



# Behind the Scenes

## Executive Director's Report

Given the announcement of Access Services' largest competitive grant ever for the Antelope Valley Paratransit Operations and Maintenance Facility, I thought I would review the importance of having Access-owned operating facilities in each of our six regions.

From an economic perspective, the region currently pays \$3.2 million annually for our contractors to lease facilities around Los Angeles County. This amount is expected to increase substantially in the years ahead as leases come up for renewal or contractors have to find larger facilities (if available).

From an operational perspective, our contractors' leased yards are currently too small for our growing services and there is always the threat that leases won't be renewed, which could lead to operational disruptions if suitable facilities can't be found.

I would like to thank the United States Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration for this transformative award and their commitment to funding infrastructure that will directly benefit people with disabilities in Los Angeles County.

**Andre Colaiace**  
*Executive Director*

**access**

## FTA selects Access Services to receive \$16.6 million under the Buses and Bus Facilities Program

I am pleased to announce that Access' application under the 2025 Bus and Bus Facilities Program for the Antelope Valley ADA Paratransit Operations and Maintenance Facility was selected for funding. The total federal award is \$16,640,000, which is by far the largest competitive federal grant award Access Services has ever received.



Because Access Services is not a fixed-route transit operator and therefore not eligible to apply directly under this program, the application was submitted on our behalf by the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA), with Access Services serving as the subrecipient. The approved project will deliver a new, purpose-built ADA paratransit operations and maintenance facility in Lancaster, providing a permanent local base to support the growing demand for paratransit service in the Antelope Valley and significantly improving long-term service reliability and efficiency. Total federal funding for this project, which includes the \$3 million appropriation the Agency received in 2024, is close to \$20 million.

This achievement would not have been possible without the outstanding efforts of the following individuals:

- > F Scott Jewell, Director of Administration, for overseeing facility design coordination with various consultants and ensuring the project's full NEPA compliance.
- > Martin Tompkins, Executive Director/CEO, and Judy Vaccaro-Fry, Chief Financial Officer, Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA), for submitting the application on Access Services' behalf.

I led and developed the grant application, including responding to all evaluation criteria and synthesizing supporting documentation. I would also like to thank County Supervisor Kathryn Barger, the City of Lancaster and AVTA for submitting letters of support on behalf of this project.

**Matt Avancena**  
*Director, Planning and Coordination*

## Access hosts Spring Virtual Community Meeting

On February 28, 2026, Access hosted its semi-annual Spring Virtual Community Meeting, bringing together staff and community members for an engaging and informative session. The event featured presentations from Access team members that highlighted recent service updates and provided helpful educational information about current policies.

The meeting opened with a warm welcome from Yael Hagen, Chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), who encouraged attendees to stay engaged by participating in Access's monthly CAC meetings. Presentations then covered several key topics, beginning with an overview of the Lost and Found process. Riders learned what to do if they leave an item behind and gained a behind-the-scenes look at how drivers help locate and report lost belongings.

Attendees also received a review of the package policy, which outlines what items are permitted in vehicles and reinforces Access's commitment to safety for both riders and drivers.

A major highlight of the meeting was the introduction of Access's new Grocery Delivery Pilot Program. This innovative partnership with Instacart offers riders greater flexibility and potential cost savings by providing grocery delivery as a convenient alternative to traditional trips. The session concluded with a walk-through of the Access website, including how to make online reservations and use the popular "Where's My Ride?" feature.

Following the presentations, community members had the opportunity to ask questions and share feedback, making the meeting a lively and productive exchange.

**Tania Cardenas**  
*Customer Relations Associate*




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## Commendations

**Southern Region**

"Customer service agent Kisha's personality is always so bubbly. She is really patient and always willing to assist."

**Barbara Shavers**  
*Rider since July 2006*

**West/Central Region**

"I want to compliment this driver for her exceptional customer service, impeccable driving skills, and overall safety. I want to thank her for providing exceptional service and safe driving."

**Steven Roger Dyas**  
*Rider since August 2018*