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Metro Board Members,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to present the June 2007 Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) report to the Board. This written report discusses the progress from our RAC subcommittees; outlines the RAC's issues surrounding Metro's reorganization, MetroAccess and budget issues.

The RAC co-sponsored with Metro, two "Pedestrian Safety Town Hall Meetings." Mr. Catoe ran the Columbia Heights event with Armando Cortinez, RAC Member and George Branyan, dDOT Pedestrian Program Coordinator as panelists. Mr. Catoe also ran the Congress Heights session with Mr. Moneme, Dr. Sharon Conn, RAC Member and briefly Mr. Gerald Francis as panelists.

Although each meeting only had time for about 10 members of the public to present issues and commendations the sessions were very productive and demonstrated Metro and dDot interest in addressing community issues. I'd like to thank all the panelists, Metro staff, and the members of public who took family time to come out to these very productive events. The three topics from the RAC's perspective that require follow-up on were:

- Transit-Oriented Development Lessons Learned – When Metro participates in a joint development project, like the on-going project at Columbia Heights, Metro and dDot need to be more pro-active in monitoring the activities of the developers to maintain pedestrian accessibility to Rail Stations and Bus Stops. As the project wraps-up, involvement by the community in a lessons learned "workshop" is important to help the Authority to do a better job on subsequent projects as guidance for future planning. The RAC Communication and Customer Service Subcommittee has expressed interest in helping Metro by co-sponsoring these events.
- Safety and Security, Lighting and Juveniles at Station – A number of riders expressed concerns that Anacostia Station may not have sufficient lighting and security controls. Also, Metro needs to look into practical ways to address the problem of young people using the station as a hang-out.

- Pedestrian Access – Access to stations and bus stops, street crossings, and placement of bus stops all require continued on-going cooperation by dDot and Metro.

At this month's RAC meeting, we had a presentation by Mr. Raphael Alfred, from the General Manager's office, on Metro's recent corporate reorganization. The RAC found the consolidation and focus on operations encouraging, but raised two concerns in presenting the organization to the public:

Customer Service Organization – If customer service is going to be Metro's primary focus, then it doesn't appear from the organization chart that the distribution of customer service functions as presented, make it a priority.

The RAC recommends that Metro establish one centralized Customer Service unit to establish standardized customer service protocols and to respond to system-wide customer service issues and also to retain or establish within each operational division, customer service units which will report directly to those division directors and operate consistently with the protocols established by the centralized customer service unit.

The RAC understands that some customer service issues need to be handled centrally, including developing guidelines for customer service. We also believe that customer service works best when customer service agents are familiar with and have strong relationships with the operating departments. This has worked well for the rail line service divisions and is being explored for MetroAccess service. We'd like Metro to look at other opportunities to incorporate this model as part of its customer service practices.

Additionally, the "Customer Communications" function under Ms. Sara Wilson might better be labeled "Public/Media Relations" to better differentiate it from customer service.

In demonstrating Metro's focus on customer outreach, it is important to include the RAC, E&D and other Metro-sponsored citizen groups on the Organization Chart.

The RAC recommends that in the new organizational structure, Metro include a direct linkage between the Riders' Advisory Council and the Board of Directors and that the organizational chart clearly identify the RAC.

Budget Subcommittee – The Budget Subcommittee is dedicated to exploring opportunities for Metro to increase non-fare revenue, identify cost saving

measures, and to examine management recommendations for changes in fares and services, with the goal of maximizing customer value in transit services consumed.

As I was putting the finishing touches on this report, I learned of Mr. Catoe's plan to recommend a fare increase in January. As Chair of the RAC, I would be remiss in my duties if I did not remind Mr. Catoe of his promise to not raise fares or cut service to balance the FY 2008 budget.

I would like to remind him and the Board that the RAC held workshops to identify alternatives and policy changes to help hold off the need for a fare increase. The RAC will work with Metro to engage the public in establishing a Fair Fare policy for FY2009 and beyond, and continue to flesh-out revenue and policy recommendations as Metro addresses the challenges of increased demand, infrastructure maintenance, and service improvements.

Meanwhile, Mr. Catoe must look deeper into his organization to find the resources needed to prudently provide public transportation to this region. Metro is experiencing record breaking ridership ... that's great for the environment, our local governments, and for Metro as it demonstrates an expanding need for public transportation. Metro needs to encourage this growth and seek ways to also expand the use of off-peak system capacity to increase revenue.

