



300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Accessibility Advisory Committee

February 26, 2026

Dear Chair Santos and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of January 2026.

During this reporting period, the AAC and its subcommittees focused on emergency preparedness, system-wide accessibility engagement, wayfinding and signage development, and MetroAccess service delivery. A significant action item this month was the Committee's approval of a formal recommendation to streamline the MetroAccess eligibility recertification process for riders with permanent disabilities.

Issues of the Month

System-Wide Accessibility Engagement and Early Coordination

The AAC received an update from the Vice President of System-Wide Accessibility outlining plans to strengthen early and structured engagement with the Committee beyond standing meetings. These efforts include voluntary station visits, focus groups, and working sessions designed to incorporate accessibility feedback earlier in planning and implementation.

The Committee supports this approach and emphasized the importance of ensuring that engagement results in practical improvements to wayfinding, customer experience, and overall system usability. Senior leadership participation in subcommittee discussions, including customer experience and wayfinding topics, reflects continued progress toward earlier coordination and alignment across WMATA departments.

Safety, Emergency Offloading, and Preparedness

The Committee reviewed the findings of a safety investigation related to an October 31, 2025 smoke event that resulted in emergency train offloading. Discussion focused on the importance of consistently applying emergency procedures, particularly for riders using mobility devices, and ensuring clear communication with customers following safety incidents.

The AAC encouraged continued coordination with training, safety, and emergency preparedness functions and expressed interest in further engagement on preparedness practices.

MetroAccess Eligibility Recertification Recommendation

The AAC unanimously approved a recommendation to streamline MetroAccess eligibility recertification for riders with permanent disabilities. The recommendation proposes extending the recertification interval from three years to five years and eliminating redundant medical documentation unless a rider's condition changes.

The Committee believes this approach would reduce unnecessary administrative burden while maintaining program integrity and alignment with peer agency practices. The AAC respectfully recommends Board consideration of this policy change.

Subcommittee Highlights

MetroAccess Subcommittee

The MetroAccess Subcommittee discussed fleet modernization efforts, including the continued transition to low-floor, ramp-equipped vehicles, provider participation in AbilitiesRide, and ongoing challenges related to pickup location accuracy and mapping. Updates were also provided on the digital assistant and the MyTransit app.

The Subcommittee emphasized the importance of clear customer communication, reliable technology tools, and continued monitoring of service quality.

Bus and Rail Subcommittee

The Bus and Rail Subcommittee focused on station restroom signage, wayfinding consistency, and early accessibility engagement in design. Members reviewed high-contrast signage concepts, provided detailed feedback on legibility, placement, and tactile elements, and requested in-person mockup review prior to finalization.

The Subcommittee also discussed broader wayfinding issues, including station-ahead signage and coordination with signage working groups.

Closing

The Accessibility Advisory Committee appreciates the continued engagement and responsiveness of WMATA leadership and staff. The Committee looks forward to ongoing collaboration to improve accessibility, safety, and customer experience across all modes and services.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Sheehan
Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee

