

City of SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Thursday, June 05, 2025

Transit Maintenance Facility

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair, Karen Manke called to order the meeting of the Accessibility Advisory Committee at 9:10 a.m.

MEMBERS & GENERAL PUBLIC PRESENT

Karen Manke, Vice Chairman	Keith Curry, Member
Toshia Griffin, Member	Manel Pushparajah, Member
Arcy Torres, MV Transportation	David Tamariz, MV Transportation
Michelle Rush, MV Transportation	Faustino Salvador, Access Services
Byron Barrientos, Access Services	Adrian Aguilar, City of Santa Clarita
Grace Ferguson, City of Santa Clarita	Kathleen Herrera, City of Santa Clarita
Resty Musonge, Member of Public	Billie Jean Curry, Member of Public

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

The minutes from the March are approved. The May minutes are reviewed by the board and approved.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Karen begins the member comments with a concern for a trip that she had scheduled with Dial-A-Ride (DAR) she had scheduled for a pick up at Wal Mart on 06/01/2025 that was shared by fellow member Toshia. The SilverRide vehicle that arrived did not have the magnet indicating it was a SilverRide vehicle. Toshia confirms that the passenger side of the vehicle did not have any badging, however, she did not see the driver's side of the vehicle. Keith asks if the driver was wearing a badge, and Toshia and Karen indicate that they did not check to see if he was wearing a badge. Keith asks Michelle if the drivers are required to wear a badge, and it is indicated that SilverRide drivers are supposed to have the magnet badging on the vehicles and wearing a badge for identification, however there is only so much MV is able to require of them as they are an

outside contractor. Keith asks for Michelle to find out if they are required to wear a badge and address the issue. Michelle confirms that she will do so.

Manel then shares an issue with a DAR trip she had on May 27. The pick-up time was 9:15 a.m. She was told that the car had come and left. She was able to get her daughter-in-law to take her to work. Her evening ride scheduled for 5:20 p.m. and she called to get an estimate time of arrival at 5:30 p.m. She was told that the vehicle wasn't going to be there until 6:15 p.m. She told the rep that she was going to call her son to pick her up. She received a message indicating that her vehicle had arrived and left and she was a no show. She told the rep that she had already left with her son. David states that he will look into the incident.

AGENCY UPDATES

Karen passes the floor to Michelle Rush.

Michelle Rush, MV Transportation

Michelle shares that there was a driver's bid the previous weekend, which goes into effect this weekend (June 7). There are not many changes for paratransit. There were some small adjustments made to hours to account for peak times. The new platform, Spare, is going to be introduced in July. This platform will replace TripShot, and eventually Trapeze. Staff has been participating in training. Adrian will share more information on the platform itself. The app seems to be user-friendly, and has great visuals to show where the vehicle is at, reminders, and trip updates. The platform will also be integrated to accommodate the DAR and Access trips as well in the future. Training will be ongoing.

Toshia asks about funds that are on Token Transit be able to be used with the new system.

Michelle states that all fare related apps will remain the same.

Grace Ferguson, City of Santa Clarita

Grace shares that the Beach Bus began service the previous weekend, with 13 people going to Ventura and 11 people returning on Saturday; and 20 people going to Ventura and 13 people returning on Sunday.

Grace provides the ADA and DAR statistics for May:

- ADA rides- 2,770
- Cancellations- 43
- DAR trips- 7,106
- Cancellations- 140

Grace also shares the copies of the Concerts in the Park series that the City will be holding, beginning in July. That concludes her updates.

Keith and Toshia request that Grace email them a PDF copy of the Concerts in the Park information.

Grace states she will email that to them. She also shares that she sent Keith the requested copies of the Beach Bus information

Faustino Salvador, Access Services

Faustino will be sharing statistics for the month of May, and notes that the numbers have not been finalized.

- On Time Performance- 91.6
- Late Trips- 0.00% (none for May)
- Denials- 0
- Calls on Hold >5 mins 4.9%
- Avg Hold Time- 82 seconds

Faustino thanks the representatives with MV Transportation for their hard work and for providing excellent service to riders. He also shares that in coordination with Cal State Dominguez Hills, Access has added seven stand signs on campus, with the information being shared to all call centers as well as the information being available online at the stand sign directory. There were two outreach events in May, one at the Wayfinder Family Services and one at the Bella Vida Senior Center. He then introduces the newest Project Administrator, who oversees the Northern Region and the Antelope Valley Region, Byron Barrientos.

Byron introduces himself and states that he is looking forward to helping the region as much as possible.

Keith asks Byron if he also takes care of the Santa Clarita region.

Byron states that he does not but works closely with it.

Keith asks Faustino about funding and wants to know if Access is covered, and if there is any fare increase coming for riders.

Faustino states that as previously shared, there is not a fare increase in the near future. If a fare increase is on the horizon, riders will be notified well in advance through several manners of community outreach.

