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Behind the Scenes

Executive Director’s Report

The Access Services Board of Directors met on January 22, 2018.

The Board approved the Consent Calendar, which included items extending data network services, establishing an ad hoc budget committee and authorizing audio recording on Access vehicles.

In addition to the above action items, the Board authorized a contract for a new voice over IP phone system and tabled the contract award for travel training services until next month.

The Board also took action and authorized service provider contract rate adjustments in preparation for the July 1, 2018 minimum wage changes.

Finally, the Board heard a presentation on Customer Service.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is on February 26, 2018 and will be at Access Services’ office in El Monte.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

New Eligibility Location at AVTA

Access has partnered with the Antelope Valley Transportation Authority (AVTA) to conduct eligibility screenings at AVTA's transit facility. Located at 42210 6th St W, Lancaster, Access' eligibility contractor MTM will see 10-15 applicants per day, Monday through Friday, taking advantage of dedicated space in a unique transit environment.

This partnership will provide applicants the unique opportunity to learn about both Access and the convenience offered by AVTA. Access will be saving over \$30,000/year in facility costs with this arrangement.

F Scott Jewell
Director of Administration



ProMaster Vehicle visits UCPLA

On Monday, December 18, Access Senior Road Safety Inspector Alex Chrisman and I accompanied San Gabriel Transit Road Supervisor Fernando Lopez to United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) in Culver City. This was not a social call; this visit was to gather valuable input on the newest vehicle Access is preparing to build. Up to 100 Dodge ProMaster vehicles will be coming to Access in the next year, but not before final engineering and design work is done.



The prototype vehicle arrived in Los Angeles a few weeks ago, and the visit to UCP was meant to gather feedback on areas of improvement and learn first-hand what our riders liked about the low-floor, ramp-equipped vehicle that has two wheelchair securement positions and five ambulatory seats. Terri Lantz, Client Rights' Advocate at UCP, as well as Access' recent Jerry Walker Award recipient, arranged for the visit and had more than 20 UCP clients ready to board the van and provide feedback.

Among the comments received:

- > All of the UCP riders had positive feedback. All liked the new look!
- > It should be easier to spot on the street.
- > Felt much more spacious than the regular vans Access has used previously.
- > The seat felt right; it was comfortable.
- > It felt like it was a more substantial, stronger vehicle.
- > It was nice to have a position next to a wheelchair space so that if traveling with a PCA, their PCA could sit next to them.
- > Had greater success with wheelchair riders being able to board and get into place in this vehicle than the standard Access minivans.

Besides all of the positive comments, riders provided feedback on where handrails should be placed and how ambulatory passengers would get around wheelchairs already onboard. Overall, it was a valuable experience to get input on the final design of Access' next revenue vehicle.

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Director of Operations

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Rider Commendations

"I would like to file a compliment for both my drivers Rogelio and Arthur. I had a trip to and from Kaiser Permanente today, and both of these drivers provided exceptional service. My overall experience with Access Services is very satisfactory."

Elpidio Gilera
Customer since March 2016

"I would like to file a compliment for my driver Edison Lopez. Edison was a marvelous driver. I am blind, and the driver approached me professionally, announced himself and proceeded to offer me help with loading my groceries. Edison is intelligent and very pleasant. Edison is a great example of other drivers – he is safe, kind, and has a great ability to make you comfortable."

Donald Brown
Customer since January 2001

2018 Transit Research Board Annual Meeting

The 2018 Transit Research Board (TRB) Annual Meeting was officially opened on January 7 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. More than 14,000 transportation professionals attended this information-packed event from the U.S. and around the world.



The program covered all transportation modes with more than 5,000 presentations in nearly 800 sessions and workshops. This year's theme was, "Transportation: Moving the Economy of the Future." Hot topics such as Automated Vehicles, Shared Mobility, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Sustainability and Transportation Resilience, were discussed throughout the TRB conference.

During the TRB Annual Meeting, the FTA announced its draft Strategic Transit Automation Research Plan (STAR). STAR is focused on transit bus operations and a full range of automation – from SAE Level 0 (no automation) to Level 5 (full automation).

FTA is looking for up to seven potential demonstration projects over the next five years. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will be announced in 2018. FTA's Office of Research, Demonstration & Innovation invited me to attend the autonomous vehicle workshops and to present Access' draft Autonomous Vehicle Pilot Project Plan at a FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) hosted session.

William Tsuei
Director of Information Technology