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January 8, 2019

Chairman Evans, WMATA Board members, and WMATA staff:

At our RAC meeting on Wednesday, January 2, James Hughes (WMATA's Director of Intermodal Planning) spoke to the group. He provided an overview of the current plans for the summer 2019 shutdown of six stations in Virginia. We were told that the plans are still being developed and there is plenty of room for additional good ideas. Based on the discussion, the RAC's suggestions for the shutdown include the following.

- RAC members were concerned about the **accessibility of the over-the-road coaches** used in the shuttle network for those with disabilities. Staff should work with the paratransit systems in Arlington and Alexandria on accessible vehicles and remain in close contact with the Accessibility Advisory Committee as they plan.
- **Signs at all stations** in the system are incredibly important, especially in and near the shutdown zone. WMATA should err on the side of too many signs, at different heights, in multiple locations, and in large font.
- Information provided to riders should be **specific to certain stations** instead of generic information. Riders will want to know what bus routes and shuttle routes and alternatives are available at that particular station, not what alternatives are available throughout Virginia.
- **Future information-sharing efforts** should be focused on riders on government assistance and other non-tech-savvy riders.
- During previous shutdowns, even those who know where they were going and how to get to the shuttle buses found the crowds to be difficult to navigate. **Crowd control**, particularly in the early weeks of the shutdown, will be vital.
- To give riders a better sense of the additional time their travel may take, WMATA can provide **alternative route suggestions to common destinations** in the shutdown zone (Old Town, malls, etc) and provide estimated travel times for a variety of routes.
- As always, **transparency** is very important to riders. WMATA should clearly identify what work will be done during the shutdown and provide regular updates through multiple communication channels on the status of that work.

The RAC also considered the themes that we would like to focus on during 2019. These include:

- Customer service standards
- FY 2020 budget, including fare policies and rail care procurement
- Real-time feedback from the summer shutdown
- Bus transformation efforts

RAC members want to contribute to WMATA's efforts to become a better transit system. In the past, members visited groups of riders affected by service changes and may be willing to do so again.

Sincerely,

Katherine Kortum  
Chair, Riders' Advisory Council