

# access

## AGENDA

### COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Los Angeles County MTA

Union Station Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
One Gateway Plaza

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<i>Item Time</i>	<i>Item Description/Presenter</i>	<i>Disposition</i>	<i>Pages</i>
	1. Call to Order	Action	
5	2. Introductions		
2	3. Review & Approval of Minutes of October 10, 2017	Action	4-14
10	4. General Public Comment	Information	
5	5. Report from Board of Directors/ Director Theresa De Vera	Information	
20	6. Customer Satisfaction Survey/ Fairfax Research	Presentation	
15	7. Draft Strategic Plan/ Matthew Avancena	Presentation	
10	8. Jerry Walker Commitment to Quality Service Award/ Nancy Loaiza & Larry Mize	Presentation	
10	9. Video/Audio Recording on Access Vehicles/ Randy Johnson	Presentation	

20	10.	Visitor Request/ Carlos Bermejo	Presentation
10	11.	Operations Performance Update/ Faustino Salvador	Presentation
5	12.	Subcommittee Update	Information
5	13.	Member Communication	Information
3	14.	New Business Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda	Possible Action
	15.	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 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 agenda item is debated and voted upon regarding that item and (2) general public comment. The exercise of the right*

*to address the CAC 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 Chair. 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 are available upon request."](#)*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MINUTES</b> Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting October 10, 2017 1:00pm – 3:00 pm</p>
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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Michael Conrad called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

**CAC Members:** Chairperson Michael Conrad, Vice-chair Maria Aroch, Michael Arrigo, Rachele Goeman, Dina Garcia, Chaplain Dov Cohen, Tina Fofoa, Wendy Cabil, Liz Lyons, Terri Lantz, Marie Francois and Gordon Cardona.

**Board Members Present:** Martin Gombert

**Access Services Staff:** Sherry Kelley, Sharon Astier, Art Chacon, Eric Haack, Alfredo Torales, Randy Johnson, Josh Southwick, LaTisha Wilson, Jack Garate, Anthony Santiago and Fayma Ishaq.

**Guests:** David Kaufman (Nelson/Nygaard), Bill Zuke (QSS), Annette Arriola (Alta), Timothy German (Access Rider), Mary Griffin (Access Rider), Daniel Garcia (Access rider), Aurora Delgado (CTI), Luz Padua (Access Rider), Kathleen George (Commission on Disabilities), Darian Harris (Global Paratransit), Dawn Bolden (MV Transportation), Dennis Burgess (MV Transportation), Mary Lindley (Guest), Adrianna Hermacio (Guest), Victor Dominquez (QSS), Albert Contreras (QSS), Belinda Conrad (QSS), Onnika Payne (Access), Thomas Washington (Access Driver), Juan Manual (Access Driver), Carlos Benavides (Commission on Disabilities), Kathleen George (Commission on Disabilities) and Michael Sher (Access Rider).

**CAC Members Absent:** Olivia Almalel, Kurt Baldwin and Jesse Padilla.

## REVIEW & APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson Conrad asked for a motion to approve the July 11, 2017 and August 8, 2017 Minutes.

Motion: Member Chaplain Dov Cohen

Second: Member Rachele Goeman

Abstentions: Member Wendy Cabil and Member Michael Arrigo from August 2017 meeting.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mary Hernandez-Lindley stated that she called reservation to book a ride to the CAC and was on hold for a while. She stated that the caller was rude, was not familiar with the Patsaouras Plaza location, and the requested reservation times she requested was not available, and the call taker informed her to call back. Ms. Lindley stated that she was not pleased with that response, and when she called back, the time requested was available.

Assigned to Fayma Ishaq

Daniel Garcia stated that retired Access vehicles should be made available to persons with disabilities, and recommended a policy be implemented to meet that need. He asked the CAC members to bring this concern to the Board.

Assigned to Randy Johnson

Ms. Cleo asked what the renewal process is pertaining to new Access ID cards, as she hasn't received her card and it has been passed the three-week timeframe. In addition, she asked if new applicants are processed before auto-renewal applicants.

Assigned to Sherry Kelley

Victor Dominquez stated that reservation does not help with ETA calls, and he has to call OMC to assist him.

Assigned to Annette Arriola

Luz Padilla stated that she is legally blind and is currently taking an evening course at UCLA. She contacted Customer Service to request beyond the curb service, and is expecting an RMC form via mail. Ms. Padilla stated she needs immediate attention.

Assigned to Jack Garate

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT**

Director Gombert provided a summary of the September 2017 Board meeting.

- The Board approved the purchase of 41 new paratransit vehicles for Access Services .
- The Board approved the Executive Directors compensation package.
- Ruben Prieto demonstrated the Where's My Ride App.

Lastly, he stated that Executive Director Andre Colaiace reported that Access trips are down by 3.9% year to date, and this is the first time that this has occurred in six years. Director Gombert thanked the Committee for the opportunity to attend the CAC meeting.

## **SUPERIOR SERVICE AWARD**

Fayma Ishaq presented the Superior Service Award. She quoted Maya Angelo "Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it". This quote rings true about Thomas Washington. He has been a driver with Global Paratransit (Southern Region) for 6 years. Mr. Washington has completed approximately 14,500 trips; 4,800 wheelchair trips, and has driven over 195,000 safe miles. According to Access rider's Mr. Washington is very professional and well groomed. In addition, Mr. Washington is an avid basketball player and has participated in various leagues.

Mr. Washington thanked Access for the award, and shared how honored he was to receive it. He also, thanked his supervisor Darian Harris, Global Paratransit, and Access riders for their kind comments and smiling faces.

Darian Harris stated that Mr. Washington is a great example of what a professional operator is supposed to be. Mr. Washington is always willing to go over and above to assist the riders. He thanked him for doing a great job.

## **COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL REVIEW**

David Kaufman presented the final report for the Comprehensive Operational Review, which included the following:

- Status Quo (Current status)
- Short Term (Recommendations for current fiscal year)
- Long Term (Items that require additional analysis)

Mr. Kaufman stated that several issues were identified during the review process, and the Nelson Nygaard team gathered information from Access to address each of the issues. He stated that the mid-study report includes Access' policies & procedures, a

review of peer paratransit systems and how the various services are delivered that could possibly be useful to Access.

Mr. Kaufman reviewed some of the key findings:

- Access has low per trip costs in comparison to peer paratransit systems.
- Most KPI targets are being met by Access' contractors.
- Access has effective contract management and oversight programs.

Areas of concerns:

- Reservation between regions requires multiple phone calls, especially with LA Basin and Santa Clarita area.
- Contractors are having difficulty hiring and retaining drivers due to wage rates.
- High facility costs are restricting competition for incumbent service contracts.

Access should consider addressing the following two issues immediately:

- Changing reservation hours
- Expand the service area

Mr. Kaufman stated that Access reservation hours are longer compared to their peer systems. Currently, Access reservation hours are 6 am to 10 pm, beyond the ADA requirement. The most common hours of operations are 8 am to 5 pm; however, this change would be enormously inconvenient for Access riders and would not save money. The results would lead to high call volumes during the day, and the need for additional staff and workstations.

Secondly, Access should consider expanding their service area, however they recommend maintaining current service area. The ADA requirements are to serve areas within  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile of a transit route. Access would not gain much and mostly would be serving rural areas. There would be an administrative cost connected to the expansion for the service area.

The following items are recommended to be considered this fiscal year.

- The Fleet Department staff should be increased.
- The audio function should be added to the Smart Drive system.
- Operator Service Monitor's (OSM's) should spend less time listening to routine reservation calls, rather target their review to new hire calls to address training gaps or opportunities for improvement.
- The stand sign project is useful and should be expanded, as it assists in avoiding missed trips and no-shows.
- Access should conduct an internal wage review analysis of staff.

