



AAC

Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

September 14, 2015

Dear Chair Downey and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of July and August 2015. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Metro's Proposed Route Changes, 2) Metro's Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives; and 3) Emergency Exercise.

Issues of the Month

Metro's Proposed Route Changes

Metro's Department of Bus Planning (BPLN) provided a summary of the FY2016 State of Good Operations (SGO) proposed bus service changes. SGO proposed changes are designed to ensure Metro is meeting ridership demand and improving customer experience through better on-time performance and done within the framework of current budgeted resources.

Although each of the jurisdictions could be impacted by changes proposed in the SGO, the AAC is concerned about customers in areas where public transportation is already sparse. The proposed changes appear to have the potential to reduce the availability of service in Prince George's County, Maryland.

To garner public opinion on the proposed changes, Metro will conduct outreach along the potentially affected routes, at major transfer stations in the Metrorail system, on the internet, through targeted phone surveys, and by holding a public hearing. To assist Metro's outreach efforts, the AAC recommends the following:

- Ensure bus routes are recognizable to the customers by adding a brief description of the bus line to each bus number in all materials made public related to the SGO changes. This would make it easier for customers to identify a particular service and the possible impact to the SGO service changes;
- Conduct an online chat during the public hearings to increase access for those customers who are unable to attend;
- Increase the number of public hearings by at least one additional daytime hearing to allow seniors to participate; and
- Post notices about the public hearing and affected routes on all MetroAccess vehicles and on the interactive voice response system.

The AAC believes that these recommendations would allow all customers including those with disabilities and seniors to have input into the process.

Metro's Diversity and Recruitment Initiative

Staff from Metro's Department of Human Resources invited the AAC to offer advice on Metro's brand new diversity initiative. The initiative is part of Metro's Affirmative Action Plan and is designed to increase the number of qualified individuals with disabilities in its workforce. The AAC applauds Metro for including the disability community in this process.

Emergency Exercise

In August, AAC members participated in Metro's emergency exercise at the Stadium Armory station. The AAC views safety as a critical issue for all customers, especially those with disabilities. The AAC reiterated its recommendation that future first responder training include working with customers who are deaf or hard of hearing and customers who use service animals. The AAC commends Metro for the ongoing number of planned emergency training exercises for first responders around the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Sheehan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "S".

Patrick Sheehan
Chairman