



300 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024



Accessibility Advisory Committee

Bus/Rail Subcommittee Meeting Minutes Virtual Meeting

January 12, 2026

Time: 4:00 PM to approximately 6:00 PM Eastern Time

Attendance

The Accessibility Advisory Committee Bus and Rail Subcommittee met virtually on January 12, 2026. Members present included Tino Calabia, Chair of the Bus and Rail Subcommittee; Patrick Sheehan,; Philip Weintraub; Paul Semelfort; Vanessa Coles; Darnise Bush; Rico Dancy; and Tajuan Farmer. Swatha Nandhakumar, Sarah Radt, Marcie Goldstein, Sandra Neuzil, and Susan Bowmaster were also present. Steve Kaffin was noted as away during roll call. Deborah M. Fisher and Doris Ray participated as at-large members, and Phil Posner participated as an Emeritus Member.

WMATA staff present included Dr. Maggie K. Butler, Vice President of System-Wide Accessibility, and Christiaan Blake, Vice President of Access Services.

Opening Remarks and Call to Order

Maggie K. Butler, Vice President of System Wide Accessibility, opened the meeting at approximately 4:00 PM Eastern Time. Dr. Butler conducted roll call, confirmed that a quorum was present, and reviewed meeting logistics. Following roll call and confirmation of quorum, Dr. Butler formally turned facilitation of the meeting over to Tino Calabia, Chair of the Bus and Rail Subcommittee, who proceeded with the agenda.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Calabia requested any additions or objections to the agenda. With no objections raised, the agenda was approved through a voice vote.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Chair Calabia summarized the prior December Bus and Rail Subcommittee meeting topics, including the Better Bus update, printed brochures and maps, station ahead maps, restroom information, and signage discussion. Sandra Neuzil indicated there

were no issues or corrections. With no objections, the December minutes were approved.

System Wide Accessibility Update Restroom Signage

Maggie K. Butler provided an update regarding proposed in station restroom signage currently under development by the Wayfinding team. Dr. Butler explained that the signage shared with the Subcommittee were mockups intended for discussion and review and have not yet been installed in stations.

Dr. Butler presented two high contrast signage design concepts aligned with Metro brand standards. One concept uses a circular motif and the second uses a rectangular motif with larger and more visually prominent iconography. Dr. Butler explained that both designs reorder symbols to emphasize the International Symbol of Accessibility and remove the dividing line between accessibility and general icons.

Dr. Butler stated that signage language will vary depending on station configuration. In locations where restroom access requires staff assistance, signage will include language instructing customers to visit the Station Manager at the kiosk. In locations where restrooms are publicly accessible, the signage will not include that instruction. Proposed locations include placement at the Station Manager kiosk and at the restroom door.

Dr. Butler emphasized that the Subcommittee will be invited to review the signage in person under lighting conditions similar to those found in stations. She stated that an in person mockup review will be coordinated through headquarters at L'Enfant Plaza to support meaningful feedback prior to finalization.

During discussion, Sarah Radt asked when the system wide restroom inventory and associated findings would be shared, noting multiple prior delays. Dr. Butler stated that data collection is complete and currently under analysis and that timing for public sharing requires internal alignment. Sandra Neuzil requested the verbatim sign text due to low on screen contrast and emphasized the importance of viewing the signage in station like conditions before providing final feedback. Dr. Butler read both text versions aloud and agreed to organize an in person review.

Sandra Neuzil expressed preference for the rectangular dark field design because the figures appear larger and more legible and supported including the Station Manager instruction where access is controlled by locked doors. Staff clarified that the Station Manager instruction will appear only where required and will be omitted where restrooms are publicly accessible, such as some Silver Line stations.

Denise Rush emphasized the importance of system wide rider notification, not limited to disability audiences, regarding restroom availability and access requirements so riders

can plan trips and supports. Dr. Butler acknowledged the concern and stated that a policy review and communications plan are in progress to ensure accurate and consistent information before public release.

Philippa Mezile expressed preference for the rectangular option due to thicker and more readable figures. Sarah Radt noted that small text on a light background can be difficult to read and requested confirmation of exact text size and that sizes meet or exceed accessibility standards. She also asked how signage would indicate when a restroom is not accessible. Dr. Butler confirmed that the International Symbol of Accessibility will only appear where restrooms meet technical accessibility requirements.

Tino Calabria suggested including restroom availability in brochures available at kiosks and other public facing materials. Patrick Sheehan recommended using clear language to indicate when bathrooms meet Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements and when no accessible restroom is available. Sandra Neuzil and Sarah Radt requested clearer gender pictograms and large print labels for men and women where restrooms are gendered and suggested consideration of unisex or family symbols when appropriate.

Vanessa Coles asked the Authority to consider audio indicators such as a push button announcement to inform blind riders that restrooms are available at a station. Janice Samuel asked whether icons and labels would be tactile or raised to allow identification by touch. Staff stated that tactile or raised elements are expected and will be confirmed during final specification review. Dr. Butler stated that all feedback would be documented and shared with Customer Experience and Wayfinding teams.

Signage Working Group Early and Iterative Engagement

Sandra Neuzil summarized the signage working group proposal submitted January 5 on behalf of the group. She stated that the proposal aligns with System Wide Accessibility's early engagement approach, including focus groups, station visits, and short feedback cycles. Priority areas include static station signage at decision points, station ahead signs, entrances and exits, elevator paths, restroom signage, and system wide consistency in placement, format, contrast, and font size that meet or exceed accessibility guidance where feasible. Dr. Butler welcomed the alignment and stated that System Wide Accessibility will coordinate working sessions with Customer Experience and Wayfinding.

Station Ahead Signs and Wayfinding Consistency

Sandra Neuzil described bottom to top pilot station ahead signs observed at Rosslyn where the current station indicator appeared very low, requiring riders to bend and reducing readability in crowded conditions. She expressed preference for top down reading order. Sarah Radt emphasized that station ahead signs are critical for

determining which escalator to use and which side of the platform to access and noted that terminus names can be unfamiliar to infrequent riders.

Phil Posner suggested bottom up orientation could benefit wheelchair users or riders of shorter stature if the eye line is properly set and recommended testing with those riders. Sandra Neuzil responded that the observed placement was too low and reinforced the need to adjust heights and consider top down orientation as the default. Sarah Radt reported inconsistent placement of wheelchair and elevator icons across stations, and Sandra Neuzil noted variation in the number of pylon faces displaying information. Vanessa Coles recommended adding Braille near maps and elevators, and Sandra Neuzil noted the Authority's three dimensional printing capability supports faster and more cost effective production of raised letters and Braille.

Waymap and Emergency Preparedness Future Briefings

Chair Calabia requested future briefings on Waymap and emergency preparedness practices, including offloading procedures, door operations, and evacuation communications. Dr. Butler stated presenters would be invited for upcoming agendas. Sarah Radt shared community feedback reflecting interest in Waymap and concerns about data latency in third party transit applications following recent network changes.

Youth Engagement

Dr. Butler invited committee assistance engaging high school and college students with disabilities and noted that weekend sessions may be possible. Sarah Radt offered contacts at American University, George Washington University, and other institutions. Chair Calabia encouraged inviting Regional Advisory Council student members to a spring session.

MetroAccess Service Area and Grandfathering

Vanessa Coles raised concerns regarding riders who have moved into areas outside the MetroAccess service area where fixed route service is unavailable. Christian Blake explained that MetroAccess cannot operate beyond its defined service area and that customers may use nearest pickup points located within the service area. He stated that the 2010 grandfathering was a one time policy and has not been expanded and encouraged advocacy for expanded bus service.

Public Comment and Other Business

Janice Samuel asked which Prince George's County bus route change was referenced at a recent Regional Advisory Council meeting. Dr. Butler stated she would identify the specific route and report back to Ms. Samuel and the Committee.

Phil Posner cautioned that public messaging stating there are no fare changes can sometimes obscure changes in fare calculation methods that still affect what riders pay and encouraged careful review of public notices.

Amanda Hillman introduced herself as a former Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority employee and current customer. She stated that she has professional and lived experience related to accessibility and wayfinding. Ms. Hillman expressed interest in participating in future accessibility engagement activities, including signage review and MetroAccess related discussions. She commented that higher contrast signage is generally easier for customers to read while acknowledging that duplicative signage approaches may have cost and maintenance implications. Ms. Hillman stated she would welcome participation through structured engagement opportunities.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. With no objections, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 PM Eastern Time.