Policies and Practices:

- The policy states that ETA calls should be made after twenty-minute window, but not all contractors abide by this rule, which results to an increase in of

ETA phone calls and wait time. Retraining is recommended regarding this policy.

- Subscription service is not required by ADA and some riders abuse this policy, as there is a significant number of no-shows and cancelled trips. It is recommended that Access re-assess the Standing order policy.
- The Operations Monitoring Center (OMC) is responsible for sending out back up vehicles when a problem has mistakenly occurred. It is recommended that Access enforce strict penalties to the providers when they don't successfully complete trips assigned to them.
- Olive View is the transfer point for Transfer Trips. It is recommended that Access assign a starter to the Olive View location to assist customers with the coordination of transfers.
- The fleet allocation methodology is currently measured by the total number of trips. It is recommended that Access revise the measurement by fleet allocation rather than the total trips.
- Access contractors must provide facilities for operations in the procurement process. It is recommended that the Access consider assuming responsibility of providing facilities for maintenance and operations.

The following are items that require additional analysis:

- Access should consider centralizing the reservations call center for all the L.A. Basin region. The cost would be more than enough to compensate for the set up cost.
- Access should consider transitioning to a single software platform for all paratransit functions. This allows for a common trip database, and enables contractors to be aware of trips across regions in one common software.
- Access should operationalize conditional eligibility at the time of reservation. It would be more efficient during the reservation process. This type of eligibility refers to people who can travel in with certain conditions. The call takers would have access to that information to determine rather the trip falls within the conditions of eligibility.
- Access staff should monitor non-ADA alternative service program to consider same-day and on-demand service options.

The Final Report can be found on the Access website at: [accessla.org/about-us/publications](https://accessla.org/about-us/publications).

## QUESTIONS.

Member Lantz expressed her concerns for individuals that reside in the hills. Many of these individuals qualify for Access, but live beyond ¾ of miles and cannot get Access rides. She would like to see other ways of providing transportation. She stated that Uber is not the way; drivers are not finger printed and the rides are not safe.

Member Arrigo thanked Mr. Kaufman for presenting a very thorough presentation.



He stated that the drivers including Access staff all do a great job and deserve a wage increase.

Mr. Kaufman replied, the staff wages should be reviewed for potential increases.

Member Lyons stated that she is not in agreement with centralized call center and it may cause longer hold time. She is not comfortable with Uber drivers and would rather pay for a regular cab or use Access. Lastly, she stated that same day service would not work, because riders may want to modify their times or locations, and this could create additional work on reservation.

Member Francois stated that it was mentioned to revise subscription trip policy, and requested to identify what triggers trip cancellations and what has been the trend.

Secondly, Ms. Francois asked would Access maintain the current monitoring indicators and focus on two for the future or just add it in addition to quality improvement.

Mr. Kaufman replied, it would be in addition to quality improvement.

Member Francois asked Mr. Kaufman if his mention of monitoring was referring to the evaluation process.

Mr. Kaufman replied, no this is about looking at both the cost and what will be done to improve service quality together, instead of separately.

Lastly, Member Francois requested clarification of conditional eligibility, and what would happen if they were making a reservation and they were ineligible.

Mr. Kaufman stated that currently, the call taker does not know if the rider is eligible or not. Someone from Access would review the trip after the fact to see if that trip was eligible, if not the rider would receive a call from Access to discuss it. The call taker should have the ability to look at that information at the time of reservation and the information would be built into the system.

Member Cohen commented on the concept of streamlining the software using one of the two choices and to make it part of awarding new contracts. Secondly, he likes the idea of having one centralized call center, which would be more effective in controlling the training, supervision and oversight.

Member Garcia stated that she understands that many people are against using Uber and their reasons are valid. However, there are many people within the community willing to take Uber and they feel safe taking it. She also, shared people with severe disabilities do not have many options.

