

Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

The Board committees met on May 17 and May 21, 2021.

The External/Stakeholder Relations committee approved a contract for website services along with an appointment to the Community Advisory Committee. The committee also heard legislative updates from Access' federal, state and local lobbyists.

The Performance Monitoring committee approved the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise goal for 2022-24 as well as extended the service provider contracts for the Eastern and Santa Clarita service regions.

The Planning and Development committee awarded a contract for drug and alcohol consulting services along with adding funds to the Rider360 2.0 contract. The committee also approved changes to Access' procurement thresholds. Finally, they approved both an amendment to the FY2020/21 budget and the proposed budget for FY2021/22.

The next full meeting of the Board of Directors will be on June 21, 2021.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

American Planning Association's 2021 Virtual National Conference

The American Planning Association (APA) is an organization dedicated to the goal of elevating the profession of planning as its practitioners work to improve communities across the U.S.

Annually, the APA hosts its annual National Planning Conference where experts in the field provide updates



American Planning Association

Creating Great Communities for All

on current topics in the profession. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, 2021's conference was the 2nd year that the APA held its event virtually.

Over 4,400 APA members attended sessions held earlier this month.

Three principal topics were at the heart of the conference's program: 1) Providing support for communities to recover from the COVID pandemic; 2) Developing programs to combat systemic inequity in communities; and 3) Designing long-term plans to reduce the impact of climate change.

In the field of transportation planning, a variety of emerging trends were discussed at sessions. One area was the growing role of micro-mobility options for short-distance travel (such as bike share and ride share) programs to encourage and support fixed route transportation networks. Also discussed were the various steps transit agencies can take to communicate the safety of their service to cautious customers in the wake of the global pandemic.

This year, although the attendees could not be together, APA members were able to explore some of the most challenging issues for the profession and provide a forum to exchange how different communities are responding to these challenges.

Eric J. Haack
Strategic Planner

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

"Awkward", "taboo", "personal", "NSFW" (not safe for work) are some of the stigmatizing words I have heard in response to the topic of mental health.



The truth is most people already possess the one emotional characteristic it takes to better support another person's mental health and well-being: empathy. Just like our intellect, our emotional intelligence should be developed; and that is where Mental Health First Aid comes in. The National Council for Mental Wellbeing says it best, "Mental Health First Aid is a course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial help and

support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis." Just like physical health, everyone has mental health; so reduce the fear and anxiety about starting that "awkward" conversation; it is only "taboo" if you continue to allow it to be.

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness month, CTSA Extension collaborated with Gary White Training & Consulting to offer Mental Health First Aid training to professionals in L.A. County. Participants who successfully completed the class received a three-year mental health first aid certificate. CTSA Extension would like to thank the team at Gary White Consulting and Training for facilitating the course.

To learn more about upcoming trainings, visit the Learning & Development eBook on the Access Services website.

Gary White, GWT&C President

Melissa Lucero, CTSA Analyst

Commendations

"I am filing a smile for Maria in the Cancellation Department. Maria was able to cancel and reschedule my reservations without needing to make multiple calls. This moment of accommodation was helpful and I appreciate the excellent employee that Maria is."

Debora Johnson

Rider since September 2015

"I would like to file a smile for all the help Elizabeth in the Lost and Found department offered me. Elizabeth was extremely kind and patient in the process of locating my lost purse. The purse was returned and, as promised, Elizabeth called me back with the good news."

Patricia Newton

Rider since April 2016