

World Institute on Disability
Ensuring Access is Everyone's Job
Presentation for the Disability Community
February 10, 2021

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>> MARSHA SAXTON: We're sort of stable at this number, should we go ahead?

>>DRENNAN SHELTON: Yes.

Hello, welcome. My name is Marsha Saxton. This is the final workshop of the Transportation Resiliency, Accessibility and Climate Sustainability Project.

Collaboration between the World Institute on Disability and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Our sponsor is the California Department of Transportation, Caltrans.

Our theme is ensuring access is everyone's job.

And this particular focus is for the disability community. Last week we had a workshop similar to this but it was for the transportation community, transportation managers, and people interested in improving from the MTC side.

I would like to briefly introduce a few people. We have several panel members, but right now I'll just introduce Drennen Shelton and Shimon Israel.

From the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.
Hello.

And Kat Zigmont is my co-worker at the World Institute on Disability.

Then we'll proceed. Today's agenda for our purpose, quick introductions.

We're going to briefly review TRACS project deliverables, talk about our goals.

We'll talk about our outreach efforts and findings. We have speakers. And we're going to address the issue of transportation advocacy in our call to action.

This is who we are. A two and a half year research, policy analysis and public education initiative to improve collaboration between transportation agencies and people with disabilities.

In the 9-County San Francisco Bay area, which includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma.

And I realize I want to thank you Lori our realtime captioner and speak a little more slowly. Thank you, Lori.

This project is funded through the sustainable communities focus of Caltrans SB1 grant program and we want to thank Caltrans for your commitment to accessibility.

Accessibility for people with disabilities.

Our achievements of this two and a half year project include the creation and participation of our policy advisory board, who are local people in the nine counties who have contributed their knowledge and expertise and help guide our process. We are in the midst of the last completion of our research and our documents which we'll soon be posting on the website at the World Institute on Disability site. We conducted a number of community workshops and events over these two years, and this our final workshop and our dissemination of resources for this project.

And our goals today are as our final workshop to offer summary of our outreach process and our findings. Other slogan is addressing the issue of transportation advocacy. Our slogan is "Ensuring access is everyone's job" including people in the disability community and transportation community and we'll have some time for sky is the limit brainstorm, for future transportation ideas.

And imaginings and dreams.

And a call to action.

That's yours, Drennen, go for it.

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: Yes. To begin with, we wanted to tell you about our outreach efforts for this project.

Our goal was to gather key transportation-related themes in the lives of people with disabilities that affect all areas of daily life.

Like employment, housing, socializing, and medical needs.

At the outset of the project, we established an advisory group that provided guidance and input throughout the project. This group reviewed our project deliverables, helped to identify opportunities for outreach and reviewed our findings. The group was made up of activists, advocates, Independent Living Center staff, transportation providers and emergency services.

The first type of outreach we conducted was one on one interviews. WID staff conducted 13 in depth interviews in private settings that allowed participants to give personal anecdotal information on their experiences. Eleven of the interviews were with people with disabilities.

And two were with transportation providers.

The second type of outreach we conducted was focus groups. WID and MTC staff

conducted five focus groups around the region.

These consisted of small group meetings with people with disabilities.

As well as a few caregivers, disability experts, and transportation providers. The small group atmosphere allowed participants to give personal and anecdotal information about their experiences.

And it allowed participants to build upon each others stories and ideas for improvement. While all the focus groups included participants with varying types of disabilities one of the focus groups was mainly with people

with visual impairments. Third we hosted two workshops on barriers within the existing transportation systems and how best to make changes.

The first workshop focused on transportation professionals, those involved in making decisions about our transportation systems.

And the audience for the second workshop focused on people with disabilities, disability advocates and those who represent the disability community. Last, WID developed and distributed an online survey to reach a broader range of stakeholders in our region. There were a total of 375 respondent, they were asked about disability type, vehicle access, and use of transportation modes. Additionally, respondents were asked about specific factors related to their fixed-route transit and Paratransit use.

The population of all of our participants was diverse with respect to disability, age, income level, race, and geography.

The types of disabilities included mobility mobile impairments, vision impairments, chronic illness and pain, and developmental disabilities.

Intersectional categories with respect to disability included people with multiple disabilities, disabled parents,

parents of disabled children, and seniors with a wide range of age-related impairments.

The age of our participants ranged from 22 to 81 and our participants came very close to reflecting

that of the Bay Area including approximately 40 percent people of color and languages spoken other than English.

Our participants were from a range of income levels and lived throughout the Bay Area.

Now I'll turn it back to Marsha who will run us through what it is we heard from you.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Okay. This is the crux of the -- this is the outcomes and the specifics of

the feedback we've gotten from the disability community.

So it's structured in terms of different categories, whether it's the type of transportation vehicle or issues that emerge.

So for fixed route, which is buses, trains,

this is really important that we engage the disability community early in taking input and this is the biggest challenge and outcome and emphasis for today is we need to create this engagement, this connection, this communication, between the disability community and the transportation agencies and MTC people.

So infrastructure issues, that's the built environment.

People spoke of the lack of signage and auditory guidance, especially if there's some kind of disruption, repair and so on. The elevators, a really big deal, when you have to move through inches of urine, the elevator is broken down, delays, not getting adequate information ahead of time so you don't even know what station you can use.

