



Accessibility Advisory Committee

600 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
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June 6, 2016

Dear Chair Evans and Members of the Board,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) report for the month of May 2016. The primary issues we reviewed were: 1) Public safety on the fixed route system; 2) Metro SelectPass Pilot program; and 3) the SafeTrack Plan.

Issues of the Month

Public Safety Report

At the request of the AAC, Chief Ron Pavlik of the Metro Transit Police Department (MTPD) discussed crime and safety on the fixed route system. With the recent incident that resulted in a loss of life, the AAC is concerned about personal safety throughout the system.

MTPD has 474 sworn officers who provide a variety of law enforcement and public safety services on the fixed route system. MTPD has jurisdiction and arrest powers throughout the transit zone that includes Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, for crimes that occur in or against Metro's facilities.

MTPD has a new command center that allows officers to monitor the system via closed-circuit television (CCTV) and shares information from the camera system with the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, which makes it available to the region, allowing officers and first responders the ability to respond to situations in an efficient and effective manner. MTPD also partners with the Joint Terrorism Task Force, which is a partnership between various law enforcement agencies, and is charged with taking action against terrorism. Additionally, Metro has a bomb squad with over 20 trained explosive-detecting dogs. Although MTPD reported that crime was considerably lower on the fixed route system in comparison to the Metropolitan area, many members of the disability community reported being afraid to ride the system because of the crime.

Metro uses a layered approach to fighting crime in the system. MTPD saturates the system during peak hours with uniform and plain-clothes officers and monitors the system via CCTV. MTPD also deploys officers based on intelligence from trends and patterns in the system and apprehends those committing crime in the system. To ensure the public is aware of officers in the system, MTPD has changed the color of its uniforms to make sure help is more visible.

To alert MTPD of crime or a situation is occurring in the system, Metro encourages customers to report crime via the Text Tip program. The program was designed to provide two-way communication for emergency and non-emergency situations in the fixed route system. Customers can text information to 696873 or use the letters

MYMTPD. Customers can also contact MTPD directly by dialing (202) 962-2121, 911, or using the emergency intercom system on the railcars.

With a round of applause, the AAC thanked Chief Ron Pavlik and his team for keeping safety on the fixed route system in the forefront and for protecting all customers including those with disabilities.

Metro SelectPass

The AAC received a presentation on Metro's SelectPass, a new pilot program aimed at giving customers more choice among transportation payment options. The pilot program offers passes at two price points: \$80 (one-way fare \$2.25) and \$135 (one-way fare \$3.75), and all trips at the value set or less are included. For customer convenience, the SelectPass is only available online and has an unlimited Metrobus option for an additional \$45 per month.

The main advantage to the customer is the unlimited travel on the fixed route system for one set low price. This means customers can make a stop without incurring any additional charges. The program is billed on a monthly basis, which allows customers to budget their travel expenses. The SelectPass is also a win for Metro because it can increase ridership and customer satisfaction, and reduce revenue risk because customers pay one monthly bill in advance.

To get the word out to the community about the new pass, Metro advertised the pilot program through its main website, the Amplify rider community, direct emails, and through music websites like Spotify.

On a regular basis, many people with disabilities use Metro as the family car. Therefore, the AAC recommends that Metro include an option for customers with disabilities using reduced fare. A reduced fare SelectPass would allow customers with disabilities to budget their travel as well.

The AAC thanked Metro for an innovative idea and stressed the importance of including passes for the disability community in future iterations of the SelectPass.

SafeTrack Plan

The AAC discussed Metro's new SafeTrack plan to improve Metrorail safety and restore service reliability. The plan will consolidate three years of maintenance work on the rail system into one year. This will result in some changes, including hours of operations; single tracking on certain rail lines; and a complete shutdown of certain parts of the rail system at times. Many members agreed that this approach was necessary for the safety of all customers but had some concerns about the plan. The AAC made the following recommendations related to accessibility that will be forwarded in a letter to the GM:

- Metrobus will be used to shuttle customers between stations that are closed due to system repairs. Most buses can only accommodate two mobility devices at one time. Recommendations: 1) Use the paratransit service to shuttle the overflow of customers with mobility devices; or 2) Use D.C. Circulator buses, which can accommodate more mobility devices. All shuttles should be clearly labeled with destination or direction information, either on the electric boards or hand written on posters, and prominently displayed on the bus front window.
- Communication and traffic flow may be hampered during the process. It is imperative that the Passenger Information Display System (PIDS), Kiosk Information Display System (KIDS), and Metro-Alerts have the most updated information at all times. Recommendations: 1) Use travel ambassadors (staff and travel trainers) to help customers navigate the system; 2) Use whiteboards for immediate communication with deaf customers; 3) Increase the number of large print maps throughout the Metrorail and Metrobus systems; and 4) All customer-facing employees at Metro enhance their professionalism to improve the customer experience.
- With the number of closures planned, Metro should consider adjusting its fare policy due to disruptions in service. Recommendation: Adjust the fare policy to twice the bus fare for the calculation of paratransit fares during these periods. The AAC also supports the Rider's Advisory Council fare policy position on this issue.

In closing, the AAC stresses that safety and accessibility are closely associated, and one point should not have an advantage over the other.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Sheehan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Patrick Sheehan
Chair