



Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

March 26, 2026

Dear Chair Santos,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of February 2026. The primary issues we reviewed were: Regional Winter Weather Operations & Accessibility, MetroAccess Service, Technology, and Customer Experience Updates, Emergency Preparedness, Wayfinding Experience (CX Session Hosted by Systemwide Accessibility), and MetroAccess Eligibility Recertification Feasibility Study Update.

Issues of the Month

Regional Winter Weather Operations & Accessibility:

During February, the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) received a comprehensive briefing on Metro's response to the region's winter storms. Metro cleared all 450 Metro-owned bus stops and additionally assisted local jurisdictions by clearing 131 stops in the District of Columbia, 46 in Alexandria, 101 in Prince George's County, and 72 in Montgomery County. AAC members provided detailed rider feedback regarding icy curb ramps, narrow snow clearances that impacted ramp deployment, slippery station floors during freezing conditions, and elevator landing defaults that left customers exposed to the cold.

To strengthen Metro's preparedness, the AAC is convening a March 2026 "Lessons Learned" session. Metro leadership from Infrastructure, Operations and Communications been invited to discuss winter operational challenges, clarify jurisdictional boundaries, review communication gaps (text alerts, IVR, web updates, MetroAccess notifications), and identify improvements for system resilience. AAC will compile community input received throughout February and provide it to Metro staff in advance so that discussion can focus on solutions and next-step commitments.

MetroAccess Service, Technology & Customer Experience Updates:

The MetroAccess Subcommittee reviewed enhancements to the MyTransit app (improved ETA accuracy, provider visibility, and the restored Cancel Trip function) and ongoing outreach needs especially for blind and low-vision riders unfamiliar with the app. Metro committed to expanding communications via text messages, IVR prompts, and mailed materials where appropriate.

Call-center performance has improved through a redesigned training program and expanded use of the "Tim" digital assistant, enabling agents to resolve more service issues without escalation. AAC members emphasized continued focus on professionalism and attentiveness on live calls.

Members also raised privacy concerns with identity verification procedures that require riders to speak personal information aloud when calling from public spaces. Metro explained the security rationale and agreed to explore privacy-safer authentication alternatives that maintain account security while reducing risk.

Uber Transit discussed technical issues affecting MetroAccess-facilitated trips, including truncated activation texts, duplicate vehicles, and missing driver names in some handoffs. Metro and Uber are jointly investigating these issues and addressing rider-reported cases individually. Riders requested clearer audible arrival alerts and easier rider-driver coordination once a vehicle is on site; Metro will evaluate these feature requests with vendors.

Emergency Preparedness:

The Bus & Rail Subcommittee received a detailed briefing on Metro's Emergency Operations Plan, Agency Safety Plan, and the system's accessible evacuation tools (including bus ramps and the E-Tech evacuation cart).

Training modules include de-escalation, AED/Stop-the-Bleed, and triennial refreshers for frontline staff. Members requested captioning and audio description for new public-facing and internal emergency training videos and asked for an opportunity to review materials before release to ensure accessibility and clarity.

Wayfinding Experience (CX Session Hosted by Systemwide Accessibility):

The AAC participated in a hands-on Wayfinding Experience session, coordinated by Systemwide Accessibility in partnership with Customer Experience (CX). The session evaluated real-world navigation at L'Enfant Plaza and identified opportunities to improve wayfinding for all riders—especially customers who are blind, low-vision, or navigating complex station environments. AAC members and staff assessed sign placement and visibility, contrast and font legibility, tactile considerations (including station-ahead lists), decision-point clarity, and large-format system maps and line identifiers. Staff from CX, Systemwide Accessibility, and station operations engaged directly with AAC members to validate observations and gather recommendations. A station-wide wayfinding pilot at L'Enfant Plaza is planned for late March or early April to test revised concepts (e.g., centered station-ahead lists at ~48 inches for close-range readability, clearer exit lettering, enhanced line identifiers) before broader deployment. Systemwide Accessibility will consolidate AAC and public comments for verification prior to finalizing the pilot.

MetroAccess Eligibility Recertification Feasibility Study Update:

Metro briefed the AAC on the Metro-directed study evaluating potential updates to the MetroAccess eligibility recertification cycle. The study covers operational, staffing, and financial considerations; documentation requirements; ADA compliance; and peer system benchmarking. AAC members offered research and rider-experience insights and will continue supporting the review through its expected 2–3month timeline.

Closing

The Accessibility Advisory Committee appreciates the continued collaboration and responsiveness of Metro leadership and staff throughout February. This month's work reflects significant progress across multiple areas—winter operations readiness, MetroAccess service performance, emergency preparedness, and the customer-centered wayfinding experience

hosted by Systemwide Accessibility. The AAC remains committed to elevating the lived experiences of riders with disabilities and ensuring that accessibility considerations are integrated early and consistently into Metro's planning, operations, and customer-facing initiatives.

As Metro prepares for the March 2026 Lessons Learned session on winter storm response and continues advancing improvements in technology, communication, and station navigation, the AAC looks forward to engaging constructively with staff, offering community-driven insights, and supporting shared goals of safety, reliability, and equitable access across the entire transit system.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick Sheehan
Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee