

*For Mayor Elizabeth G. Flores*

### **Paratransit Advisory Committee**

Here is some information which the Mayor can use in her presentation. This is the beginning of the Charge that we are preparing:

As determined by the City of Laredo, the purpose of the Paratransit Advisory Committee is to assist and advise the City Council and EL Metro staff regarding the implementation of Paratransit Eligibility and Certification programs, and transit services for elderly and disabled people. In carrying out this charge, the committee shall:

1. Review current services and programs.
2. Review both short and long-range plans, including the plans for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and any other local, state, or federal requirements relating to accessible transportation.
3. Review the performance of EL LIFT paratransit services through monthly statistical reports and special surveys.
4. To assist the City Council in ascertaining paratransit needs in the Laredo area.
5. To develop a policy and participate in the "Appeals Process" for those persons who are denied EL LIFT paratransit services.
6. To make recommendations to the City Council and EL Metro staff concerning paratransit program goals and objectives.
7. To review the current certification process and recommend a re-certification program for the EL LIFT paratransit service with the assistance of the EL Metro staff according to ADA standard requirements.

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

To accomplish the above stated purpose, the Committee and its membership shall endeavor to:

1. Provide advice and recommendations to the City Council and EL Metro staff regarding policy matters and priority needs which will improve service for elderly and disabled people;
2. Provide an open forum for the discussion and evaluation of EL Metro services;
3. Promote and aid in the dissemination of information to the elderly and disabled within the entire service area.

## **Charge from the Laredo Mayor and City Council To the Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC)**

### **I. General powers and duties**

The Paratransit Advisory Committee is an Ad-Hoc committee created to assist and advise the City Council and LTMI staff regarding the implementation of Paratransit Eligibility and Certification programs, and transit services for persons with disabilities and the elderly.

### **II. Vision and mission statements**

#### **A. Vision:**

1. Provide advice and recommendations to the City Council Committee regarding policy matters and priority needs which will improve service for persons with disabilities and the elderly;
2. Provide an open forum for the discussion and evaluation of Laredo Transit Management, Inc . services for persons with disabilities and the elderly;
3. Promote and aid in the dissemination of information to persons with disabilities and the elderly within the entire service area.

#### **B. Mission:**

1. Review current services and programs.
2. Review both short and long-range plans, including the plans for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and any other local, state, or federal requirements relating to accessible transportation.
3. Review the performance of EL LIFT paratransit services through monthly statistical reports and special surveys.

### **III. Goals, responsibilities**

#### **A. Goals:**

1. Review current services and programs.

2. Review both short and long-range plans, including the plans for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and any other local, state, or federal requirements relating to accessible transportation.
3. Review the performance of EL LIFT paratransit services through monthly statistical reports and special surveys.
4. To assist the City Council and LTMI staff in ascertaining paratransit needs in the Laredo area.
5. To develop a policy and participate in the “Appeals Process” for those persons who are denied EL LIFT paratransit services.
6. To make recommendations to the City Council and LTMI staff concerning paratransit program goals and objectives.
7. To review the current certification process and recommend a re-certification program for the EL LIFT paratransit service with the assistance of the LTMI staff according to ADA standard requirements.

**B. Responsibilities:**

- Demonstrate capacity to apply objective, impartial, analytical, and critical thinking to solve/resolve complex problems.
- Enjoy reputation in the community of Laredo, Texas for possessing a solid character and good citizenship.
- Familiarity with the multicultural-multilingual community of Laredo, Texas.
- Demonstrate familiarity with missions, organization, process, procedures, and services of Paratransit Authority.
- Demonstrate record of positive service to the community of Laredo, Texas.
- Commitment to ensuring that fair, impartial, and adequate processing of complaints be handled effectively and efficiently.
- Possess no prior or current commitment, obligation, or debt to organization, advocacy group, political sect, or religious body that would constitute a conflict of interest with the mission of the Paratransit Authority’s mission and operations.
- Possess no kinship to any other members of the Paratransit Authority or its Officers or employees.

**IV. Officers, members**

**A. Officers**

1. Members shall elect a Chair and a Vice Chair.
2. Members also may elect other officers by majority vote.
3. Member may be appointed for up to four( 4) consecutive two (2) year terms.
4. Officers shall be elected by majority vote from among members whose terms are equal to or longer than the officer's term.
5. Officers shall be elected by a majority vote of members voting in the presence of a quorum.
6. Members may authorize the Chair to appoint other officers, including a Parliamentarian and/or a Sergeant-at-Arms, provided the authorization to appoint is by majority vote.
  - a. Appointed officers serve at the will of the appointing official, but may be removed by a majority of the members.
  - b. Appointed officers may be re-appointed to one-year terms, provided they were not removed by majority vote.

**B. Members**

1. **Number of members:**  
The Paratransit Advisory Committee will consist of nine (9) members of the community.
2. **Appointed by:** City of Laredo, City Council Members
3. **Vacancy**  
In the event that a duly appointed PAC member is unable to complete his/her two-year term, an interim member shall be appointed by the PAC Chairperson to complete the remaining portion of the two-year term.
4. **Resignation**  
Any member may resign by filing a written resignation to the Chairperson of the committee . Resignations take effect when stated in such notice and acceptance is not necessary to make the resignation effective.
5. **Chairperson**  
The chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the committee and

may sign all letters, reports, and other communications of the committee. In addition, the chairperson shall perform all duties incident to the office of chairperson and such other duties as may be prescribed by the committee from time to time. He shall appoint the members and Chairperson of all subcommittees. Appointment to each subcommittee shall be ratified by the Committee. The Chairperson shall be an ex-officio member of each subcommittee. The PAC Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Committee; call special meetings when indicated; perform other duties on an advisory basis as directed by Committee. The PAC Chairperson shall appoint the Vice Chairperson to represent the Chairperson when the Chairperson is absent.

6. **Vice Chairperson**

The duties of the vice-chairperson shall be to represent the chairperson in assigned duties and to substitute for the chairperson during his/her absence, and the vice-chairperson shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the chairperson or by the committee.

7. **Chair as Presiding Officer**

The Chair may move, second and debate from the Chair, subject only to such limitations of debate as are imposed on all members. He/she shall not be deprived of any rights and privileges of any member by reason of his/her acting as presiding officer. However, the Presiding Officer is primarily responsible for the conduct of Committee meetings.

When appropriate for clarification purposes or requested by a member, the Chair shall restate each motion immediately following its introduction. In situations where extensive discussion or debate occurs following introduction of a motion, or when an amendment(s) has been made to a motion, the Chair, or his/her designee, shall restate each motion immediately prior to calling for the vote. Following the vote, the Chair shall announce whether the motion carried or was defeated.

The Chair shall be responsible for the maintenance of order and decorum of Committee meetings. The Chair shall determine all Points of Order subject to the right of any member to appeal the determination to the entire Committee. In the event of an appeal, the majority decision of the Committee shall govern and conclusively determine any question of order.

8. **Staff Support**

As authorized by the City Council, the General Manager, or his/her designee, shall serve as Committee Secretary to prepare meeting notices, agendas and minutes.

9. **Qualifications**

a. **Residency:** Laredo, Texas

b. **Expertise:**

1. Community Involvement ~~(relative to committee purposes).~~
2. Familiarity with or interested in EL METRO paratransit services and fixed route system.
3. Sensitivity to and or/practical experience with people who have disabilities.
4. Communication Skills (LTMI will make reasonable accommodations to alternative modes of communication; responsive to ADA regulations, i.e., signing, large prints, etc.)

c. **Other:**

**V. Certification Appeals Panel**

**A. PROCESS**

A subgroup of the PAC will serve as a Certification Appeals Panel (CAP) for persons denied certification for the EL LIFT paratransit service. If an applicant for certification fails to achieve after the physical, mental or visual assessment, he or she may appeal that decision to the CAP.

**B. MEMBERS**

Three (3) members of the PAC will be appointed by the PAC Chairperson on a revolving basis. Each CAP hearing must include a medical professional. The LTMI General Manager or his designee, will attend all CAP hearings but may not participate in the determinations of the board. The decision of the CAP will be final. The CAP will meet on an as-needed basis before a meeting of the PAC.

**VI. Ethics and standards of performance**

A. Members shall reflect the highest standards of ethics, performance and excellence in customer service.

B. They also shall reflect professionalism, courtesy and proper decorum in interacting with each other and with the public and while serving as City Appointed Officials.

C. They shall comply with the standards, parliamentary authority (*Robert's Rules of Procedure*, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, 1990), policies and procedures defined in the protocol and procedures handbooks adopted by the Mayor and Council.

## VII. **Training requirements**

**A. Training:** Members shall participate in training required by the Mayor and Council and may expect a focus on topics such as protocol, procedures and customer service, including the following elements:

i. Review of charge

ii. Parliamentary procedure and rules of decorum

iii. Techniques for successful meetings, hearings, forums

iv. Accountability and responsibility

v. Public information and feedback

vi. Customer service in specific areas

**B. Failure to comply:** Failure to participate in required and training shall be grounds for removal.

## VIII. **Timeline, schedule, reporting dates**

a. **Timeline:** The ADA Plan shall be updated on an annual basis.

**b. Reporting dates**

i. **Annual report:** Members shall submit an annual report to the Mayor and Council.

1. The report shall include the work, activities and accomplishments of the calendar year.

2. The annual report shall be due in December.

**vii. Quarterly reports:** Members shall submit quarterly reports to the Mayor and Council.

1. Quarterly reports shall include the work, activities and accomplishments of the quarter.
2. Quarterly reports shall be due in March, June, September and December.
  - a. The December report shall be the annual report.
  - b. Reports shall include an evaluation of progress toward accomplishing vision/mission and goals/responsibilities.

**iii. Minutes:** The designated staff liaison shall submit the minutes of each meeting within a week of the meeting.

1. The minutes shall include records of attendance, excused and unexcused absences and whether a quorum was established.
2. The minutes shall be signed by the Chair and designated staff liaison.
3. The Chair and designated staff liaison shall be responsible for recording the subsequent approval of the minutes.

## **IX. Meeting requirements**

**A. REGULAR MEETINGS:** The committee shall meet on a monthly basis.

**B. SPECIAL MEETINGS:** Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by majority vote of the committee.

**C. PLACE OF MEETINGS:** The committee shall hold its regular meetings and its special meetings at the Laredo Metro Transit Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor West, Laredo, in a place which is readily accessible by all members of the public, including disabled individuals.

**D. NOTICE OF MEETINGS:** Any change in the established date, time or location of regular meetings must be given special notice at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. All special meetings shall be publicized. Any required



notice shall be in writing; shall state the day, hour, and location of the meeting, and shall be delivered either personally or by U.S. Mail to each member and Associate Member not less than 72 hours or more than two weeks prior to the date of such meeting.

**E. DECISIONS OF THE COMMITTEE:** All decisions of the committee shall be made only after an affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members in attendance, provided a quorum is present. Minutes of meetings of this committee, as well as any special reports or communications desired by the committee, shall be forwarded each month by staff to the LTMI General Manager. In addition, the Chairperson or his/her designee may personally present issues to the City Council and LTMI Staff.

Dissenters may forward to the City Council and LTMI Staff their reservations or disagreement with the decision of the membership by recording same in the Minutes of the Meeting or in the form of a prepared minority report.

**F. QUORUM:** The presence of five members of the total membership shall be required in order to constitute a quorum necessary for the transaction of the business of the committee. No decision of the committee shall be valid unless a majority of the duly appointed members present concur therein by their votes. In the event that the full committee complement of nine is not maintained, a quorum shall consist of a minimum of one-half of the number of members then serving.

**G. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS:** All regular and special meetings of the committee shall be conducted in accordance with these bylaws and with the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order. In case of conflict, these bylaws shall take precedence over Robert's Rules of Order. Meeting minutes, correspondence, exhibits, and other information shall be made available to members in accessible formats as needed.

**H. MEETINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:** All regular and special meetings of the committee shall be open at all times to the public. Meeting agendas shall be posted in a public place in the same manner as agendas posted for meetings of the City Council.

**I. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES:** No individual member shall represent the PAC to the General Public or City Council meeting without majority vote of a quorum at a PAC meeting prior to the representation. No PAC member will represent LTMI to the general public without consent of the LTMI

#### **X. Accountability to the Mayor and Council**

A. Appointees of the Mayor and Council are accountable to the Mayor and

Council.

- B. Annual and quarterly reports, minutes and additional oral and written reports requested by the Mayor and Council shall reflect that accountability.
- C. The Mayor and Council hold all City Appointed Officials accountable for the highest standards of ethics, performance and excellence in customer service.

**IX. Accountability and accessibility to the public**

- A. Reports submitted to the Mayor and Council shall be public information and reflect accountability to the public.
- B. Members shall be subject to the notice and openness requirements of the Texas Open Meetings Act.
  - 1. All meetings shall be posted in compliance with the procedures defined for the Mayor and Council in the priority procedures handbook.
  - 2. All meetings shall be held in compliance with the openness provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act defined for the Mayor and Council in the priority procedures handbook.

**XII. Liaison with City Staff**

- 1. The designated staff liaison shall be a representative of El Metro.
- 2. The designated staff liaison shall submit all required reports and records to the Mayor and Council via the City Secretary or the City Secretary's designee.
- 3. The City Manager shall ensure that the designated staff liaison works with members to comply with all directives of the Laredo Mayor and Council, including complying with provisions of the protocol and procedures handbooks adopted by the Mayor and Council.

**XIII. Charge Recommendation and Adoption**

This charge was recommended to the Laredo Mayor and Council by

Designated Staff Liaison: Mr. Thomas N. Lucek, General Manager for Laredo Transit Management, Inc.

Department: EL METRO

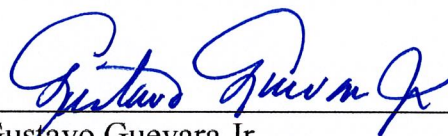
Date: July 27, 2003

for the Paratransit Advisory Committee (PAC) created by a Motion on  
June 16, 2003.

This charge was approved and issued by the Laredo Mayor and City Council on  
August 4, 2003, to become effective, June 16, 2003.



Elizabeth G. Flores, Mayor  
City of Laredo



Gustavo Guevara Jr.  
City Secretary