

access

AGENDA

TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, July 14, 2022
9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

***Webinar - Please see note below**

Time	Item	Item Description	Presenter	Disposition	Pages
	1.	Call to Order/Roll Call	Chair	Action	
	2.	Approve May 12, 2022 Minutes	Chair	Action	4-6
	3.	General Public Comment	Chair/Public	Information	
	4.	Executive Director's Report	Andre Colaiace	Information	
	5.	TNC Overflow Service	Hector Rodriguez	Presentation	7-11
	6.	Parents With Disabilities Update	Eric Haack/Alex Chrisman	Presentation	
	7.	Dodge Promaster Prototype	Tamika Arana	Presentation	
	8.	Operations Report	Faustino Salvador	Presentation	
	9.	Officer Nomination Subcommittee	Matthew Avancena	Information	
	10.	New Business Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda	Members	Possible Action	
	11.	Adjournment	Chair	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 aids and services to facilitate communication. In determining the type of auxiliary aids 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 aids 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 aids or services. You may do so by contacting (213) 270-6000.

Note: Access Transportation Professionals Advisory Committee 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 to the committee both initially and supplementary prior to the meeting at the agency's offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue 3rd Floor, El Monte, California and on its website at <http://accessla.org>. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to the committee by staff or committee members at the meeting will simultaneously be made available to the public. Three opportunities are available for the public to address the committee during a committee meeting: (1) before a specific agenzized item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (2) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the committee 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 Access staff. 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 committee 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 committee 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 committee may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future committee meeting and the staff will respond to all public comment in writing prior to the next meeting.

***NOTE**

NOTICE OF ALTERNATIVE PUBLIC COMMENT PROCEDURES

Pursuant to temporary revised Brown Act requirements, TPAC committee members will be participating via webinar. The public may submit written comments on any item on the agenda - 1) through email by addressing it to - tpac@accessla.org or 2) via US Postal mail by addressing it to - Access Services TPAC Comments, PO Box 5728, El Monte CA 91734. Please include your name, item number and comments in the correspondence. Comments must be submitted/received no later than 8:00 am on Thursday, July 14, 2022 so they can be read into the record as appropriate.

The public may also participate via the Zoom webinar link, or by teleconference. Please review the procedures to do so as follows -

How to Provide Public Comment in a Board Meeting via Zoom

Online

1. Click the Zoom link for the meeting you wish to join. Meeting information can be found at: https://accessla.org/news_and_events/agendas.html. Make sure to use a current, up-to-date browser: Chrome 30+, Firefox 27+, Microsoft Edge 12+, Safari 7+. Certain functionality may be disabled in older browsers including Internet Explorer. You may also use this direct link - <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86320042391>

2. Enter an email address and your name. Your name will be visible online while you are speaking.
3. When the TPAC 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 an 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, the 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 on video.

By phone

1. Call the Zoom phone number and enter the webinar ID for the meeting you wish to join. Meeting information can be found at:
https://accessla.org/news_and_events/agendas.html
2. You can also call in using the following information -
3. Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099 or 833 548 0282 (Toll Free) or 877 853 5247 (Toll Free) or 888 788 0099 (Toll Free) or 833 548 0276 (Toll Free)
Webinar ID: 863 2004 2391
4. When the TPAC 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.
5. If you cannot use the "raise hand" feature, the please submit a written comment as outlined above.
6. 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.

**TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES FOR THURSDAY MAY 12, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Diane Amaya called the meeting to order at 9:31 am.

INTRODUCTIONS

TPAC members and alternates in attendance: Diane Amaya (City of Redondo Beach, Beach Cities Transit) , Silva Baghdanian (City of Glendale), Nicole Carranza (Pomona Valley Transportation Authority), Eric Hoch (Santa Monica Big Blue Bus), Fayma Ishaq (METRO), Kevin Parks McDonald (Foothill Transit), Trini Ramirez (City of Pasadena, DOT), Esteban Rodriguez (Antelope Valley Transportation Authority), Janna Smith (LADOT), Jesse Valdez (East Los Angeles Regional Center) and Frazier Watts (Gardena Bus)

TPAC Members absent: Adrianna Kendricks (Montebello Bus Lines), Ariel Bianca Moreno (LADOT), James Lee (Torrance Transit), Kellie Irving (Long Beach Transit) and Gracie Davis (OCTA)

Access staff in attendance: Andre Colaiace, Hector Rodriguez, F. Scott Jewell, Matthew Avancena, Mike Greenwood, Rogelio Gomez, Eric Haack, Melissa Lucero

APPROVE FEBRUARY 10, 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Chairperson Diane Amaya entertained a motion to approve the February 10, 2022 minutes.

First: Kevin Parks McDonald

Second: Eric Hoch

Vote: Via roll call, all were in favor, minutes approved.

Abstentions: None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Executive Director, Andre Colaiace, announced that Access was selected as a grant recipient for President Biden's American Rescue Plan. The grant provides funding for preventative vehicle maintenance and rehabilitation of ADA accessible vehicles.

He also provided an update on the agency's FTA triennial review. There were no findings related to the provision of paratransit services.

Mr. Colaiace concluded his report by sharing information about the TransEd conference sponsored by the Transportation Research Board. He is presenting his abstract titled "*Paratransit 2.0 Improving the ADA Paratransit Experience*" at the conference.

CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS

Strategic Planner, Eric Haack, and Great Blue Research Project Manager, Catherine Veschi, presented the Biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey results. They summarized customer demographics and discussed research methodologies. Active customers were surveyed in late January and early February through email, text, telephone and the Access website. The questionnaire focused on satisfaction with drivers, vehicles and other customer experience categories. Approximately 85% of respondents were satisfied with overall service. Survey results will be used to identify opportunities for service changes or improvements.

DRAFT FY 2023 BUDGET

Deputy Executive Director, Hector Rodriguez, presented the draft FY 2023 budget. He discussed the budget process and provided an overview of major line-item expenses. Staff is proposing adjustments in the budget to address fluctuating service demand, taxi-driver shortages and other major cost drivers. The changes include increases to driver wages and CPI adjustments in service contracts. The updated budget will be presented at the Access board meeting in June. Mr. Rodriguez concluded his presentation with an update on the next steps in the budget process.

Public Comment

Marshall made a public comment. He recommended using ride share services to fulfill paratransit service.

PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE

Director of Planning, Matthew Avancena, provided an update on the TPAC meeting schedule for FY 2023. Starting in July, TPAC will meet bi-monthly on the second Thursday of odd numbered months of the calendar.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

Senior Operations Manager, Rogelio Gomez, provided the operations report for March 2022. He presented key performance indicators (KPIs) for each service area. In March, service contractors met 11 of the 13 KPIs. Service contractors continue to face operational challenges associated with increased ridership demand and driver shortages in the labor market. Mr. Gomez provided an update on efforts to recruit and retain new drivers, including the Access contractor hiring assistance plan.

Mr. Gomez concluded his report with operational highlights. In March, over 35 Access contractor and subcontractor staff attended a mental health awareness training hosted by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Lastly, a new Access stand sign was installed at the Long Beach Airport.

NEW BUSINESS RAISED SUBSEQUENT TO THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

None raised.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Chairperson Diane Amaya requested a motion to adjourn at 10:55am.
First: Jesse Valdez
Second: Fayma Ishaq
Vote: Meeting adjourned at 10:55am.

JULY 6, 2022

TO: TRANSPORTATION PROFESSIONALS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(TPAC)
FROM: HECTOR RODRIGUEZ, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RE: CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK
COMPANIES (TNCs) PILOT PROGRAM

ISSUE:

Access service providers are currently experiencing difficulties in obtaining sufficient resources (either employee drivers or taxis) to meet customer demand during the Agency's peak service periods in the spring and fall. Board approval is required to implement a program that will allow service providers to utilize TNCs, such as Uber, for a small portion of their next-day paratransit service

In addition, Access' Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) needs alternative service providers to provide back-up services for stranded Access riders and other emergency situations.

Staff plans on bringing the following recommendations to the Board -

1. Authorize the Executive Director to implement a pilot program as outlined in this item that will allow service providers to utilize TNCs as subcontractors for two years. At the end of the first year, staff will present findings and recommendations to the Board.
2. Authorize the Executive Director to contract directly with TNCs for the provision of back-up service via Access' OMC for stranded Access riders and other emergency situations.

IMPACT ON BUDGET:

The implementation of the program will not have a financial impact as our service providers will contract directly with the TNCs. The expected cost of OMC directed trips is expected to be negligible.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Staff continues to work with Access' providers to help them obtain traditional driver resources (employee driver and taxis) through the implementation of a Contractor Hiring Assistance Program and providing for additional funding in the FY 23 budget to raise provider driver wages to be more competitive in the marketplace.

In addition to these initiatives, other alternatives include:

- Expand use of direct employees - The service providers are constantly seeking to expand the workforce to meet the demand. However, for most service providers, expanding the directly hired workforce to cover trips originally delegated to subcontractors during the bidding process would require additional support personnel as well as a renegotiation of contracts that would substantially increase Agency costs. In addition, it is unlikely in the current economic environment that service providers could obtain sufficient personnel.
- Expand the size of the fleet - This option would go together with the first option outlined above. While expanding the fleet is prudent, this is a long-term solution rather than a short-term solution. Expanding the fleet is capital intensive and would require planning by this agency as well as our service providers as most of the existing operational facilities would not be able to accommodate an increase in the size of the Access dedicated fleet. In addition, this option would substantially increase Agency capital costs.
- Increase use of taxis - To date, service providers continue to seek additional taxi resources. Staff will continue to hold conversations with our service providers to determine avenues that will lead to greater taxi participation in our contracts.
- Increase compensation to taxi subcontractors - The Board recently approved an increase to subcontractor (taxi) rates. Staff will follow the response to the increase to determine its effectiveness and what additional steps should be taken if necessary.

BACKGROUND

The pandemic has had multiple impacts on the way the agency operates. Ridership demand declined rapidly and is only now beginning to return to more normal levels, but the increase in demand has not been a steady and predictable increase. With each new wave or variant, the demand has again dropped, only to increase again. The extent of each decrease and corresponding rebound have not been consistent.

