

ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

November 22, 2024

James Walkinshaw, Chair

The Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA) met virtually on Friday, November 22, 2024. They discussed the AFA Situation Assessment and Recommendations, received a report from the WMATA Access Advisory Committee liaison, and re-capped the Fall TPB activities. The committee also held time open for a member forum.

AFA SITUATION ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Laura Bachle, Transportation Planner, provided a presentation on the TPB staff recommendation to refresh the AFA committee. She recapped the assessment process used (including over 40 interviews), the key findings, criteria to evaluate alternative committee structures, and the recommendation that ensued. The staff recommendation is to keep the AFA committee basically “as is,” hold a recruitment event to re-balance committee representation among the five designated groups, formulate a work plan and schedule, and continue work on clarifying roles and meeting guidelines. It was acknowledged that the groups represented on the AFA overlap. A person with a disability may also be low income, etc.

Comments included the following:

Regarding criteria to be applied to applications for membership, consider: balancing the membership across the TPB region, seeking members who represent specific disability groups, representation by municipal, county and state governments as well as non-profit and advocacy groups, and perhaps some distinction between grantee members and other members. Members advised targeting outreach to some specific networks, such as the centers for independent living.

Other ideas were to consider having an outreach event or roundtable in years when planning consultation is not needed. Having an annual reporting requirement was another idea discussed.

REPORT FROM THE WMATA ACCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE LIAISONS

Doris Ray provided a report on the current activities of the committee. Current initiatives include DMVMoves, upgrades to WMATA operations, and a “way mapping” roll-out providing navigational aids at metro and bus stations. There are some changes underway for Metro Access operations, including a new call center.

AFA FORUM

As a regular part of every agenda, members are invited to share information about their programs, current initiatives, and any questions or concerns they may have.

Washington, DC, has been selected as the site for the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Designing Cities 2025 conference. The conference will take place May 28-31. AFA members were encouraged to reach out to their ADA offices to ensure that pedestrian and disability issues are raised in the workshops and tours.

A concern was raised about the lack of outreach from WMATA when they were developing the Better Bus initiative. Commuters in Fairfax County on the Route 1 corridor seemed to have been left out. Members discussed the elimination of some of the WMATA routes and effects on other transportation options.

Members discussed restoration of the slug lines in Virginia, especially now that Springfield has a new hub. Efforts are underway to bring the practice back after its hiatus during the pandemic.

For future AFA topics, issues related to pedestrian rights-of-way to get to and from bus stops, the accessibility of bus stops, and taxis and ride-share were raised.

OTHER BUSINESS

The 2025 calendar has not been set. The AFA Refresh recommendation advises setting the calendar to the consultation requirements needed in the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan and Visualize 2050. This plan update is due to start again next spring. Once these dates are established, a work plan and calendar will be developed.

Chair Walkinshaw thanked everyone for participating and urged members to continue to work with TRB staff to refresh the committee.

ATTENDEES

District of Columbia

Heather Foote
Cassandra McFerson

Maryland

Sara Fought
Bong Delrosario
William Clements
Jessica Richards (guest)

Virginia

John Nemeth
Cynthia Alarico
Roger Hoskin
Doris Ray

Regional

Glenn Millis

TPB Staff

Lyn Erickson
Rachel Beyerle
Leo Pineda
Laura Bachle

Chair

James Walkinshaw, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors