

*AVTA response as provided by Mr. Len Engel*



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March 18, 2015

TDA Article 8 Unmet Needs Hearing Board

c/o Armineh Saint, Program Manager

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

One Gateway Plaza

Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: Fiscal Year 2015 TDA Article 8 Unmet Needs Hearings

Dear Ms. Saint:

The 2014 TDA Article 8 Unmet Needs Hearing Board found that the Antelope Valley Transit Authority (AVTA) had no unmet needs that could not be met through existing funding sources. However, AVTA did receive feedback from four Individuals during the hearings. The comments focused on improving service frequency, expanding service hours of operations and improving connections.

AVTA always places a high priority on the rider needs. System-wide key performance indicators continue to be monitored on a monthly basis. These measure performance on the following goals;

- Operating a Safe Transit System,
- Provide Outstanding Customer Service,

- Operate an Effective Transit System and
- Operate an Efficient Transit system

Data is collected from a variety of sources including the farebox, contractor reports, and from our business intelligence system which includes financial performance data.

In addition to system performance measures, staff is committed to responding to changes that occur within the transit network by adjusting and modifying bus services on a biannual basis. An internal service development plan has been established that allows staff to analyze and develop service recommendations based on customer inquiries and/or feedback along with additional feedback from our operations department. This provides staff with the opportunity to reach out to the public by holding informational meetings on proposed service enhancements in both English and Spanish throughout the AVTA service area.

The following is a brief update on the service enhancements and programs implemented in Fiscal Year 2015:

**Route to Success Ten-Year Plan:** AVTA continues to experience significant ridership growth. Without a long-range plan, AVTA would continue to be reactive and not proactive with future growth and development. AVTA worked with Nelson Nygaard for the development of a Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA and ten-year plan. The study focused on six key goals addressing the near term (1-3 years), mid-term (3-7 years), and the long term (7-10years). The study included a line-by-line analysis, providing service recommendations on AVTA's 18 routes.

Beginning in April 2015 the first phase of service recommendations from the Route to Success short range plan will be presented to the public. The changes will focus on improving route directness, reducing travel time and improving service transferability, while maintaining frequencies and connectivity along most corridors. Service is proposed to be removed from unproductive corridors.

**Commuter Service 785 | 786 | 787:** Commuter express service travel times and service frequencies have also been evaluated and adjusted on a trip-by-trip basis to better match peak ridership demands in the morning and afternoon. In September 2014, JARC Grant funding was approved for commuter service expansion, additional trips were introduced on the Routes 785 and 787 extending the morning and afternoon services. In June, two 786 trips will be included on that service will be incorporated as part of the final phase of the commuter expansion program.

**North County TRANSporter (NCT) 790:** On August 6, 2012, the County of Los Angeles, in partnership with the AVTA, Santa Clarita and Metrolink implemented a new

regional connector service known as the North County TRANSporter (NCT). The service bridges the gap between the Antelope and Santa Clarita Valleys for Metrolink trains that stop in Santa Clarita and do not continue further north into the Antelope Valley. Due to the tremendous success of the NCT service, a new northbound trip was introduced at 3:15 p.m. in order to accommodate the overflow of riders during that time. Service was also extended on to the McBean Regional Transit Center on a several trips to provide greater connectivity to Santa Clarita Valley employment centers.

**Intelligent transportation System (ITS):** In March 2014 AVTA awarded a contract to Avail Technologies for the implementation of a fully functional, expandable, reliable, and technologically advanced intelligent transportation system. The turnkey solution will assist our operations team in monitoring and communicating with our operators via GPS tracking, along with it greatly enhance our customers' overall transit experience by allowing them to take advantage of next bus departure predictions through their mobile devices and computers via our Track-it system, Google Transit or at the Authority's transportation centers on scrolling LED signs. The system will also allow AVTA to improve service delivery by gathering stop by stop data in real time. Including ridership by stop and possible dwell times and running time based on actual real-world scenarios.

**Bus Stop Improvement Program (BSIP):** AVTA's emphasis on customer service includes the improvements of its "front door" - the bus stops. The BSIP continues to increase the attractiveness of bus stops with modernized amenities for our passengers along with carousels which display bus fare and scheduled information on a specific route. Since the inception of the program over 34 bus stops have been upgraded and enhanced to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Through the program, AVTA will be working with the local college to help erect a new transit center on the campus. This will allow for improved service to the Antelope Valley College. AVTA continues to evaluate bus stops within the cities of Palmdale, Lancaster and the unincorporated areas of the Los Angeles County.

**Mobility Management Program:** AVTA recognizes the need to educate residents who may be fearful of using public transit because they lack knowledge of how the service operates. During FY15, AVTA shared its travel training program with more than 300 Antelope Valley residents who attended travel training classes through the Mobility Management Program. The training has been especially helpful to Dial-a-Ride dependent residents who now have more transportation options available to them. Our Mobility Manager has also hosted several "Train the Trainer" classes to help instructors from the Department of Public Social Services learn how to teach clients to use public transportation in order to reach employment. The travel training program has been greeted with tremendous accolades as it showcases video

instruction and provides field experience with actual trip planning. Travel training videos can also be viewed on the AVTA website and on the AVTAtv channel on YouTube.

