



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

The Access Services Board of Directors met on February 26, 2024.

- > The Board approved contract extensions for an on-board vehicle camera recording system and third-party administrator insurance services.
- > The Board also approved a two-year extension for the service provider contract in the Santa Clarita region through June 2026.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for March 25, 2024.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Self-reliance and neighborliness may be key to earthquake resilience

Los Angeles has many advantages, from the almost year-round sunny weather to a plethora of food and entertainment options. However, like all things that seem nearly perfect from the outside, there's a catch. Los Angeles, a county of 9.83 million people, sits near the San Andreas fault, which is capable of producing a magnitude 8.3 earthquake according to computer models. A quake of such size would be 39 times stronger than the 1994 Northridge quake, according to the United States Geological Survey. The Northridge earthquake caused 57 fatalities, \$20 billion dollars in damage and major disruptions to hospitals and transportation facilities. The Big One, as the potential 8.3 quake is called, would likely be incredibly destructive and dangerous.

Because of the level of destruction a large earthquake will likely cause, local emergency resources will almost certainly be overwhelmed. Calls to 911 may go unanswered; first responders may be themselves impacted; and Angelinos should prepare to essentially be on their own for up to a week after the event. While this thought may be grim, there are steps you can take to prepare.



Our increasingly digital lives have left many of our streets quiet. Residents tend to stay indoors, using high speed internet (which will likely not be available after a large earthquake) to get their news and other information. Many have commented that kids don't seem to play outside like they used to. When it comes to being as prepared as possible for an earthquake however, a very basic yet important thing to do is to get to know your neighbors. Because authorities will be heavily taxed in the aftermath, neighbors who can help each other can be a big asset. Your

neighbor next door might be a doctor, carpenter, or even a government procurement worker who knows how to navigate assistance resources. Having a few neighborhood “block party” style events a year might go a long way towards building these relationships. Even introducing yourself to your neighbors, knowing them by name, and occasionally saying hello may help later in a time of need.

Switching gears, the power will likely go dark after a major earthquake. While everyone would do well to consider alternative power sources such as generators and solar power, those who rely on critical medical devices and/or need to charge their power wheelchairs have an especially good reason to consider how to adapt to power loss. Backup batteries are one option to prepare, and these can be purchased from many sources online including medical device companies. Southern California Edison offers its Critical Care Backup Battery Program for those who cannot afford to purchase one. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has a prioritization program for those who have critical care needs. Those who use oxygen should consider having extra bottles on hand in case of an emergency if possible.

In addition to the above, everyone should have emergency supplies on hand. Store emergency supplies in an area you will be able to reach if your home is not accessible. A good example would be a shed outside your house which is weatherproof. If you live in an apartment, consider storing the kit as close to the front door as possible or in an external storage location like a well secured vehicle or outside locker. You will need at least one gallon of water per person per day, for at least three days. Regarding food, you should have at least 2,000 calories of food per adult per day.

While food and water are the most important items to consider, there is a long list of other important items to have on hand. The Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management has prepared an Emergency Survival Guide that everyone who lives in Los Angeles should review. You can obtain a copy by logging on to ready.lacounty.gov/emergency-survival-guide/ (a Google search for LA County Survival Guide also works) or by calling 211 and asking for a copy to be mailed to your home. “Stay Safe, Stay in Control,” which is geared towards people with disabilities, seniors and others with access and functional needs, can also be obtained in the same manner.

Alex Chrisman
Emergency Management Coordinator

Access staff visits CapMetro

For the past 30 years, the paratransit software market has been primarily dominated by a few established software firms. However, there are new paratransit software firms that have entered the market recently and deserve some attention. One of these software firms is called Spare, which CapMetro just implemented within the past six months.

Thomas Lee, IT Project Manager, and I were recently invited by CapMetro in Austin, Texas to visit their ADA paratransit facilities to learn how their agency managed the transition of their paratransit software from Trapeze to Spare. In addition to Thomas and me, staff from Orange County Transportation Authority were also invited. Hosting our visit was Chad Ballentine, VP of Demand Response and Innovative Mobility at CapMetro.

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CapMetro implemented the new Spare paratransit software on October 1, 2023 and according to Chad, CapMetro Access immediately saw efficiency improvements within the first month of operations. For instance, on-time performance increased from 80% to 91% and vehicle utilization efficiency improved from 16% to 24%. These improvements were achieved primarily through software changes. The software also provides paratransit system monitoring via mobile devices, such as tablets and smart phones, with real-time data.



Staff can also view vehicle movement on Google maps and other fleet data. The availability of Google maps integration has reduced the time required to access system information and allows staff to quickly respond to issues. I will monitor CapMetro's progress for the next six months and report developments to Access' management team.

Bill Tsuei
Director of IT

Commendations

"The rider called to say her driver this morning was a great and courteous driver, very helpful. He is very patient and helped the rider get in and out of the vehicle. His name is Allen Wilson."

Dortrella Mescudi
Rider since February 2018

"Rider stated that the driver is a diamond. A perfect gentlemen, with very good navigation. Driver is courteous, kind, efficient and fast worker. Rider stated to take good care of him and don't let him go."

Magdalena Tee
Rider since March 2023