These kinds of things are really, really challenging.

The next category is driving training issues. Not acceptable to pass up people in wheelchairs at stops for whatever reason. That was a significant complaint.

And truly an outrage.

There are sometimes safety failings related to lift securement, tie-downs and not giving enough time for people with disabilities to be seated safely.

Sometimes drivers are not skilled or trained dealing with other passenger issues such as passengers not respecting disabled seating and so on.

And then the issue of conflicting needs regarding accessibility.

You know, sometimes the accommodation for one individual with a disability requires circumstances that may not work for somebody else. And there's not clear solutions sometimes.

So that's an ongoing issue for input, for negotiation, for thinking on the spot about what's going on work for those individuals who may have somewhat conflicting needs.

Okay, Paratransit. Big issues.

For those of you who are paratransit users, you know what we're talking about. There are unclear and difficult eligibility process for the application. Huge challenges of scheduling and delays.

Like if things change like a flight or doctor appointment which may often change, how do you handle that need for quick response and renegotiating and rescheduling.

The trips a-- the regional trips across County lines, transfer trips, different jurisdictions may result in hours-long waits.

There are issues around curb to curb problems where individuals with disabilities are picked up somewhere and then dropped off somewhere without appropriate assistance to where they're going.

You know, into their home, that may be a ways away.

The community of parents with disabilities and parents of disabled children are poorly served. There are not clear regulations. It's unclear sometimes what the roles of the drivers are. Parents may be carrying a lot of things.

You know, the baby seat, the diaper bag, and so on, and holding hands of children in wheelchairs.

So that needs to be addressed and clarified. Yes, huge disparities across the providers, there are many different kinds of agencies, even within one County, so learning the rules and negotiating, creating policy that works across these disparities is a huge challenge.

With regards to private transportation, we're still hugely struggling with a lack of wheelchair accessible cabs and ride hail services, it's still very expensive.

So the cost as well as the accessibility are big challenges. Now we'll go on to the TNC's.

Over to you, Drennen.

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: We wanted to take this opportunity to update you that there may soon be an increase in private accessible ride hail services.

So back in 2018 the governor signed into law the TNC Access for All Act. TNC stands for transportation network companies, which are those app based ride hail services like Uber and Lyft. The law made the California public utilities commission responsible for implementing a program for TNC wheelchair accessible service. Under this program, transportation network companies have been charging customers a ten cent per ride fee, and all of these fees are being deposited in County-based pots called Access Funds.

Those funds will be spent in the County where the trip originated. Both Uber and Lyft had been starting or increasing their wheelchair accessible services around the state, but in the next year, we'll see an increase in these services with more providers as those access funds start to be spent.

And you can find more information about this program on the California public utilities commission's website. Which is:

cpuc.ca.gov/tncaccess.

You can also search for TNC access for all and you'll be able to find the California public utility commission's website, where they'll talk about that.

So let's change gears a little bit. We've got a couple presentations for you. Our speakers will talk to their experience working with or through advisory boards and councils. We'll have a Q & A session for our speakers when they're done speaking.

So feel free to type questions into the Q & A box as we go.

First we have Annette Williams, who has directed accessible services at the San Francisco Municipal transportation Agency since 1990, her team is responsible for accessible to SFMTA's fixed route system, including trolley and diesel bus, light rail, historic street cars, cable car services, her office manages the contract for San Francisco paratransit and she's also responsible for overseeing accessible design and review for transportation related capital projects for public transit, bicycle, parking and pedestrian access in the public right of way.

Annette, thanks for being here. Take it away.

>> ANNETTE WILLIAMS: Thank you. It's nice to see you, I don't know if people can see me, crazy with these screens.

It's nice to see people that I know on the list of participants and people who have worked with us in terms of advisory committees. What Drennen and Marsha asked me to do was just to talk about how input from people with disabilities and older adults or seniors is crucial to our success in terms of really having services that meet the needs of these groups.

Next slide, please. For those of you who aren't familiar with MTA, one of the unique things about San Francisco municipal transportation agency is that we not only run the public transit system, but we also and paratransit but we also manage a lot of the other transportation functions, so it gives

us no excuse in terms of getting things coordinated and worked together. For instance, we oversee the taxi regulation as well as bike lanes, bike share, car share.

So all of the streets, parking, audible signals, all those kinds of things.

So we should have better chance at getting them to get to work together. Next slide, please.

Just to talk a little bit about our main advisory committees in -- main advisory committees in term of disabled access and access for seniors, we have the Paratransit coordinating council been around over 40 years and has been instrumental in making sure we have the Paratransit system that meets the needs. Not only meeting the law in terms of what the ADA requires but also meeting the needs of our customers and San Franciscans, that committee meets every six weeks. We also have subcommittees for each mode of service, we have taxi, SF access, more of the traditional ADA van service and group van.

What's I think somewhat unique about our committee is that we have a lot of participation by stakeholders, people with disabilities and agencies that serve people with disabilities and seniors, but also drivers and providers, so that we're able to get down into the nitty-gritty especially in the subcommittees about policies and procedures and what actually happens out there on the street. So I think that's been really important. We also have the multimodal ax not advisory committee that advises us in all the other MTA programs. Mainly it's Muni but also in terms of bike lane or parking and some of the other policies the MAAC committee is also involved in those as well.