Member Cabil shared her concerns regarding contractors having difficulty hiring and retaining drivers. She is curious to know how that information was ascertained and what solutions the providers are coming up with to address the drivers concerns and safety. Ms. Cabil stated that she advocates for the drivers, hear their complaints, and wonder why the drivers feel their concerns are not being heard, specifically in Antelope Valley. There should not be any negative repercussions for trying to give the best quality of service, when you bring up comments or share insight.

Member Lantz stated that she is not clear on conditional eligibility and requested clarification. She also asked if the call taker would be able to determine the conditional eligibility and if unconditional eligibility would be affected.

Mr. Kaufman replied, ADA eligibility regulations are for certain trips and because of the nature of a person's disability. Some riders are eligible for all trips and some are not. For example, some riders can walk to a short distance, but not far, or a rider may be able to make some trips, but not those that require negotiations or transfers. The rider's information would be available in the database for the call takers upon booking the customers reservation. In addition, unconditional eligibility would not be affected, and most riders have unconditional eligibility.

Member Lantz stated that the Southern and Northern regions have already gone through centralized software. The Southern riders never complained until the change to the new system, and it would be a nightmare to take on consolidating all the providers. She stated that the Where's My Ride App is helpful, and we should work as a team to deliver the best service possible.

Chairperson Conrad stated that he would like to address two concerns. First, the twenty minute-window where the riders' call should not be taken until after twenty minutes. The only downfall is for those who are visually impaired or totally blind. The driver could be two houses down and after five-minute wait time, the driver leaves the rider without making any contact. The rider calls after the twenty-minute window to find out they were no showed, and must wait for another ride. Secondly, He stated that there are some disabilities where a rider may be able to take the bus on some days and others they cannot. Therefore, there should not be an iron-clad rule stipulating on certain trips you have to use the bus. There should be some allowances within the eligibility process for all conditions.

Member Cohen stated that the CAC responsibilities are to listen, and to give their input. The management of Access has accepted their responsibility, and we never have issues with Access doing the right thing. He stated that the report pointed out areas of improvement and of the two software's, we should implement the one with the least problems and move forward to possibly centralize that system.

Member Francois stated that there are kinks to be worked out to add another layer of conditional eligibility that could make the system worst. She stated that the cost

effectiveness will be labor intensiveness and would also require higher wages. She inquired about the level of ineligible trips that Access has reached triggering this recommendation.

Chairperson Conrad apologized to the guest requesting to make public comment, as there was no additional time to do so and informed them to see Access after the meeting if follow up was needed.

## FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Eric Haack presented the five-year strategic plan FY2019- FY2023. He stated that Access is working on creating a new 5-year strategic plan, which is more comprehensive in identifying some areas of improvement. The new plan will provide a road map for the goals of the agency, including projects and the timeline for implementation of the different projects.

We are also looking at recommendations from all the different departments that were not included in the COR report. The strategic plan will be a living document that will be part of Access annual budget. In addition, Access plans to present the budget to the Board annually and to Metro at their February 18 meeting.

Mr. Haack reviewed the vision of the new strategic plan. He stated that Access' vision is to capture not only where Access will be in the next 5-years, but to also look at how we will address and overcome challenges. Transparency is also an important part of the plan for everyone to see and discuss the agency goals.

Mr. Haack introduced Onnika Payne as one of the new team members within Access Planning department. They met with other Access departments to identify areas requiring improvement and developed the following proposed themes.

The Strategic Plan Focus Areas.

- Safety- additional Road Safety Inspectors are needed to respond to incidents and emergencies
- Customer Experience and Education- looking at being able to book trips online or through an app. Develop educational and informational videos at the eligibility center or through a revised Access website.
- Process Streamlining/Cost Containment Control; working towards centralize call-center, and Access becoming the landowner or leaseholder for the contractor's facilities.
- Improved Partnerships and Coordination - Access cannot operate on it is on; we benefit greatly by some of the partnerships; the CAC and others. We are considering having better partnership with medical facilities, which could help reduced missed appointments and any inconvenience.

