



**Special Needs Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2011
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Orange County Transportation Authority
600 S. Main Street, Orange, CA
Conference Room 155/156**

Committee Members Present

Michael Castillo, <i>Dayle McIntosh Center</i>	Paul Miller, <i>California State, Fullerton</i>
Vicki Connely, <i>St. Anselm's</i>	Charles Mitchell, <i>American Legion</i>
Fran Gustin, <i>Law Office of Fay Blix</i>	Judi Murray, <i>Program Director, Fairview Development Center</i>
Madeline Rae Jensen, <i>Office on Aging, Santa Ana</i>	Gary Osterbach, <i>Fountain Valley Advisory Committee</i>
Sue Lau, <i>Polio Survivors Plus (AARP)</i>	Sue Ray, <i>City of Anaheim Council Services</i>
Elizabeth Lee, <i>Alzheimer's Family Services</i>	Ronald Salda, <i>Hall Family Homes, LLC</i>
Sylvia Mann, <i>Orange County Office on Aging</i>	Ellen Schenk, <i>State of California Department of Rehabilitation</i>
Kathryn McCullough, <i>Lake Forest City Council</i>	Cenicio Ulit, <i>C&R Guest Homes</i>
Henry Michaels, <i>California Elwyn</i>	Mallory Vega, <i>Acacia Adult Day Services</i>

Committee Members Absent

Diana Burkhardt, <i>Braille Institute</i>	Denise Simpson, <i>N.O.C. Community College District</i>
Patricia Estrella, <i>City of Tustin</i>	Sandra Stang, <i>Housing & Transportation Committee</i>
Alice Grant, <i>Community Organizations of Anaheim</i>	Bob Tiezzi, <i>Intake Coordinator, OCARC</i>
Penny Hinds, <i>Circle of Friends</i>	Bill Turner, <i>Demiurgic Living Solutions</i>
Pethuru Lourthu, <i>Westview Services, Inc.</i>	Denise Welch, <i>South County Seniors' Services</i>
Jane Neglia, <i>Dayle McIntosh Center</i>	Janis White, <i>RCOC</i>
Gloria Reyes, <i>ABRAZAR, Inc.</i>	Minaya Wright, <i>Integrity House</i>

1. Call to Order/Welcome

Chair Mallory Vega called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Self Introductions

Committee members, OCTA staff and guests introduced themselves.

Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chair Charles Mitchell led the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Vega asked if there were any additions or corrections to the February 22, 2011 Special Needs in Advisory Committee (SNAC) Meeting minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the February 22, 2011 meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Report

There was no report by Chair Vega.

2. ACCESS Driver "Exceptional Service Awards"

Chair Vega presented ACCESS Driver Exception Service Awards to three ACCESS drivers: Abay Agonafir and Mohammad Alhayek who work for American Logistics, and Lieu Nguyen who works for Veolia.

3. Aging Disability Resource Connection

Debra Kegal from Aging Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) of Orange County provided an overview of the purpose and services of the ADRC.

The ADRC initiative, a collaborative effort of the U.S. Administration on Aging and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, is designed to streamline access to long-term care. The ADRC program supports State efforts to develop "one-stop shop" centers in local communities that help older adults and individuals with disabilities make informed decisions about their service and support options and serve as the single point of entry to the long-term care system.

Debra said ADRC programs provide information and assistance to individuals needing either public or private resources, professionals seeking assistance on behalf of their clients, and individuals planning for their future long-term care needs.

ADRCs target services to senior and people with disabilities (i.e., individuals with physical disabilities, serious mental illness, and/or mental retardation/ developmental disabilities). ADRCs are working towards the goal of serving all individuals with long-term care needs regardless of their age or disability.

Debra said to locate programs and get additional information about ADRC, SNAC members could contact her or go to the ADRC website at www.adrcoc.org.

4. Transit System Study Update

Gordon Robinson, Project Manager of the Transit System Study (TSS) provided the most recent update. As he had stated in previous meetings with the committee, the goal of the study is to help OCTA's services become more efficient, cost-effective and sustainable.

Gordon announced the Guiding Principles and Framework and Approach of the TSS have been finalized. He said the initial service concepts are ready to be developed. The key is to tailor OCTA's services to better match demand. He said the service concepts will be presented as recommendations that will go to the OCTA Board of Directors in June for their feedback and input. With their approval, he said the concepts will be rolled into the implementation plans.