**Employment Travel Program:** The Employee Travel Program (ETP) provides curb-to-curb transportation services over a three-year period to residents seeking employment in the Antelope Valley. 211 LA County and AVTA have partnered to work with human service organizations to develop mobility management programs which serve various areas of Los Angeles County with a special focus on Lancaster and Palmdale. The target population is primarily low income and welfare recipients seeking access to jobs and employment-related activities. On February 1, 2015 we began to take in passenger reservation through the ETP.

**Comprehensive Fare Study and Restructure:** Fare box revenues comprise over 20% of AVTA's operating budget. Nelson Nygaard consultants was contracted to assist the authority in developing a more simplified fare structure and analyze our existing one. An existing conditions report was also developed that reported an increase in ridership by 30% over the past three years and a 15% increase in revenues. The Fare Restructuring Scenarios report will include two options for the Commuter Service and two recommendations for the Local Transit Service. Staff will begin moving forward with public outreach on the proposed fare restructure with a final recommendations at the May 2015 board meeting.

**Coordinated Service:** AVTA continues to work closely with local municipal operators such Santa Clarita Transit, Los Angeles Metro and Metrolink on transit issues that affect our community. In an effort to provide improved connectivity, AVTA continues to focus on providing improved transfer connections at major transfer hubs with minimal wait times, specifically at Lancaster City Park, Palmdale Transportation Center and 47th Street and Avenue S. These connections are evaluated in concert with the biannual service adjustments.

AVTA values the input of our customers and other stakeholders and looks forward to continuously working to improve the public transportation service in the Antelope Valley.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (661) 729-2229

Best regards,

Len Engel

Director of Operations and Maintenance



City of  
**SANTA CLARITA**  
**TRANSIT**

TDA Article 8 Hearings

March 18, 2015

Presented by Adrian Aguilar, Transit Manager

Over the past 12 months, the City of Santa Clarita undertook a number of projects in the areas of capital improvements, technology and service reliability. As a result, the City continues to provide reliable transportation, and has not decreased, but in fact increased, the level of service provided to the community. Because of this commitment, last years' TDA Article 8 hearings only produced one recommended action for the City of Santa Clarita.

1. To continue evaluating funding opportunities for transit services.

Two thousand fourteen was another exciting year for Santa Clarita in terms of projects and service improvements. While many of the efforts undertaken in the past year directly address comments received during last year's unmet need hearings, I can tell you many were years in the making.

Some examples of the capital projects completed in the past 12 months include, refurbishment of the Newhall park and ride lot which included new lighting, resurfacing of the asphalt, striping, and the installation of designated disabled parking. The City also undertook maintenance projects at both the Santa Clarita and Newhall Metrolink stations. These projects included resurfacing of the parking lots and improved landscaping. The largest transit capital improvement project undertaken by the City of Santa Clarita this past year was the bus stop improvement project.

This \$1 million project allowed the City to make improvements such as extending sidewalks, improved ADA accessibility, installation of new bus stop furniture, and the placement of in street bus pads at 24 stop locations within the City. Additionally, the City will be installing passenger signaling devices at 50 bus stop locations throughout the service area. These devices are

designed to notify the driver that passengers are waiting to board the bus and minimize the incidents in which drivers fail to stop for a waiting customer.

In terms of service improvements the City continues to make adjustments to the local schedules to improve the systems on-time performance. Within the past 12 months the City has increased the systems on-time performance rate from a monthly average of 86.5 percent to 88.3 percent. The City also introduced three new routes last August which resulted in more frequent service to Castaic and Val Verde, and greater frequency and improved connections to and from the Canyon Country community. During the summer months, the City introduced extended weekend hours on the North Hollywood service. The extended hours allowed customers to make later connections with both the Red Line and Orange Line service and return to Santa Clarita as late as 12:30 AM.

As part of the August 2014 schedule change, the City also increased the number of mid-day trips it operates on the North Hollywood line and made further adjustments to the Century City and downtown Los Angeles commuter schedules to better reflect changing traffic patterns.

In order to be successful, the City strongly believes that it must continue to work closely with our local, regional, and federal transportation partners. The City maintains active lines of communication and collaborates frequently with partners including Access Services, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, Caltrans, County of Los Angeles, Metro, and Metrolink, just to name a few.

Finally, the City continues to work closely with the local business community to promote public transportation. These efforts include active participation in the Chamber of Commerce Transportation Advisory Committee, the establishment and promotion of corporate fare programs, the introduction of a summer visitor's shuttle, and the operation of special trolley routes such as the Old Town Newhall block party and Senses on Main Street.

The City of Santa Clarita continues to address the transit needs of our residents in a proactive manner and is committed to providing an effective and efficient service that improves the quality of life within the Santa Clarita Valley.

Thank you,

Adrian Aguilar

Transit Manager

Santa Clarita Transit