Drennen asked me to give a little bit of background on disability advocacy and history. I think probably most of you on the call know this as well as anyone.

So I won't spend a lot of time. But for anyone who may not be as aware of what's happened in terms of disability advocacy, we are only where we are right now because of advocates and because of people with disabilities who really put themselves on the line to push for accessibility and I'm sure most people are aware that back in the late -- well, in the early '70s, the 504 regulations were passed, saying people with disabilities could not be discriminated against in programs funded with federal dollars.

But what happened was nothing.

That was in that legislation but there were not any regulations to put out how was that going to be followed through on. There was a lot of frustration on the part of people in the disability community.

And there were demonstrations across the country in 1977. The largest one was in San Francisco and there was a sit-in, a 28-day sit in. I highly recommend checking out the movie Crip Camp if you haven't seen it, it's on NetFlix, and it gives a lot of this history and kind of the back story of what happened in many groups of people with disabilities prior to that that helped that movement and that work.

After that, they did adopt regulations under 504 and that was called "local option" in terms of transit where transit agencies could decide whether to either do Paratransit van and taxi or van services or fixed route accessibility, lifts on buses and other measures to make the fixed route system accessible.

And I think there still was not a lot of action. You know, I think only California and Michigan had state laws that required lift on buses for all new buses that were purchased. But there was still not a lot happening. And that led to the ADA. And obviously the ADA addresses much more than just transportation, but I think transportation was one of the frustrations that people with disabilities had that they still were not seeing good accessibility and ability to get around.

And it's very hard to participate if you don't have access and transportation.

So next slide, please.

This just shows you some old photographs that we had back from our early days of accessibility.

You can see Art Agnew, earlier mayor, and there are descriptions of all of these pictures that Drennen has distributed to people who have vision impairment.

So I'll quickly go over explaining them.

But there are alt text descriptions. This is one of our early buses, kind of, what do you call it, ribbon cutting.

And our two times before now light rail vehicles, the Boeing vehicles. Since then we've had the Brada and now we have the Semens. And some other examples of where things with the disability community have really worked with us in terms of accessibility.

In the lower left side, there's a picture of a manual ramp being deployed from our F line street cars, they're historic street cars to a wayside platform. Next slide, please.

So when I think about some of the really important factors in terms of working together with people in the disability community and listening and hearing and taking actions, one of the important things is building relationships, because not only is it important for people who are working in the transit agencies to really have ongoing relationship with people with disabilities so they understand things, but vice versa, so that there's a level of trust there and it makes it much easier to move forward. And I think even more importantly is having people with disabilities in positions in transit agencies, you know, themselves as planners and managers, and that's always the best way to get input because then you're getting it all the time. But those relationships I think are really important. Another thing that comes up a lot is inches matter. You know, geometry matters. And one of the things, it's one thing to say oh, it needs to be 30 inches wide. But it's

much different to actually try it out with people and figure out, well, how do you get to that 30 inch wide space?

And what does it take in terms of a manual chair versus a power chair?

And we've found we've gotten so much information from actually working and trying things out and seeing what works and what doesn't work.

It's really important to do that in the real world.

And then the third thing I think is really crucial is finances.

You know, we can't really get projects done if we don't have the funding to do it.

And often, you know, we come in late in terms of accessibility or we're not consulted early enough.

And when new funding measures are contemplated, we need to be advocating for accessibility and for the needs of seniors and people with disabilities and I know many of you have, I know Bob Clanhold has and I'm sure many of the others I don't know from other counties, that having the funding to be able to follow through makes a big difference. Next slide.

I wanted to talk about a few examples of things where input from the disability community was so crucial to getting something that worked well. I don't know if you all remember back in the early days when they first started doing low floor buses, the ramp just started at the door and went, you know, straight out from there. And it wasn't very long. And so what this meant was, it could work okay at a curb, you know, if you were at a six inch curb because there wasn't too much of a slope between the bus when it was kneeled and the ramp at the curb. But if you had to deploy the ramp at the street, it was almost impossible to get up. If someone was trying to get up in their wheelchair often they would be up on two wheels. It wasn't

something the bus manufacturers were really concerned about until we said this doesn't work.

There will always be cases where someone needs to get on from the street. Obviously it's more ideal to get on from the curb but we need to design a ramp that works better in all circumstances.

One of the answers was this one which is a bifold, there are two pictures of different people in wheelchairs, Marina and Roland using a bifold ramp that provided then longer length so that the slope was not as steep. Another ramp design included the ramp surface all the way into the vehicle, so that you had the length all the way from the fare box to the street. And that made it work better. Next slide please. Another example is securement areas. When bus manufacturers originally started making buses, they generally put the securement area right next to each other and if you try to think about how you get into a securement area if you're having to turn around, if there's another wheelchair user right next to you, it's very difficult.

But if you stagger the securement areas and you have longer distance in each securement area, it makes it much easier to make those kind of maneuvers.

