

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM ACCESSIBLE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC)

December 16, 2021

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Sotelo-Solis called the Accessible Services Advisory Committee meeting to order at 1:14 p.m. A roll call sheet listing the Accessible Services Advisory Committee member attendance is attached.

2. Approval of the September 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from September 16, 2021 could not be approved due to not having a quorum.

3. Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

4. 2022 San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) Accessible Services Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule (Carla Perez)

Ms. Carla Perez, MTS staff, presented the Accessible Services Advisory Committee meeting schedule for the next calendar year. The meeting schedule will reflect the ASAC meetings throughout the 2022 calendar year. Meetings are scheduled on the following dates: March 10, June 16, September 15, and December 8. MTS staff noted that a list of these dates will also be posted onto the MTS website.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only

5. ADA Accessibility on Restrooms (Callie Anderson)

Ms. Callie Anderson, MTM Project Manager, provided an overview on various features of ADA-compliant restrooms. Ms. Anderson discussed important chapters and provided examples following the U.S. Access Board Guide to ADA Accessibility Standards located on the website: www.access-board.gov. She pointed out the ADA standards that address which restrooms must be accessible and what accessibility features are included. She provided sample restroom types including: single-use/family toilet rooms, private toilet rooms with a private entrance, portable toilet units, multi-user toilet rooms, urinals, and children's toilets. Ms. Anderson also provided examples of accessible components including: grab bars, turning space, height and location of mirrors, location of dispensers and receptacles, coat hooks and shelves, height to the top of toilet seats, and also the location and type of flush control.

Chair Sotelo-Solis stated that the information Ms. Callie Anderson shared is extremely important and mentioned that the City of San Diego is working on a bathroom directory

to help indicate where the restrooms are located throughout the transit systems. Chair Sotelo-Solis also asked staff if they have addressed the issue of indicating exactly where the accessible restrooms are located. Ms. Anderson stated that she is unsure, but the topic has been brought up during eligibility assessment interviews as a common concern whether the clients will be able to utilize the public restrooms that are available along their route effectively. Chair Sotelo-Solis requested the information Ms. Anderson provided to be shared with the Board of Director's, being that it is an essential area of concern for all members of the community. Mr. Jay Washburn stated that staff will arrange for this information to be shared with the Board.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

6. For-Hire Vehicle Administration's Update on Taxicab Wheelchair Accessibility Policy Development (Leonardo Fewell)

Mr. Leonardo Fewell, MTS For-Hire Vehicle Administration Manager, provided an update on the process of developing a Taxicab Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) policy that incentivizes the entry of Taxicab WAV's into the San Diego For-Hire Transportation market. Mr. Fewell described the For-Hire Vehicle Administrations (FHVA) primary goals for ensuring public safety and preventing unfair consumer practices. He pointed out the responsibilities of regulating taxicabs, non-emergency medical vehicles, charters, jitneys, and low-speed vehicles. He also described the taxicab regulations which include: Ordinance No. 11, which sets forth MTS's requirement for the operation of a taxicab; ADA regulations which allow service animals, stow foldable mobility devices, and prohibits from charging higher fares or fees for carrying individuals with disabilities and their equipment than are charged to other persons; and the City Council Policy No. 500-02 which sets forth the fundamental policies relating to taxicab operations within San Diego. Mr. Fewell provided an example of a Taxicab WAV and the history of taxicab WAV policies and policy development. He also described the current steps MTS is taking by conducting peer regulatory agency reviews, requesting feedback from disability and transportation accessibility committees, and identifying passenger demand for WAV's via surveys and data that has been collected from multiple sources.

