



Accessible Transit Advisory Committee
550 S. Main Street, Orange CA, Room 07
July 23, 2024 | 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Agenda

1. **Call to Order/Welcome** (5 min.) Raymond Bueche, *Chair*
 - Pledge of Allegiance
 - Welcome New Members
 - Approval of Minutes
2. **ACCESS Driver Exceptional Service Awards**
3. **Chair and Vice Chair Elections**
4. **Coordinated Plan Update** Kevin Khouri, *Planning*
Heidi Ganum, *Transpo Group*
5. **Service Change Update** Kevin Khouri, *Planning*
6. **OC ACCESS Policy Change Update** Melissa Mungia, *Specialized Transit Services*
7. **OC ACCESS and Travel Training Video** Gracie Davis, *Specialized Transit Services*
8. **Paratransit and Microtransit Software Procurement** Jack Garate, *Specialized Transit Services*
9. **Reports** (5 min. each)
 - **OC ACCESS Operations Update** Melissa Mungia, *Specialized Transit Services*
 - **Mobility Management Services Update** Gracie Davis, *Specialized Transit Services*
 - **Committee Liaison Update** Christina Byrne, *Public Outreach*
10. **Committee Member Comments**
11. **Public Comments***
12. **Adjournment / Next Meeting:**
October 22, 2024

Agenda Descriptions

The agenda descriptions are intended to give notice to members of the public of a general summary of items of business to be transacted or discussed. Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should contact the OCTA at (714) 560 5611, no less than two (2) business days prior to this meeting to enable OCTA to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to this meeting.

*Public Comments: At this time, members of the public may address the Accessible Transit Advisory Committee (ATAC) regarding any items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the ATAC, provided that no action may be taken on off-agenda items unless authorized by law. Comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes per person, unless different time limits are set by the Chairman, subject to the approval of the ATAC.



Accessible Transit Advisory Committee
April 23, 2024
12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Orange County Transportation Authority
550 S. Main Street, Orange, CA

Committee Members Present

Arnel Dino, Fullerton Resident

Arturo Cazares, Regional Center of OC

Brandi Kelly Contreras, City of Huntington Bch.

Claudia Harris, County of Orange Office on Aging

Ellen Schenk, State of Calif. Dept. of Rehab

Isaac López, Special Needs Advocate

Mario Ortega, ABRAZAR, Inc

Mary Ann Remnet, Rossmoor Resident

Nelly Gomez, Dayle McIntosh Center

Raymond Bueche, Saddleback Valley USD

Richard King, Braille Institute

Sandra Stang, Housing & Transportation Committee

Sue Lau, Polio Survivors Plus AARP

Susana Rios-Cruz, Santa Ana Resident

Committee Members Absent

Cesar Hernandez, Transportation Solutions

Henry Michaels, Ashling's Residential Villa

Jim Nguyen, Alzheimer's of Orange County

Jon Peat, Cypress Council Member

John Ulrich, Laguna Niguel Chamber of Commerce

Meredith Chillemi, LeadingAge

Michael Seyler, Mission Viejo Resident

Tom Krogstad, Senior and Special Needs Advocate

Pam Thompson, Saddleback Valley USD

Paul K. Miller, Cal State Fullerton

Oscar Valadez, Fullerton Resident

Scott Quinlan, Lions District 4-4L

Samir Hijazi, ARCHISSANCE

1. Call to Order/Welcome

Raymond Bueche called the meeting to order and welcomed new member Susana Cruz-Rios.

• *Pledge of Allegiance*

Raymond Bueche led the Pledge of Allegiance.

• *Approval of Minutes*

Isaac Lopez made a motion to approve the January 23, 2024, minutes and Sue Lau seconded the motion.

2. OC ACCESS Driver Exceptional Service Awards

The following ACCESS Driver was recognized for exceptional service:

- Eric Gonzales

3. ACCESS Policy Update

Jack Garate, Specialized Transit Services, presented the update. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member asked for a copy of the letters. Jack Garate said he would send a copy to the committee.

A committee member asked what options had been provided to the riders and if there were transportation alternatives. Jack Garate responded yes. For a Not-Ready-To-Return there is Same Day Taxi service that OCTA ACCESS riders can use. There may be other senior mobility services available depending on the rider or center. The 211 Resource Tool was provided to ACCESS riders to give them alternatives other than OCTA.

A committee member asked about the options and information for accommodating the large wheelchairs. Jack Garate responded they had adopted a soft approach on rolling out the new policies and this allowed them to have a conversation with individuals about the policy changes. In 95 to 99 percent of the conversations, the riders had already used the service without concern, and it was just making them aware of the policy. For the one or two cases where the rider was unaware the chair exceeded the specifications, information was provided that those vehicles are not readily available outside of peak hours to help them make the best decision about their travel.

A committee member asked about the OCTA presentation with the plan to replace 118 of the cutaway vehicles with a smaller type of mobile vehicle and will it cause more individuals to have a wheelchair that is out of range for them. Jack Garate responded no; they expect zero impact. They will have the same dimensions as the cutaway vehicles.

A committee member commented on a slide in the presentation that the policy changes had been approved by the ATAC and asked do they have that authority. Jack Garate responded that the slide would be corrected.

A committee member commented that their constituents had been experiencing delays and how does that affect the Not-Ready-To-Return policy. Jack Garate responded that there will be service delays that occur, and the question being raised may be referencing the delays occurring in the months of March and early April. Those will be addressed in the Operations update. The policy does not change, the policy addresses the specific problem of the rider not being available when the vehicle is there, and the rider is not ready and has to ask for another trip.

A committee member asked if the rider is not ready after a delay and the vehicle comes, is that on the rider. Jack Garate responded no, in the event it is a contractor error, it is not on the rider.

4. Community Transportation Programs Update

Martin Browne, Specialized Transit Services presented the update. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member commented asked if OCTA is aware the city of Fountain Valley HOP ON Senior Mobility Program (SMP) was waving the co-pay for the months of May and June within the designated areas and they are also opening corridors to some locations for evaluation. Martin Browne responded that if it is an SMP program, each city can spend the money they are allocated in any way they feel that will assist the community. They have three years to spend the money and can ask for a two-year extension if they need more time to spend the money. Cities have begun exploring new options and expanding their programs to spend their monies.

A committee member commented that the cities of Los Alamitos and La Palma are not participating in the SMP program and asked why. Martin Browne responded the funding they would receive from the SMP program is small and in order to provide a good program they would need more funding which the city would need to provide from their general fund. Their population base of over 60 is small.

5. Trapeze Project Update

Jack Garate, Specialized Transit Services, and Allison Kale, Specialized Transit Services, presented the update. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member asked what technical issues EZ Wallet has. Jack Garate responded issues they were experiencing in 2019 are continuing, conversations with the vendor related to software updates have occurred but the software continues to require high administrative maintenance and cause errors for the customers.

A committee member asked if there was a timeframe for an alternative program. Jack Garate responded they are actively looking for a replacement.

A committee member asked if using credit cards was an alternative for cashless pay. Jack Garate responded that is not an activity that is supported now but can be looked at as they evaluate what options exist. Consideration of the partner contractors is under consideration so it is a seamless transition for riders across all providers.

A committee member commented on the issues they experienced with the Trapeze system; text with incorrect times for the back-end ride, not getting notifications for taxi rides, and inconsistency on texts for arrival time. Allison Kale responded the feedback was appreciated and she would follow up.

A committee member commented seniors need help to understand and navigate the use of smart technology to onboard and use of a cashless payment system; offer a step by step on each feature and use. Jack Garate responded the pilot phases are small in number and offer one-on-one conversations on how the system works and to answer questions and to understand the needs and improvements for training.

A committee member commented that the various notices when the ride is there are very helpful. Jack Garate responded the feedback is helpful and would continue to work with the vendors to improve the accuracy.

A committee member commented that the hyperlink in the text message from the taxi company that would show information on arrival time has not worked in over a year. Jack Garate responded they would look into that.

A committee member commented that a secondary number for notifications to other service members such as caregivers and family members would be great. Allison Kale responded that personal care attendants can be set up to receive email and outbound notifications.

6. Reports

- *EMSD Update* – Denise Sifford, Planning, presented the update. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member asked if the recording was available. Denise Sifford responded it is on the OCTA webpage.

- *OC ACCESS Operations Update* – Christina Blanco, Specialized Transit Services, presented the update. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member asked if the problems in late March were from individual drivers or the organization being out of compliance, and does OCTA have anything in place to avoid this happening again. Christina Blanco responded it was a mixture of both and measures have been taken to ensure this non-compliance does not reoccur with this contractor and future contractors.

A committee member asked for a copy of the letter. Christina Blanco responded the letter would be sent to the committee.

- *Mobility Management Services Update* – Gracie Davis, Paratransit Services, presented the update. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member asked if the photo would be taken by them or could they present their own. Gracie Davis responded that they would take the photo, and for auto-renewal they will request the individual send in a current photo.

