# Agenda

**Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting**

Tuesday, November 10, 2015  
1:00pm - 3:00pm  
Los Angeles County MTA  
Gateway Conference Room, 3rd Floor  
One Gateway Plaza,  
729 N. Vignes Street, Los Angeles CA 90012

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10. Member Communication Information

11. New Business Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda Possible Action

12. Adjournment Action

ACCESS SERVICES DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF 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 Services Community Advisory (CAC) 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 board both initially and supplementally prior to the meeting at the agency’s offices located at 3449 Santa Anita Avenue, El Monte California and on its website at http://accessla.org. Documents, including Power Point handouts distributed to CAC by staff or CAC members at the meeting will simultaneously be made available to the public. Two opportunities are available for the public to address the CAC during a CAC meeting: (1) before a
specific agendized item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (2) general public comment. The exercise of the right to address the board 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 the CAC secretary. 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 Chairperson. Persons whose speech is impaired such that they are unable to address the board 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 CAC 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 CAC may direct staff to investigate and/or schedule certain matters for consideration at a future CAC Meeting.

"Alternative accessible formats available upon request."
CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Cohen called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL


Board Member Present: None.

Access Services Staff: Sherry Kelley, Araceli Barajas, Kim Hogarth-Hindi, Jack Garate, David Foster, Lys Bovery, F Scott Jewell, Alfredo Torales, Sarah Boden, Mike Greenwood & Ruben Prieto,

Guests: Victor Garate (Global Paratransit), Victor Dominguez (Access Customer), Giovanna Gogreve (Metro), Beatriz Lara (MV Transportation), Karina Moreno (CTI), Jacqueline Sanchez (CTI), Tonni Yee Hemphill (QSS), Chrystene Terry (Care Evaluators), Melinda Brown (Care Evaluators), Kathleen Barajas (QSS), Aisha McKinney-Wendt (QSS), Maria Villasenor (Guest), Jan Johnson (Access Customer), Belinda Conrad (QSS), Michelle Ortega (Guest), Jember Carcamo (Access Customer), Frank Lucas (CTI), Julie Gaona (Access Customer), Rigo Gaona (Access Customer). Cleo Ray (Access Customer), and Guest (Unidentified).
INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Cohen welcomed the members, staff, and guests to the meeting and asked that everyone introduce themselves.

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF THE CAC MEETING MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

Motion: Member Lyons.
Second: Member Baldwin.
Abstentions: None.

Minutes were approved.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Jan Johnson made a public comment by stating that the providers need to have a back-up plan when they have computer problems. She said if the rides get lost in the system, the customers may get stranded.

Tonni Yee Hemphill made a public comment by stating that on September 14th, she had a ride going to La Habra, and while in route the vehicle began to stall on the freeway. She said the driver got nervous and did not know how to handle the situation. She said it was a traumatizing experience and she ended up having to go to the emergency room the following day. She asked that the drivers receive better training on how to deal with emergency situations.

REPORT FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chairperson Cohen announced that there was no board report today; however, mentioned that the board will be meeting in November to discuss the issues and continue working towards improving the service.
SUPERIOR SERVICE AWARD

Chairperson Cohen introduced Access Services Project Administrator of Eligibility Services, Mr. David Foster to present the Superior Service Award to Care Evaluators Records Clerk, Ms. Linda Brown.

He introduced Care Evaluators Operations Manager, Ms. Chrystene Terry to say a few words about Ms. Brown.

Ms. Terry stated that Care Evaluators handles anywhere from 180-250 eligibility interviews per day, and Ms. Brown’s responsibility in the Quality Assurance department is to make sure the interviews are processed correctly and on time. Ms. Terry thanked Ms. Brown for her positive attitude and congratulated her for a job well done.

Ms. Brown thanked Care Evaluators and Access staff for the recognition. She said that due to a previous medical condition, she was unable to work for several years; however, thanks to the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) she was able to learn the skills she needed to re-enter work force. She attributed her success to having a positive attitude.

CAC OFFICER NOMINATION SUBCOMMITTEE FORMATION

Access Services Manager of Customer Service, Ms. Sherry Kelley stated that this is an action item on today’s agenda, and explained the formation of a subcommittee is needed to identify the candidates who will run for officer positions at the November 2015 meeting.

She explained that Member Lantz is currently serving her second term as Vice-Chair and Chaplain Cohen is serving his first term as Chair. She said that normally the nominations subcommittee is formed at the August meeting with the vote in September; however, because there was no meeting in August the schedule was delayed and the incumbent officers will be a few months short of the regular year term.

She reviewed Section 2 “Slate of Officers Nomination Process” in
the Bylaws.

Chairperson Cohen asked for 3-5 volunteers from the committee to serve on the Nominations Subcommittee.

Members Arrigo, Lyons, and Padilla volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Chairperson Cohen reminded the committee that this is an action item and asked for a motion.

Motion: Member Conrad made a motion to approve the volunteers to the Nominations Subcommittee.

Second: Member Francois.

Pass/Fail: Motion passed.

**RIDER ENHANCEMENTS**

Access Services Special Project Administrator Mr. Alfredo Torales and Access Services Project Manager, Ms. Sarah Boden attended today’s meeting to give a brief presentation on a project staff is working on to enhance the customer’s ride experience called “Where’s My Ride.”

Mr. Torales & Ms. Boden reviewed a slide show presentation.

Ms. Boden stated that Phase 1 is the development of an application (app) called “Where’s My Ride.” She explained that the project is still in the “concept” phase, but the idea is that the customer will be able to access their profile and ride information through the Rider360 portal. She stated that once the customer is registered in Rider360, they will have access to the “Where’s My Ride” app and be able to view their scheduled trips and the ride details. The app will also allow the rider to view vehicle’s estimated time of arrival (ETA), ride history, and the vehicle number assigned.

She explained that this app will also feature a rating system where the customer can rate their ride experience. She said the rating
system will be similar to the stars on Amazon where the customer can rate the product. Additionally, there will be a free form box where the customer can make comments which will be viewed by staff. She concluded her comments by stating that the next step is to get the word out and encourage people to create a profile in Rider360.

Member Lyons asked where the Rider360 program is located.

Mr. Torales responded that Rider360 can be found on the Access website under the “Riding Access” link and said there are step by step instructions on how to register.

Ms. Boden explained that customers who are registered can currently view their profile and trip history. She asked the committee for suggestions on how to get people to register on Rider360.

Member Lantz stated that many of the customers she works with do not have the financial resources to purchase smart phones and said some people only have computer access at the center.

Ms. Boden stated that customers who do not have smart phones can still receive ETAs by text. She said this app offers additional options for people who have smart phones and would like to access information about their ride.

Member Lantz asked if a group of 50-60 people are interested signing up for Rider360, can Access help with the registration process.

Ms. Boden responded that Access can assist with registering large groups.

Chairperson Cohen stated that he would also like to have a staff member assist with registering people at the West LA Veterans Home.

Member Lyons stated that she works with two committees in the San Fernando Valley and would like Access to assist with
registering those groups as well. She also suggested that an app be developed where the customer can request their trips online.

Ms. Boden stated that the plans for future phases include scheduling & cancelling reservations and developing other ways to interact with Access through the system.

Member Lantz asked how many locations would Access be willing to visit to talk about the app and suggested that Access look into visiting regional centers to promote the app since there are large groups of customers.

Ms. Boden asked if an informational video would help in spreading the word.

Member Lantz responded that customers will probably still have questions and said that the video is a good idea for the future.

Member Padilla asked if this app will be usable for all types of phones including pre-paid phones.

Member Arrigo expressed his support for the implementation of the program and said he would also be interested in having a presentation in the City of West Hollywood. He asked how this program will help people with visual or hearing disabilities.

Ms. Boden stated that the Request for Proposal (RFP) will require that the software be accessible for persons with visual disabilities.