So in terms of our bus specs, we always stagger the two wheelchair securement areas so that it's easier for people to navigate and that really came from trying with many different people and different types of chairs how it worked in terms of the real world. Next slide, please. Another example was one of our advisory committee members Joel McGuinness who is pictured here said when I want to make a complaint or I want to give a compliment to a driver I don't want to have to ask the driver what the bus number is, I want to be able to get that on my own independently so we came up with a little I guess you would call it like a plate that we put behind the operator at on all of our vehicles that has in raised letters as well as number in Braille so someone can find out the number of the bus without having to ask another passenger or the driver. Next slide, please. This next slide shows pictures of some of the things we've done with our advisory committee over the years. One was having a single flip-up seat. Normally you have three flip up seats for a wheelchair user but a single flip up seat can be really helpful for someone who has a walker, so they could flip that

seat up and put that walker in the position and get it out of the street, out of the aisle way and that's helpful to them. Another is our manual bridge we have.

That bridges from wayside platforms into our historic street cars and we try that with many different people with disabilities to come up with a very simple design but that works well and gives people access to these historic cars, you know, some of our advisory committee members grew up in San Francisco and saw these cars drive by every day and were never able to get on them.

So being able to get on these different historic cars, as well as getting from point A to point B. Another thing we did was like the stop request feature for the light rail vehicles.

Generally it's underneath the seat. This is the specific one for meeting account wayside -- needing the wayside platform. If you're an ambulatory person and want to get off there it's not convenient to be under the seat so we added another stop request specifically for the wayside platforms on the modesty panel. We're in the process of putting in new decals in the metro stations which will show where the front door of the light rail front car is when someone is going out into the surface that's the door you want to be in when you exit. Like our new line the Third Street line is accessible at all doors but out on the surface where the system was built in the early 1900s, the stops are only accessible at key stations with wayside platforms.

Next slide.

Another thing I wanted to mention is emerging mobility and I talked about it a little bit in the beginning, or maybe that was before our call. As many of you know, probably about a year and a half or two years ago a whole bunch of scooters were I would say dumped on the seats of San Francisco and people were leaving them everywhere, leaving them in the middle of path of travel having really significant impacts on seniors and people with disabilities so we were able to put in place a permitting program and part of that permitting program was very clearly to lay out parking guidelines and that we got input from people with disabilities on in terms of what makes sense.

What we came up with was requiring the scooters to be tethered to a bike rack or pole so it's more likely they'll be not in the main path of travel.

As well as having very strict enforcement requirements where the companies are fined when scooters are not parked appropriately. We've also started on a new adaptive scooter, which is part of the permitting process where each

permitted company also has to provide a pilot for adaptive scooters. So looking at how can these scooters be more usable for people with disabilities. We did a survey. We've gotten feedback - having a basket is helpful.

Having three wheels, lower picture on the left side, I'll explain, more like a tricycle where you can stand or sit and it has much better balancing in terms of if someone was to stand on it so we're looking at these different type of scooters that may make it more possible for people to use a scooter that couldn't use the more traditional small two-wheeled scooter, also a pop-up for adaptive bicyclists in Golden Gate Park hopefully will start up again this spring where people with disabilities could come out and try out adaptive cycles, like a tandem cycle, side by side tandem, hand trike and BORP who is working very closely with us in the east bay is going to be helping people with sizing and making sure we have get the right bicycle for them.

We did this pre-COVID as well but we'll continue it after that. Another area of emerging mobility is TNC's and Drennen talked a little bit about that. But we've been very strongly advocating with the disability community for accessible TNC services and working with the CPUC on implementation of the access fund. Now since July of -- July 2019 already, time is flying with COVID, it's like it disappears, they've been collecting ten cents on every trip, which is going into an access fund, some of which is being used by the TNC's for -- TNC's for accessibility but if it's not all being used, it will be available throughout the state for accessible TNC-type services.

Next slide.

Just one last thing I wanted to mention is with COVID, we've gone through lots of changes and Muni service was reduced some and we were really concerned about seniors and people with disabilities getting being able to do their essential trips even if the bus line was further away than it had been, so we implemented essential trip card program and that really came out of all the work that had been done by consumers and the managers of the program prior to workout any problems that we had with existing paratransit program that used a taxi debit card.

So because of that, we were able to stand up this program in about three weeks time.

Which I'm sure we never would have been able to do without all the work that had been done prior.

So now we have about 3200 seniors and people with disabilities in San Francisco who are using this card to do other essential trips, maybe a medical trip or shopping trip during COVID. Next slide. Another thing I think is really important is celebrating the work and thanking advisors because it's a lot of work and it takes a commitment from people and one of our PCC members said we should be having an appreciation luncheon every year so we've been doing that for quite a few years now and we usually try to go a museum.

Get a docent tour and have a lunch and foster relationships outside of all the work we do.

But to really build on those relationships.

Next slide. There's my contact information. And then also in the following slide is links to our website to different parts of our website in terms of accessibility.

I appreciate you having me here, I know there's a number of other speakers, I hope I didn't take up too much time. I'm more than willing to take questions. I think there are a few in the chat I haven't had a chance to look at yet.

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: That's okay, Annette, we'll get to the questions when Ernest is finished. A reminder to our attendees if you have questions, don't worry about waiting, just go ahead and put them into the Q & A box.

Next we have Ernest Rogers, who is the chair of the Solano County Paratransit coordinating council and member of the Solano County transportation service agency advisory committee. He's worked in a variety of initiatives and programs focused on youth mentorship and currently works with inmates at San Quentin as a sponsor in leadership training and assisting individuals who are getting ready to return home. Ernest was born with osteogenesis imperfecta and is a public transit user. Ernest, thanks for being with us today.

