

City of **SANTA CLARITA**  **TRANSIT**

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Carl Boyer Room, City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman, John Panico called to order the meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee at 9:03 a.m.

MEMBERS & GENERAL PUBLIC PRESENT

John Panico, Chairman

Adrian Aguilar, City of Santa Clarita

Karen Manke, Vice Chair

Sarah Carey, City of Santa Clarita

Manel Pushparajah, Member

Nicholas Echeverri, City of Santa Clarita

Keith Curry, Member

Kathleen Herrera, City of Santa Clarita

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

Faustino Salvador, Access Services

Michelle Rush, MV Transportation

Kristy DeHaro, Access Services

David Tamariz, MV Transportation

Alicia Posada, Access Services

Adam Reyes, MV Transportation

Billie Curry, Member of Public

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

John Panico calls the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

MEMBER COMMENTS

John starts the meeting with member comments, and shares an incident of a bus running red light the previous evening. Arcy indicated that they will pull video and review incident. John passes the floor to Manel.

Manel shares that service has been good and she doesn't have any issues to raise at this time. John passes the floor to Keith.

Keith states that he does not have any comments at this time. John passes the floor to Karen.

Karen states that she does not have any comments at this time.

March 2024 Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting minutes are reviewed by Committee and attendees. Motion to approve June minutes is passed.

AGENCY UPDATES

Adrian Aguilar, City of Santa Clarita

Adrian shares updates on the additions to the City's Transit Team, and introduces Sarah Carey to the group. Sarah briefly shares her background and experience with the City.

Keith asks what her duties will be in her position.

Sarah states that she is currently working on various projects and learning about the Transit operations, and that her exact responsibilities are still being decided upon.

Adrian shares that Sarah is working on learning the operations, has conducted an analysis on our fareboxes and will be making recommendations on improving the system. He also shared that she is working on refining and organizing our policies and procedures. Adrian shares that Nicholas will be providing updates on the Transit Development Plan (TDP) shortly, but before he gets to that he would like to share updates on a few other items. Bus purchases- we currently have three buses on order for our local service. We received notice from the manufacturer that we have a date for the site visit and inspection at the end of September. Once the inspection is completed we will take delivery of the buses. Once we take delivery, it will take approximately 3-4 weeks to get them equipped and inspected by CHP, and are hoping to have them operational by the end of October. We have Dial-A-Ride vehicles on order that we placed three years ago. They were supposed to be delivered in May, it was pushed to July and now we are looking at the end of September. The delay has been caused by the process used to retrofit the vehicles to have them operate with Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel instead of gasoline requires an approval that has taken longer than anticipated. The vehicles are complete with the exception of that retrofit; once that is approved it will be approximately 3-4 weeks for delivery.

Keith inquires about the Dial-A-Ride bus design and wants to know if they will have the same step up.

Adrian states that the design has been modified from a two-step entry to a more manageable one-step entry. The vehicles also have the liquid spring suspension which provides a much more comfortable ride. Finally, we have placed an order for an electric passenger van for our GO! Santa Clarita service. The vehicle will be wrapped, the farebox is being installed and we are hoping to have that vehicle in service in the next month or so. We are working with a contractor to install a charging station at the facility and are hoping to have that work started in the next week or so.

John asks for an update on the Hydrogen Project.

Adrian states that the project is moving along and we currently are at 90% design for the station and will be at 100% design by the early October. At that point, we will start the permitting process which we estimate to be a three-month process. We have already started the leg work, with the City permits in place. The County, fire and utility permitting process will be the most time consuming. We are hoping to start construction in November and beyond that we are looking at July of 2025 for equipment delivery and final testing of the station. For service, we saw some ridership increases for July, with the exception of GO! which may correlate to the fare increase.

Nicholas Echeverri, City of Santa Clarita

Work on the TDP is nearing the end. We collected feedback from the public through various channels, and determined that if we implement the changes recommended that more people would be happier with service and ride more frequently. The feedback indicated a desire for increased trip frequency, increasing service span and shorter trip timelines. We have taken those recommendations and have incorporated them into the overall TDP and should have it finalized within the next two months.

Keith asks if the money for the consulting firm was money well spent.

Adrian states that it was- we knew that there were adjustments that needed to be made to the service and this study has provided the opportunity to measure that demand to implement the appropriate changes. Many factors were taken into consideration including travel pattern data, changes in commute patterns due to COVID, as well as changes in our population.

Keith asked if there were particular focuses on the areas that use public transit more frequently.