Member Coto asked if customers will be able to schedule their rides according to their disability.

Ms. Boden stated that Phase One of this project is “Where’s My Ride” and the customer will still have to go through the current reservation process to schedule their ride. She said the customer can track their ride with this system.

Member Padilla asked if this new program will have any impact on the dispatching system.
Ms. Boden stated that the dispatching system will not change; however, the customer can track the vehicle’s location with the GPS data. She said the software will automatically update the ETA.

Member Lyons asked if this information could be discussed at the next round of community meetings.

Mr. Torales responded that the fare system will be the topic presented at the next round of community meetings, but said that once staff is ready to present more information about “Where’s My Ride,” the community meetings is a good idea. He thanked her for the suggestion.

Member Aroch asked if the “Where’s My Ride” review is for the driver or the provider.

Ms. Boden responded that the review is for the overall ride and said that the customer can also use the “free form box” to provide additional information about the trip.

Member Padilla asked if this app will be similar to “Uber.”

Ms. Boden stated that this app has some features similar to Uber; however, the customer will continue to schedule their ride in advance by calling reservations and the vehicle will be pre-assigned to the trip. The customer will also receive a notification when the vehicle is assigned and have the ability to view the ETA.

Member Foafoa asked if the customer can make changes or cancel the ride through the app.

Ms. Boden stated that for future phases of the app, trip cancellations will be included; however, currently customers still need to call and cancel their trip.

Member Francois asked what the forward arrow on the screen was pointing towards.

Mr. Torales responded that the screen displayed is still a “concept” screen and said that the design has not been finalized.
Member Francois also requested that Access staff visit the Claremont area to provide information about the app and assistance to the customers who would like to sign up.

Ms. Boden stated that the purpose of this presentation was to get the committee’s feedback and said this project will take several meetings before being rolled out. She said the feedback from today’s meeting will be included in the RFP and said staff is looking at the spring of 2016 for a possible start date.

Member Baldwin suggested that the trip fare be displayed on the main screen and asked if the customer will receive an ETA in addition to the notification that a vehicle was dispatched.

Ms. Boden stated that the ETA and vehicle type will be displayed.

Member Lantz stated that many of the no-shows are due to lack of information being given to the driver for the pick-up. She suggested that if there is space available to add details that would help for pick-ups especially at large locations.

Member Coto suggested that comment cards be put in the vehicles for people who don’t have smart phones.

Mr. Torales reminded everyone that this app will not be replacing Customer Service or Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) and is being offered as an additional resource for the customers.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 8

Ms. Tonni Yee-Hemphill made a public comment by stating that recently she went to a Forest Lawn in Glendale and the driver could not find the drop-off location because there was no signage. Ms. Hemphill asked a cemetery employee for directions but still ended up missing the ceremony. She asked that Access evaluate the location to determine if stand can be added.

Member Francois asked if the ETA will adjust with current traffic conditions.
Ms. Boden responded that the ETA will automatically update similar to “google maps” or other navigation systems.

FARE UPDATE

Access Services Special Projects Administrator, Mr. Alfredo Torales attended today’s meeting to give an update on the fare issue. He reviewed a power point presentation that included the following slides:

Issue

FTA finding that Access charges more than twice the fixed-route fare for some paratransit trips

Access received an extension from the FTA to comply by January 1, 2016

Efforts to Comply with Current Regulations

August 24, 2015, the Access Services Board of Directors:

• Approved fare structure that would check each paratransit trip request against its fixed-route equivalent, double the fixed route fare, and then round down to a fare of Free, 50 cents, $1, $2, $3 or $4.
• Approved a motion that, in the event a legislative or regulatory change is enacted by January 1, 2016, the new fare structure would not be implemented.

Regulatory Change Update

• In March, Access submitted a petition asking the Department of Transportation (DOT) to revise its regulations to explicitly allow for a “coordinated” paratransit fare structure.

