



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

December 4, 2017

Dear Chair Evans and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of November 2017. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) New MetroAccess Vehicle; and 2) the Abilities-Ride Program.

Issues of the Month

New MetroAccess Vehicle

The AAC had an opportunity to speak further with Metro staff about concerns and recommendations for improvements to the new vehicles, but also to share directly observations, concerns, and recommendations to representatives of Ford, Transit Works, and Sonny Merryman. The AAC's goals with the review and feedback on the vehicle design are to have corrections made to the current fleet, where possible, and set a standard for future vehicles. Some improvements needed include wider door, better last step off the vehicle, more leg room between seats, and higher door frame. The AAC is also concerned that the GPS is too low, forcing drivers to take their eyes off of the road when looking at the device.

Metro staff stated that some modifications have already been made based on prior AAC feedback, and that other modifications can be made in the future. The AAC is requesting timelines on future modifications.

Abilities-Ride Program

The AAC had the opportunity to speak with representatives of Regency Taxi and Silver Cab, Metro's service provider partners in the Abilities-Ride program. The AAC highlighted some service challenges witnessed during the early days of the program including transfers between the companies depending on the customer's trip originating county; drivers picking up customers across the street from their homes; and some late pick-ups. Some members of the AAC also reported witnessing overall improvements from the first days until now, but would like further improvements. The AAC will continue to monitor the program to ensure that it reaches its full potential.

The AAC is recommending Metro undertake the following actions: (1) release copies of the signed contracts with both companies providing service under the Abilities-Ride program; (2) establish uniformed pricing for trips subsidized by the Abilities-Ride program; and (3) Metro's Office of ADA Policy and Planning provide to the AAC monthly publicly releasable statistics and data on the program in order to enable the AAC to better advise the agency on the program and make recommendations for improvements to the services being provided.

Attachment

Attached to this report is a listing of all AAC recommendations regarding the new MetroAccess vehicle.

The AAC recognizes that steps to address many of our concerns and recommendations, for both the vehicle and the Abilities-Ride program, are underway, but will take some time and effort by Metro staff and partners. The AAC will monitor these developments to ensure progress continues.

Sincerely,

/s/

Philip Posner
Chair



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Recommendations for the New MetroAccess Vehicles

1. The door to enter the vehicle does not open wide enough; they open less than 90 degrees.
2. The last step off the vehicle is not a real step.
 - a. Recommendation:
 - i. Make it a real step. Larger and with a non-slip surface that is inside the vehicle to prevent it getting wet.
3. The handles to assist a customer to board the vehicle are not accessible and do not provide adequate support for boarding the vehicle.
 - a. Recommendation:
 - i. Make the handrail on the door lower
4. The long seat is too high. The legs of some customers would swing from the seat, leaving no way to brace oneself if a sudden stop occurs.
 - a. Recommendations:
 - i. Lower the seat
 - ii. Install an arm-rest on the left side of the long seat. This will allow a customer the ability to hold on in case of a sudden stop.
 - iii. Install a slide-out step under the seat.
 - iv. On the back seat only, add a X-configuration style seatbelt (i.e. child car seat)
5. The two side seats do not allow enough leg room.
 - a. Recommendation:
 - i. Removal of one of the seats
 - ii. Reduce the inside of the bulkhead
 - iii. Make the side seats captain chairs
6. The door frame is too low and inside of the door the bulkhead is too low.
 - a. Recommendation:
 - i. Retrofit the rear of the van with a stairway or ramp for access through the rear.
 - ii. Add cushioning to bulkhead
7. The tail pipe is very low. This will be a concern if there is snow on the ground.
 - a. Recommendations:
 - i. Extend and raise the tailpipe and deflect emissions from entering the vehicle.

8. The driver's area appears to be cramped, and the brake and gas pedal are too close together.
 - a. Recommendation
 - i. Move the driver's seat back
9. The GPS screen is low. While driving the driver must look down.
 - a. Recommendation:
 - i. Lift the screen to view the road and screen at the same time.