Take it away.

>> ERNEST ROGERS: Thanks for having me. I'm glad to be here with you guys and as you heard awful the good news, to me it was good news because I've been disabled all my life.

And to tell you that growing up in an area where there's no public transportation for people with disabilities is amazing.

I grew up in the South.

A little town called Tolulu, about 15,000. Rough streets, everything, you know, nothing was there, in my time, with anything with ADA accessible.

I went to college. To go to my class, I had to go up about 7 flights of stairs.

Not 7 flights. About 4 flights of stairs. But I couldn't do it because I was in a wheelchair so I had to depend on my buddies that played football to carry

me up. Good thing I was small at the time. I got a little bigger now, so that kind of hurts.

But what I want to talk to you about is what made me angry, and I'm going to tell you the reason why I use the term angry, because sometimes you had to get mad to get something right or to want to speak out and what made me angry was the fact that I could see all these people going around doing whatever they want to do and just as capable as I am, they might not have disabilities whatever, but we all wanted the same things.

And I wanted some things too.

One of the reasons why I'm in California and I'm glad I'm in the Bay Area because I heard so much great things about Berkeley being the access capital of the United States, back in the '70s and the '60s, because you saw about the demonstrations.

But there was change that needed to be made, still needed to be made. In 1990 came out with the ADA law, which had a lot of good things in it but we became the policemen of it, so we need to make changes. Now, how do we make changes? That's one of the questions I like to ask. After you get upset and angry, what can I do with change is don't just hold the anger, because you need to channel it to be productive. It's not only about us and getting to and from places, it's about the people that are behind us.

Those that come, the younger generation, the younger children that they don't need to see their disability as a holdup or something that could stop them from achieving the goals they want to achieve. So one of the things I found out because of my nice personality is that you make friends with people, all kind of people. One of the things that came out in one of the slides is make friends with the transportation agency and what I did was I started riding buses here in California and started talking to the drivers and speaking to them and once they saw me and found out I was a friendly person, then I could get maybe a free ride or a pickup maybe not necessarily on the curb because I couldn't get on the curb but maybe on the street.

So one of the things I want to talk about is how to make friends.

A lot of people are sympathetic to us. Don't be too proud. I find myself being too proud to ask people for help, and it makes my journey harder. I found out the more I asked, the easier it got. People start seeing you as a person when they talk to you and start to get to know you. Those are the changes you can make. The reason I became a member of the Solano County Paratransit was because I got stuck, coming from Concord, about 8:00 p.m., got to the Concord station and I realized that the Vallejo bus didn't come to the Concord station at that time, so I had to catch the 80 route from Concord all the way around to El Cerrito Del Norte, I made the last bus. It's now about, oh, 9:30 at night, so I'm riding through Vallejo and just so happened that night I had to get sick.

So here I am coming to Vallejo and my home is not downtown where the main stop is, it's about three miles away.

And it's at 10:00 at night. Not that many traffic lights. And I had to roll right home in my power chair at night without any lights.

And I'm out there sick, and I'm upset, I'm saying why the bus couldn't run just a little later, why this and why that.

So when I got home, it just so happens in a week or so I received a pamphlet and the pamphlet talked about coming to a Paratransit meeting.

I went.

And I told them my story.

I told them how would you like to be out there that time of night, and I'm small, and it's dark outside.

I had no lights on my chair.

The streets were dark. It was just a mess. But they sympathized.

And they asked me, could I come back? So I started going to the meetings, then I joined the panel.

By joining the panel, we were able to make so many changes. Right now we have a system where if you do get left at the bus stop at night, we have a system now where we have Faith in Action, you can call a couple of agencies and they have vans that can come pick you up and take you home, if you are that late. But see, that never would have happened if I didn't make friends. It never would have happened if I hadn't been there and spoken my voice. You don't have to be rude, but you do have to let them know that you mean business, and that the customer -- see, I graduated in business administration.

And one of the things I found out, a lot of people say the best thing about a business

is the product. No, that's not the best thing. The best thing a business got is the way it looks. No.

The thing that makes a business important is the people.

Who you work with. Who you reach out to. And how you respond to your customers.

Because if your customers don't come, you don't make no money.

And that's one of the things I found out.

So people are an important aspect. And see, we can't get things done because people don't know what they need to do for us.

I've been in places, it's funny, I had a guy bring a wheelchair to my house. Now, I'm 4 feet tall. Well, 3 11. And the guy brought a wheelchair for somebody 6 feet tall. Now, how did that work?

It doesn't work. So I had to complain. And I said look, man, I appreciate it, but this ain't gonna work. And I had to show him. I had to go around with that wheelchair for a while because you know how hard it is with agencies.

So I had to wait. But I had to complain.

And I had to do it patiently.

By patient, I had letters written. I had my doctor write a letter. I had my friends write a letter. And do you know those things got read.

And people responded. And they responded positively.

See?

If you're upset about something, that's fine, but let's put it towards the positive way. Let people know what we need and say it, like the 28 day sit-in. Man, I imagine people were having problems trying to get around all the wheelchairs and stuff, man, what's going on? And they asked them. Hey, now look, we do have buses. So that's what I'm saying. We can do stuff very constructively and that's what the advisory committees in our County, Solano County, I like it. I'm telling you, I enjoy being on it.

I enjoy being the chair. And being the chairperson, you can kind of guide the conversation, and they see me on a regular basis, so they are always aware that hey, people with disabilities need to be heard.

And that's what it is, we need to be heard. That's what voting is for. If you don't vote, you can't say too much.

But if you vote, then your voice has been heard and you can say that you did not like it. Okay?

Or what you can do to help it. But that's pretty much all I have to say about it.

If you have any questions are, now, I can give you some other things, you know, about other cases where riding in -- okay, I'm going on give you another story. This is a good one. I worked at Napa State Hospital.

This is the way the bus is run. It's a ten-minute ride by car. It's an hour ride by bus.

I used to have to be at work at 8:00 in the morning.

I would get up, go out of the house. Now, the bus did not pick me up at the house.

I had to go to the bus stop, which is about, I'm trying to see, about 7, 8 blocks from here. I would make it there sometimes and guess what? I made it late.

So I would have to make it early. So I would make it early. But then when the weather gets cold, now I'm out in the bad weather in the cold, early, waiting on the bus.

So that was difficult.

But anyway, not to say the least, I still made it to work, and made it on time.

But one night, I got out of work, I went across the street, and the sun had started setting earlier so it got darker earlier.

I'm out there at the stop by myself, same stop, same time, and guess what the bus did? Straight on by. You know why? Couldn't see me.

But I had the number for the dispatcher.

And I actually knew the dispatcher. So when I called, I said hey, the bus left me. He missed me. He couldn't see me.

And you know what they did? They sent a van to pick me up.

And guess what? The van took me right to the door to my house.

So I mean, I got a little nice ride out of it but we got to talking and then I began communicating more with them about what would be better for this situation too. Because when you speak up, people want to hear what you got to say. When you speak up and you're friendly and. They are aware and they want to help, that's how it works.

And that makes the system work.

But that's it. That's all I have to say. Anybody got any questions, I'll be glad to answer.

And believe me, I've been hounding this thing for -- I don't want to tell you how old I am, but I've been around for a while, I've been around since the '60s. So I've seen the changes made and I like the changes now that are made and the people that come after me, they got it made way better, and we can make it even better because more people are listening. Like this group is listening. My group is listening. So it's an open door and we need more participants because the more voices we got, the more people hear.

Thank you. Any questions? We'll wait on the question and answer time. So if you have any.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: Thanks, Ernest. We've alluded to just the power of personal narrative and anecdote, so I personally enjoyed the stories. I would like to hear more at some point.

Now we're turning to the Q & A portion of the outreach, there's a little bit of presentation after Q & A part, so I would encourage people to stay on after that. Here I encourage people to share their questions in the Q & A box or in the chat. I see a few have been primed and I think the first someone directed at Annette. I will read it. Has there been something to address the pass-ups of PWD's who are physically disabled such as walkers or crutches but not in wheelchairs? Muni frequently does this.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: I can respond to that, Shimon.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: Okay, Marsha.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: The examples I gave are a very small segment of the issues that were raised. We have hundreds of pages of documenting the complaints and concerns from our participants, so yes, that one was definitely registered as a problem.

And this is a good example of getting in touch with the agency.

In this case, it looks like Muni, and filing a complaint. Put your voice out there. Say this is not acceptable. Thanks.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: Annette, did you want to add anything?

>> ANNETTE WILLIAMS: I would say the same thing. It's just as important, it doesn't matter what the disability is that someone has. No one should be passed up. The only time when a passup would be warranted is if everyone at the top is being passed up because the bus is so full that it can't take additional customers.

But we're very clear in our training with operators that they really, you know, when someone has a visibility disability, it's even more important to stop and explain, you know, what's going on, why you're going past.

And I know that can be difficult because then people try to rush on the bus and it's so packed you can't get people on.

But Bob is absolutely right. It's just as important, no matter what the disability that someone has, that they not be passed up.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: Next question was about the three-wheeled scooters that were discussed and the Golden Gate park.

>> ANNETTE WILLIAMS: So the Golden Gate park is the bicyclist, the adaptive bikes. The adaptive scooters are throughout the city.

The different companies have different pilots they're doing. I think what Bob had asked was is it possible to purchase one yourself, that type of scooter. And my understanding is it is, Bob, and I'll get more information for you about the manufacturer.

You know, who makes it. But did I come across a guy on the street who had one.

And I asked him about it because I wanted to know.

And he is it had been really helpful to him. It was one that he owned himself.

So I know that they are available.

So I will try on find out more information for you about who is the manufacturer and how to get ahold of one.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: Okay.

Next we have a comment or a link to an article, which is just about the disability community being left behind with vaccinations.

So there's a link in the chat that people can link to if they're interested in that article.

Beyond that, we don't have any questions, but I will take a moment here to pause to encourage folks to either within the chat or within the Q & A box to provide any questions for the panelists.

Okay. Well, there is kind of a blue sky exercise that we'll have later in the presentation, so there will be an opportunity to hear more of your kind of ideas and input. But I guess we can we can resume with the presentation if there's nothing else.

Okay. This is a slide about transportation advocacy and Annette described in her presentation the Bay Area has a very storied and significant history of independent living activism, which includes transportation.

