

City of SANTA CLARITA TRANSIT

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AAC)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting

9:00 a.m.

Thursday, September 3, 2026

Transit Maintenance Facility

CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Panico called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance

MEMBERS & GENERAL PUBLIC PRESENT

John Panico, Chair

Keith Curry, Co-Chair

Manel Pushparajah, Member

Toshia Griffin, Member

Resty Musonge, Member

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

Michelle Rush, MV Transportation

David Tamariz, MV Transportation

Anthony Santiago, Access Services

Grace Ferguson, City of Santa Clarita

Kathleen Herrera, City of Santa Clarita

Billy Curry, Member of Public

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

May meeting minutes were reviewed and approved without any amendments or corrections noted.

MEMBER/GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Transfer-trip vehicle reassignment

A member described being moved from a cab that had arrived and identified the member by name, reportedly to accommodate another passenger who had missed an earlier ride. Multiple vehicle changes followed, and the member arrived about 15 minutes late for a specialist appointment, which then had to be rescheduled.

Access Services explained that dispatch may adjust vehicles at transfer points for operational reasons, but the rider's original trip should still be completed. Staff acknowledged that communication may not have been clear.

Access Services requested details to review the manifest and vehicle changes. Faustino was identified as having the trip details; the matter is to be investigated.

Ride-booking applications and return trips

Members said the “Where’s My Ride” application may only allow selection of destinations already in trip history. New destinations may need to be booked by phone first. Access Services said address verification and app functionality are still being refined.

A member reported two occasions when a return trip appeared to be submitted but was missing the next morning. Access Services asked the member to report future incidents with dates and trip details so the issue can be referred to Spare.

Staff clarified that return trips must be booked separately in the app; they are not automatically created.

Pickup windows, scheduling, and travel time

Members raised concerns about vehicles arriving before scheduled pickup windows, notifications, and calls before a pickup window opens.

Staff clarified the distinction discussed at the meeting: Access pickups should follow the assigned pickup window; Dial-A-Ride riders should be ready up to 15 minutes before the scheduled time. Members were asked to report cases where the process does not appear to be followed.

Access Services explained that shared-ride itineraries may be optimized as conditions change and may include additional pickups. Riders were encouraged to allow sufficient travel time; staff noted that a trip can involve up to 90 minutes in the vehicle.

A member requested clearer notice when a driver arrives early. MV Transportation said it would raise the notification concern with Spare, while noting that any general change would need to be applied consistently.

Driver identification

Members asked about identifying drivers. Access Services drivers are required to display a photo/name placard where the vehicle has a holder; for vehicles without a suitable holder, the driver carries the ID.

Members were advised that they may ask to see a driver's identification and should report situations in which drivers do not identify themselves.

AGENCY UPDATES

Grace Ferguson, City of Santa Clarita

The Hydrogen Station construction project is progressing. A fully functioning station is anticipated in early 2027; no firm opening date was provided.

A senior-ambassador beach trip drew approximately 27 attendees and received positive feedback. Staff will brainstorm additional day-trip destinations and bring ideas back to the group.

Local bus service to Vista Canyon Transit Center was scheduled to begin October 16, 2026. Service hours were still being finalized; Route 6 was identified as the initial local route serving the center. Vista Canyon was expected to receive local fixed-route service initially; commuter service was not planned at this stage.

Holiday Light Tour dates were announced for December 18–20, 2026. Volunteer information will be shared when available.

Electric vehicles are being delivered for service. Two EV chargers had arrived, with another charger planned for installation.

Santa Clarita Transit marked its 35th anniversary with an internal open house for city staff.

A community outreach event with Access Services was planned for Valley Oaks on September 24, 10:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. Staff agreed to prepare a flyer and consider sharing it with a nearby residential community.

Ridership was described as generally stable, with increases when school is in session. A driver bid took effect August 29, and another was expected within the next month in connection with the transit-center schedule change.

Anthony Santiago, Access Services

Preliminary August Performance:

- On-time performance: 92%- above standard.
- Excessively late trips: 0.04%
- Preventable collisions: 0.0

****Figure are still being finalized**

Events/Operations:

A recent virtual community meeting had more than 110 attendees. Staff reported no concerns specific to the Santa Clarita region at that meeting and identified continued rider education on the “Where’s My Ride” app as a useful follow-up.

Seven additional vehicles were being added to on-demand service. The existing service area would remain unchanged.

The on-demand service can serve destinations within its service area, with an exclusion around schools within approximately one mile due to traffic concerns.

Members discussed accessible local fixed-route and commuter buses as alternatives where practical, while noting that reaching a bus stop can be difficult for some riders.

Arcy Torres, MV Transportation

A new road supervisor, Walter Leonardas, began work and was completing training. He previously worked at the Van Nuys location and became a road supervisor in 2022.

MV Transportation continues to recruit drivers. Applicants need a driver's license held for at least one year; a commercial license is not required at application because training is provided. Training duration depends on prior experience and progress; approximately one month was discussed for many new applicants.

David Tamariz, MV Transportation

The AI-enabled phone system is being used to book trips, check ETAs, and cancel trips. Staff said early confusion about pickup-time versus arrival-time requests has eased. Riders may ask to speak with a staff member if a booking seems incorrect.

The call center was reported fully staffed, with an ambassador temporarily covering for a call taker on medical leave.

Kathleen Herrera, City of Santa Clarita

Customer-service staff reported that bus-stop inspections in the valley were completed. Complaint calls had decreased following AI self-service; school-related calls rose somewhat as schools resumed.

OLD BUSINESS

Members asked about transit coverage for developing areas, including Skyline and Golden Valley Road. Some bus stops and an accessible path to a stop had been provided for a new development; other service changes remained dependent on development progress and funding.

Members discussed keeping fares affordable. Transit staff reported that ridership was stable overall and increased when school was in session.

NEW BUSINESS

The chair asked about John Hasagawa's interest in joining the board. His résumé had been received and was under review by the director; no final decision was reported.

Members requested that meeting reminders also be sent by text where possible because some do not check email daily. Staff agreed to look into options.

Staff said transportation can be arranged for future community concerts at Central Park, with on-demand service hours extended as needed. The Cowboy Festival was also mentioned as a potential event.

ADJOURNMENT

John Panico adjourns the meeting at 10:36 a.m.

FUTURE MEETING

November 5, 2026, 9:00 a.m. Carl Boyer Room, City Hall