Chair Sotelo-Solis noted that this policy is still in development but asked staff to share any opportunities that the community could possibly share their perspective through. Mr. Leonardo Fewell stated that the For-Hire Vehicle Administration plans to soon present at the next Social Services Transportation Advisory Committee (SSTAC) meeting with SANDAG which will allow the public to participate then. He also stated that the FHVA plan to return to a future ASAC meeting to provide any updates on the development. Mr. Fewell also added that a survey will be sent out to the committee members allowing them to distribute to other sources in order to provide feedback. Chair Sotelo-Solis stated that it is essential for this policy to also be brought up to the Board for review. Mr. Jay Washburn noted that MTS Access will be able to send out an email blast to registered Access clients and riders that will include the survey provided from taxi.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

7. EZ Access Launch (Jay Washburn)

Mr. Jay Washburn, Manager of Paratransit and Minibus, provided a live demonstration of the new web portal, EZ Access, for MTS Access. Mr. Washburn demonstrated the remote functions that will allow Access riders to book trips online, modify reservations, cancel trips, view fares, update personal information, the ability to track the location of their ride once a vehicle has been dispatched, and save recently booked trips for ease of booking. He stated that the webpage is available in both English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, and this new option will allow for greater flexibility and selections for riders to access services. He also mentioned that a group of registered Access riders have been testing the web portal for around 3 to 4 months and have provided great feedback that has helped make several revisions to the software. Mr. Washburn stated that this web-based application is the first phase of a three-part launch; the second phase is an app that can be used on any smart phone and will provide the same services seen on the EZ Access website but will be accessible through an app on a mobile phone; the third phase is a web-based fare payment system which will allow paratransit users to load an account and have the fares for the paratransit services deducted from their account balances. He noted that MTS Access hopes to roll out all three products within the next 6 months or so.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair Sotelo-Solis cited a public comment that was made questioning if riders still need to book rides 1 to 2 days in advance within business hours. Mr. Jay Washburn specified that riders have to book at least 24 hours in advance but have access to the web-based portal 24 hours a day. Chair Sotelo-Solis asked how flexible it is making changes to rides that have already been scheduled. Mr. Washburn noted that changes can be made for individuals before the trip has been approved and up to the same cut off time as they have for reservations. He also stated that any additional changes made after 5 pm, the day before service, will have to be done over the phone to the reservations department since the trip has been locked in at that point; but the riders will have access to cancel their trips anytime through the web portal. Chair Sotelo-Solis stated that it would be challenging to those riders trying to make any last-minute edits the day of the scheduled ride and would like staff to revisit how far in advance riders have to make those changes to provide a more convenient and flexible service.

Ms. Callie Anderson complimented Mr. Washburn on his live demonstration and stated they did a great job with the new launch of the web portal. She also stated that she and her clients are excited for it to go live and will benefit from this; especially those that may not want to call in to book a trip, or for individuals that may not want to wait outside for their driver to arrive when the weather does not permit.

Ms. Debbie Marshall, ASAC committee member and State Council on Developmental Disabilities, provided a verbal statement regarding Ms. Viri Salgado's, MTS Access client, written statement on several issues she encountered pertaining to MTS Access services. She noted that MTS Access did not inform their clients of their new Minivans and was left with an uncomfortable experience when she was picked up by one. She also stated that the driver was not understanding of her disabilities and made it very difficult for her to board onto the vehicle. Ms. Salgado suggested that MTS Access

should consult with their clients before implementing changes in their services and take into consideration any feedback, suggestions, and requests from clients that use their services on a regular basis to discuss new changes. She also noted the safety issue regarding driver's personal bags and the encounters she's had in the past with those drivers who have left their belongings in the pathway.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lily Irani – Inquired if the decision to have a separate app for EZ Access was for technical or project management reasons, or if it was what clients had requested. She also asked if the decision to not integrate payment services with PRONTO would be a long-term plan to maintain separate accounts and if it would create inconveniences for riders who access to both the paratransit services and the standard public transportation services provided through MTS.

Chair Sotelo-Solis asked staff to respond to the question regarding compatibility with the PRONTO app and what the long-term plan would be. Mr. Jay Washburn stated that the PRONTO app is not designed to be compatible with the paratransit applications due to the uniqueness of the services available. He also noted that the decision was made to utilize software from the Trapeze Group to support the paratransit reservation and dispatching system, stating that this would be a separate cash and card-less standalone fare system, available online only, with no plan of integrating both apps together. Chair Sotelo-Solis noted for staff to continually address this since PRONTO will be the main fare system for MTS, and integrating the two apps can be something to incorporate in the future. She also asked how members of the public can ask questions anonymously or relay any feedback on areas for improvement. Mr. Jay Washburn stated that there are both telephone and web-based options where the public can provide customer feedback, individuals can remain anonymous or provide their first and last name along with any details relating to a specific incident. Chair Sotelo-Solis also noted for staff to follow up on the process regarding where drivers are allowed to leave their personal belongings on the vehicles. Mr. Jay Washburn noted that staff will be able to provide a presentation for a future meeting.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

8. ADA Paratransit Reports

MTS Access and MTM monthly reports attached.