A committee member asked for more information on the process changes. Gracie Davis responded they currently only take the photo when the individual comes in for an in-person assessment, and they will be requiring a more current photo for auto-renewals for safety and security purposes.

A committee member commented that at times drivers may have difficulty discerning if the correct person is riding. A photo ID would be very helpful and asked is this photo ID is something the passengers would carry or the MVT Driver would see. Gracie Davis responded the driver would see a photo; no ID cards are mailed to individuals.

- *Coordinated Plan: Proposed Survey for Stakeholders' Interviews* – Kevin Khouri, Planning, presented the update and an update for the May 12, 2024, Service Change. <The full presentation is available on OCTA.net.>

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member commented that on Route 57 there are many students, it is hard for individuals with wheelchairs to get on the bus and was that route considered for alleviating the heavy traffic. Kevin Khouri responded they have noticed the heavy loads on several routes system wide, including the 57 and are looking at them and prioritizing them as resources are available.

- *Marketing & Customer Engagement* – Ryan Maloney, Marketing and Customer Engagement, presented the item.

Committee Member Comments:

A committee member asked what mechanism there is for outreach to individual high schools for the Teen Council and particularly to the six high schools in Santa Ana. Ryan Maloney responded many schools are reached out to, particularly those with high ridership. There is promotion online and through social media.

A committee member provided a compliment on the Lunar New Year Program, commented next month was bike month and asked if OCTA will have any bike programs. Ryan Maloney thanked the member for the compliment and responded, there will be additional information coming out about bike month.

- *Self-Certification Form for Non-Elected Boards*– Christina Byrne, Public Outreach, presented the form and information about the form.

Committee Member Comments:

There were no comments.

- *Committee Liaison Update* – Christina Byrne, Public Outreach, presented the update on recruitment for the 2024-2025 term has begun and will conclude in early May.

Committee Member Comments:

There were no comments.

7. Committee Member Comments

A committee member read a letter received from a constituent regarding the March-April situation. Christina Byrne responded the remark would be shared with customer relations.

A committee member commented they had several people reach out to them as a member of the public to voice their concerns with the program as per that letter. The member commented that things have happened to make things better. The member asked does or can OCTA have a backup program and commented about the potential for liability.

The member commented that as an individual it was important for them to have backup services and asked if OCTA was aware that ABRAZAR had expanded their services and the potential impact to OCTA services.

A committee member commented that from OCTA's EMSD last call cycle they are proposing a senior mobility program for non-medical transportation.

Jack Garate responded to the previous member comments. To address riders being penalized, the no-show policy was not applied during the entire month of March and half of April so there shouldn't be any rider affected by the service issue. For the other comments raised, every action taken where it is a policy change has been implemented with the assistance of our legal team to make sure it is appropriate. All our policy changes are together with other transit agencies to see what our peers are doing and to be in compliance with FTA Guidelines. The decision to take vehicles out of service was not done lightly. We worked tirelessly since the day we found out until the day the vehicles were released back into service by working with the contractor and external agencies to make sure they could get drivers and vehicles running again.

8. Public Comments

There were two public comments.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

The next scheduled meeting date is July 23, 2024.

**Accessible Transit Advisory Committee
Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Attendance Record**

● = Present ⊙ = Absent E = Excused Absence R = Resigned

Member	7/25/23	10/24/23	01/23/24	04/23/24
Mary Ann Remnet	●	●	●	●
Henry Michaels	●	⊙	●	⊙
Scott Quinlan	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Jim Nguyen	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Mario Ortega	●	⊙	●	●
Beck Levin	●	●	⊙	N/A
Lawrence Klein	●	●	●	N/A
Arturo Cazares	⊙	●	●	●
Raymond Bueche	●	●	●	●
Cesar Hernandez	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Richard King	●	●	●	●
Ellen Schenk	⊙	●	●	●
Samir Hijazi	●	⊙	●	⊙
Claudia Harris	●	●	●	●
Sue Lau	⊙	●	●	●
Nelly Gomez	●	⊙	⊙	●
Paul Miller	●	⊙	●	⊙
Arnel Dino	●	●	●	●
Oscar Valadez	●	●	●	⊙
John Ulrich	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Tom Krogstad	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Pam Thompson	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
Sandra Stang	●	⊙	●	●
Jon Peat	●	⊙	●	⊙
Isaac López	●	⊙	●	●
Meredith Chillemi	●	●	●	⊙
Brandi Kelly Contreras	●	●	●	●
Alejandra Rodriguez	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Susana Rios-Cruz	N/A	N/A	N/A	●
Michael Seyler	N/A	N/A	N/A	⊙