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July 15, 2015

Chairman Downey & WMATA Board Members:

Here is the Riders' Advisory Council report on its activities for July.

Customer Feedback:

Lynn Bowersox brought Jason Minser to our July 1st meeting, to tell us about the Customer Community initiative that they hope to launch in September. RAC members expressed their enthusiastic support for WMATA's proposal to supplement its suite of customer feedback tools. We look forward to both participating on one of the proposed panels and to hearing the feedback received from others.

Rail Service:

James Hughes also attended our July 1st meeting, to present the newest proposal for rail service, including an 8-minute headway. He answered many questions from us, and we provided strong support for conducting public outreach. Our own reaction to the proposal itself was not negative, but that the majority of the riders would not likely welcome any additional wait time. We acknowledged that the communication to the public needed to be crafted carefully, so riders could have a reasonable expectation of the overall impact, and not rush to judgment based on the headway change alone. Blue line riders should be pleased with more equity in the wait time, but the projection of even a little more crowding for them may be a concern.

2015 Work Plan:

On July 9th, I met with the Executive Board to give an update on the RAC's progress toward its 14 initiatives targeted for 2105. I walked through our status (shown below), and reported our thinking so far, with an indication of our next steps. They provided the feedback we were seeking -- which initiatives were most important and/or urgent to them, any that may not add value at this time (e.g., researching cell phone service), as well as any additional insight they had for us.

As always, a very sincere thank you to all who give us information and listen to our feedback!

Sincerely,
/s/

Barbara Hermanson, Chair
Riders' Advisory Council

cc: RAC Members

RAC Committee	RAC Initiative	Status as of July 1
Budget & Finance	Provide recommendations on 2016 budget options impacting riders.	Provided feedback to Mark Schofield on fare options.
	Provide recommendations on fare simplification for consideration with 2017 budget.	Met with Mark Schofield to identify guidelines, concepts and options to consider, as well as advantages and disadvantages of options.
Customer Service	Collaborate with WMATA staff on rider-related safety procedures, incident training, and clear and timely communications.	Met with Ron Bodmer on emergency management. Participated in April drill at Greenbelt and provided feedback. Also provided feedback on safety video and methods to increase viewership.
	Understand impact of Silver line on Blue line service, and make recommendations to balance service levels.	Met with Shyam Kannan on rail ridership, work underway, and input from RAC members and public. Provided feedback to Jim Hughes on newest schedule proposal and next steps.
	Research rail station operational roles, responsibilities and training related to customer service, safety, and escalator conditions, and make recommendations as appropriate.	Met with Rita Davis and others from Rail Station Operations on current station manager roles, training, and challenges. Also attended a Station Manager training session. Drafted recommendations, currently under full RAC review.
	Provide recommendations on information available to riders at bus stops.	Some brainstorming completed. More to come.
Programs, Projects and Planning (PPP)	Collaborate with AAC on recommendations for priority seating.	Met jointly with AAC to combine perspectives on incorporating the needs of all users. Another joint session to be held.
	Research WMATA's approach to mobile application technology, and provide recommendations, as appropriate.	Drafted recommendations, currently under full RAC review.
	Research current status of cell phone service, plans for future, and provide recommendations, as appropriate.	Began brainstorming, but focusing on other initiatives first.
	Research WMATA's operational coordination with regional transit systems in the context of service cuts, and provide recommendations, as appropriate.	Began brainstorming, but focusing on other initiatives first.
	Obtain Payment Pilot feedback and provide recommendations, as appropriate.	2 RAC members participating in pilot. Met with Tom Randall on pilot's purpose and the eventual system's operation. No recommendations planned.
	Research options to elicit feedback from a wider group of riders through Internet technology.	Began gathering ideas. Provided feedback to Jason Minser and Lynn Bowersox on proposed community feedback initiative.
Leadership/ Governance Committee:	Identify and implement processes to improve the RAC's contribution to WMATA.	Brainstormed ideas for improving information exchange with WMATA staff and the riding public.
	Refine Committee guidelines and expectations.	Communicated guidelines and templates for RAC committee use and reporting.