



## Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

November 7, 2022

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of October 2022. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Emergency Bus Bridge Tabletop Exercise, 2) Better Bus Network Redesign, and 3) MetroAccess Vehicle Global Positioning System (GPS).

### Issues of the Month

#### Emergency Bus Bridge Tabletop Exercise:

Lauren Byrne, Planning and Exercising Branch, Office of Emergency Preparedness, thanked Denise Rush, Vice-Chair and Anupama Sharma, AAC, for participating and providing accessibility related feedback at the Emergency Bus Bridge Tabletop Exercise held on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ms. Byrne provided an overview and stated the purpose of the exercise was two-fold: bring WMATA's internal stakeholders from bus and rail together to discuss the process for activating a bus bridge along with the new section of the Silver Line, as and when needed. The exercise provided an opportunity to discuss the coordination and agreement with our partners from Fairfax and Loudoun Counties, as well as discuss our internal process of coordinating and staffing a bus bridge in those operations. Ms. Byrne stated the other major focus of the exercise was to ensure and describe the steps that WMATA would take to help people with disabilities, access, and functional needs during our provided service in those functional operations.

Ms. Byrne stated during both the modules, our colleagues from Bus Operations Control Center (BOCC), Bus Transportation (BTRA), Bus Planning, and Rail, discussed the accessibility of bus shuttle locations along the route, the accessibility of buses, and customer messaging, just to name a few topics that were discussed during the exercise. Ms. Byrne stated the support and the partnership of the AAC has always been appreciated. Ms. Byrne stated as we review our processes, we want to ensure everyone is aware of the steps and procedures.

The AAC appreciated the Office of Emergency Preparedness inviting the Committee to participate in the Tabletop Exercise, and for providing an overview to all the members. The team was attentive to our comments and we look forward to providing further feedback as needed, as well as receive any further information when available.

#### Better Bus Network Redesign:

Stacy Weisfeld, Planning Manager, WMATA, and Alanna McKeeman, Project Manager, Foursquare ITP, provided information about Better Bus Network Redesign. Ms. Weisfeld stated the Better Bus Network Redesign is a recommendation that came out of the Bus Transformation Project (BTP). Ms. Weisfeld stated the goal of this project is to meet customers' and regions' needs, to increase access to frequent service, optimize and expand bus priority infrastructure, make the system easier to use and understand, align network with development and travel patterns, align payment systems and fare structures, increase access to opportunities for customers, and to create long term sustainable,

predictable funding model to meet customers' and region's needs. Ms. Weisfeld stated we will be and are partnering with local bus providers to ensure it is a holistic process for the service area. She shared the Better Bus Network Redesign roadmap that started in June 2022 and is expected to go through March 2024.

Ms. McKeeman provided information about the Public and Stakeholder Engagement. She shared information regarding an Inclusive Engagement, which will focus on customer needs and benefits, engage all audiences during all phases, engage customers and potential customers, communicate across multiple media, ensure plans, scenarios, and messages are accessible and understandable, and work with partners to extend reach of engagement. She stated the audiences consists of six categories and would receive communication/notifications through various modes as applicable. Ms. McKeeman asked the AAC to help in spreading the word. Sharing the next steps, she stated the survey, pop-up and bus stop chat events are going on through November 11<sup>th</sup>. There is an in-person Meet the Project Team at the Riders' Advisory Council on Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Ms. McKeeman stated on November 9<sup>th</sup>, there is an opportunity for informal conversations with the project team which is open to RAC members and the public.

The AAC was pleased to hear the details that were shared with the Committee, and we look forward to being briefed again at key points throughout the project.

MetroAccess Vehicle Global Positioning System (GPS):

Terrian Williams-Hall, Director, MetroAccess, informed that installation of the Garmin devices in all MetroAccess vehicles was about to begin. The installation is expected to be completed by the end of December 2022. The real time traffic information in the area would provide the operators an opportunity to change route, based on traffic conditions. Ms. Williams-Hall stated we did detailed testing for over a year, all the feedback has been very positive, and it is going to improve customer experience. Ms. Williams-Hall stated the Garmin device would be mounted on the vehicle. The driver would, between each trip, enter the next address and then follow the directions from the Garmin device and not the Ranger, as that does not reflect the real-time traffic conditions. Ms. Williams-Hall stated the Garmin device uses common names, therefor drivers would be able to enter destination names rather the address.

The AAC was pleased to hear about the Garmin device installation in MetroAccess vehicles. With Garmin in MetroAccess vehicles, the real time traffic will improve not only customer experience, but also the driver experience.

Sincerely,

Denise Rush  
Acting Chair / Vice-Chair