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**September 22, 2020**

Chairman Smedberg and Members of the Board:

I am pleased to present you with an update on the activities of the Riders' Advisory Council.

### **Board Priorities and the 2021 Budget**

During our September 9 meeting, the RAC heard from Chairman Smedberg on the WMATA Board's priorities for 2020. The members of the RAC very much appreciated the presentation and the proactive approach to communication, and also thank Board Member Stephanie Gidigbi for her participation. One of the RAC's goals for the coming year is to increase engagement between the Board and the RAC with the purpose of introducing rider feedback into the dialogue.

The RAC's members acknowledge the sobering outlook for WMATA's 2021 budget and the actions necessary to close the funding gap. Given the funding environment, the RAC supports the deferral of capital projects and the delay of the Silver Line's Phase 2 opening as having limited impact on existing riders and transportation needs.

Given the relatively minor positive effect on revenue of restoring bus fares in Q3 and in light of the continued reduction in bus service, the RAC asks that the Board consider creative alternatives that take into account the diminished financial resources of many riders since the pandemic and the less frequent, more limited availability of bus service. The RAC supports an extension of the fare suspension (or a discounted fare) while service or reliability is seriously curtailed, and encourages the Board to consider how cuts or service changes may affect WMATA's post-pandemic future.

### **Metro Station Safety and Mobility**

The RAC also asks that the Board balance the safety and convenience of riders when evaluating the proposal to reduce the number of station entrances and station managers. Specific to the Fairfax station, riders report the visibility of the new passenger information displays (PIDS) is poor from the middle of the platform. More generally, newly installed PIDS do not necessarily show elevator and escalator outages, which is critical information for many riders.

### Federal Funding

Acknowledging the depletion of CARES Act funding by January, several RAC members are developing points for use by riders who may want to contact their elected Congressional representatives with concerns over transportation funding. The RAC also supports additional Federal funding for public transportation as a critical element in the economic recovery of the region.

As always, the RAC looks forward to continuing to work with the Board on its priorities, especially through this challenging period.

Sincerely,

Rob Cavese, District of Columbia Vice Chair  
Andrew Kierig, Riders' Advisory Council Chair  
Wil White, Maryland Vice Chair