



COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES

Wednesday, October 15, 2025, 3:30 P.M.

Minutes

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. Those present and absent were:

Present:

Derrick Espadas
Kate Elliott
Sue Kroeger
Wesley Derbyshire
Jonathan Lee Confer
Zach Coble, Chairperson
Ray Jordan
Lily Bogan

Representing

Mayor's Office
City Manager
City Manager
Ward 2
Ward 3
Ward 4
Ward 5
Ward 6

Absent:

Representing:

Staff and Others Present:

Panya Chhoeuy
Ian Sansome
Andy Bemis
Mikel Oglesby
Brandi Medina
Stepanie Alvarez

AGM Sun Van
DTM Transit Team
Deputy Director of DTM
Director of Transit Services
City Clerk's Office
City Clerk's Office

2. Call to the Public.

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

3. Consideration and Possible Approval for the September 2025 Draft Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Elliot, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 6 to 0, (Chairperson Coble abstaining) to approve September 2025 minutes.

4. Sun Van Update and Discussion of Operational Analysis

Chairperson Coble opened the item and introduced Andy Bemis, Deputy Director with the Department of Transportation and Mobility; Panya Chhoeuy, the new Assistant General Manager at Sun Tran; Ian Sansom with the DTM transit team; and Mikel Oglesby, Director of Transit Services. The presenters discussed ongoing improvements within the Sun Tran system, including updates to rider conduct policies, accessibility of printed and digital materials, and coordination across transit services. Commissioners raised concerns about how disciplinary actions are applied and the accessibility of eligibility forms for riders with visual impairments. The presenters noted that these topics are part of a broader effort to strengthen ADA compliance and improve the overall rider experience.

Mr. Bemis responded to commissioners' accessibility concerns, stating that he was unaware of the existing barriers to visually impaired riders but would make it a top priority to resolve. He assured the Commission that Sun Tran would not wait until the federal 2026 accessibility deadline to make necessary updates, particularly regarding screen reader compatibility for application and eligibility documents. He also invited commissioners, including Commissioner Bogan, to review upcoming revisions and provide feedback to ensure the materials meet accessibility standards. Mr. Sansom confirmed that the DTM team would coordinate accessibility reviews with the City's ADA program and report back at a future meeting.

Mr. Chhoeuy introduced himself in his new role and expressed his intent to strengthen communication between Sun Tran and the Commission, emphasizing his commitment to improving accessibility and customer experience system wide. Chairperson Coble thanked the presenters for their engagement and responsiveness and reminded commissioners that any follow-up discussions with the transit team should be routed through him to ensure compliance with open meeting laws.

5. Follow Up on Road Construction and Accessibility Discussion from Last Month

Chairperson Coble opened the item by following up on last month's discussion about road construction and accessibility. Although he was absent from that meeting, he shared that he had reviewed the full recording and thanked staff for making it available. Coble informed the Commission that he had reached out to Jen Toothaker to plan a future agenda item focused on ensuring accessible routes during ongoing road construction throughout the city.

Commissioner Derrick Espadas added that even when pathways appear accessible on paper, poor design elements—such as steep angles or uneven textures—can still pose challenges for people with mobility needs. Commissioner Wesley Derbyshire asked whether the upcoming discussion would include not only accessibility during construction but also after project completion, citing issues like improperly placed tactile bumps and signs. Chairperson Coble clarified that the next meeting would primarily focus on accessibility during active construction projects but noted that post-completion accessibility could be addressed in a separate future discussion.

6. Discussion and Organization of Possible CODI Memorandum Drafting

Chair Coble introduced the final agenda item, suggesting that the Commission prepare two memorandums—one addressing Sun Van and another focused on accessibility during construction. He proposed beginning with the Sun Van memo, based on the Commission's recent discussions with Sun Van representatives, and

drafting the construction accessibility memo following the November meeting once additional information becomes available.

Commissioner Jordan recommended completing the construction memo first, explaining that the Commission had already had a thorough discussion on contractor accessibility and safety considerations. He noted that drafting a concise memo highlighting ADA compliance and construction zone access guidelines would be straightforward, while the Sun Van memo would require more time pending the release of the final report. Chair Coble agreed with this order and requested volunteers to assist with drafting; Commissioner Jordan offered to participate, and Chair Coble volunteered to collaborate. Both will prepare a draft construction accessibility memorandum for the next meeting.

7. Announcements

Chairperson Coble opened the floor for announcements. Commissioner Jordan shared updates on the "Safe City" initiative, a collaboration between the Department of Transportation and Mobility and the Tucson Police Department to enhance safety around transit areas. He invited Commissioners to share any related feedback through Chairperson Coble and suggested that Sun Tran's rider training sessions be held at public locations such as transit centers to improve accessibility.

Chairperson Coble announced that Tucson Disability Pride Day will take place on December 6th, 2025 and encouraged disabled artists and performers to participate. With no further announcements, he concluded the meeting.

8. Adjournment: 5:00 PM