



Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)
Thursday, November 13, 2025 – 1:00 PM

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AGENDA

Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

1	Member and Staff Introductions Housekeeping Items	1:00 – 1:15 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
2	ACTION: Approval of September 12, 2025 Minutes	1:15 – 1:30 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
3	INFORMATION: Access Services Q&A	1:30 – 2:00 pm Access Services Staff
4	INFORMATION: Hyperlegible Font at LA Metro	2:00 – 2:30 pm Stephen Tu, Metro Matthew Marquez, Metro
5	NEW BUSINESS: Raised Subsequent to the Posting of the Agenda	2:30 – 2:40 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
6	PUBLIC COMMENT	2:40 – 2:50 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair



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7	ADJOURNMENT	2:50 – 3:00 pm Kathleen Barajas, Chair
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MEETING**

Meeting Minutes for September 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
Fernando Roldan
Raul Tafoya
Greg Kuhl
Karen Esquivel-Mayes
Kevin Dixon
Mark Panitz

Excused:

Blanca Angulo

Antonio Mendez

Olga Parra

Cynde Soto (First Vice-Chair)

Absent:

John Mavis

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kathleen Barajas called the meeting to order at approximately 1:05 p.m. Armando Roman from LA Metro opened with a reflection marking the anniversary of September 11, 2001, honoring victims, survivors, and first responders, including those with disabilities affected by access barriers in the years since. A moment of silence followed.

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

2. ACTION: Approval of August 14, 2025 meeting Minutes

The committee reviewed the draft meeting minutes from August 14, 2025. A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made and seconded.

Nine members voted to approve, with one abstention due to connection issues.

Motion carried.

3. INFORMATION: Metro Youth Council

Ms. Tania Taylor presented updates on the Metro Youth Council and ongoing recruitment for the 2026 term. She described the Council's mission to engage high school students (ages 14–17) across Los Angeles County, fostering civic leadership and encouraging lifelong Metro ridership.

Highlights included:

- Fifth annual Youth Council cohort to begin in January 2026.
- Members receive leadership training, volunteer hours, and a \$300 stipend.
- Upcoming Youth Summit scheduled for September 13, 2025.
- Outreach includes schools, YMCAs, libraries, and organizations such as the Braille Institute.

Member Discussion:

- Fernando Roldan and Arlene Descargar urged greater inclusion of youth with disabilities and outreach to disability-serving schools and agencies.
- Members suggested engaging regional centers, LA County Libraries, and youth-serving organizations.



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- Blanca Angulo shared her experience teaching elementary students about white cane etiquette and volunteered to continue such outreach.

Ms. Taylor affirmed Metro's inclusion goals and welcomed partnership suggestions.

4. INFORMATION: FTA Section 5310 Grant Program

Mr. Cervantes reported that Metro will seek Board approval on September 25, 2025 to allocate \$11.6 million in FTA Section 5310 funds to support mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Key points:

- 49% of funds designated for Access Services to replace aging paratransit vehicles.
- Remaining funds to be awarded competitively to eligible agencies and cities.
- The solicitation is scheduled for release on September 26, 2025, with applications due November 14, 2025.

Discussion:

- Fernando Roldan asked about language access for major events; Armando Roman confirmed that Metro is expanding interpretive services and multilingual communications as part of World Cup and Olympic preparations.
- Greg Kuhl raised concerns about the proportional allocation to Access Services and requested a



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review of passenger fare revenue contributions.

- Armando agreed to invite Metro's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to the November 2025 AAC meeting to provide clarification.
- Arlene Descargar commended the comprehensive planning and emphasized the importance of bridging service gaps through Access.
- Kathleen Barajas and Arlene Descargar expressed concerns about vehicle safety and design, including steep ramps, space limitations, and visibility for wheelchair users. Mr. Cervantes explained that ADA-compliant specifications can be customized by agencies and encouraged feedback to Access Services on design needs.

5. INFORMATION: Weapons Detection Pilot Follow-Up

Mr. Jose Cenuse provided updates on the Weapons Detection Pilot, describing the system's purpose, testing sensitivity settings, and ensuring compliance with ADA clearance requirements (minimum 32-inch passage width).

Member Concerns:

- Jared Rimer asked about experiences of mobility device users triggering detectors.
- Arlene Descargar raised questions about privacy and screening for individuals with medical implants.
- Fernando Roldan emphasized safety concerns following national incidents and recommended more visible security presence on buses.



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- Greg Kuhl urged Metro to assess the actual frequency of weapons incidents within LA County before large-scale deployment and to ensure consistency with constitutional rights.
- Mr. Cenuse acknowledged the input, explaining Metro's ongoing work to balance safety, privacy, and legal compliance while developing standard operating procedures with law enforcement.

6. INFORMATION: Journey Mapping Program

Robert Hearvin and Dr. Carolyn Bufford-Funk outlined Metro's Journey Mapping Project for Riders with Disabilities, an in-depth research effort to document accessibility challenges across the rider experience.

The study will:

- Focus on mobility, vision, and hearing disabilities.
- Include interviews, ride-alongs, and surveys in English and Spanish.
- Produce actionable findings by June 2026.

Member Feedback:

- Greg Kuhl urged inclusion of ASL users in ride-alongs and suggested visual ASL messages on bus monitors.
- Fernando Roldan recommended accounting for deafblind riders and international sign languages.
- Arlene Descargar noted barriers with emergency call buttons for deaf riders and described safety issues with train acceleration affecting mobility device users.



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The presenters committed to integrating these insights and invited AAC members to complete journey-mapping worksheets for deeper input.

7. ACTION ITEM: 2025 AAC Election

The following slate was presented by the Nominating Subcommittee:

- Chair: Kathleen Barajas
- First Vice-Chair: Greg Kuhl
- Second Vice-Chair: Fernando Roldan
- Member-at-Large / Board Liaison: Jared Rimer

Floor nominations were accepted. Cynde Soto and Ellen Blackman were also nominated for First Vice-Chair. After roll-call voting, the committee confirmed the 2025–2026 AAC officers as follows:

Chair: Kathleen Barajas

First Vice-Chair: Cynde Soto

Second Vice-Chair: Fernando Roldan

Member-at-Large / Board Liaison: Jared Rimer

Due to other commitments, Cynde Soto declined the nomination and the next highest vote getter, Greg Kuhl, accepted the position.

8. New Business

Members raised the following items under new business:

- Requested a presentation regarding the continued collaboration with Metro's Budget team regarding Access Services funding transparency.
- Updates on the Journey Mapping progress and Weapons Detection pilot outcomes in early 2026.

9. Public Comment

One member of the public expressed appreciation for Metro's accessibility efforts and supported continued community engagement.

10. 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.