



Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

June 5, 2023

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of May 2023. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Board Members and CFO's Visit to the AAC, 2) 8K Rail Car Series, Open Gangway Design – Update, 3) Better Bus Network Redesign Public Engagement, and 3) MetroAccess Eligibility Certification Process.

Issues of the Month

Board Members and Chief Financial Officer's Visit to the AAC:

Lucinda Baber, Bryna Helfer, and Sarah Kline, the three Board Members attended the AAC Meeting along with Yutende Olumide, Chief Financial Officer. The AAC wanted to thank them for helping in making the \$4 cap fare for MetroAccess, a reality. The AAC appreciates the recommendation of Board Member Kline, and the Board accepting and approving it. The AAC commends Ms. Olumide and her team, for their remarkable data driven research results that informed feasibility of cap fare of \$4 could be a reality. The AAC applauds the tremendous efforts of Christiaan Blake, Managing Director, Access Services, for firstly, continuing the paratransit service even during the pandemic. Not only that, but Mr. Blake also initiated and maintained Abilities Ride Program. As shared with the Board Members and Ms. Olumide at the AAC Meeting, the AAC understands the fiscal cliff for FY25, and offers to discuss financial contribution with jurisdictions, as per the guidance of the Board and WMATA Leadership.

8K Rail Car Series, Open Gangway Design - Update:

Lynn Bowersox, Senior Vice President (SVP), Rail Transformation; and David Sauter, Senior Program Manager; provided an update about the feedback received from the AAC members that participated in the trip to New York, to view the open gangway trains. Ms. Bowersox stated majority of the recommendations are being considered, as follows: Dedicated wheelchair space, Designated bike/luggage/ stroller space, Rail operator visibility improvement at window, Handholds (integrated bars) at priority seats, Open gangway without pinch points/ ability to close off cars, Door closing lights, Seat covering similar to 7Ks, USB Chargers (secure), Digital/more visible maps, Emergency instruction with more icons, Halo lighting for emergency call box, Info systems more visible with more content, Better inter-car barrier, and Non-slip flooring. Ms. Bowersox stated an optional folding seat may not be considered for various reasons.

The AAC appreciates the efforts put forth on a recommendation made by an AAC member about a trip to New York to experience the Open Gangways and implementing it. The members who were able to participate in the trip, appreciated the efforts, and provided their feedback, which is being considered by WMATA. The AAC looks forward to continuing this partnership of providing recommendations and WMATA's keen interest in reviewing and considering those, as applicable.

MetroAccess Eligibility Certification Process:

Antoine Johnson, Eligibility Verification Operations Manager, provided an overview on the Eligibility Certification Process. Mr. Johnson stated for new applications, the MetroAccess application is to be completed as follows: Part A by the customer and Part B by the healthcare provider and include a color copy of a state or federal identification (for example, a driver's license, a non-driver's license, passport, etc.). For recertification, the MetroAccess application is to be completed as follows: Part A by the customer and Part B by the healthcare provider. A photograph on file can be used for ID purposes. The completed applications can be returned to the Transit Accessibility Center by email, fax, postal mail and can be dropped off at the office. Once an application is received a customer will be contacted only if there are questions or if additional steps are needed regarding the application. Up to 21 days should be allowed for processing of applications plus additional mailing time for MetroAccess ID card if the person is determined eligible.

The AAC appreciates that the Transit Accessibility Center also resets the online web booking password for a MetroAccess customer, updates customers' address, phone numbers, and email addresses. Not only that, but they also provide Travel Training, reduced fare Senior SmarTrip cards, and the reduced fare cards for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan
Chair