This movement has very much been a bottom up movement led by activists, and, you know, it's a challenge but it's important to recognize that civil rights at the government level does not have a watchdog role and is generally complaint driven, so that unfortunately at times the role of the public to be rabble rousers to remind people of the challenges that they experience in their lives. Decision makers are not off the hook. We need to

hold their feet to the fire, so to speak. And there are various channels through which advocacy can be implemented, making comments at public meetings, making formal complaints, engaging the media to put pressure on decision makers.

And as we heard from Ernest, the personal narratives can be very powerful for decision makers to hear. For example describing what it's like for people to transfer between Paratransit systems, many people on the presentation now, many people assume it's like a bus transfer, but we know it's a lot more difficult. And the sharing of personal stories can really convey the challenge of these experiences.

It's good to be involved generally. Get connected to develop relationships with transportation agency staff to better understand the legal and financial landscape.

Such relationships could be helpful in understanding what's in the realm of possible, you know. We're all dealing with a lot of varied constraints. It's good to have our eye on the prize, but it's also good to be aware of where the challenges that we're confronted with. There are conflicting priority, budgeting and staffing constraints.

Good to be vigilant to be aware of these but to continue to march through them.

And then lastly, I want to underscore the importance of connecting directly with elected officials.

They do represent you. It's important that they hear from you early and often. And you continue to be engaged with them.

And then I think Marsha is going to take this slide.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Right. Okay.

This is a little opportunity for us to share hopes and dreams. We will collect these.

And Daveed is suggesting that we allow participants to speak. We were in the webinar version of Zoom, and I would have to confer with my colleagues about doing that. There is a way, but I'm not sure how to do it myself.

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: Yeah, if attendees want to raise their hand, I can unmute you.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Yeah, Daveed says some people are on the phone.

So what I vaguely remember about Zoom is you can go to the participant list and enable them to talk.

Kat, are you aware of how far to do that?

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: One person is on the phone but they're in listener mode.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: Yeah, we can allow them to speak but we have to know who has that interest.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: I'm presuming it's Daveed. Well, okay, let's go ahead with the exercise for people who have access to chat and then we'll see if we can get Daveed's participation.

So the question for consideration is, what would you imagine if you had, for example, \$100,000 or if you had \$10 million? What in your wildest imagination is options, resources, vehicles, services that you would like to see? And this is a sky's the limit kind of exercise.

So, you know, including time travel or whatever, we want to open up the box outside the box thinking to share our creativity and we'll post these on the website or for discussion right now. So take a few minutes.

Go for it. Share your thoughts in the chat.

Is there a way to enable Daveed or somebody on the phone to speak?

Somebody else's phone or somehow get Daveed?

Daveed is on Zoom.

>> SHIMON ISRAEL: You'll have to unmute yourself, Daveed, or maybe we can unmute you.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Daveed, can you unmute?

>> DAVEED MANDELL Sorry, my voiceover is speaking on my iPhone at the same time. I had to look for the mute button. I don't exactly remember what -- I had a number of questions.

But I feel as if, you know, we know how to advocate. And frankly, with all due respect, and I want to give Annette credit where credit is due, I can that Muni has made much more progress than many other transit agencies. And I think that's partly due to such staunch advocates as Roland Wong and the late Lamenta Jule McGinnis who many of us miss terribly.

But I also want to say that we know how to advocate.

We know what we need. And a number of us are organizing a coalition of transit-dependent riders because we feel that transit agencies haven't paid enough attention to us.

Those of us who are captive, we have no choice but to use public transit. We can't use the bicycles and scooters that you mentioned, Annette, those of us who are blind, for instance.

Someday there will be autonomous vehicles, and that will be very nice and we'll be able to drive or be driven.

And so we have a lot to look forward to. And we hope that we can work in partnership with all the transit agencies in the Bay Area. I want to say one more quick thing.

I represent the American Council of the Blind. I've just been appointed to their transportation committee. And we have been talking about, calling for the complete restructuring of ADA Paratransit, that it must become same-day service and that it must be linked not to the availability of fixed route transit, but, rather to the inability to drive.

So I want to prepare you for that eventuality. We don't know when we'll bring this up. Maybe next year. But I know that it will be coming up soon. So thank you.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Great. Thank you, Daveed, very good news that you're organizing many that way. We'll post the contact information on our website. So we'll be in touch about that.

>>SHIMON ISRAEL: Marsha, as people post to the chat or Q & A, do we want to read them out loud?

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Okay, I see. I would like to see spontaneous accessible transportation -- okay. Yes.

And Richard, 24 hour accessible transportation for seniors and people with disabilities. Just like everybody else. Excellent.

Any others forthcoming?

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: I have unmuted Jenna.

>> JENNA RUBIN Hello, everyone. I wanted to make one comment with regard to the desire for things that are done on behalf of accessibility to also be when and if possible very labor progressive and it seems once again that the TNC's, which really gets down the Duopoly except for tiny little markets, we're looking to them and I think that access fee I've been paying it, it's nice to know that it hasn't all been used but I want us as we build the system of our dreams where there's integration to also appreciate that as we expand same day service and on demand for all of the people who need these many forms of transit, that we try to find ways to

incorporate the existing labor pool and even the vehicular pool of accessible vans and getting more appropriate vehicles for the job.