Working with the consulting team, Transportation Management & Design (TMD), Gordon said there have been three different spines identified within a system-wide regional perspective:

- Metrolink Corridor – additional frequency needed

- SR-22 Freeway – an untapped market; getting people into and from Orange County to LA County
- I-405 – congested freeway where express bus service or bus rapid transit may be viable

Gordon said within the four market areas, the following services have been proposed:

- Core – propose rapid transit and continue supporting local lines (71% of current ridership is in Core)
- Emerging Core – propose possible rapid extensions (growth of developing areas such as Irvine Spectrum and Business Center), express service on SR-73
- Outer Core – extend rapid service, see higher frequent local line feeding into the Outer Core, introduce new services such as Go Local or hybrid Go Local
- Suburbs – Add a Metrolink Station (City of El Toro), extend rapid service, introduce services such as Go Local or Dial-A-Ride

He said the proposed services are services that OCTA has utilized in the past, but having identified the markets and what the possible needs and demands are, it is important within the TSS to see if they will actually work again. Gordon then turned the meeting over to Dana Wiemiller, Manager, Community Transportation Services to speak about the ACCESS portion (Task 9) of the TSS.

Dana said the ACCESS Alternative Service Evaluation and Recommendations report was received and OCTA is ADA compliant; however, there are significant increases in costs that are becoming unsustainable and there are continuing increases in ridership demand. She said OCTA needs to become more efficient and look at ways to or other ways to structure the service or the contract.

The draft recommendations include: 1) Manage demand, 2) generate revenue, and 3) reduce the cost of service by increasing efficiency and productivity.

She said some of the strategies for each of the recommendations include:

Manage Demand

- Eligibility process –
 - Evaluate and enforce conditional eligibility; look at type of eligibility
- Travel training – effective way to train individuals to look at fixed-route as another viable option (ACCESS may not have to be the only source for trips)

Generate Revenue

- Zone or distancing fares (still being evaluated)
 - Distance-based fares – longer trip would be higher cost

Reduce Costs

- Service strategies
 - Supplemental Service: Taxis – already in use on Sundays and on weeknights starting at 9 PM, but looking into Sunday service and extending weeknight service starting at 6 PM
 - Same Day Taxis – incentivize riders to use taxis by covering long trips (e.g. from 3 miles to 5 miles); make customers more aware of the program through proactive marketing
 - Service zones – vehicle would not travel out of its service area and it would require transfers (it is not a popular idea with OCTA staff, so it would probably not be an implemented strategy – difficult to manage, not customer friendly)
 - Group trips – trips that taxis can't accommodate; regional day care programs
- Cooperative/Partnership Agreements
 - Agreements with agencies – cost per trip subsidy (getting customers to use an alternative service to ACCESS); five year study showed significant savings
- Contract Strategies
 - Contract structure – one contract (call center, dispatch, scheduling) or multiple contracts
 - Service rate structure – RVH or per Trip Cost (RVH does not work for taxis)

Dana said if ACCESS costs continue to increase, it puts a strain on the entire bus system. ACCESS is an ADA-mandated service so there can be no trip denials. She said ACCESS has to look for ways to be sustainable so that there are no severe cuts to fixed route service to compensate for ACCESS service.

She indicated the current Veolia agreement expires June 2012. She thinks it is going to be difficult to build real strategies OCTA can employ by the contract expiration date. She said there needs to be time to allow for the strategies to be evaluated through committees (such as the SNAC) and public outreach, and be approved by the OCTA Board. Dana said to be able to put a scope of work together for a contract of that size and complexity takes a significant amount of time and effort. As well, she said there will be a transitional period if the contract was to be awarded to a new provider.

Dana indicated there are discussions taking place with Veolia for a possible one year contract extension in order to be able to include some potential strategies into a new contract. She said there also will be dialogue with the OCTA Board about the issue. She said there needs to be a balance for cost savings with the need to preserve service quality and reduce risk to customers.

She said she will continue to keep the SNAC members updated with progress on recommendations.

Gordon said the next steps with the TSS are to continue to collect feedback. Some of the feedback includes:

- Coach operator roundtable
- Onboard surveys

- Public open houses in May: 1) north Orange County, 2) OCTA Headquarters, and 3) south Orange County

He recommended an ad hoc meeting should be held with the SNAC since the next SNAC meeting is not until August and there is going to be a major internal workshop with the consultant in May where many details of the demand/response ideas will be vetted out. Gordon suggested a meeting the first week of June. Gaile Raymer asked members to send her an e-mail if they were interested in attending.

Committee member Fran Gustin said there is a bus stop loophole in the City of Irvine. At Yale and Portola there is one of two high schools in the city that serves 75 percent of the special needs students - 60 students age 14-22. Also, across the street there is an elementary school that serves another 50 special needs students. She said this high school is the only one in Irvine that does not have an OCTA bus stop. Fran said the school is 1.5 miles away from a Route 79 bus stop at Irvine Boulevard and Culver. She said the students that need to practice independence skills cannot access public transportation. It is a loophole that was never fixed due to population density in that area of Irvine at the time when the school was opened 12 years ago. Fran said with the bulk of Irvine's special needs students not near a bus stop, it is a loophole that needs to be fixed. She asked that this loophole be taken into consideration as the TSS looks at efficiencies.

