



## Accessibility Advisory Committee

300 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024

### **BUS/RAIL SUBCOMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES: June 9, 2025**

In attendance: Tino Calabia (Chair), Steve Kaffen (Vice Chair), Sandra Neuzil (Second Vice-Chair), Susan Bowmaster Vanessa Coles, Rico Dancy, Debby Fisher, Marcie Goldstein, Swatha Nandhakumar, Phil Posner, Sarah Radt, and Patrick Sheehan.

#### **Call to Order**

Anu Sharma, AAC Coordinator, took roll call, read the Meeting Agenda, and provided helpful information, thereafter, Vice Chair Kaffen moved the meeting forward.

#### **Review and Approval of BRS Agenda and Minutes:**

The BRS approved the Meeting Agenda as presented.

The BRS Meeting Minutes from May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025, were approved as written.

#### **Way Finding Signage Review - L'Enfant Plaza Station, Metro Center, Rosslyn, Gallery Place-Chinatown:**

Second Vice Chair (SVC) Neuzil stated Metro is testing static signage variations at four, two-level stations: L'Enfant Plaza, Roslyn, Metro Center, and Gallery Place, to improve wayfinding signage for customers. Getting off a train at the lower level in a Metro station, finding an elevator can be challenging. Some signs have an arrow and elevator symbol in black on white rectangle including all symbols. In some cases, symbols are in black on individual white circles. She recommended the AAC to review these signs to determine which type of sign is easier to interpret the arrow to find the elevator symbol.

Dr. Posner stated finding elevators in Metrorail stations, particularly at transfer stations with multiple exits and platforms, is problematic, along with determining the elevator direction. The signs are typically placed on the wall by tracks, making it difficult to see the sign until the train pulls out of the station. SVC Neuzil stated there is one platform on the lower level of the four mentioned stations, hence, easier to get to the needed train. It is important to identify the correct side of the upper platform to take the appropriate train. Signage above the elevator door clearly informs of the platform and the level(s) serviced, or if the customer needs to go to the other side to reach the opposite platform. Vice Chair (VC) Kaffen stated in past, buttons of some elevators were reversed, was that still the case. SVC Neuzil stated there is consistency about help button and the button to call the elevator. Responding to Dr. Posner, SVC Neuzil stated the signs were easily located consistently in the middle of a platform, not on walls blocked by the trains.

Ms. Radt stated white letters on black background is the most important feature to her. The wheelchair symbol is a good indication to identify an elevator regardless of the white circle with black letter, or a white circle with black letter on a white stripe. SVC Neuzil stated the universal accessibility wheelchair symbol was missing at one instance. Ms. Radt

shared concerns about Union Station where there were no signs guiding for elevator locations, except on one of pylons. Consistency about the location where to find elevator signage and international accessibility symbol (IAS) on signs, will be helpful. Dr. Posner stated Union Station is one-level platform with upper level to exit the station. The elevators go to street level or inside the Union Station hence those signs should be clear. Ms. Radt stated at some stations, the street elevators may be half a block away. Dr. Posner stated Judiciary Square is an example of that situation.

Ms. Nandhakumar asked about stations where one platform elevator goes to one side. SVC Neuzil stated from lower platform coming up to the upper level, customers must find the correct platform. Dr. Posner stated the importance of marking the station exits clearly. Ms. Nandhakumar stated exits should identify the exterior locations of the station and mark the side for elevator. SVC Neuzil stated this is more complex than anticipated. She asked members to volunteer for a working group, to observe and discuss the static signage, then to be present to present the compiled information to the AAC, and then to WMATA.

### **Summer 2025 Shutdown – Phase I:**

Bobby Gilchrist, Program Manager, Bus Street Operations, stated this shutdown is due to work being conducted on the Blue Line from Franconia Springfield to King Street stations from July 5<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>. Franconia Springfield and Van Dorn Street stations will be closed, whereas Eisenhower Avenue and King Street-Old Town stations will remain open. During weekdays, the local shuttle service will operate between King Street, Eisenhower Avenue, Van Dorn, and Franconia Springfield stations. The travel-time is about 45 minutes, and 28 buses throughout the day will execute the service. The express shuttle will provide direct service from Pentagon to Franconia Springfield. The travel-time is about 33 minutes and 24 buses will execute the service. For weekends, 28 Metrobuses throughout the day will operate the local shuttle service, and 24 contractor's vehicles will provide the express shuttle service. The service is expected to resume as normal, from July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Mr. Gilchrist provided shuttle bus bay information:

- King Street: local shuttle will operate out of bus bay D.
- Eisenhower Avenue: local shuttle will service from bus bay F, in both directions.
- Van Dorn: shuttle service will operate going in both directions out of bus bay D.
  - The Fairfax Connector route 109 had to be relocated to bus bay F.
- Franconia Springfield:
  - Express shuttle (direct to Pentagon) will operate out of bus bay D.
  - Local shuttle will operate out of bus bay C.
  - Relocations of bus bays for other bus routes: Fairfax Connector (all four lines): 50, 51, 52, 53, relocated from bus bay C and D to bus bay A and B.

- Pentagon: Express shuttle will operate from bus bay U13.
  - Relocations of bus bays for other bus routes: A28: from bay 13 to bay 12.

Responding to Ms. Nandhakumar's question, Theresa Thomas, Supervisor, Crew Support, stated announcements will be made for the end of the Blue Line service station and prior to approaching King Street Station. Ms. Thomas stated this outage is to concentrate on our train control room upgrades at Telegraph Road, and Franconia Springfield. The rail renewal, re-lamping and repairing of our lighting system, some roof replacements and some station signage upgrades and repairs both interior and exterior, will also take place. Mr. Gilchrist provided information about the ADA compliance and stated as the first option, there will be a wheelchair accessible van staged at every affected station. Another option is Metrobus or the contracted shuttles. The first 4 seats from left to right are for people with disabilities and older adults. All staff is trained on how to assist people with disabilities. Mr. Gilchrist stated the operators are required to announce the next stop, the current stop, and any other relevant information.

### **Restrooms in Metrorail Stations:**

Henock Yohannes, Director, Mechanical Systems, Facility Maintenance, stated we strive to upgrade and make all our restrooms accessible, as feasible. One of the key challenges is location of the restrooms being in the ancillary rooms. In the restroom renovations, we upgrade the system including the handrails, raising the height as needed, placing the mirror at the correct location, hand wash systems, adjusting the door pressure, etc. In our new stations such as Potomac Yard Station or the Silver Line Phase 2, restrooms were a part of the design criteria, and those are accessible where customers do not have to go through the ancillary or service rooms. Ms. Coles asked if restrooms are labeled women, men, or unisex; and if braille signs are available. Mr. Yohannes stated those restrooms are unisex and all our signage includes braille. If there is any location that does not have Braille sign, please let us know and we will do our best to get that sign replaced.

SVC Neuzil asked if station managers need to escort customers due to the controlled location of the restrooms. She also asked about location of signage for restrooms. Mr. Yohannes stated the station manager will have to let the customer into those control areas. Once the customer has entered, there will be signs for customer restroom (unisex) and employee (unisex) restrooms. Ms. Radt complimented for the Potomac Yard Station restrooms for being easily visible, accessible, and identified as men's vs women's. She asked if for older stations, there is signage informing customer to ask station manager to use restrooms. Mr. Yohannes stated we are piloting different types of signage for communication at six stations. VC Kaffen asked if restrooms remain locked and customers

need to request station manager to open them. Mr. Yohannes concurred and stated these restrooms are by the ancillary rooms, thus customers have to communicate with station managers to be able to use the restrooms.

Mr. Sheehan asked about requirement under ADA for accessible restrooms and stated in older stations, some of them are probably not wheelchair accessible. Mr. Yohannes stated based on the ADA requirement, for it to have a wheelchair accessible from the point of entry, the turning radius must be in consideration. Metro faces a challenge on the old or any existing stations because of the room's design. Mr. Sheehan asked if stations that pre-existed in 1990 or the ADA, are required to be compliant. Mr. Yohannes stated at some locations, to have wheelchair accessible restrooms, we would have to tear down the walls, which is nearly impossible. Mr. Sheehan asked if there is a requirement to have accessible restrooms at the new stations. Mr. Yohannes confirmed and stated that is why Potomac Yard and the new Silver Line Phase 2 stations are accessible from outside. Mr. Sheehan recommended improved signage informing customers about restroom access.

Ms. Coles asked about layout of the restrooms and the waiting area for customers. Mr. Yohannes stated in most cases, these are individual stalls. The station manager will allow one customer at a time. Customers would wait outside on mezzanine level.

Don Drummer, Board Member, stated every station does not have accessible restrooms and asked about a plan for making those compliant. He recommended a report per jurisdiction, listing the accessible restrooms versus the ones that are not compliant. Mr. Yohannes Explained that station restrooms were not intended for public access when they were originally designed. We adjusted the design criteria ensuring new stations are ADA compliant. The pre-existing restrooms are constantly worked on to ensure accessibility is reached, as possible. Mr. Drummer stated some facilities cannot be fixed in their current configuration. He recommended the AAC to know the requirements, if the accessible restrooms are required. If there is a requirement, there ought to be funding to meet that requirement. There would have to be a target, if it is 10 years, 5 years, or one year. If it is impossible to meet that requirement, that needs to be acknowledged. He recommended to have a periodic update on this topic.

