



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
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BUS AND RAIL SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES: November 14, 2011

In attendance: Susan Holland (Chair), Debbie Brown (Vice-Chair), Marilyn Lutter, Patrick Sheehan, George Aguehoude, William Staderman and Darrell Drake. Christian Kent, Glenn Millis, Christopher Colbert and B. Moore Gwynn represented the Department of Access Services.

Call to Order

Chairman Holland called the October 11, 2011 Bus and Rail Subcommittee (BRS) meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Public Comments

A comment was made that Metro's on-line customer comment form is difficult to navigate for customers that use reader software. A comment was also made about signage to identify wheelchair areas on the new 7000 series railcars. Staff will follow-up on both comments and provide feedback.

Review of Agenda, Minutes

The Subcommittee approved the November 14, 2011 agenda and the October 11, 2011 minutes.

Status of Action Items from November 14, 2011 Meeting

The Subcommittee discussed the draft Customer Guide for Metrobus and Metrorail, designed to assist riders with the use of fixed route public transportation. It provides information on trip planning, customer rights and responsibilities, personal care attendants, service animals, and other tips for traveling on Metrobus and Metrorail. The Subcommittee suggested that information on the location of elevators, a list of helpful telephone numbers, and internet links to an audio version be made available. Mr. Millis reported that the document will be also available in accessible formats and will be on

Metro's website. The Subcommittee also suggested that the guide be available in a format conducive to conversion to Braille.

Ms. Barbara Milleville, President, National Capital Citizen with Low Vision discussed station lighting in the Metrorail system. She stated that public transportation is very important to the disability community because it increases independence. Ms. Milleville stated that insufficient lighting or too much concentrated lighting is a safety issue that causes some people with vision impairments to use paratransit services instead of fixed route. She indicated that lighting can also be a challenge for other types of disabilities as well.

Ms. Milleville reported that areas at the fare gates, platforms and escalators had insufficient lighting in Metrorail stations. Ms. Milleville stated that lighting is inadequate at Gallery Place and Bethesda rail stations at the platform levels and escalators. Mr. Kent stated that in many areas of the system, the original lighting design was for aesthetic purposes. Ms. Milleville reported that red lights are the most difficult for individuals with low vision to see and white and yellow lights are more easily recognized. She suggested that the timely replacement of bulbs, additional lighting on the escalators and stairs, and spot lights on rail pylons, would improve lighting in the rail system. Ms. Milleville indicated that Forest Glen, McPherson Square, and Tenleytown-American University, were good examples of adequate lighting in the Metrorail stations.

In preparation for the next meeting, the Subcommittee requested that the National Capital Citizens with Low Vision provide additional information on stations where lighting is inadequate and specific offer recommendations for improvements.

The Subcommittee also discussed signage. Mr. Millis reported that Metro accessible signage can include Braille and raised lettering. Different types of signage can be found on elevators, entrances, exits, and exterior and interior directional signs. Mr. Millis reported that an accessibility signage plan is being developed to standardize signage throughout the Metrorail system. He indicated that the signage plan will be administered in phases

and it will be developed via data collection, industry best practices, safety compliance, and discussions with advocacy groups. Mr. Millis indicated that the input from the Subcommittee will be critical in prioritizing this plan and developing preliminary information scheduled to begin in FY12. Staff will provide an update at each stage of the process.

The Subcommittee expressed an interest in bus stop signage as part of the accessibility signage plan. Mr. Millis reported that the topic of bus stop signage was on the work plan for the January 9, 2012 meeting.

The Subcommittee also discussed auto-dispatch in the Metrorail system. Mr. Kent reported that auto-dispatch was available in some but not all of the elevators in the system. The Subcommittee requested an update on auto-dispatch on elevators. Staff will provide a status report on auto-dispatch at the December 12, 2011 meeting.

Subcommittee Work Plan

The Subcommittee reviewed its work plan priorities and agreed to add elevator auto-dispatch to the work plan.

New Business

The Subcommittee expressed an interest in the status of the travel training grant. Mr. Millis reported that portions of the grant will conclude during the first quarter of CY2011. Mr. Millis also stated that Metro has developed a Request For Proposal (RFP) to continue providing travel training services after the funding expires. He indicated that the RFP is scheduled for December 2011 award to prevent any interruption of services to customers.

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

Attachment: Work Plan