



Access Services
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Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

As we are about to close the year and begin 2020 with new challenges and opportunities, I would like to take a moment to thank the Access Board of Directors for their support and leadership, to all contractors and their staff for their tireless dedication to providing safe and quality service, to our riders for entrusting us with their mobility needs, and a special thank you to all Access staff for their endless desire to improve service and commitment to innovation.

I wish everyone a Happy Holidays and a safe New Year!

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director



Face to face: Access Community Meetings bring the agency to the people

Access hosts community meetings in each of its six service regions in order to hear the voice of the rider directly and present important information. During this most recent round, which began on November 18th with the Eastern Region meeting in Baldwin Park and ended on December 7th in Mar Vista. Information was shared regarding the Where's My Ride application, online booking, avoiding and responding to no-shows and emergency planning and management, among other topics. Common rider feedback included questions about routing and driver assistance, along with many compliments regarding the service as a whole. Riders were often given individual attention and staff ensured that feedback was addressed and considered.



These meetings also provided some unique moments for staff and riders to interact face to face.

A customer stated that she may not have been sure how she was going to get home. The Tick Fire in late October had closed the road between Sylmar and the Antelope Valley, making travel very difficult if not impossible.

That's when Access found a way; working with our regional contractors and the Road Safety Inspector team, a new transfer point was established on the fly at the Montclair Place mall. It would be a long ride along the Pearblossom Highway north of the Angeles National Forest and through the Cajon Pass, but Angela and her fellow riders were not left out in the literal cold.

At the November 20th Antelope Valley Community Meeting, staff members who worked in the Access Emergency Operations

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Face to face: Access Community Meetings bring the agency to the people *continued*

Center (EOC) during the Tick Fire were able to hear her words of gratitude directly. From within the EOC, the team is always working on behalf of the riders, but it is even more impactful to get to meet someone personally affected by that behind the scenes work.

Access will continue to reach out to the rider community as part of its continuing mission of providing quality and safe paratransit service in Los Angeles County.

Alex Chrisman
Project Administrator

Access conducts Emergency Tabletop exercise to prepare for severe weather

On December 4th, Access conducted an emergency management tabletop exercise with the goal of practicing how the agency responds to large-scale emergencies and disasters in the Los Angeles County Operational Area. Tabletop exercises are an opportunity for staff involved in emergency operations to discuss plans, procedures, and courses of action they will use during an emergency based scenario. This discussion allows staff the ability to practice their emergency management skills and identify opportunities for improving the agency's preparedness for major emergencies.



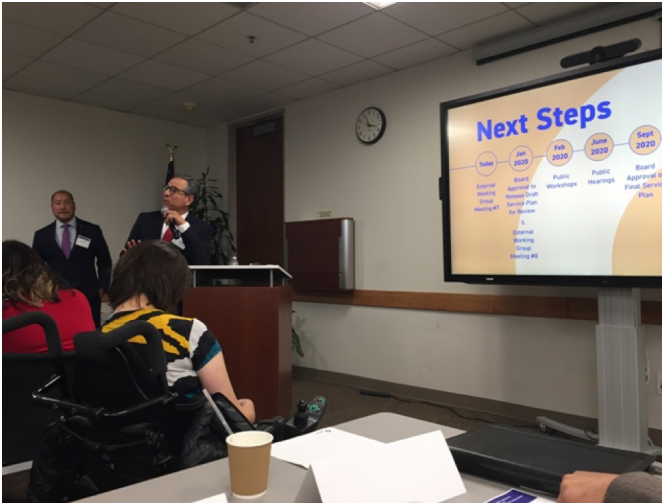
The exercise was a full day event and included two sessions simulating two different severe weather scenarios. Participants in the morning session were greeted with a scenario that began as red flag fire weather conditions and quickly escalated to a major emergency wildfire in the San Fernando Valley. Participants in the afternoon session were charged with responding to a heavy rain storm that caused widespread flooding across the Los Angeles Basin. Both scenarios included simulated impacts to Access operations in addition to calls for evacuation assistance from our emergency management partners.

The exercise participants included staff trained to work in Access' Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during major disasters. Each staff member filled a position according to the federal Incident Command System, which is the standard structure for managing large-scale incidents across the United States. Management staff from all six service regions and the Access Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) also participated in the exercise, allowing Access to simulate a whole-of-agency response to each scenario.

During the exercise, the Access EOC staff, service regions, and OMC practiced the essential communication and coordination required to ensure a successful response to a major incident. The exercise was observed by several partner transit agencies and the Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management. Access will continue to conduct regular exercises as a key component of the Access Emergency Management Program.

Matthew Topoozian
Emergency Management Coordinator

NextGen Bus Study update



During the past 20 months, L.A. Metro has worked diligently on the NextGen Bus Study, a comprehensive examination focusing on contributing factors that make some fixed-routes successful and others less frequented. Access has participated in the NextGen Bus Study meetings hosted by Metro and last month Director of Government Affairs Randy Johnson, Manager of Operations Rogelio Gomez, and I attended the latest update.

Metro intends to improve the reliability of its service and make stop distances more consistent throughout the different lines. One proposed solution discussed by the project team was to reduce duplicative service.

For example, local route stops are often at one-block distances, while rapid route stops are half-mile to one mile apart. These routes may be merged into a single route with quarter-mile stop distances to create more frequent headways.

Access staff is paying close attention to potential changes to less productive routes that Metro may restructure or discontinue. As Access' service area is based on where fixed-route service operates, the reduction of certain lines could impact Access' service area.

At this meeting, there was no discussion made of eliminating any fixed-route service, though Metro and Access will work closely as the NextGen Bus Study continues to develop.

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Rider Commendations

"I would like to file a smile for my driver. Although I did not get my driver's name, they went above and beyond by assisting me with my groceries. The driver was courteous, kind, respectful and above all made me feel like a human being. I appreciate being treated with respect and dignity, something that I do not always get elsewhere."

Peggy Bergler
Rider since July 2004

"I am filing a smile for Maria from the northern service area. Maria was quick and clear when assisting me in booking multiple trips. She is top of the line and a definite keeper. I had a great experience speaking with Maria and she made me feel comfortable by slowing down her speech for me. "

Julia Allen
Rider since 2015

Transit and Paratransit Management Certificate Program recipients



On December 6th, Access Services, in partnership with the Westgate Center for Leadership, congratulated recipients of the 2019 Transit and Paratransit Management Certificate Program. Located within the Eberhardt School of Business at the University of the Pacific, the Westgate Center was established to offer management and executive training programs for individuals and organizations.

The program curriculum consists of eight classes, ranging in topics from Budgeting and Financial Management, Designing Innovative Organizations, and Overview of Transit Legislation, Regulation, and Policy. Instructors demonstrate how transit systems can be designed, operated and monitored to enhance performance. Upon successful completion, participants receive an official certificate and five Continuing Education Units.

The final class of the Transit and Paratransit Management Certificate Program marked the close of CTSA Extension's 2019 programming. Stay tuned for the release of the 2020 program schedule!

Melissa Lucero
CTSA Analyst