Adrian states that the data and the recommendations are being done in viewing the City as a whole, while also looking to provide service in areas where there are currently service gaps, such as Golden Valley, Fair Oaks, Five Knolls and Vista Canyon. The plan is, upon approval for additional funding, to implement the recommended changes over a three-year period. We had completed a plan two years before the pandemic hit and were in the process of rolling out those recommendations. When the pandemic hit, all of the previous recommendations were no longer relevant. We requested grant funding for this project, and received the funds, federally funding the TDP project. The Plan takes into account moving our fleet into zero emissions using hydrogen, which has increased costs for the vehicles, looking at our ability to sustain the level of service that we have in place while being able to maintain the quality of infrastructure that we have now and into the future. The Plan will not necessarily significantly expand service, but will expand service in a way that is justifiable and sustainable.

Faustino Salvador, Access Services

Faustino provides updates and shares that on time performance is above standard, the service is on track to meet 12 out of 12 keystone standards for the first quarter. Access recently wrapped up the second community meeting of the year in August, with over 100 attendees. Finally, Barrett

Tate and Brian Lopez are no longer on my team. Their replacements are Kristy DeHaro and Alicia Posada.

Kristy and Alicia provide information on their background with Access Services.

Manel shares an issue that she had regarding an interview for Access Services that she had scheduled.

Faustino states that he will follow up with Access to determine the status of her application.

Keith inquires about ridership at the San Fernando transfer point at Olive View

Faustino indicates that the ridership for the transfer point is good.

Keith asks if the restricted services on the weekend for the transfer trips is due to funding, and inquires as to whether or not Access Services is State or Federally funded.

Faustino states that yes, the limited transfer services on the weekend is due to funding as well as a limitation on resources, and that Access is Federally funded.

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

Arcy shares updates on the newest driver's bid on August 3, which had minimal changes to the Dial-A-Ride routes on the weekends, adding the school trippers and removed the summer trolley and beach bus. Michelle will share some of the special events we have had with our employees.

Keith asks for the feedback on the beach bus.

Arcy states that she did not receive any complaints and that ridership has increased since shifting to traveling to the Ventura Harbor rather than Santa Monica.

Michelle Rush, MV Transportation

Michelle shares updates on events geared toward employee appreciation. The events included a employee appreciation barbecue, which encouraged employees to bring their families and enjoy activities and food. We are looking to provide the employees with positive team building. Dispatchers achieved the incentive from Access Services, so they were happy about that. MV has implemented additional trainings that focus on issues brought to our attention through customer service feedback.

Keith inquires about the sensitivity training.

Michelle indicates that yes, the sensitivity training is still in place. These brief trainings are just in addition to the required and scheduled training.

John asks Arcy for any updates on available positions.

Arcy states that Safety Manager Larry has been promoted, so they are looking to replace that position. We are always looking for drivers.

David Tamariz, MV Transportation

David shares that the Customer Service supervisor has started and the last customer service representative came off of training, so they are fully staffed in customer service. David shares that they do get concerns regarding driver behavior, and the concerns are addressed accordingly. David also shares that there is progressive discipline for drivers that have repetitive issues.

Keith asks if there is a complaint limit when it comes to drivers.

Adrian states that all complaints come to the City, and is tracked by City staff. The complaints, as they come in, are shared with David. We do track to find trends, and address those trends appropriately with MV who will then focus on the trend in training. Drivers are trained on all aspects of servicing the City. If there are any shortfalls for a particular driver, there will be some retraining to address that. We also ask for MV to include training information in their regular training schedule that will focus on relevant matters, such as the recent fare changes and encouraging TAP usage.

Faustino adds that complaints that come to him regarding Access are addressed by him. Should a particular driver receive four complaints, the matter is addressed with management and it is determined if this is the right position for the driver.

John asks if trends of complaints from certain patrons is also tracked?

Adrian states that yes, it is tracked.

Karen makes a statement on rider safety, asking what can be done about riders taking off their seatbelts and/or standing up before the bus has stopped?

David states that he will address the issue at the next safety meeting.

Adam Reyes, MV Transportation

Adam shares positive feedback and ridership for the beach bus, Dodger Day and the hotel trolley. He also shares a phone call that overheard in dispatch that came in from customer service, looking for a vehicle for a patron that had finished with his appointment early and was sitting in the heat. Unfortunately, there were not any vehicles available, but we did try to accommodate the request. Unfortunately, we are not always able to do so.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

John shares the details of the memorial service for former AAC member, Jim Hogan. He also shares a complaint from Canyon Country residents regarding a lack of a median in an area on Whites Canyon.

Adrian states that the residents can reach out to the City's Traffic division.

John asks for the status update on the Lost Canyon Bridge

Adrian states that the City has awarded a contract for the construction and they anticipate it being an 18-24-month project.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

John adjourns the meeting at approximately 10:31 a.m.

FUTURE MEETING

The next meeting is November 7, at 9:00 a.m. at the Carl Boyer Room