Toshia asks Michelle to share the start date for the new app.

Michelle states the live date is July 1 for On Demand, and for the other services, a date has not yet been determined.

Keith asks Faustino about new vehicle purchases by Access.

Faustino shares that Access recently received several new vehicles that are primarily being disbursed in the Basin Region. They are the larger Ram vans, similar to the GO! electric vehicle currently in use for Santa Clarita Transit.

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

Arcy states that there is a candidate that has been identified for the Operations Manager position that was vacant. Once the offer letter is signed, they will start June 16. With the transition from TripShot to Spare on July 1, a high call volume is expected. With that in mind, management will be available in the call center to assist with the call volume.

Keith asks if riders will be able to download the app on July 1.

Arcy states that riders will be able to download the app prior to July 1.

Grace states that marketing for the transition will be going out to the public very soon.

Toshia then asks Grace and Faustino about setting up another outreach event at her retirement community.

Grace confirms that she will get together with Faustino to organize an event.

David Tamariz, MV Transportation

David reaffirms that all customer service representatives as well as ambassadors have been in training for the new system and will be participating in ongoing training. He is excited for the new system, and is proactively preparing for the anticipated high call volume during the transition. Once the app is available for all paratransit riders, riders will be able to book trips, cancel trips, get ETA information and more, which will allow the call volume to go down to improve customer service. The call center is fully staffed, and thank you to Faustino for the numbers. We have been working hard to improve call times. He also states that he will look into Manel's trip, and confirms with Toshia that the issue with the call she shared has been addressed and resolved.

Keith asks if City staff can do an outreach event at the Senior Center to assist them with downloading the app.

Grace states that we will coordinate something.

David also shares that the ambassadors that are at the Senior Center have been in training as well to be able to assist the seniors with the transition.

Karen states that she does not have a smartphone and will not be able to download the app.

David states that she will still be able to call in to schedule and cancel. And that she will receive text messages for the ETA and any changes to her rides.

Karen asks if the SilverRide vehicles will be utilizing the same platform and if they will send the notifications that the vehicle is coming and what kind of vehicle it is, as she has difficulty getting into small vehicles.

Michelle confirms that they will be using the same platform and that it will let the rider know what kind of vehicle it is. She also shares that there are options in the platform that they can discuss to help with vehicle preferences.

Toshia asks if riders will still be using the Access app or if they will be able to use the Spare app.

Michelle states that the Access app will still be in use, and that Access will not be live on Spare at the initial launch of the new platform.

Adrian shares that as a part of the overall integration is to have riders be able to book through the Spare platform for all paratransit and on-demand services, but that will be later down the line as they are still developing the interface.

Adrian Aguilar, City of Santa Clarita

Adrian expands on the integration of the Spare platform, and shares the background of the process in selecting the software platform, including meetings, live operation demonstrations, and highlights the importance place on level of comfortability with the software and the advantages for both the rider and the operations side. The software is intuitive and user-friendly, will allow a consolidation of all three services on one platform, and will allow the GO! and DAR services to share resources, increasing timeliness of rides. He is confident that it will assist with improving productivity and reduce challenges like no-shows. Initially, the plan was to roll out the platform for all services. However, due to integration challenges with Access's "Where's My Ride" application, the paratransit services have been delayed. The decision was made to roll out the platform for the on-demand service only, with a tentative roll out date for paratransit services on July 27. If things go well, the riders should not notice a change in the scheduling through the platform. All policies, operations, routing, and procedures for the services will remain the same, with the only change being the software that is running in the background that is processing the scheduling and trips. The expansion of the software platform to include paratransit will be rolled out first, prior to any marketing being established to minimize any issues with the transition. Initially, the "Where's My Ride" app will continue to work to track vehicles. We are hoping within a couple of the months of the initial rollout, we will have the complete integration with all functions- scheduling, tracking, cancellations, etc. on the Spare or "Where's My Ride" app. We have recently taken delivery of four new DAR vehicles, with additional vehicles scheduled to arrive next week. Replacement vehicles are coming in on the DAR side, with one of the vehicles going into service next week, and the remaining three still awaiting the completion of inspections and equipment installation.

Keith asks if the vehicles are the same design.

Adrian indicates they are overall the same design with some different features, as they are from a different manufacturer.

Keith asks if they have the two step up, as he has heard from senior riders that they have issues with the steps and suggests highlighting or painting the steps for better visual assistance for the riders.

