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Metro Board Members,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to present the July 2007 Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) report to the board. This written report discusses the progress from our RAC subcommittees; outlines the RAC's issues surrounding Metro's possible headquarters relocation, and recycling issues.

Metro Headquarters Relocation

The RAC passed the following resolution with concurrence from the Elderly and Disabled Committee:

“The Riders' Advisory Council recommends that Metro wait at least 18 months to 2 years before beginning significant planning for a move of Metro headquarters from the Jackson Graham Building. We believe that planning a move at this time would be a burden and an unnecessary distraction for Mr. Catoe and his new management team. We believe that Mr. Catoe's team needs an opportunity to concentrate on his initiatives to improve safety, customer service, and focus on public transportation.”

The U.S. Department of Transportation is about complete with its move from L'Enfant Plaza to the Navy Yard. This effort distracted the organization for 18 months prior to the move, and turmoil continues and is expected to last for at least 6 months following the move. This move impacted every employee and contractor in the organization and even with substantial lead time, they failed to adequately plan for needed human capital space, arrange for infrastructure to handle public transportation to the new facility, and arrange for needed computing, network, and communication capacity.

Metro should use the USDOT's experience and other major moves by other large organizations to better assess the hidden costs that a move of this magnitude impacts employees, customers, and the services they provide.

Newspaper Recycling

Over the last year, the RAC Rail Subcommittee has had a number of presentations on newspaper recycling at rail stations, which resulted in an inventory of trashcans

and recycling receptacles. A few months ago, I included in my report to the board photos of proper and improper placement of recycling bins at a few select stations.

The RAC has followed-up on whether Metro actually does recycle newspapers and we obtained the following confirmation from Mr. Linwood West, the Contract Administrator in Plant Maintenance:

Metro employees are responsible for emptying trash and recycling containers and depositing the trash and recycling into holding rooms at the rail stations. The material is then picked up by the contractor and taken to be either recycled (for newspapers) or disposed of (for trash). Under the contract, pick-ups were to occur 3x/week (MWF); this has since increased to daily pick-ups due to increased ridership. There is a provision in the contract that requires the contractor to recycle the newspapers collected.

The RAC passed the following resolution:

“The Riders’ Advisory Council recommends that Metro:

- Provide recycling bins on all station platforms;
- Locate recycling bins next to trash cans, including outside of stations, where practicable; and
- Install signage on trash cans that reads “Trash Only – No Newspapers.”

30s-Line Restructuring Study:

At this month’s RAC meeting and at a number of Bus Subcommittee meetings, we had presentations by Jim Hamre from Metro’s Office of Long-Range Planning on Metro’s 30s-Line restructuring study. Mr. Hamre has engaged the RAC in the creation of a survey, outreach to the public, organizing public workshops, and the preparation of materials for the workshops. The workshop held last Thursday at the Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church was highly productive and it is anticipated that Tuesday’s meeting at St. Columba’s Episcopal Church will be equally productive. The RAC would like to thank Mr. Hamre and his organization for their efforts in soliciting RAC and public input into a much-needed study of the most used bus line in the region.

Emergency Planning

At this month’s RAC meeting, Ron Bodmer, Emergency Management Coordinator for WMATA and a distinguished panel of experts presented the current procedures and processes used in the coordination of Metro and first responders to incidents that occur in the Rail System. Mr. Bodmer’s panel included:

Victor Size – WMATA, Office of Fire and Life Safety

Lt. Sean Doody – Special Operations Division, Metro Transit Police

Chief Milton Douglas – District of Columbia Fire and Rescue

Sgt. Alfred Wright – District of Columbia Fire and Rescue
Jeff Anderson – Bus Operations Control Center
Dan Epps – Rail Operations Control Center
Don Goings – Yellow/Green Line Customer Service

The RAC asked for this presentation in preparation for workshops the RAC is interested in holding to address the concerns of communication and planning that are increasingly impacting riders when an event closes a station, track, or rail line. Our goal is to improve on Metro's processes, improve communication with affected passengers, and be better prepared in organizing the movement of people and resources at the scene of an event.

Bus Subcommittee – The Bus Subcommittee is dedicated to MetroBus service issues including operations, scheduling, safety, and improvements to services for the communities served by this mode of transportation.

At this month's Bus Subcommittee, as discussed earlier, Mr. James Hamre presented Metro's final plans for the 30s Line Survey.

We also had a presentation by Ron Rydstrom, Acting Marketing Director, on the creation and distribution of schedules following a change in service. The RAC has not seen any improvement in getting the correct schedules and bus system maps onto Metrobuses. As a reminder, an ongoing initiative for the past two years has been to have bus operators take responsibility for seeing that this much needed literature is available on all busses at the beginning of their shift.

Rail Subcommittee – The Rail Subcommittee is dedicated to MetroRail, MetroRail Stations, elevator/escalator, and parking-related services, including safety, cleanliness, recycling, lighting, bicycle/pedestrian/special needs accessibility, infrastructure, expansion, and improvement to services for the communities served by this mode of transportation.

At this month's Rail Subcommittee, the Customer Service Managers for the three rail-line teams presented how customer service functions in rail operations. As discussed in last month's report, we encourage Metro to expand on this model as it moves towards reorganizing customer service across all modes.

Concluding Remarks:

The Rider's Advisory Council has voted to follow the Board's lead and not hold its full RAC meeting in August. However, we will be arranging for tours of the Customer Service Facility, and a chance to see the pilot reconfigured rail cars

between now and September. The RAC subcommittees will post their plans and schedules on the Metro calendar once they have voted on their plans for August.

This month, I had a very productive meeting with Mr. Catoe and he renewed his commitment to regular meetings with himself, Deputy General Manager Gerald Francis, and the Chair of the RAC. These meetings are an excellent opportunity to follow-up on initiatives and resolutions presented in these reports.

In conclusion, the RAC and the E&D committee continue to appreciate when Boards Members remind Metro to obtain appropriate feedback from our committees as the General Manager presents new initiatives that directly affect riders. On behalf of the citizen volunteers on the RAC, I'd like to thank all Metro staff who include the RAC in pre-planning and ask:

What would Metro's customers on the RAC think of this idea?

I. Michael Snyder

Chair, Riders' Advisory Council