



Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

December 1, 2025

Dear Chair Santos, and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the AAC report for the month of November 2025. The primary issues we reviewed were: (1) Richard W. Hedding Award - 2025, (2) Bus Flag Designs, (3) MetroAccess Strategy Study Update.

Issues of the Month

Richard W. Hedding Award - 2025:

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) nominated David Shaffer, posthumously, a former WMATA employee, for the Richard W. Hedding Award - 2025. Some of the AAC members remembered the contributions of Mr. Shaffer, in enhancing accessibility, and helping the disability community while employed with WMATA and beyond, along with his outstanding background involving education, work experience, and the law cases that he won. Despite his disabilities, Mr. Shaffer continued to work as an advocate for the disability community. He was instrumental in getting changed the default location of street elevators from mezzanine to street level, and direction of the platform escalators changed making it convenient for customers from mezzanine getting to the platform level. He worked on MetroAccess to ensure grandfathering of the system. He was in front of the Supreme Court a couple of times and won some high-profile cases.

Despite him being legally blind, Mr. Shaffer could get around independently, ride Metro, do his legal work, and do his Ombudsman work. He was a gentle person and always responded to whatever was brought to his table.

Bus Flag Designs:

Teddy Krolik, Project Manager, Digital Customer Technology and Innovation, discussed the bus flag designs, the current phase, prototyping. He informed that route ID, destination, operating agency, and bus stop ID, were found to be the most important information for the bus flags. He discussed the proposal to bring together multiple operators on the same flag and the effort to unify Metrobus and Metrorail. The flag is focused on the needs of the operators and the information for customers. He discussed the various flags, i.e. two-routes, three to four route, and five or more routes. Mr. Krolik provided information about features, i.e. accessibility, unify bus stops under a proposal from DMV Moves, unification of Metrobus and Metrorail, and reflectivity.

The AAC appreciates the involvement thus far and looks forward to receiving updates and provide feedback to assist in WMATA getting the optimal bus flag designs.

MetroAccess Strategy Study Update:

Ryan Traher, Transit Analyst, Washington Suburban Transit Commission (WSTC), stated Maryland's costs for MetroAccess are the highest of the region's jurisdictions corresponding to highest ridership in the two Maryland counties. Mr. Traher stated MetroAccess Abilities Ride is mutually beneficial service for customers and jurisdictional

fundings of WMATA. The average cost per trip for Abilities-Ride is only \$33 compared to the \$106 for MetroAccess. The total cost in Maryland for MetroAccess service was \$117.3 million in fiscal year 22, and \$120.9 million in fiscal year 24. In the extended area beyond WMATA's ADA coverage, approximately \$20 million of \$120 million (approximately 17%) annual MetroAccess costs in Maryland, were stemmed from rides created by local service in the counties. That is roughly \$12.3 million in Montgomery County, and \$7.9 million in Prince George's County.

WSTC wanted to know what was driving the cost and they got that answer. The costs are driven by high ridership caused by dialysis, adult daycare, and some locally induced MetroAccess coverage. The AAC would be interested in learning about any future steps/results of this study, as that becomes available.

Sincerely,

Patrick Sheehan
Chair