

# Behind the Scenes



## Executive Director's Report

As Thanksgiving approaches, that can only mean one thing – it's time for the Access Services Annual Membership meeting!

Please be on the look out for your electronic invitation and save the date for November 18th from 11 am to noon. The meeting will again be hosted on Zoom.

This year's meeting will feature a financial update, an operations update and a presentation on Access' recently-adopted Strategic Plan. It will conclude with the presentation of two awards to individuals who have gone above and beyond in serving our customers.

I hope to see you there (virtually) and please let me know if you have any questions.

**Andre Colaiace**  
*Executive Director*

## Access staff helps develop electric paratransit vehicles

While zero-emission, electric vehicles are becoming more common in fixed-route bus fleets, they are not being deployed in paratransit services that serve people with disabilities. Access Services is in the process of developing a pilot program to explore the possibility of converting some of its vehicles, currently a combination of gasoline and natural gas, to electric propulsion systems.



A few weeks ago, Access staff was able to inspect and drive some accessible electric paratransit vehicles developed by Sunset Vans of Corona, CA. Sunset has been working closely over the last year with our Senior Manager of Fleet and Maintenance,

Rick Streiff, to develop accessible electric vehicles based on the Dodge ProMaster chassis. Unlike fixed-route electric buses which have fixed-routes and schedules and the ability to recharge en route, paratransit vehicles do not have fixed-routes from day to day, which brings up unique operational challenges and makes the vehicle's range extremely critical.

In terms of funding this project, Access intends to submit a grant application for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)'s Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Program. The purpose of the program is to support capital projects that replace, rehabilitate, purchase, or lease buses and related equipment and facilities.

We look forward to giving our stakeholders a chance to take a look at these vehicles in the near future. If you are attending the CALACT or APTA Conferences, you can see them there as well.

**Andre Colaiace**  
*Executive Director*

## L.A. Metro's On the Move Riders Program

For over fifteen years, Access Services has operated its own very successful Travel Training program. Access' program is designed to provide customers, who may never have taken fixed route bus or rail, with the skills and confidence to use bus or rail for some or all of their travel needs.

L.A. Metro has its own successful program to encourage older adults to travel on fixed route transportation. Lilly Ortiz is Metro's manager of the On the Move Riders Program and recently met with Access staff to discuss Metro's program.

The On the Move Riders Program provides group travel training, however, the program's most well-known and successful aspect is events where Metro hosts a workshop at a senior center. Participants take part in a workshop, where they learn the basics of traveling by bus or rail and then the group travels to a popular destination on transit. The workshop lessons – and subsequent transit trip – help to increase understanding and remove barriers older adults may feel with respect to using transit.



During this past year, due to the pandemic, Metro has been unable to host its in-person workshops; however, the On the Move Riders Program has remained active with virtual events. Recently, the program released a series of on-line videos titled "Back to Transit" which provided valuable information for older adults who may be interested in taking transit again, but – like many – have not ridden on a bus for more than a year.

The program is a wonderful resource for Los Angeles County residents to gain confidence and experience with using transit for some of their transportation needs.

For more information on the Access' Travel Training program or Metro's On the Move Riders Program, please contact Eric Haack in Access' Planning Department.

***Eric J. Haack***  
***Strategic Planner***

## Commendations

"I would like to file a Smile for my driver Tanya. She was so helpful and polite throughout my ride. Thank you Tanya for a wonderful experience."

***Sarah Ellison***  
***Rider since March 1996***

"I am so thankful for all the workers at Region 3. This commendation is for the consistent, great service and patience that is exhibited through all my encounters using the service. I am very thankful and appreciative."

***Frances Gregory***  
***Rider since January 2016***