



AAC

Accessibility Advisory Committee

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Dear Chair Hudgins and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of June 2012. The primary issues reviewed by the AAC, its subcommittees and workgroups during the month were MetroAccess Fare Calculator and the Surcharge for Non-SmartTrip Customers.

AAC Safety First Update

The AAC was informed that Metro pre-stages emergency equipment and supplies, including Automated External Defibrillators, throughout the Metrorail stations. Metro also conducts exercises to improve response time in emergency situations, and in many of the exercises customers with disabilities are used to simulate a real-world experience of a rescue.

Issues of the Month

MetroAccess Fare Calculator

The AAC received an update on the progress of development of this unique tool that will be very helpful to MetroAccess customers. On behalf of the entire AAC, I would like to express thanks and congratulations to all Metro staff involved, in any way, in the development of the MetroAccess Fare Calculator.

On the other hand, AAC members continue to express strong concerns that the benefits of the fare calculator will be limited to only those MetroAccess customers with computer access. The AAC was informed that reservation agents will not have access to fare calculator information until the second phase of this project; projected for October 2012. To this end, the AAC would like you to take into consideration our motion that the MetroAccess fares be reduced to twice the bus fare until the benefits of the MetroAccess Fare Calculator can be incorporated into the telephone reservations process.

Surcharge for Non-SmartTrip Customers

Some members of the AAC continue to express concerns about the surcharge for customers who do not use SmartTrip cards. The concerns primarily center on the number of locations where SmartTrip cards can be loaded, in particular the lack of access to locations where the card can be loaded.

Metro staff has pointed out that SmartTrip cards can be purchased, not loaded at more than 366 retail locations across the region, and that more are being added. Staff also informed the ACC that Metro is working on a SmartTrip auto-load feature to enable

customers to replenish cards automatically, and that Metro is working with social service agencies to assist customers who do not have bank accounts. The ACC would like all of these efforts to become priorities at Metro.

Other Issues

1. Metro has taken measures to protect accessibility and enhance safety during construction at the Dunn Loring and Vienna Metrorail stations, including the installation of six inch chain-link fences as well as improved lighting along the accessible paths at the stations. The Bus Rail Subcommittee (BRS) recommended that during construction a temporary crosswalk be installed at the Dunn Loring Metro station to access a nearby housing complex. Staff reported that the construction fences covered the entire area, and customers should use the crosswalks along the accessible path for safety.
2. The BRS commended Train Operators for making announcements for long-term elevator outages, and recommends that Bus Operators do the same.
3. The BRS received an update on Metro's efforts leading up to Rush Plus, including public outreach, the displaying of information on the Passenger Information Display System, the updating of system maps and signage, and the informational sharing through newspaper ads, multi-cultural publications and social-networking sites. The BRS applauds Metro for its outreach efforts to customers.
4. The MAS received an update on the new paratransit vehicle, the MV1, and commended staff for introducing a potentially more comfortable and practical vehicle into the MACS fleet.

Sincerely,



Patrick Sheehan, Chairman