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Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)
Thursday, December 11, 2025 – 1:00 PM

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AGENDA

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

1	Member and Staff Introductions Housekeeping Items	1:00 – 1:10 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
2	ACTION: Approval of November 13, 2025 Minutes	1:10 – 1:15 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
3	INFORMATION: Access Services Q&A	1:15 – 1:45 pm Access Services Staff
4	INFORMATION: Hyperlegible Font at LA Metro	1:45 – 2:00 pm Matthew Marquez, Metro Stephen Tu, Metro
5	INFORMATION: Weapons Detection Pilot Follow-up	2:00 – 2:10 pm Jose Cenuse, Metro
6	ACTION: Recap of AAC Work Undertaken in 2025	2:10 – 2:20 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair



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7	ACTION: Goal Setting for 2026	2:20 – 2:30 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
8	PUBLIC COMMENT	2:30 – 2:40 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
9	NEW BUSINESS: Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda	2:40 – 2:50 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
10	HOLIDAY ACTIVITY	2:50 – 2:55 pm Armando Roman, Metro
11	ADJOURNMENT	2:55 – 3:00 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair

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Meeting Minutes for November 12, 2025

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Accessibility Advisory Committee

Members in Attendance:

Kathleen Barajas (Chair)
Jared Rimer (Executive Member)
Deaka McClain
Arlene Descargar
Ellen Blackman
Raul Tafoya
Greg Kuhl
Karen Esquivel-Mayes
Mark Panitz
Blanca Angulo
Olga Parra
Cynde Soto (First Vice-Chair)

Excused:

Antonio Mendez
Fernando Roldan

Absent:

John Mavis
Kevin Dixon



1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kathleen Barajas called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. She reminded members to keep questions concise, noting that presenters can follow up by email if needed.

Chair Barajas welcomed attendees, reviewed housekeeping procedures, and invited members to keep questions concise to ensure coverage of the full agenda.

Roll call attendance was conducted by Armando Roman. A quorum was confirmed.

Attendance corrections were noted: Deaka McClain was erroneously marked as excused; she clarified she was excused and not present at the previous meeting.

The committee acknowledged the new AAC leadership slate for the next two-year term: Chair: Kathleen Barajas; First Vice Chair: Greg Kuhl; Second Vice Chair: Fernando Roldan; Member-at-Large: Jared Rimer.

2. ACTION: Approval of September 11, 2025 meeting Minutes

The committee reviewed the draft meeting minutes from September 11, 2025. A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded.

Members approved the minutes with corrections. Votes included one abstention from Cynde Soto, who was not present at the prior meeting. Motion carried.



3. INFORMATION: Access Services Q&A

Access Services notified Metro they would not attend this meeting. Armando used the scheduled presentation time to collect questions for Access Services, to ensure they come prepared for the December meeting.

Arlene Descargar reported excessively long rides, sometimes up to three hours, and asked if Access can provide alternatives such as rideshare options. She asked about malfunctioning credit card readers and whether Access offers alternative methods of payment when the reader is down. She raised concerns that riders must provide exact street addresses in the app rather than business names, making it difficult to confirm destinations. She asked whether Access drivers are CPR-certified and how medical episodes on board are handled. She noted design issues in older vehicles, including step height and fuel leaks, and asked whether Access has input into vehicle design decisions.

Deaka McClain stated that the new, larger vans are not accessible enough, particularly due to high first-row seating and multiple steps. She shared that climbing the steps leaves her exhausted and has led to falls. She suggested that Access maintain individual rider accommodation profiles, particularly for ambulatory wheelchair users who may need vehicles without steps. She expressed concerns that Mobility Wallet cards lack the required chip to work with newer fare readers. She asked



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that Access allow restroom breaks as a reasonable accommodation during long shared rides. She encouraged Access to inform riders that ADA-related reasonable accommodation requests can be placed on file.

Blanca Angulo reported chronic issues where riders traveling between regions (1, 2, or 3 into region 4) are dropped off several blocks away, sometimes up to seven blocks, from their actual destination. Drivers often appear unfamiliar with exact drop-off locations, creating safety hazards for blind riders. They seconded concerns about long shared ride times, especially for riders with diabetes needing access to food or glucose tablets.

Karen Esquivel-Mayes noted blind/low-vision students are frequently dropped in unsafe areas, including the middle of the street when drivers double-park. She requested a process to establish standardized, accessible pickup/drop-off points for large buildings. She reported instances of drivers physically guiding blind riders into seats rather than using effective communication and descriptive language. She recommended drivers carry glucose tablets for riders with diabetes during long rides. She suggested drivers inform riders how many stops remain and their current location.

Chair Kathleen Barajas asked how Access accommodates two riders traveling together in wheelchairs, noting that newer vehicles cannot secure two wheelchairs at once. She stated that window placement in new vehicles



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prevents riders from seeing outside, which is disorienting and counterproductive for blind riders who use external cues. She requested an update on when the online reservation system will be available, particularly for customers with speech impairments who cannot easily use the phone. She clarified that Access drivers are not permitted to request alternative payment types if the fare machine is not working.

Other members reiterated concerns about unsafe conditions, excessive ride lengths, payment issues, older vehicle reliability, and the need for clearer rider communication. Armando committed to forwarding all questions to Access Services ahead of the December meeting.

4. INFORMATION: Hyperlegible Font

The hyperlegible font team was unable to attend the meeting and will attend in December to present.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Journey Mapping Program Update

Armando shared that the Journey Mapping team is preparing to begin interviews and ride-alongs with AAC members. Members will receive a survey link to determine eligibility. Participants will receive a \$200 gift card after the ride-along. Armando will assist members who need help completing the survey and will call members without email



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access.

December AAC Retreat Planning

Armando requested ideas for the annual December retreat. Traditional agenda items include a look-back at the year, goal-setting for 2026, lunch and refreshments, and possible group activities such as holiday trivia or games. Deaka volunteered to help coordinate activities.

Brown Act Update

Armando provided an update on virtual meeting provisions. AB 2449, which allowed just-cause and emergency teleconferencing, sunsets January 1, 2026. SB 707, signed October 3, 2025, extends teleconferencing accommodations to January 1, 2030. Committee practices are expected to remain consistent. Armando will review the bill to confirm any procedural changes.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments included encouragement for Metro to continue training drivers, especially around service disruptions such as North Hollywood construction impacts. Participants advocated for stronger audit tools to distinguish true ADA accessibility from minimal compliance and for updated AAC bylaws. Questions were raised about whether any riders with mobility devices have experienced difficulty during the Tap-to-Exit pilot. Armando reported no such issues and noted that stations are staffed during pilot operations. Jared announced that the Tap-to-Exit program will restart Monday, including at Union Station and Pomona.



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7. Adjournment

Chair Kathleen Barajas thanked all presenters, committee members, and staff for their participation and constructive input.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:05 p.m.