



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

May 6, 2019

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 April 2019. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Platform Improvement Project, 2) Silver Line Phase Two, 3) MetroAccess GPS System.

Issues of the Month

Platform Improvement Project:

James Hamre, Director, Bus Service Planning and Scheduling, presented information about Metro's Platform Improvement Project Summer 2019. The AAC appreciated the information received from Mr. Hamre. The AAC expects adequate shuttle service and assistance for customers with needs during the platform improvement and stations closure. Metro will have free shuttles on various routes for weekdays and weekends with times that place customers at the operating stations for the first and the last trains. Additional bus service has been added to the existing routes throughout the shutdown. All shuttles will be accessible, and there will be an extra contractor available to provide additional wheelchair accessible service.

Another part of the platform project that was discussed was the design of the new platform and bus bay shelters. The importance of bench height (not too low and not too high) as well as arm rests for rising from the seats, and cell phone charging ability. It was also pointed out that this might be an opportunity to standardize elevator buttons and signage.

Silver Line Phase Two:

With the expansion of the Silver Line, MetroAccess service will be extended as well. Fixed route travel time on Metrorail may be very different than travel time on the roads, thus a determination of accurately measuring the fixed route equivalent time for MetroAccess trips will need to be developed.

The AAC is also concerned that MetroAccess drivers may have trouble finding customers at the Dulles Airport. The current GPS systems often send drivers to a hotel in the vicinity. As a result, MetroAccess drivers may end up waiting at an inaccurate location. The Committee hopes that use of a public-transit lane for MetroAccess trips similar to the one used by STAR at Reagan National airport is something WMATA can work out with the Airport Authority.

MetroAccess GPS System:

Customers have commented that recently, the MetroAccess GPS system has been sending drivers in circles, blanking out, and sometimes takes time to recharge itself. The Committee discussed issues that surface when the GPS malfunctions and recommended

for customers to be allowed to provide driving direction input to drivers. The Committee was advised that there is really no way of weighing the accuracy of the information from customers and could create safety and other operational issues. Currently, if the real-time traffic aspects of the GPS malfunctions drivers would still be able to receive turn-by-turn directions. In a situation where the entire system goes out and drivers need assistance, drivers can utilize a map if it is safe to do so; and if they do know the area and know how to get to locations because of their own experience, they are free to do that. The Committee hopes that if and when needed, the drivers will take into consideration information received from customers. It will also be critical that the GPS system be corrected to give accurate and efficient routes.

The committee is looking forward to receiving updates on the cashless bus pilot as well as the Bus Transformation Project in May, as well as a discussion of potential MetroAccess passes and MetroAccess trip durations and their positive impact on service efficiency.

Sincerely,

Philip Posner
Chair

