



Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

February 6, 2023

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of January 2023. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) FY2024 Service and Fares Proposals, 2) E-Paper Signs, and 3) Six-Month Service Update.

Issues of the Month

FY2024 Service and Fares Proposals:

Mark Irvine, Director, Strategic Initiatives, presented the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer's Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget-Service and Fare Optimization. The Service Optimization Summary includes Service and Fare Optimization for Bus, as follows: launch the Better Bus Network Redesign, and advance incremental changes to improve frequency and expand access. For Metrorail, more frequent service, enable efficient and predictable transfers and increase access to destinations. As for Fares, recommendation is to simplify Metrorail fare structure by eliminating peak/off-peak price difference and align Metrorail and Metrobus base fare; launching a low-income fare discount program; and encouraging ridership, increasing revenue, as well as advancing equity. Mr. Irvine further stated there is opportunity to grow ridership with enhanced service for fast growing parts of system, games, and other events at four major sports venues, airport travelers, and a new station. He stated the proposal reduces transfer times at some stations, provides equity benefits where feasible, and increases utilization of key assets.

Mr. Irvine shared the FY24 budget timeline, the process began in October 2022 and will be implemented in July 2023. In conclusion, Mr. Irvine provided a comparison between fare increase and fare simplification.

The AAC has requested flat fares for MetroAccess and looks forward to it being incorporated at a future proposed budget. The Committee looks forward to the budget hearing process.

E-Paper Signs:

Brian Anderson, Director, Innovation and Digital Communication, and Alan Rowe, presented the E-Paper Sign. Mr. Anderson stated the pilot will be at Braddock Road Metro Station for 4-6 months. Mr. Anderson stated the goals of the pilot are to deliver more information, enhance real-time customer information at bus stops, and improve customer experience, as part of a broader strategic plan to improve passenger information. Mr. Rowe discussed the accessibility aspects of the program. He shared information about screens located on the exterior as well as interior of the bus shelter. The exterior screen will face the Metro station entrance and will provide information about routes served, next three buses, and additional messaging. The interior screen will provide information on the routes serviced, next few bus arrivals, and additional messaging such as weather, etc. Mr. Rowe further stated two pushbuttons will be provided under the display for text to

speech and language option. The existing signage will be replaced and will have a message to inform customers will be in raised lettering and braille, to inform customers “OUT OF SERVICE, USE NEW AUDIO BUTTON UNDER SCREEN”.

The AAC was excited to receive the presentation and looks forward to testing the new e-Paper sign and be able to provide feedback about accessibility features.

Six-Month Service Update:

Christiaan Blake, Managing Director, Access Services, stated the service has been normal, though on-Time performance dipped slightly in November and December. There were some technology issues that impacted the service, but they have been addressed. Mr. Blake added that the number of shared-rides continue to increase, which is to be expected as we continue to emerge from the pandemic and ridership increases. Mr. Blake stated shared rides are still less than 50% of overall trips but expect that amount to grow.

The Committee appreciates all the efforts put forth by the Access Services and MetroAccess Office, in providing the paratransit and alternate services for the disability community.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan
Chair