



## Accessibility Advisory Committee

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

May 6, 2024

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of April 2024. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) AAC By-Laws, 2) 8K Rail Car Soft Mockup, and 3) Better Bus Network Redesign-Engagement Plan, Types of Materials being developed.

### Issues of the Month

#### AAC By-Laws:

The AAC had asked for volunteers from the Committee, as a Workgroup, who would do the initial review of the By-Laws. Once the Workgroup completed its initial review of the By-Laws, it was presented to the entire Committee. The Committee then reviewed the entire document, line-by-line, and has recommended some further edits to the document. Some of the edits were brought forth due to the change as to how the meetings are held currently, a change since the pandemic. The Committee also reviewed and clarified some sections for better understanding, clarify, and transparency purposes. The final draft of the by-laws will be provided to the Office of ADA Policy and Planning, Systemwide Accessibility, by June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. The AAC hopes the document will be reviewed by WMATA's General Counsel and will be approved by WMATA Board at its July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting. The AAC By-Laws updated version will be effective from 2024 through 2029. In advance, the AAC would like to thank Counsel and the Board for reviewing the document.

#### 8K Rail Car – Soft Mockup:

Lynn Bowersox, Senior Vice President, Rail Transformation, stated it was so nice to visit the Expo of Metro's fleet of the future, with so many of the AAC members, on the National Mall, from March 20<sup>th</sup> through April 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 9:00am to 5:00pm. It was a great experience and about 46,500 participants came up to the mockup of the 8K rail car and the electric bus. We had visitors from all walks of life, including students, tourists from the country and abroad. We had a lot of input from our regular customers who look forward to the upgrades, the feedback was received via the use of tablets and the data will be presented to the General Manager in the most authentic manner. We were looking to see to have either the shorter or the taller back seats. Next phase in design will be developing digital screens and signs and that the AAC is interested in speaking with Saray Meyer about those and provide their feedback, along with the audio components for the displays. Ms. Bowersox stated the inter-car-barriers is a pending matter.

Ms. Bowersox informed the AAC that she is retiring from WMATA on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Bowersox stated she would like to introduce her colleagues, Sarah Meyer, Executive Vice President and Chief Officer of Customer Experience and Engagement. Ms. Bowersox introduced Nahom Debessay and his work on the 8k rail cars. Ms. Meyer stated it is difficult to fill the shoes of Ms. Bowersox, it has been a great experience working with her and she looks forward to sharing information about the feedback concerning the maps, signage pilot at L'Enfant Plaza, print maps, etc. The Committee thanked Ms. Bowersox for her great work on the open gangway rail cars and taking the input from the Committee.

The AAC wished her well and thanked her for all she has done while working with the Committee.

Better Bus Network Redesign-Engagement Plan, Types of Materials being developed:

Melissa Kim, Program Manager Planning, Capital and System Planning, presented an update about the Better Bus Network Redesign's engagement plan and types of materials being developed. Ms. Kim provided information about Project Background & Update, Phase 3 Engagement Approach, and Next Steps. Ms. Kim provided the project update and stated in spring 2023, they shared the draft visionary network. Ms. Kim stated the Proposed 2025 Better Bus Network better connects the region; improves access to better bus service, especially in evenings and on weekends; advances access to opportunity for equity focus communities; prepares us for the future; makes bus service more convenient to use. Discussing the spring (phase 3) engagement goals, Ms. Kim stated it is to increase awareness and understanding of the proposed 2025 network; get the input needed with a focus on the proposed 2025 network and impacted audiences; generate support, build advocacy, and create champions.

Ms. Kim stated the better bus discovery tour will target high-change areas, high ridership, pop-ups equity focus communities. Ms. Kim stated an example static network map (Spring 2023) will be shared, along with an overview of the draft Visionary Network from Spring 2023 outreach. Ms. Kim recommended the AAC to sign up for the e-newsletter, and the Better Bus Dispatch located at [wmata.com/betterbus](http://wmata.com/betterbus). The AAC appreciates the updates and the work put in the Better Bus Network Redesign, and looks forward to further updates, when available.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan  
Chair