5. West County Connectors

Christina Byrne, Community Outreach Manager, provided an overview of the West County Connectors (WCC) Project.

She said the WCC Project is essentially Phase 2 of the Garden Grove Freeway Improvement Project. The improvements will continue from where they previously ended on the Garden Grove (SR-22) at Valley View Street up the San Diego (I-405) to the San Gabriel (I-605) freeways. The project will end just south of Katella/Willow on the I-605 (at the county line).

Christina stated the WCC Project is a six mile project and has been split into two segments:

- The I-405/SR-22 segment, or east segment, includes construction of the portion of Valley View Street over the SR-22, the reconstruction of the southbound I-405 to eastbound SR-22 connector, and a new elevated structure connecting the carpool lanes on the SR-22 to the carpool lanes on the I-405.
- The I-405/I-605 segment, or west segment, includes the reconstruction of the Seal Beach Boulevard bridge, reconstruction of the northbound I-405/westbound SR-22/7th Street Connector (7th Street Connector) and a new elevated structure connecting the carpool lanes on the I-405 with the carpool lanes on the I-605.

Atkinson Construction is the contractor for both projects and all improvements are being made within existing Caltrans right-of way.

The 7th Street Connector, which is part of the west segment construction, is a major connector from Orange County into Long Beach and it was recently closed on April 18. It

is a route that is heavily used for individuals who visit the Long Beach Veterans Hospital or attend California State Long Beach, therefore, several detours have been created to reroute drivers. Christina said several alternate routes were created so that traffic is dispersed and one detour is not more heavily utilized than another.

She said the demolition of the 7th Street Connector bridge will take place April 27 through April 30. In preparation of the closure and demolition, she said flyers have been distributed to approximately 5,500 homes in the neighborhood, including Leisure World. She said the reconstruction of the 7th Street Connector is to accommodate additional lanes on the I-405 underneath it. She said to avoid property acquisition, the new bridge will be built further south from the community of Rossmoor.

Christina said OCTA has met extensively with the community of Long Beach. OCTA also has worked with the City of Long Beach public works department to develop a traffic management plan and created a mitigation plan (i.e. traffic light synchronization, street restriping, on-ramp upgrades, intersection upgrades) to put into place while the 7th Street Connector is closed. OCTA and Caltrans will closely monitor traffic conditions and make adjustments as necessary.

Outreach efforts for the bus route (Route 60) which has been affected by the WCC Project included riders' alerts, notices on the buses and e-mail alerts.

Christina said that over the past 2-1/2 years OCTA has conducted a multi-faceted outreach program customized to reach the different stakeholders in each of the project's corridor. Regular updates have been given to city councils, city staff and traffic commissions throughout the corridor. Presentations have been made to over 100 organizations through OCTA's Speakers Bureau program. Construction and detour alerts have been sent via e-mail to 3,000 stakeholders in the WCC Project database. Christina said construction activity flyers are distributed, and traditional media as well as social media (facebook and twitter) are being utilized to share information. She said with the WCC Project in active construction, OCTA hosts neighborhood meetings on Saturday mornings prior to the start of any major activities (e.g. night work, demolition). An automated call system is in place to inform the public of major construction events or other imminent freeway closures and developments. A coupon book with over 90 businesses partnering with OCTA has been developed to promote businesses that have been impacted by the construction. Christina emphasized that OCTA and Caltrans are committed to having as little impact on the local streets and cities as possible during the WCC Project.

OCTA's website has a dedicated webpage for the WCC Project which provides interactive detour maps. The website is updated daily with construction information including closure alerts. As well, people can contact her directly or utilize the Construction Helpline.

6. Members' Organizational Affiliations

Ellen Schenk provided an overview of her organization, State of California, Department of Rehabilitation.

Ellen said the California Department of Rehabilitation works in partnership with consumers and other stakeholders to provide services and advocacy resulting in employment, independent living and equality for individuals with disabilities. She said the Department of Rehabilitation works with colleges, high schools, veterans' administration clinics, social security and the department of corrections.

7. Measure M2 Project U Update

Dana provided an update on Project U. She said that Project U under Renewed Measure M (M2) is a program to meet the transportation needs of seniors and persons with disabilities. The projects that are funded under Project U include senior mobility programs, fare stabilization, and funding to supplement the County's funding of the senior non-emergency medical transportation program.

Dana said the OCTA Board approved the guidelines of the programs. Starting with the new fiscal year in July, the senior mobility program will be funded with M2 funds. There are 20 cities and four non-profit agencies currently participating in the program. Two new cities will be joining the senior mobility program in July: Orange and Tustin.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Dana said ACCESS is getting ready to implement the next phase of the ACCESS Customer Satisfaction Survey. She said it is in the final stages. Jessica Deakyne, Community Transportation Coordinator, talk about the specifics of the survey.

Jessica said the survey looks similar to the one sent out in 2007. Most of the questions that are being asked are trend questions (e.g. Are we doing better? Worse? Are the buses clean?). Jessica said the survey has been expanded to include frequency and types of trips taken so ACCESS can understand the prioritization of trips the customers take. The survey will go out in the next few weeks and a firm has been hired to compile the data. She said she expects to have the results of the survey ready to present to the SNAC sometime in the fall.

8. Mobility Trainer Identification Card

Marlon Perry, Manager, Customer Relations, reported that on March 28, 2011, the OCTA Board of Directors approved fare policy revisions, effective June 12, 2011.

He said one of the important ACCESS fare policy revisions was to the Mobility Trainer identification card. Previously, mobility trainers used their photo identification cards as flash passes to ride free on fixed route service and were not restricted for travel training trips only. However, when the new fare policy revisions are effective in June, new photo identification cards will contain magnetic strips and will have to be used as swipe passes and free rides on fixed route service also will be restricted for travel training trips only.

Marlon said a tan colored card with a magnetic strip will replace the green card and will be accepted starting June 12, 2011. The cost of the new card and replacement card is \$4.00. He emphasized that if a mobility trainer attempted to use a green card after

June 12 for fixed route service, even if mobility training was being conducted, the card would be denied and the trainer would have to pay full fare.

The other fare policy revisions he highlighted included:

- Senior Citizen
New: Any individual **60** years of age or over who presents any legally accepted proof of age. This changed from **65** years of age or over.
- Child
New: A child **five** years and under must be accompanied on a bus by a fare-paying passenger. Up to **three** children **five** years old or under may ride free with that fare-paying passenger. This changed from a child under **six years** and must be accompanied on a bus by a fare-paying passenger and up to three children **six** years old or under may ride free with that fare-paying passenger.
- College Pass
New: Passes must be sold only to students scheduled to attend at least **9** hours per week. This changed from at least **12** hours per week.

A committee member suggested that 'hours' for college passes be changed to 'units' as he said it is based on a unit and not hour involved. Marlon said he would have Fare Policy Committee look at it.

- Reduced Fare ID Fee
New: The fee for a reduced fare ID card is **\$4.00**. This is a change from **\$2.00**.
- ACCESS Card (Personal Care Attendant) – Effective July 1, 2011
New: A PCA assisting an ACCESS eligible passenger ride fixed route is offered ACCESS eligible fixed route local fare of \$0.25. This changed from a PCA assisting an ACCESS eligible passenger ride fixed route is not offered a discounted fare.

New: A purple colored card with a magnetic strip will replace the orange colored ACCESS card. This changed from an orange colored card with no magnetic strip.

9. Update Reports

Eligibility Update

Gracie Davis, ACCESS Section Supervisor, provided an update on ACCESS eligibility.

Gracie Davis, ACCESS Section Supervisor, stated that since the age for a child accompanied on a bus was changed to five years of age, any child age six years and younger must be evaluated with an adult for certification. The child cannot be evaluated independently.

She reported to the committee that a contractor had been selected to be the evaluator for ACCESS certification. The contract was renewed with CARE Evaluators for five years.

Gracie indicated that the certification center is going to get some upgrades: a real traffic signal, live grass, cement, and a real bus. She said the upgrades will made the evaluations much more comprehensive.

Gracie said a notice will be put in the next Transit Connection Newsletter reminding customers to update their contact/emergency contact information. She said CTS has found that some customers had information on file that was nearly five years old so she is requesting the SNAC members to reach out to the community and remind them get their information updated with ACCESS.

She announced the auto-renewal program will be in place as of July 1. Individuals identified as auto-renewals will no longer have to come to the certification center for in-person assessments. They will receive a letter in the mail informing them of their auto-renewal.

She told the committee that the number of individuals certified for the month of March was 614, which was the highest for the past 15 months. There was an increase of new applications from 70 percent to 74 percent and the denial rate was 3 percent (national average is 5 percent).

Office on Aging

Sylvia Mann, Orange County Office on Aging, stated that the office received the contract from OCTA and is hoping to start on July 1.

10. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 PM. Next scheduled meeting is for August 23, 2011 at 1 PM.