To offset the need for a fare increase, Mr. Catoe must allow his new management to implement the real cost savings he has promised, get a better handle on the abuse of passes and transfers, control its overtime costs, and expand the use of headquarters staff to support operations.

The RAC will work with Metro on its recommendations for a Fare Policy that is easy to understand; allows easy access to passes; and is tied to a *wage based* economic indicator; but for FY 2008 Metro must look elsewhere.

Bus Subcommittee – The Bus Subcommittee is dedicated to MetroBus service issues including operations, scheduling, safety, and improvements to services for the communities served by this mode of transportation.

At this month's Bus Subcommittee, Mr. James Hamre of Business Planning and Development presented Metro's plans for the 30s Line Survey and public meetings to gather customer input into a possible restructuring of this well traveled line. We were very pleased to have Mr. Milo Victoria attend our meeting even though it was only his second day at Metro. We look forward to his active participation in the RAC's discussion of bus operations related initiatives.

Rail Subcommittee – The Rail Subcommittee is dedicated to MetroRail, MetroRail Stations, elevator/escalator, and parking-related services, including safety, cleanliness, recycling, lighting, bicycle/pedestrian/special needs accessibility, infrastructure, expansion, and improvement to services for the communities served by this mode of transportation.

At this month's Rail Subcommittee, Mr. David Kubicek, Metro's new Chief Mechanical Officer (CMO) discussed railcar design issues, specifically related to the 7000-series cars. An issue that was discussed was whether Metro had considered cab-less rail cars to (1) make room for more passengers; (2) save in energy costs by producing lighter rail cars; and (3) save in the cost of producing 500 cabled rail cars; when we seem to have more than enough cabs in the system already. We have encouraged Mr. Kubicek to provide us with follow-up.

The subcommittee continued our discussion of Metro's recycling program as presented in my April report to the Board. An earlier resolution asked that Metro clearly label trash-cans with a statement of "No Newspapers." We also asked that Metro re-arrange the placement of Recycling containers to encourage their use over trash-cans. Metro performed a survey of all trash and recycling receptacles, but has failed to relocate and label them as we've asked.

MetroAccess

On Thursday June 22, 2007, Mr. Christian Kent, Access Assistant General Manager and Selene Dalton-Kumins, Director of MetroAccess presented their recommendations for Board Action on expanded funding in support of the MetroAccess Policy Advisory Task Forces' 11 initiatives to that group and members of both the Elderly and Disabled Committee (E&D) and the RAC. A majority of the participants endorsed the recommendations and look forward to formally guiding the implementation of these initiatives. Pat Sheehan, E&D Chair and Michael Snyder, RAC Chair pledge to develop a formal structure to this Task Force as a collaborative effort of E&D and RAC, so WMATA receives clear guidance and recommendations representative of all customers with special needs.

Concluding Remarks:

In last month's report I discussed, but was unable to highlight my concern about huge sections of tiles planned for replacement at the above ground stations of White Flint and Twinbrook. I was told by the Red Line team that even though Metro would be replacing tiles all the way to the granite edge, they would not be adding bumpy domes on this part of the platform. Additionally, there are no plans

to use the new skid-resistant tiles that the RAC approved. Why not take this repair as an opportunity to accomplish both these initiatives?

As Chair of the RAC, I would like to formally commend, Mr. Bob Hester, Customer Service Representative on the Red Line. Mr. Hester has been a great friend to the RAC, he has actively participated in most of our Rail Subcommittee meetings, and has been personally very responsive to Red Line issues raised by the RAC. Mr. Hester has invited RAC members to participate in station walk-throughs, meet and greets, and other Red Line events. Mr. Hester is a model customer service representative and the RAC encourages all other Metro customer service representatives to follow his example. Thank you Mr. Bob Hester for being one of Metro's finest.

In conclusion, the RAC is eager to know the status of any initiative that directly affects riders. On behalf of the citizen volunteers on the RAC, I would ask everyone at WMATA involved with the planning and implementation of a new initiative to ask:

What would Metro's customers on the RAC think of this idea?

I. Michael Snyder
Chair, Riders' Advisory Council