• On August 20, 2015, the US DOT issued a Federal Register Notice seeking public comments on Access’ Petition for Rulemaking.
• Public comments were accepted online, by mail, or by fax until September 21, 2015

Summary of Comments

As of today, a total of 201 submissions received to the docket:
  • 159 (79%) comments supporting rulemaking
  • 27 (13%) comments opposed
  • 8% are other or not applicable

Docket: DOT-OST-2015-0075

Supportive Comments

Local organizations supporting the rulemaking include:
  • The Paratransit Riders Coalition
  • Rancho Los Amigos Patient Advisory Council
  • CALIF
  • United Cerebral Palsy
  • SCRS-IL
  • Independent Living Center of Southern California
  • Westside Center for Independent Living
  • Eastern Los Angeles Regional Center
  • Disabled Resource Center
  • Los Angeles County Client Coalition
  • Metro and other transit agencies

Supportive Comments (cont.)

Some of the reasons commenters prefer a coordinated fare structure are:
  • Simple and easier to understand
  • Complexity inherent in a dynamic fare system
  • Difficulty planning/budgeting on fixed income
  • Simpler coupon system is achievable
  • Concerns of higher fares in a dynamic fare system
Opposing Comments

Almost all submissions opposing the petition are from individuals or organizations outside of L.A. County:

- Includes Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Kentucky Protection and Advocacy, Disability Rights North Carolina, United Spinal Association, among others
- Fear that fares may increase in other parts of the country if rulemaking is allowed.
- Suggest that Access should implement a variable fare system because it is technically possible.

Next Steps

**OCT 2015**
- Testing of reservation system with Metro Trip Planner
- Present amendment to the LA County Coordinated Paratransit Plan to the membership of Access

**NOV/DEC 2015**
- Customer Outreach
- Community Meetings

**JAN 1, 2016**
- Start date of new fare system

Questions

Member Lyons stated that she was charged $5.00 the last time she went to Disneyland and asked if her fare will be $4.00 going to Disneyland with the new fare system.

Mr. Torales stated that the fare will depend on where she is being picked up.
Member Baldwin stated that there are transfers in the Newhall Pass so there may be some higher fares. He said that since the fare system will be linked to Metro.net, he asked how the information will be checked for accuracy.

Mr. Torales said staff took a sample of 1200 trips and cross checked the information with the trip planner to verify the fare amounts. He explained that one of the system’s default settings is to look at ¾ of a mile from the address which provides a wider range and may find a lower fare for any given trip.

Member Baldwin asked if the fare system will have some type of “quality assurance” process to ensure the accuracy.

Member Coto asked if customers will have to pay for trips on buses or trains.

Mr. Torales explained that Access customers can continue to ride for free using the Free Fare Program.

Member Lantz asked if Access can request an extension from FTA until a decision is made regarding the petition for rulemaking. She said that the fare change will be confusing for customers and money will be spent on the implementation.

Mr. Torales responded that the DOT has not responded; however, Access will continue the lobbying efforts in Washington D.C. He stated that Access will still need to be prepared to implement the fare system by January 1st. He said the committee will be notified as soon as a response is received.

Member Lyons suggested that Access informs the customers that there are no changes to the Free Fare Program.

Mr. Torales thanked Ms. Lyons for the suggestion.

Member Baldwin stated that customers in the Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley Regions have the same concern.
PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEM 9

Mr. Michael Sher made a public comment by stating that some of the machines in the vehicles are not functioning properly and said the machines should be replaced.

Mr. Torales asked for clarification as to which machines he was referring to.

Chairperson Cohen asked that this issue be looked into by staff.

Member Padilla suggested that Metro and other transit staff be informed that there is no change to the Free Fare program to avoid any further confusion for the customers.

Chairperson Cohen suggested that this information be added to the recorded message the customer’s listen to while waiting on hold.

Mr. Robert Coto made a public comment by stating that the machines on the buses could not read his card so had to pay for his rides until his card was replaced.

Chairperson Cohen asked if the bus operators can accept the Access ID Tap card by checking it visually.