Action Taken

No action taken. Informational item only.

9. Fixed-Route Reports

Fixed route monthly reports attached.

10. Committee Member Communications/Comments

Mr. Jay Washburn mentioned a lawsuit that emerged within the U.S. Department of Justice, filing suit against Uber Technologies, Inc. over wait time fees charged to persons with disabilities. He noted that the wait time fee kicks in two minutes after an Uber driver arrives for a pickup and the DOJ found this to be discriminatory against people with disabilities who may take longer than the provided wait time. Mr. Washburn also stated the Federal Transportation Administration issued a request for information (RFI) from transit agencies, transit planners and transit users as it looks to update its Title VI guidance and improve equitable access to transit nationwide. He also noted that the FTA is calling on transit agencies, transit riders and anyone interested in transit to review the RFI and provide input on the FTA general website until the closing date of Monday January 3, 2022. He lastly stated Mr. Bill Lewis, General Manager for Transdev, is retiring after 19 years and Ms. Vassilena Lerinska, Supervisor of Paratransit and Minibus, will also be leaving at the end of the month.

11. Next Meeting Date

The next Accessible Services Advisory Committee meeting schedule is scheduled for June 16, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

12. Adjourn

Chair Sotelo-Solis adjourned the meeting at 2:13 pm.



Chairperson
San Diego Metropolitan Transit System



Committee Clerk
San Diego Metropolitan Transit System

Attachment: Roll Call Sheet

SAN DIEGO METROPOLITAN TRANSIT SYSTEM
ACCESSIBLE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ASAC) MEETING
ROLL CALL

MEETING OF (DATE): 12/16/2021

CALL TO ORDER (TIME): 1:14pm

ADJOURN (TIME): 2:13pm

COMMITTEE MEMBER (Alternate)	ORGANIZATION	PRESENT (TIME ARRIVED)	ABSENT (TIME LEFT)
Alejandra Sotelo-Solis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	ASAC Chair	1:01pm	2:13pm
Nancy Vera <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Access to Independence	1:02pm	2:13pm
Arun Prem <input type="checkbox"/> Jonathan Albarran <input type="checkbox"/>	FACT (CTSA)		
Debbie Marshall <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	State Council on Developmental Disabilities	1:00pm	2:13pm
Bill Lewis <input type="checkbox"/> Juan Lopez <input type="checkbox"/>	Transdev - Contracted Bus Routes		
Callie Anderson <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heriberto Gaytan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MTM, Inc	1:00pm	2:13pm
Anthony Ferguson <input type="checkbox"/> Jorge Malone <input type="checkbox"/>	San Diego Regional Center		
Elsa Caballero <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	San Diego Center for the Blind		
Bill Hipp <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kevin Marquez <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	First Transit, Inc. (MTS Access)	12:57pm	2:13pm
Allison Woodworth <input type="checkbox"/> Zaccary Bradt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SANDAG	1:02pm	2:13pm
Vacant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	County of San Diego AIS		
Vacant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Caltrans		
Sharlene Ornelas <input type="checkbox"/> Tanya Azevedo <input type="checkbox"/>	Paratransit Consumer		
Jorge Rivas <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Fixed Route Consumer		
Tom Doogan <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	MTS Trolley		
Belinda Kelly <input type="checkbox"/> Amanda Denham <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MTS Bus	12:58pm	2:13pm
Allie Rice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Deaf Community Services	1:00pm	2:13pm
Betsy Knight <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Labelle <input type="checkbox"/>	County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services	12:58pm	2:13pm
Carla Perez <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-voting	MTS Contracted Services	1:00pm	2:13pm
Jay Washburn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-voting	MTS Contracted Services	1:00pm	2:13pm
Samantha Leslie <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> non-voting	MTS Legal	1:00pm	2:13pm

CLERK OF ASAC:



PARATRANSIT AND MINIBUS MANAGER:

