportation at the Federal Transit Administration, Sean Duffy, who is a Congressman from Wisconsin, is the new head of DOT and the head of the Federal Transit Administration, Marc Molinaro who is also a Congressman from New York. He's been told that both Congressman have children with disabilities, and they are focused on accessibility. He's heard there have been layoffs at the Federal Transit Administration. It isn't clear how many people will be laid off and whether that would affect Access or other transit agencies. They submitted a project to their senators, Senator Alex Padilla and Senator Adam Schiff for funding for our Southern region facility. They will know later if they are going to fund earmarks or as they're now called community funding projects, and he will keep them updated about what's going on in a federal level and how it affects Access.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sherilyn Edwards made a public comment by stating that when she rides Access, they provide some of the best service. However, there are some issues when she takes Access rides and they pick up other passengers along the way, which has made her arrivals late. She thinks they need to fix these issues.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Padilla asked if there were any people being laid off at Access. Andre Colaiace responded there was none. The Federal Transit Administration, which oversees them, and other transit agencies have had some layoffs. Again, it's not clear to what extent and how it would affect them.

COMMUNITY MEETING UPDATE

Randy Johnson presented an update on the spring meeting on March 15th. It was very well attended, very good participation. There was an emergency management update, a presentation on the 2025 customer survey and a presentation on stand signs. Afterwards, they held a Q&A to allow people that are participating to ask questions, get clarifications about the service or policies and other questions. They are always looking to improve community meetings, so he is asking for any input. He asked if there were any questions regarding the community meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating that they should have community meetings every two months and they would get more participation from riders.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Almalel stated she's had discussions with those who attended the meeting, and she thinks they have missed a lot of good opportunities. Towards the end of the meeting, people start asking more and more questions. It's a great opportunity to invite those people to the CAC meetings. To make them feel heard, acknowledged, especially if they want to participate more.

Vice Chair Lantz stated she missed the last community meeting, and some frustrating part of the meeting was when someone has a burning issue that they want to ask about and is then sent to a private room. She herself would like to hear what everyone has to say and what the response is. In case it is something she too would have liked to ask that same question.

Member Cabil stated that she enjoyed the community meeting, and it was her first virtual one. She has always been an advocate for mental health issues and likes to help, educate and raise awareness in the public while at the same time debunking the myths about mental health challenges. She thinks there needs to be more sensitivity around this issue and more comfort in describing situations without being offensive. Someone was describing a situation and used the word nut cases. She is there to also advocate for the respect of those with other disabilities and invisible disabilities.

Chair Hagen stated that at the beginning of the meeting, people were asked if they wanted to go into a room and discuss their matter with a particular staff person, and then there was a change in the facilitation and that was no longer done. She proposes they do the meeting in three parts. The first part would be the presentations, then general questions and then if people want to stay a little longer, to talk about their specific issues can speak to staff one-on-one.

Member Johnson stated that many of them who depend on Access to get home and set a time, they don't know if they will be able to ask their questions.

Chair Hagen responded that the meetings were via Zoom. She added that meetings were an hour and a half and thinks if they divide them into three parts, they can have the last 45 minutes as time to speak one-on-one to a staff member.

Member Cardona stated, "Maybe allow more time for the public to speak."

Member Hudson stated that there were some prevalent issues raised at community meetings, and if they could make prevalent topics or issues part of the agenda then that would encourage people to come to the CAC meeting as well to discuss issues in further detail.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that the community meetings used to invite people to participate and were allowed to speak, and they didn't have a bunch of presentations. It was a meeting to allow the riders to express themselves and speak on subjects they wanted to talk about. Sometimes they should stick to the way things were since they worked great. She would like to go back to that and maybe allow them to speak even if it is a timed speaking time.

Chair Hagen stated that Access staff have decreased the number of presentations and the amount of information they provide during the community meetings. Riders are allowed speaking time without a limit and able to give input. anything like that in terms of having the time and being able to give input. She thinks the issue is that they don't have enough time or when people are removed from the general discussion to a side discussion. If we were in person, then people would ask their questions and afterwards staff were available to answer individual questions.

Vice Chair Lantz suggested they have community meetings where the riders are just able to have discussion only meetings where there are not presentations and just let the riders speak.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Parshva Shah made a public comment by stating that I think that people who have access to a computer isn't able to get their suggestion in, because of the ability to keep track of their suggestion online and a ticket number. It will allow them to leave a comment and be able to follow up. Instead of having the same complaints over and over.

Sherilyn Edwards made a public comment by stating that she participated in the community meeting the other month. It was really good, and it was about ProMaster, and she thought they did a great job. She loved the idea of the first part, the second part, the general questions and having an option to go aside to speak to someone

alone.

Marla Hall left a public comment by stating that she wrote down all the issues from the meeting but can't find her list. She said the conversation wasn't just about ProMaster but other issues as well. She asked where there was a list of all of those things, and she was told she would be contacted regarding the ProMaster. She has trouble getting on that vehicle and she wanted this issue addressed.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen added that the other topics at the community meeting were shared rides and same day service.

