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December 14, 2023

Chair Smedberg and Members of the Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Riders' Advisory Council's report for December 2023.

### **FY2025 Budget and Outreach:**

As Metro has worked to develop and now, make public, its Proposed FY2025 budget, the RAC has been preparing to engage in advocacy on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of riders that we represent and who would be irreparably harmed by the reduction or elimination of one-third of Metro's services. As the initial shock from the budget proposal wears off, the RAC will be working to educate lawmakers and other stakeholders about Metro's importance to the region and to highlight and humanize the devastating impacts that the proposed cuts would have on riders.

As the Board refines the proposals that will be taken out for public comment, RAC members will be working with their networks to educate them about the proposed changes, gather feedback and make them aware of the various opportunities to provide comments directly to Metro. We look forward to working with the Board over the next several months to preserve Metro as a key regional asset and lifeline.

### **Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School Service**

Students from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School again attended this month's RAC meeting to note crowding on J2 buses heading from Silver Spring to Bethesda during the morning rush and returning to Silver Spring. Students also brought up the need for improvements at the bus stops on East-West Highway that serve the school. The RAC understands that, given Metro's fiscal challenges, there may be limited options to provide additional service, but would appreciate Metro investigating any available options to better match service with demand.

### **Membership Transitions:**

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the three members of the RAC – José Delcid, Lovell Walls and Emma Wormser – who will be leaving the Council when their terms end. I've appreciated the enthusiasm, perspective and insights they've all brought to their service on the RAC. We're looking forward to working with the new members that the Board will be appointing today to expand the RAC's reach to new networks and communities, and I'd like to thank the Board in advance for its vote on these nominations.

As always, thank you for your time and attention, and I remain available for any questions you may have.

I'd like to wish everyone a happy and restful holiday season and will look forward to working with the Board in 2024 to maintain Metro as the world-class transit system the region needs and deserves.

Sincerely,

*Mike Lebowitz*

Mike Lebowitz, Chair  
Riders' Advisory Council