

ITEM 7 - Action
October 20, 2004

Approval of a Resolution Recognizing the
Importance of Accessible and Dependable Transit Service,
Sidewalks, and Safe Pedestrian Crossings for
People with Disabilities

Staff

Recommendation: Adopt Resolution R2-2005 to recognize the importance of accessible and dependable transit service, sidewalks, and safe pedestrian crossings for people with disabilities.

Issues: None

Background: On October 20 the TPB will hold a press conference on "Disability Awareness Day" to highlight the importance of accessible and dependable transportation for people with disabilities. TPB Board members and persons with disabilities will travel to the press conference in teams and report on their travel experiences.

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002**

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF
ACCESSIBLE AND DEPENDABLE TRANSIT SERVICE,
SIDEWALKS, AND SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

WHEREAS, Congress has designated October of each year *National Disability Employment Awareness Month* to increase awareness of the contributions from workers with disabilities and call attention to the employment barriers that still need to be addressed;

WHEREAS, according to the 2000 Census, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities in the Washington region is twice that of the general population, and two-thirds of people with disabilities are not even in the labor force;

WHEREAS, the 2004 National Organization on Disability (NOD) and Harris survey found that people with disabilities were twice as likely to have inadequate transportation than people without disabilities;

WHEREAS, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), which is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Region, is responsible under the provisions of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process for the Metropolitan Area;

WHEREAS, on November 15, 2000, the TPB established the Access for All Advisory (AFA) Committee to provide advice on how to include concerns of low-income, minority and people with disabilities in the regional transportation planning process and to identify projects, programs, services and issues that are important to these communities; and

WHEREAS, on April 21, 2004, the TPB was briefed on the 2003 AFA Report which identified recommendations for improving transit services for people with disabilities, including:

- Improve the dependability of the bus and rail systems to attract and retain riders with disabilities;

- Coordinate efforts to encourage more people with disabilities to use bus and rail with regional and local transit providers; and
- Conduct a comprehensive study of the curb-to-curb service for the best and most cost-effective ways to serve the greatest number of people.

WHEREAS, the TPB participated in a Disability Awareness Day on October 20, 2004, and hosted a press conference highlighting the importance of accessible and dependable transportation for people with disabilities, co-sponsored by Easter Seals Project ACTION, the Community Transportation Association of America, the Center for Workers with Disabilities, the American Association of People with Disabilities, and the American Council for the Blind; and

WHEREAS, teams traveled throughout the region to highlight the great strides that have been made to create an accessible and dependable transportation system, including wheelchair access for buses, truncated domes in Metrorail stations to warn people that they are near the tracks, improved sidewalks with curb cuts, audible pedestrian signals, curb-to-curb paratransit services, and the need for more of these improvements.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD:

- Recognizes the importance of accessible and dependable transit service, sidewalks, and safe pedestrian crossings for people with disabilities; and
- Encourages TPB member agencies and jurisdictions to implement the AFA recommendations to improve transit services for people with disabilities.