The taxi subcontractors have not been spared during this pandemic. During the initial outbreak, Access service providers stopped utilizing taxi subcontractors. The lack of taxi utilization by our service providers, coupled with the decline in travel, tourism, and night life, led many taxi companies to cease operating. Other taxi companies severely

curtailed their operations to minimize expenses. As the economy reopened and travel bounced back, many of the remaining taxi operators are choosing profitable cash fares rather than performing the steady work that is subcontracted to them through Access' service providers.

Access has historically supplied about half of the required vehicle fleet required to deliver the service during peak periods. Thus, the service providers must choose between purchasing or leasing approximately 1,000 vehicles and corresponding staffing levels or subcontracting the work to outside firms such as the taxi industry. Most of our service providers have chosen to subcontract the work rather than increase staffing levels and the corresponding number of fleet vehicles.

Paratransit Agency Use of TNCs

Access conducted a small survey of ten (10) transit agencies to, in part, answer the question as to how those agencies do or do not utilize TNCs in conjunction with their ADA paratransit service.

Listed below is the summary of findings from the report:

- All agencies reported that their TNC collaboration was considered a non-ADA option for paratransit riders. When some type of non-ADA paratransit service is offered as a supplement, there are a proportion of passengers who will be interested but also a proportion who are not interested or are unable to use it.
- All the supplemental non-ADA paratransit services were less expensive on a per trip basis to the agencies by a wide margin.
- Some agencies did not use Federal funding to pay for their supplemental non-ADA paratransit service and did not count it in their NTD reporting.
- All these services are pilots and hard data about costs, trip making rates and the impact on ADA paratransit demand are too "soft" to reach any conclusions.
- The passengers who use these supplemental services tend to prefer them to ADA paratransit but not always for all trips.

Proposed TNC Pilot Project

The pilot project proposes to utilize TNCs in the following manner:

- Provide a non-ADA transportation to paratransit riders.
- Allow Access service providers to subcontract up to 10% of the reservations received.
- Allow Access service providers to subcontract up to an additional 5% of trip demand as daily demand conditions dictate.
- Allow Access service providers to request authority to subcontract additional work should conditions dictate for each day (e.g., major holidays).

- Riders will have to opt-in to the program. Final opt-in details will be further developed if the program is approved.
- Only riders that have expressly given their approval to opt-in will be provided trips via a TNC.
- Verification of opt-in program will be captured by both the Rider360 customer portal and the reservations and dispatching (RSDS) software.
- New riders will be provided the opportunity to opt in during the evaluation process.
- Existing riders will be given the option to opt in during the reservation process, if necessary.
- TNC drivers must have criminal background checks.
- TNC drivers must be screened for satisfactory driving history.
- TNC drivers must be regularly reviewed for new information related to criminal or driving history on at least an annual basis.
- TNCs will be required to provide insurance with minimums of at least \$1 million per occurrence.
- Reporting of collisions and incidents will mirror existing requirements.
- TNC vehicles will have to undergo the required inspection that the TNC requires and subsequent inspections as required by the TNC.
- All TNC vehicles must meet the minimum age and feature requirements as stipulated by the TNC.
- TNCs must provide 24-hour support for situations that may arise as part of the normal course of business.
- TNC drivers that perform services on behalf of Access service providers will be required to have at least one year of experience with the TNC.
- TNC drivers that perform services on behalf of Access service providers will be required to have the highest customer satisfaction rating.
- Collection of fares will be performed either through the TNC app or via a third-party app.
- TNC trips will be GPS tracked from the pickup point to the destination point.
- TNCs will be required to provide all data required by NTD and Access in a usable format for ease of reporting.
- TNCs will be required to provide service providers with a dashboard or the ability to provide live trip information in order to allow the contractor staff to provide ETA information.
- TNCs will contract directly with Access service providers.
- Access service providers will provide separate billing detail for trips performed by TNCs.
- Access will reimburse service providers for TNC trips at the same variable rate applicable to each contract.
- Customers will be advised of a TNC trip option during the reservation process.
- Customers will be contacted to be offered the option to be dispatched a TNC vehicle the day of the trip.
- All costs related to this pilot project will be paid using local funds only.

- The TNCs may differ from other Access subcontractors in that it will not have the same standard for driver training, driver assistance to riders, vehicle maintenance, driver credentialing, and drug & alcohol testing.
- The TNCs will be primarily used for ambulatory riders.

Proposed Backup Trips Utilizing TNCs

- Backup trips are arranged by the Customer Service Department's Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) to provide solutions to stranded rider situations or extremely late trip pickups.
- TNC vehicles and drivers will be subject to the requirements of the contracted TNC.
- Contracts would be directly with Access.
- TNCs will be added to the list of available resources to be utilized.
- Continue current practice related to backup trips:
 - Access pays the full cost of the trip.
 - Typically, the fare is waived.
 - Billing occurs monthly.
- Monthly utilization is expected to be low as OMC trips are used only when there are no other transportation options available through the service providers.

TNCs would be added to provide more options to solve service issues.