Lastly, Mr. Haack reviewed the Strategic Plan Development and Next Steps.

- Received COR Recommendations
- Received Projects from Staff
- Draft Strategic Plan- October/November
- Draft Strategic Plan to CAC, TPAC, and the Board for comment- November
- Return to CAC, TPAC and Board- January 2018

#### QUESTIONS.

Member Lantz thanked Mr. Haack. She stated that it is reassuring to know that Access is being cautious in their decision-making.

Member Lyons thanked Mr. Haack for all his hard work. She suggested working with the schools and malls concerning stand signs locations.

Mr. Haack stated that the Operations department is currently working on this recommendation to expand the stand signs so that we have fewer missed trips and no shows.

Member Cabil thanked Mr. Haack. She stated that it is reassuring to know that Access is open to receive information for improvements.

Chairperson Conrad thanked Mr. Haack.

#### RATIFICATION OF CAC GROUP A

Sherry Kelley Senior Manager presented Group A for reappointment. The members consist of Michael Arrigo, Kurt Baldwin, Wendy Cabil, Gordon Cardona, Fetineial Fofoa, Terri Lantz, Elizabeth Lyons, and Jesse Padilla.

Ms. Kelley stated as prescribed by the bylaws, there shall be eight (8) representatives appointed to a two-year term (known as Group A) and seven (7) representatives appointed to a one-year term (known as Group B). We need to ratify Group A that expires on January 22, 2018.

Chairperson Conrad asked for a motion to ratify Group A members.

Motion: Member Dov Cohen

Second: Member Rachele Goeman

#### SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE

None.

## MEMBER COMMUNICATION

Vice-chair Maria Aroch shared that Access is a blessing and they provide much better service than the San Francisco paratransit system.

Member Arrigo expressed how much he appreciates everyone. He stated that we all have one thing in common and that is to provide safe quality paratransit service to all.

Member Lantz stated that it is a pleasure to serve with everyone seated at the CAC table and thanked everyone for doing an incredible job. She also, thanked Global for working on all the glitches.

Member Goeman requested to speak with someone from CTI.

Member Garcia mentioned that many negative things have been said about reservations. However, for the most part reservation has been a lot nicer, pleasant and patient. It would make a big difference in their life just to say have a wonderful day.

Member Cohen made an announcement pertaining to an event for our Veterans at the Madrid Theatre in November and December 2017. He also, announced there is a free program on December 3, 2017 at the VA property in West LA.

Member Fofoa thanked the presenters. Ms. Fofoa expressed how much she appreciates Access and the providers for providing great service.

Member Cabil expressed it is a privilege to sit amongst the CAC members, and to be able to represent the mental health community. Ms. Cabil mentioned that she serves on other committees and it has been quite pleasurable to be on the CAC committee for the last two years. She shared and read a flyer from the Department of Mental Health regarding Disability Rights California (DRC) and provided the contact information. [LA.MetroAccess@disabilityrightsca.org](mailto:LA.MetroAccess@disabilityrightsca.org)

Member Lyons thanked the presenters and Jack Garate. Ms. Lyons stated that she volunteers five days a week at the Operation Gratitude and they are accepting any leftover candy to send out care packages to our service men and women.

Chairperson Conrad announced the November 2017 is a dark meeting and we will resume back in December 2017.

## NEW BUSINESS RAISED SUBSEQUENT TO THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Member Lantz stated that members have expressed their interest in establishing a Stand Sign Subcommittee.

Chairperson Conrad replied the CAC Members would discuss that item in addition to the CAC Bylaws and action items immediately after the December 2017 meeting.

## ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Member Lantz

Second: Member Lyons

The meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.