



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

December 6, 2021

Dear Chair Smedberg, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of November 2021. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Customer Service Processes, 2) Floating Bus Stops - Montgomery County, and 3) Return of Shared-Ride on MetroAccess Update.

Issues of the Month

Customer Service Processes:

Barbara Moulton, Senior Director, Customer Care, and Darbi Dickerson, Acting Director, Customer Service, informed that Customer Service (CSVC) has four departments: Customer Information, Customer Relations, Social Media/Live Chat, and Lost and Found. Ms. Moulton shared the data about total communications and informed that the volume is at 50% of pre-pandemic, however increased for 2021 in comparison to 2020. She also talked about a new metric called 95/5, where the goal is to resolve 95% of customer concerns within five business days. While discussing the complaint volume related to accessibility, Ms. Dickerson stated a total of 120 complaints were received from bus and rail customers for the three quarters of 2021. The number is about 1% of total complaint volume. Ms. Dickerson stated the top three categories of complaints include service, employee behavior, and procedure issues. The AAC appreciated the data shared about Customer Service and hopes for extended hours of Customer Information Office.

Floating Bus Stops – Montgomery County:

Matt Johnson, Capital Project Manager, Montgomery County, presented Montgomery County Bus Stop Program - Floating Bus Stops. Discussing the evolution of floating bus stops, Mr. Johnson stated in 2017, the County built its initial four floating bus stops, which are being rebuilt soon to upgrade to best practices. In 2019, three second-generation floating bus stops were built. The concerns were that wheelchair users may have challenges navigating the channelized bikeway. Whereas blind & low vision users may have difficulty finding the floating bus stop crosswalk from the sidewalk, and they cannot see or hear oncoming cyclists. He shared the access and safety features as well as navigation and calming treatments. Mr. Johnson stated Montgomery County is improving floating bus stops for people with vision disabilities and will have mock-ups for feedback. The AAC appreciates the forthcoming mock-ups as that is a true test of usability for all. The AAC wishes the region taking a leading in getting national standards for such stops.

Return of Shared-Rides on MetroAccess - Update:

Christiaan Blake, Managing Director, Access Services, stated we have returned to shared rides on MetroAccess. We are back to normal service on MetroAccess, and remain safe by continued enforcement of facemask wearing and by maximizing ventilation in the vehicles. We continue to stress that customers should not talk with drivers during the door-to-door escort or when a driver is engaged in the securement process. Mr. Blake stated in an effort to minimize shared rides we are trying to have a maximum number of vehicles available for service; as using Abilities-Ride providers for a large number of trips;

and limiting the number of passengers on the vehicle to three. The AAC understands that the Department of Access Services is diligently following the science and would take appropriate steps to ensure safety of customers and drivers.

Sincerely,

Philip Posner
Chair