Member Padilla said the presentations are important, but he suggested they cut down on one or two presentations. It is important to hear more from the community instead.

Vice Chair added that maybe they could do focus groups on certain issues that have been raised by the community members. Chair Hagen stated that is why they have subcommittees. Vice Chair Lantz stated that instead of coming up with presentations, the community has already spoken and given what their interests are. There needs to be some focus on discussing those things at the next community meeting like the new vehicles, same day, and other issues.

ACCESS TO WORK UPDATE

Eric Haack updated them on this item. He presented on the Access to Work program. He provided an overview of the history of the program, recent changes to the program, and statistics related to where the program is today. The Access to Work program began with federal funding assistance from an FTA Job Access Reverse Commute grant. The idea of the Job Access Commute Grant from the FTA was to provide increased transit and paratransit resources to persons working non-traditional schedules. Access did receive funding from this grant program. Trips were designed around a customer's work start time, so that they would know that they would get to work on time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating that he is glad that the Access to Work program is improving. He recommended that they promote this, with the State of California Employment Development Department, along with my partners, like the Workforce Services partners like Verdugo Job Center, Goodwill Industries, Jewish Vocational Services, and other places.

Parshva Shah made a public comment by stating that they should expand this program for individuals who are going to school as well. It is important for education and people who are trying to finish school.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Member Barron asked if someone was sick at work and had to leave early, was there an option to get a ride earlier. Eric Haack responded because Access to Work is similar to standing time orders, then they would have to arrange another ride.

Member Hudson asked if this program was federally funded and if there was a limit on how many participants could apply. Eric Haack responded that it was a grant program, and in the grant application, there was a component in which Access was supposed to provide how many participants would be on this program. There is not a stated limit or cap for this program. She stated that the reason she is bringing that up is that she thinks that the agency needs to see what their upper limit might be if there is one, because then it becomes a standing time order and that changes the whole ride.

Member Cabil asked if they could go visit them in Antelope Valley at the Independent Living Center called Desert Haven. Eric Haack asked her to send him a message. Chair Hagen asked Eric Haack to take Access Services to Antelope Valley with Dina Garcia.

Member Cardona stated said, "Braille Institute, how about day programs?" Eric Haack responded that the Braille Institute is one and day programs another. Access to Work is for jobs and job skill training. If the Braille Institute specifies that this is a job skill training, then that could make that connection.

Chair Hagen asked what the difference between this program and a standing ride program was since they all have the same qualifications. What makes this program different? Eric Haack responded that they are guaranteed pick up and have priority to arrive on time.

Chair Hagen asked why changing the fare from \$2 to \$2.75 was a huge hardship. She would like to know how much revenue was gained by the extra .75 cent increase. That's two trips per day, and that adds up to a very steep price. Eric Haack responded that the fare was lower before the grant and now Access is operating without any assistance from a grant. She thinks it will cost more money to change all the literature about this program than actually save money in the end. She hopes they look into it.

Chair Lantz asked if Access could check if this is the case and if it's a valid point. She knows they had a supported employment program at UCP before, and it worked pretty well. When it went wrong, it really went wrong. She thinks this program is good for those that go to the same place every week. This gives Access information ahead of time so they can improve routing as well.

Chair Hagen stated that they had date from before and after the fare raise. It is something that they need to look at. Eric Haack stated that this could be part of the survey that they will hold this summer and Chair Hagen added that she wanted to see those questions.

Member Shah stated that the goal of Access to Work is to get people to their jobs on time. Instead of creating programs, the Access to Work, Access to School, Access to whatever. They could develop a program to where the system generates a pick-up time, and they have an option to either request a set time for pick-up based on the rider's unique need. It can cover doctor appointments, schools, and a wide variety of issues. Eric Haack understands what he is proposing but he is not the person who can speak on this subject.

Member Cardona stated, "This \$2 fare was guaranteed since they have to work." Eric Haack responded that some people may cancel for whatever reason but with work, they don't tend to cancel.

Member Johnson asked that the fact that it is a shared ride program, how can Access, given the problems with shared ride now, predict what time they will arrive. Eric Haack responded that the program is designed to make sure that person's ride arrives to their destination at the time provided. The operations team at Access has created a KPI to ensure that it was 94% on time for Access to Work. There is an incentive that the contractors are getting them to work on time. If there is another share ride that pops up on a route, but if that share ride is going to risk that the person will not get to the destination on time, they will not assign to that ride.

AGE FOR AUTO-RENEWAL

Karen Gilbert presented this item by stating that they would be discussing the age for auto-renewal. Currently, that age for auto renewal is 75 and Chair Hagen is requesting to lower that age to 60. She defined what auto renewal was by stating individuals that have auto-renewal are only required to complete a one-page form every five years. This form just asks to update their personal information, and they don't need to be seen in person. As of today, there are 45,684 or 39% of riders with auto-renewal status, and the total ridership is 116,431. There are two criteria for a customer to be granted auto-renewal. The first one is customers with current unrestricted eligibility who will be 75 or older at the time of their renewal. The second category is customers of any age, any disability that goes to an in-person evaluation and is granted unrestricted eligibility as a new applicant or even as a renewal customer, may be eligible for auto-renewal status. Someone that's permanently bound to a wheelchair, power chair, scooter, autoimmune diseases, systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, epilepsy. Also, chronic mental illnesses not controlled by medication or even if the improvement with treatment wouldn't help, serious mental illness such as mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder resulting in serious functional impairments which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. Severe cognitive

conditions, dementia or Alzheimer's disease, severe mood and personality disorders, bipolar affective disorder, PTSD, severe autism.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Fernando Roldan made a public comment by stating that it is good that they provide an age limit and Karen Gilbert did provide a pretty big list of disabilities. He suggested they also in-home evaluations to facilitate this process for some riders.

Parshva Shah made a public comment by stating that he is blind and his disability is not going to change, so he just gets renewed automatically. If everything is documented, the permanent disability should be renewed automatically.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen stated that the difference between someone's medical condition with someone at 60 and as they grow older, it will probably not improve but worsen. Growing older with a disability is even more pronounced as a deteriorating condition. She thinks it would save Access money not having to have in-person recertifications. It will put Access less at risk because as people get older and their disabilities are more severe. Attending an in-person eligibility appointment may become a big liability for both the person and the facility itself. They are proposing to ask Access to consider changing the age from 75 to 60. She added that Metro considers a person who is a senior at the age of 62.

Vice Chair Lantz stated that when she first joined the CAC they had a long discussion, and Access was presented with the research, and nothing was done to change it. There is nothing to be gained from it but there is a lot of risk involved, especially for seniors. It is difficult to leave their homes sometimes. She added that she applied for social security, the age is 65. Who came up with the 75 yr. limit because she doesn't understand it since it doesn't align with any other governmental entity. Most people have either disabilities from birth or from early on in their lives. Those who have age-related disabilities, it usually happened before 65 in many cases. The arbitrary 75 makes no sense whatsoever.

Member Shah asked what the data was on how many people without permanent disabilities are riding with Access. Out of those 70,000 people, how many of those people lose their eligibility at some point in time. Chair Hagen asked if he meant if there are some riders that have medically improved, or if their conditions have changed and therefore they're no longer eligible.

Chair Hagen proposed they bring this item back to the agenda for the next meeting. Everyone agreed to do that for further discussion. Vice Chair Lantz asked why they should bring it back if they all agree that they shouldn't have to be reinterviewed to get auto renewal. They should bring it to the Board of Directors. Chair Hagen stated that it

needed to become an action item so they can forward it to the Board of Directors.

ESTABLISH TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

Matthew Avancena proposed they establish a technology subcommittee. They will discuss issues around technology and ask for volunteers for this subcommittee. Wendy Cabil, Gordon Cardona, Yael Hagen and Terri Lantz as an alternate.

A motion was made by Member Cardona and seconded by Member Cabil. Motion passed unanimously.

MEMBER DISCUSSION

Chair Hagen asked them to postpone the following items until the next meeting. The Riders Guide update, Operations report, Member Communications, and Subcommittee updates were tabled.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chair asked to adjourn the meeting. Member Cabil made a motion and Member Cardona seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.

ITEM 6

MAY 27, 2025

TO: CAC

FROM: MATTHEW AVANCENA, DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND COORDINATION

RE: CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) APPOINTMENTS

ISSUE:

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) currently has two membership vacancies. In accordance with the CAC Bylaws, CAC approval is required in order to appoint new members to the committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Appoint Jonna Wilkins and Stephen Bauer to the CAC effective May 27, 2025.

IMPACT ON BUDGET

None

BACKGROUND

One of two advisory committees created by the Access Services Board of Directors, the CAC provides community input and advice to the Board and staff concerning operational and policy issues to improve Access' paratransit service. As required by the CAC bylaws, the CAC formed an ad hoc Member Selection Subcommittee to work with staff to review applications and schedule interviews.

PROCESS

Subcommittee members conducted interviews with potential applicants on March 26-27 and on April 7. Following the interviews, the member selection subcommittee met again on April 11 to deliberate and discuss the applicants. After careful consideration, the subcommittee selected Jonna Wilkins and Stephen Bauer to fill the two vacancies on the CAC.

PROPOSED MEMBERS

Jonna Wilkins is an active Access rider and a disability rights advocate. She enjoys taking Access with family members to see various parts of the County and to show them how to effectively use paratransit for their daily needs.

Stephen Bauer has been an Access rider for 22 years. He is the president of the greater Los Angeles chapter of the California Council of the Blind and provides training in Braille and access technology to blind students throughout the County.