Adrian states that there is yellow edging on the steps, but he will look into that to confirm. He adds that they switched to the two step design a few years ago due to feedback from this group, as there were concerns about the three-step design that was in use. He continues with updates on transit vehicles. Seven Hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles will be arriving at the end of this year, and we are on track to be completing our hydrogen station at this facility at the same time. The plan is to have the vehicles in service at the beginning of next year. As a part of next year's budget which is going to council next Tuesday, we are requesting funding for 16 new vehicles, including six GO! vehicles, three new DAR vehicles, and replacing a number of our transit vehicles as well. This is a large funding request at about \$10 million. In addition to replacing some of the GO! vehicles currently in the fleet, we are also looking to expand the GO! service by adding about 50% more service to the program, once the budget is approved. The plan is to roll out the expansion in October when the additional vehicles arrive, and allows us to fully transition to spare prior to the expansion of service. He provides an update on the transition to fare capping on our local service, which has been in process for about a year and a half after doing outreach and a fare study. The technology is at a point where we can start rolling it out. This will allow us to eliminate the day and monthly passes on the local service, and use a fare cap of \$3.00 per day and a \$10.00 per week. This allows riders to take advantage of discounts and free trips once they meet the caps without having to buy a monthly pass in advance. We are working with Metro to update all software and programming on buses and fareboxes, and will be doing testing through the fall with a rollout on January 1, 2026. There will be an extensive outreach campaign for the public.

Kathleen Herrera, City of Santa Clarita

Kathleen shares that administrative staff have also participated in Spare platform training, focusing on reporting that is used for the on-demand and paratransit services which help with accountability and efficiency. On the customer service side, there have not been any trends identified recently in rider calls or concerns. There were several commendations received from riders for operators and CSRs in May, sharing positive experiences and customer service.

Adrian adds that for the Spare app, staff is working with Android and iOS stores to get the application uploaded and available for download on their platforms, and notes that the Spare app will be City branded linking it to Santa Clarita Transit, not Spare itself.

Toshia states that she has encountered several instances of the Access app being down and inoperable.

Faustino states that Access is aware and provided Toshia with a number to call when she experiences these issues to ensure Access can troubleshoot effectively.

Manel asks about her Access account and if it is still active. When she returned from Srilanka, she confirmed her DAR standing order was still in place. She then asked about her Access account and the CSR indicated they did not have her Access information.

David indicates that she does have an active Access account, and that when she calls and selects DAR, per policy, the CSRs cannot provide her information on her Access account. She would need to go back into the queue and reroute to Access. He confirms to Faustino that he will provide him with her Access information.

Toshia addresses an issue with Access riders being added to a DAR manifest. Drivers will arrive early as they would for a DAR, which seems to be a waste of the driver's time. Additionally, it makes the rider feel rushed and that the driver is waiting on them. She has received calls from dispatch indicating that her ride is there and it is prior to the Access window time, and she has had to remind them that she is Access. Will the new system be able to detect the difference in services and time windows?

Michelle confirms that the new system will be able to differentiate and recognize the varied time windows for the services. The current system does have issues with that, in that it relies solely on the dispatchers to override the system. She also indicates that she will make sure to discuss this at the next dispatchers meeting, to ensure that they are communicating the early arrival of a driver for Access rider in an appropriate way.

OLD BUSINESS

Elections- At the May meeting, there was not a quorum. However, John Panico submitted to be Chair and Keith submitted to be Vice-Chair. Resty was supposed to be installed as an official member, however, her resume has not yet been shared with the Director of Economic Development. She will be installed at the next meeting. Motions are made, confirming a two-year term of Chair to John Panico and Vice Chair to Keith Curry.

Adrian provides an update on the progress of routing expansion in Vista Canyon at the request of Keith, with the funding request for the expansion of service in the 2026/2027 fiscal year budget.

Faustino and Adrian provide Keith with clarification on the need for transfer trips for riders in the unincorporated areas of the Santa Clarita region when they are traveling to Oliview.

Grace provides updates on the return of the Senior Ambassador program, and outreach will be conducted at the Senior Center.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Resty shares her challenges with having to cancel trips that are scheduled, as she has been told that her canceling trips frequently is causing confusion. Additionally, she has assumed that the driver knows where they are going for her trip and that routing is done accordingly. On Sunday, she was on a ride that took her in the opposite direction of her destination, and another passenger was picked up and taken to their destination. When she asked the driver why he took her so far from her destination, they indicated that they thought they were taking her home, which was not the case. The drivers should know, and she assumes they know, the address where they are

taking the riders. The inefficient routing, taking riders all over the valley, causes delays and she ends up being late for work. She would like the driver to be able to drop her off so she can request an Uber so she is not late. She has asked drivers if they can drop her off so she can get an Uber and they have refused her request.

Michelle addresses Resty's concerns, and confirms that she may cancel her rides whenever she needs to and there should not be any feelings or opinions shared by CSRs towards riders when they cancel. Additionally, riders can request to get off a trip whenever she wants to, but the driver must identify a safe place to do so. The drivers do not have access to their full manifest, so they may not see your destination upon your boarding if there is an additional pick up or drop off in between. We will continue to address issues with dispatch in order to improve routing.

NEW BUSINESS

Spare- discussed in updates

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting is adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

FUTURE MEETING

September 4, 2025, 9:00 a.m. Carl Boyer Room, City Hall