Because I would hate for us to not ever use unionized labor. I just want to make a pitch for keeping that right there front and center. Thank you.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Thank you. Excellent point. And someone is commenting. \$10 million. Yes mark. And someone is commenting, "\$10 million? RE-think & Develop prototype accessible busses, in all lengths but not stick to the standard dimensions. Make door entry maximum feasible and not minimally feasible. Then tour them around the Bay Area first, making sample passenger trips to each transportation agency, to MTC, to county transportation authorities. Then go to nearby metro areas. Seek production funding from Caltrans as well as US FTA."

Yeah this is "nothing about us, without us", so lovely specific suggestions about how to include maximal input from the community. So thank you.

And Justina from CRIL is agreeing with something that Drennen said. "Spontaneous, accessible transportation. I'd also love for people with disabilities not to have to jump through hoops in order to apply for the programs and services." Yes. "It doesn't make sense that a person whose transportation options are limited should have to figure out transportation to apply to participate or get a discount, etc card applications or paratransit apps." Excellent point. Yes, the hoops are absurd. These are good.

>> ANNETTE WILLIAMS Marsha, could I just address that comment about ETC? Because I think that's a really good comment.

And it was one of the things we were concerned about when we started the program.

So we tried to make it as easy as possible. All someone had to do was call 311.

And then they were transferred, you know, 311 saying I need this program, which we advertised around to all the bus stops and tried to get out through social service agencies and any way we could and then they would be transferred from that call directly to Paratransit where they would do the intake over the phone so they didn't have to send anything in and then they would be registered for the card and the card would be sent to them.

We gave them time to send their verification if it was a driver's license or whatever to prove their ge. We were cognizant of that, people need this quickly and easily and not have to go through a lot of hoops to make it happen.

So that was something we took into consideration

>>MARSHA SAXTON: Good, thank you Annette, excellent. Okay.

"Require more transit only agencies and transit agencies to use all carpool or bus only lanes,

such that any express bus trip is no more than

two times the time it takes for a car to commute. So transit becomes somewhat time competitive with autos." Okay. Good suggestion.

"Raise fines for traveling in bus lanes and for parking in bus zones. Then use the local share of those fines to buy more ramps, taxis, and paratransit vans." So thinking budget.

>> ANNETTE WILLIAMS: Could I mention one other thing about that? One of the things we've been trying to do at the state level is to get the state to allow us to issue tickets for cars driving in the transit only lanes, you know, similar to red light running tickets, and that's been a steep endeavor so far. But I think that's one place where advocacy could help, you know, is getting the state legislature to understand how important it is to keep those transit lanes open so they could be there for people who are on transit and enforcement is always important to making things happen.

So if you have easier enforcement methods, then it's more likely to happen.

>> MARSHA SAXTON: Thank you, Annette.

Okay.

I'm guessing that's all of the brainstorm suggestions. For now.

So we can proceed.

>> DRENNEN SHELTON: Okay. Good. Those were some good things to hear from you all.

We are just about the end of our time together today, and while this TRACS project is coming to a close, it doesn't mean that the conversation has to end.

Later this week we'll send out this presentation to you, as well as a list of the attendees who registered for today.

If you don't want to be included on that list -- if you don't want to be included on that list, please let us know by Friday that you want to opt out, you can send me an e-mail, and we won't include your name and e-mail address.

But in the coming weeks, we will also be publishing all of our TRACS documents and

additional resources on the WID website to help you with your transportation advocacy. We don't want you to stop there. We want to issue a challenge to you today.

Daveed mentioned that lots of you are transportation advocates, but some of you aren't.

It's what we heard during our research.

Some of you are new to advocacy and you're frustrated with the system. So our challenge is this.

In the next month or so, we would like you to deliver a public comment at a transportation agency meeting or at an MTC meeting.

Write your experience down and e-mail it in or attend one of those virtual public meetings and raise your virtual hand to make your comment.

We want you to tell the decision makers about the transportation problems you're facing. Last week, we issued a similar challenge to our colleagues at the transportation agencies. We asked them to reach out to a disabled member of their agency advisory board or to their local independent living resource center.

We asked them to be more deliberate about creating relationships with the disability community so that they could better include disability perspectives in their work. We told them that reaching out and doing this is not going to be easy, and I'm going to say that to you today, if you're not used to giving public comment, it will be a challenge, and it may feel scary.

But we really need all of our voices at these meetings in order to make transportation systems more accessible to everyone.

So we'll go into the next slide.

Like I said, we will e-mail this out and many of you already have this presentation.

But you'll have our contact information there.

I want to thank you all for being with us today.

And again, in the coming weeks, we're going to follow up and provide our presentation and let you know when all of the TRACS documents are up on the website.

Again, tell us by Friday if you do not want your information shared. But I do to want say thanks for your time today and thank you for being here with us.

And thank you for your continued advocacy.

>> MARSHA SAXTON Just to mention, Bob is asking, can we share the subgroups and connecting with those for people who may not know of them? On the website, there will be a County by County listing of how to connect with those groups.

So it will be available.

Thanks for asking.

And again, thanks for everybody's participation. We appreciate your commitment.

And please continue the conversation, as Drennen has said.

Take care, everybody.