



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-962-6060

BUS AND RAIL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: June 11, 2012

In attendance: Susan Holland (Chair) Debbie Brown (Vice-Chair), Regina Lee, Dr. Phil Posner, Marilyn Lutter, Georges Aguehoude, Doris Ray and Dr. William Staderman.

Representing the Department of Access Services: Christian Kent, Christiaan Blake, Glenn Millis, Sherrie Collins, Christopher Colbert, Carol P. Lopez, Gabriel DeJerusalem, Nicole June, Antonia Evans and Dr. B. Moore Gwynn.

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Brown called the June 11, 2012 Bus and Rail Subcommittee (BRS) meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Public Comment

In response to a question about MetroAccess bus stops signage, staff reported that during the May 2012 meeting, Metro's Office of Bus Planning stated that the new MetroAccess bus stop signs will mirror the color of the transit property's bus stop signs in the areas where they are placed. Additionally, in places where there are multiple entrances, the MetroAccess signage will identify pick-up and drop-off points.

Review and Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The Subcommittee approved the June 11, 2012 agenda, and approved the May 14, 2012 minutes with corrections.

Construction Signage and Fences at Metrorail Stations

In response to a comment made at the April 2012 meeting about fences and accessible paths during construction at Metrorail stations, Carol Lopez, ADAP Accessibility Design Review Manager, reported that Metro is

rebuilding the bus bay area at the Vienna and the Dunn Loring stations. She stated that during construction the bus bays have been relocated. The accessible paths for customers are protected by 6' chain link fences.

The BRS expressed an interest in the lighting of the accessible paths at the two stations. Ms. Lopez reported that Metro has improved the lighting along the accessible paths for greater visibility. The BRS also expressed an interest in how Metro was communicating these changes in service to customers. Ms. Lopez reported that Station Managers are on-site to provide information and guide customers to the new bus bay area, and bus stop information is updated on the website. Additionally, Metro is considering the use of the MetroBus annunciator system to provide information on changes in service.

The BRS expressed an interest in a temporary crosswalk at the Dunn Loring station to access a nearby housing complex. Currently pedestrians jaywalk because the construction has blocked the crosswalks and the accessible path is too long. Ms. Lopez reported that the construction fence covers the entire area for safety, and encouraged customers to use the designated crosswalks.

Shuttle Response to Elevator Outages

The BRS discussed Metro's shuttle response to elevator outages at Metrorail stations. Mr. Brian Nickelson, Manager, Bus Operations Control Center, reported that Metro strategically stages buses throughout the system in an effort to promptly dispatch buses to stations during an outage. He indicated that the shuttle service response time is 30-minutes, and customers are transported to the nearest station which has operational elevator. The BRS expressed an interest in requesting shuttle service prior to a customer arriving at a station which has an outage. Mr. Nickelson reported that customers can request shuttle service from a Station Manager prior to arriving at the station where there is an elevator outage. AAC member Dr. Staderman reported that Station Managers are reporting that shuttle service can only be requested from the station with the elevator

outage. Mr. Nickelson reported that he will investigate and provide feedback to the Subcommittee.

Mr. Nickelson stated that for long-term elevator outages, buses are staged at Metrorail stations to shuttle customers to the next station. The BRS expressed an interest in a designated sign or area at stations with multiple entrances for customers to wait for a shuttle. Mr. Nickelson indicated that customers should wait at the Station Manager Kiosk for the shuttle service.

The BRS commended Train Operators for making announcements about elevator outages, and expressed an interest in Bus Operators making the same announcements for long-term service changes. Mr. Millis reported that at the May 2012 meeting Jim Hamre, Director of Bus Planning, discussed that he was investigating the possibility of making additional announcements on buses. Mr. Millis also discussed accessible signage at bus bays. He indicated that Metro is considering adding accessible signage to bus shelters at Metrorail stations. This will allow customers with visual disabilities to locate the correct shelter for a bus. Staff reported that they will investigate and provide feedback.

Rush Plus

Mr. Tom Harrington, Director, Office of Long-Range Planning, and Ms. Jennifer Green, Director, Strategic Communication, provided an update on the Rush Plus service in the Metrorail System. Mr. Harrington stated that all system maps and signage in the Metrorail system will be updated in two phases to reflect the changes in service. The first phase will include the installation of all line destination signage above the tracks and accessible signage in stations prior to the implementation of Rush Plus. The second phase will consist of all other signage in the stations, and will be done over the summer. The BRS expressed an interest in the updates being placed on the Passenger Information Display systems (PIDS). Mr. Harrington stated that the information will appear on the PIDS and will be tested prior to the launch of the service.

Ms. Green reported that Metro has conducted outreach to educate the ridership about the Rush Plus service. She stated that staff will be available in Metrorail stations during the launch of the service to educate customers on the new service. Customers can also use the interactive map on the website to learn about the new service. Additionally, Metro has placed ads in local newspapers, multi-cultural publications, and on social networking sites to inform customers about the change in the service. The BRS expressed an interest in Train Operators providing announcements of the line shift at the platform, in the tunnel and a least two stations prior to the branch point of the line. Ms. Green reported that the Office of Rail Transportation is working to improve announcements.

Work Plan

The BRS proposed to maintain the following items on its work plan for FY2013: Accessible paths during construction at Metrorail Stations; Shuttle response to elevator outages; Enhancements to Metrobus and Metrorail announcements; Metro's 7000 series railcars; Web accessibility; and Accessible signage at bus stops. The BRS proposed to add Metrorail Station Platform repairs to its work plan for FY2013.

New Business

Marilyn Lutter, Chair, BRS Station Lighting Work Group, reported that the Work Group will meet on June 27, 2012. Staff will provide an update of the lighting in the Metrorail system. Dr. B. Moore Gwynn discussed the Accessibility Excellence Awards program. She indicated that nominations are needed for the Richard W. Hedding award. The BRS expressed an interest making the application process for the Hedding award easier, and agreed to the honoring of former members of the AAC with awards. Staff will follow up and provide feedback.

AAC Chair Patrick Sheehan, Vice-Chair Dr. Posner and BRS Chair Susan Holland met with Metro's General Manager Richard Sarles and Ms. Carol Dillon Kissal, Deputy General Manager/Chief Financial Officer, to discuss fare discounts available through use of SmartTrip cards. Funds can be loaded onto SmartTrip cards at every Metrorail station and on all Metrobuses. Staff reported that Metro is also increasing the number of dispensers that issue SmartTrip cards in Metrorail stations. Mr. Millis reported that customers can purchase SmartTrip cards at approximately 366 locations around the Metro region. Metro is working on an SmartTrip auto-load feature to enable customers to replenish cards automatically. Metro has also worked through social service agencies to assist customers who do not have bank accounts.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Attachment: Work Plan