### **Customer Service Inquiry:**

Sarah Meyer, Executive Vice President (EVP) and Chief Customer Experience and Engagement Officer; Dan Klingessrow, Graphic Designer; Sam Serebin, Product Manager, Wayfinding Program and Execution; discussed initiatives to reduce the visual clutter in Metrorail stations. Mr. Klingessrow stated Metro is ensuring our services come across as

OneMetro, rather than Metrorail, Metrobus, Metrobus, and MetroAccess as three different companies. Ms. Meyer stated we have two different official Metro Reds (color) and two different official Metro Blues (color), and having different colors creates visual tension. Mr. Klingessrow stated our current logo was drawn 50 years ago. It is recognizable, has great contrast, and simple typography. We have other logos, i.e. the Metrobus logo, the primary Metro logo, and the MetroAccess logo. In the updated logo, the word Metro is taken out of the bounding box, making it larger and uniform for all three Metro services.

Mr. Klingessrow discussed the rail line discs (circles) representing the rail line, with two letters in them indicating the rail line color. The proposal is to change from two letters inside those circles, to one letter, increasing the font size 25% larger. Mr. Klingessrow stated the color contrast between the foreground and the background is being reviewed. For higher contrast, the proposal is to change Green Line's white letters to black letter on green background. For Red, Orange, Yellow, and Silver lines, the higher contrast was already chosen. Contrast for Blue color is under review. Mr. Sheehan asked about the color contrast ratio, and how it that measured. Mr. Klingessrow stated contrast varies by color. For instance, Silver is 63%, Green is 50% (lowest), Yellow is 80%. The color contrast results may vary based upon the tool used.

SVC Neuzil preferred the larger letters and stated there will be a learning curb for a single letter in the color discs. For her, white color letter on orange background will be higher contrast. She asked if the exit letters would cause confusion for customers when they see single letter representing the color name. Mr. Serebin stated the Metro logo has been moved into a square with rounded corners. That differentiates between our exits, escalators, and elevators. All the directional information taking customers to our services, will be in those circles. SVC Neuzil asked about the earlier topic that was discussed in reference to static signs at the four stations. Mr. Serebin stated those are a series of design tests pilots for observation in the stations. VC Kaffen stated he prefers two letters for the rail line color and recommended the use of small case letters. Ms. Meyer stated seeing the rail discs in context of all the information being presented will be helpful. She also understands that change is always not welcome.

Mr. Serebin stated the updated color discs will appear in the system-wide map with the upcoming rail service changes from June 22nd. On the map, Silver Line service will be depicted through a dashed line. In late 2025, the Yellow line will extend up to Greenbelt hence, a dashed line will be on the map as well. Mr. Serebin stated the focus is to make our entire system more intuitive applying the rules and principles of universal design, making it better and intuitive for everybody by reducing the visual clutter.

Ms. Radt liked the larger one letter in the color discs for Metrorail lines. Concerning the color contrast, white letter on blue background is better than black letter on blue background. She recommended to lighten the Silver disc color for higher contrast, and to switch entrances from letters to numbers, to reduce confusion for riders. Mr. Serebin stated he prefers numbers, potentially for somewhere else. He made notes about the feedback on color discs and stated one letter used for train lines and for exits, should not cause confusion because of the move from circles to squares. VC Kaffen stated the importance of having maps, and locations of those maps within the Metro stations. Mr. Serebin concurred and stated the maps should be at predictable and strategic places on both, free and paid sides.

Ms. Meyer stated they wanted to share information with the AAC before the changes occur to reflect service changes as of June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Sheehan asked if this work has been shared with the DMV Moves group working on wayfinding signs. Ms. Meyer stated it is a good reminder to show the map to them. The purple line is coming soon and there is a request to incorporate that onto the map. VC Kaffen recommended for Silver Line, to add in parentheses via Dulles, at the Ashburn Station. Dr. Posner and SVC Neuzil inquired about other shapes in different colors showing on the system map, which were the Potomac River and the Capitol Beltway. Mr. Klingessrow stated the river, and the parks have not changed about the map. SVC Neuzil stated little airplane symbol gets used for airports, thus recommended to add that at the Dulles airport station, rather at Ashburn.

### **Public Comments**

The first member of the public preferred one larger letter for the Metrorail line color discs. For her, white letter on blue and green backgrounds would be good contrast. She understood the team's challenges about contrast concerning the silver color background. She preferred street or building information for exits rather than numbers or letters.

Ms. Coles asked about notification to customers when restrooms are out of order. Ms. Sharma stated station managers can inform or a sign can be placed informing customers.

Public Comments can be received via phone at 202-962-1100, or via email at [MetroAACChair@wmata.com](mailto:MetroAACChair@wmata.com)

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.