



Accessibility Advisory Committee

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March 4, 2019

Dear Chair Evans and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of February 2019. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) WMATA Budget, 2) Metrorail Dwell Time, Running Time, and Announcements, and 3) MetroAccess New Vehicles.

Issues of the Month

WMATA Budget:

The AAC received a presentation of the WMATA budget by Dennis Anosike, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), WMATA. Mr. Anosike provided information about the Capital budget as well as the Operating budget. The AAC appreciates the shared information.

The AAC shared its belief that a weekend flat fare of \$2 on Metro fixed route service should result in \$4 flat weekend fare on MetroAccess. The AAC is also concerned that extending peak-hour service with peak-fares will adversely affect MetroAccess riders as their fares will increase even though their service will not be improved. The AAC recommends the introduction of a MetroAccess pass similar to the Metro Select pass. If extended peak-fare service were to be introduced, it would be even more important for WMATA to issue a MetroAccess pass. The AAC expects and hopes the Board considers a MetroAccess pass that would treat the disability community in a manner equal to bus/rail riders, students, visitors and convention attendees.

Metrorail Dwell, Running Time, and Announcements:

The AAC's focus on dwell time and running time resulted from discussions about Metrorail announcements being interrupted and not providing pertinent information for riders to make appropriate travel decisions. The AAC had an opportunity to receive information from and provide feedback to Jim Hughes, Managing Director, Operations Support. Mr. Hughes shared information about dwell time, route time, scheduling of trains, and running time between stations. The AAC shared its recommendations for series and order of announcements to ease customers receiving pertinent information.

The AAC also recommended that if running time increases, which may result in more dwell time, thus the issue of announcements being truncated may get resolved. Another recommendation is to review the relevance of the current announcements and update as relevant to today's ridership needs. The AAC believes that the most important information before boarding a train is: Line (Red, Green, Yellow, Orange, Silver, Blue), direction, and next stop.

The AAC has previously shared with the Board, its recommendations on announcements. The automated announcements on the forth-coming 8000-series will be very helpful for Metro ridership, as on the 7000-series railcars.

MetroAccess New Vehicles:

WMATA is in the process of re-introducing sedans into the MetroAccess fleet. The reasons for going with sedans include customer comfort, improved fuel efficiency, and to ensure the fleet age remains low while being able to reconfigure the existing vans and giving the time necessary for the AAC and other stakeholders to provide feedback for the design of the new vans.

Three vehicles currently under consideration by Metro are: Ford Fusion Hybrid, Chevy Malibu Hybrid, and Honda Insight Hybrid. The AAC welcomes the re-introduction of sedans, if an appropriate vehicle(s) is added to the fleet. The AAC has concerns about sufficient leg-room, head room, sufficient space for service animals and storage for mobility devices (canes, crutches, walkers, etc), height of entrance from ground and door opening angle to make entry and exit easy as well as shock absorbers for smooth ride. The AAC also recommends investigating the use of advertising space on the outside of the vehicles as a revenue source, similar to that on bus. Perhaps, dealerships might donate stock vehicles in return for advertising.

Sincerely,

Philip Posner
Chair