

AC Transit Mobility and Accessibility

Multi-modal, accessible and convenient.

Michael Paine, IT Supervisor, Software Engineering
Innovation and Technology Department

Agenda

- Discuss available mobile information and experience.
- What have we done for accessibility to transit information?
- Upcoming initiatives.

Accessible transit information from every channel for everybody

Transit information includes ACT Realtime, maps and schedules, service notices, trip planning, fare information, mobile payment, customer relations, open data catalog and analytics, public meetings.

Popular channels:

- 1) On the bus or at a station: audio announcements and digital signage on buses and at stations.
- 2) On the Web: AC Transit website 511.org and GTFS data.
- 3) On the app stores: download the AC Transit official app or favorite third-party transit apps.
- 4) Social and traditional media, radio, news, twitter and more.
- 5) Assistants with customer service and chatbots (coming soon).

What has been done for Mobile App?

Accessibility review for AC Transit (Official) App during beta testing in October 2020.

- Evaluation assessed the native app against a combination of accessibility guidelines and best practices.
 - Testing for mobility impaired, deaf/hearing impaired, and blind / low vision users.
 - Keyboard accessibility analysis (for mobility and physically challenged users) was conducted by attempting to navigate the app using both gestures and a Bluetooth keyboard.
 - For deaf and hard of hearing users, videos are assessed for proper captioning (when applicable).
 - Screen reader testing to identify accessibility barriers that are likely to be experienced by blind users.
- Conclusion: 29 issues were identified with accessibility guidelines.
- Remediation of these issues occurred between the app vendor and I.T. project manager.
- We are planning a new audit to newly reported or ongoing user experience issues.

What has been done for AC Transit.org Website?

Accessibility review for AC Transit website:

- Added accessiBe plugin for providing user with onscreen web accessibility controls.
- Added Google Translate with 17 additional languages.
- Google Lighthouse was used to evaluate website during the beta stages.
- Recently used Lighthouse with new accessibility rating calculations:
 - Homepage is at 79%, dropped from previous tests.
 - ACT Realtime at 93%.
 - Maps & Schedules Overview at 90%. Individual Line Schedule is 85%.
- We now recommend a third-party audit and website updates to be done through informal RFP.

What are the upcoming accessibility initiatives?

- Creating new district Mobile App with accessibility-first.
- All widgets will include:
 - Semantics improves navigation for screen readers. Information should be clear and concise.
 - Scalable graphics and fonts with alternative text and good color contrast for colorblind and grayscale.
 - Ensure active interactions do something.
 - Avoid automatic user context changes during input.
 - Large tappable targets.
 - Undo input errors.
- Ongoing discussions with AI chatbot vendors for providing transit information to all new channels such as:
 - Website Frames, Phone calls, Texting/SMS, Outlook/Email, Microsoft Teams, Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant, Zoom, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, Telegram, Twitter/X and Mastodon.

What are the upcoming accessibility initiatives?

- New stop QR codes to be placed at all stops, along with the stop ID. This links to webpage for easy access to detailed stop information, including:
 - Stop ID and address.
 - Link to mobile device's native map.
 - Active Service Alerts affecting the stop.
 - ACT Real-time arrival information.
 - Link to Maps & Schedules for lines servicing the stop.
- Modernizing the transit schedule communications tools for transitional channels. Accessibility-first is to be considered during the redesign.
 - Stop and line changes, printed schedule information, time-table PDF, stop audio announcements, service notices and alerts improvements.