Ms. Belinda Conrad made a public comment by asking if the Access ID Tap cards require activation prior to being used.

Mr. Torales responded that no activation is required.

Member Lantz stated that going back to the fare issue, how will a person know if a comment submitted to the federal docket was received. She said a receipt number was given; however, the comment was not posted.

Mr. Torales stated that the person can log on to the FTA website and copy and paste the receipt number into a search field and the comment should come up.
Member Baldwin stated that all of the comments will be posted in the federal register.

Mr. Torales thanked everyone who took the time to submit a comment and said that all efforts will go a long way.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

Member Lantz reminded everyone that the Service Animal Subcommittee will be meeting immediately after today’s CAC Meeting and asked that anyone else interested in attending is invited to stay.

MEMBER COMMUNICATION

Member Coto stated that Access is continuing to improve and doing a wonderful job.

Member Padilla also said that Access is doing a great job; however, expressed his concern about some providers using a new software system that is causing rides to be late and customers being stranded.

Member Conrad stated that customers have shared with him that the share rides are being scheduled with too much time in between trips for example a 6:10 pick up and the share ride is for 7:30. He said there should be something in the handbook that explains the maximum time allowed between share rides.

Member Baldwin stated that the Paratransit Riders Coalition requested a list of the Project Administrators contact information for each region and said that would be good information for the CAC to have as well. He requested that the information be provided at the next CAC.

Member Arrigo stated that October is disability awareness month and reminded everyone to be considerate to the disabled not only in October but throughout the year.
Member Foafoa thanked Access for the work they do in the community.

Member Lyons stated that she had a problem with her ride last Tuesday and was not able to get to the QSS Meeting. She said the computers went down and her ride was lost in the system. She said Access should have a “Plan B” so when computers issues occur, people will not be left stranded.

Member Francois stated that she looked forward to the new app and the future projects Access is working on.

Member Aroch thanked Mr. Victor Garate from Global Paratransit and Ms. Karina Moreno from San Gabriel Transit for the work they do.

Member Lantz stated that the United Cerebral Palsy is celebrating Disability Awareness Month and encouraged everyone to visit their website and check out the updates on their page. She also thanked Mr. Torales for providing the updates on this issue and for his assistance with the DOT comments. She also thanked Global and CTI for their hard work and asked to speak with someone from CTI after the meeting.

Ms. Kelley mentioned that some comments were made regarding the room size and stated that next month the room would be set up a little different to accommodate everyone attending. Lastly, she stated that a copy of the updated CAC Bylaws were at the table for all of the members.

Member Coto asked if there were any current vacancies on the committee.

Member Cohen announced that the 23rd Annual Veterans Celebration will be held on December 4th, 5th & 6th, and said everyone was welcome to attend. He said there will be food & entertainment all day.
NEW BUSINESS RAISED SUBSEQUENT TO POSTING OF AGENDA

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Member Baldwin.

Second: Member Lyons

The meeting was adjourned at 2:39 p.m.
NOVEMBER 10, 2015

TO: ACCESS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: SHERRY KELLEY, SENIOR MANAGER OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

RE: COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE NOMINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

ISSUE:

The Nomination Subcommittee formed during the October 2015 Access Services Community Advisory Committee meeting has developed a slate of candidates for the 2015-2016 term.

Each nominee was encouraged to provide an oral or written campaign platform to present prior to today’s vote.

RECOMMENDATION:

Review nominations presented, solicit any additional nominations from the floor, and conduct the election for Chair and Vice-Chair.

Advisory Committee Chair

☐ David “Dov” Cohen

Advisory Committee Vice-Chair

☐ Michael Conrad

BACKGROUND:

As outlined within the bylaws, the election of officers is to occur each year at the September meeting and officers serve for a one-year term with a term limit of two years.
It is important to remember that the Chair of the Advisory Committee is also the Ex-Officio member of the Access Services Board of Directors. This requires that the Chair be an active participant at the Board of Directors meetings conducted every fourth Monday.