

Arlington Transit Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
May 9, 2023
7:00 PM
Microsoft Teams Meeting

YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9qvDfqOLX0>

TAC Members Present:

John Carten	James Davenport	Ronald Decker
Herschel Kanter	Patrick Thompson	Frank Krol
Alexander Cumana	Harvey Berlin	Alexa Mavroidis
Erika Chiang		

Attendees Present:

Lynn Rivers (staff)	Pierre Holloman (staff)	Robin McElhenny (staff)
Kirk Dand (staff)	Diana Isaza (staff)	Clinton Edwards (staff)
Paul Mounier (staff)	Ryan Jones (staff)	Kenex Sevilla (staff)
Rocco Visconti (staff)	Steven Frazier (staff)	Edwin Montano (staff)
William Jones (WMATA)	Andre Stafford (WMATA)	Doris Ray
Jiaxin Tong	T. Emerson Williams	Sue Gutierrez
Steven Waters	Maria Martinez	

Call to Order

- John Carten opened the meeting at 7:02 pm.

Introductions

- John Carten led roll call of TAC members present, Arlington staff, and others present.

Public Comment

- Doris Ray provided the following comments:
 - “Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am very interested in the agenda for this evening. Umm. Particularly the reports from WMATA and one of the things that I don't know whether you're going to discuss that. I did want to mention is I saw your talking about the fare adjustments for Metro. Rail and I just wanted to mention there is a significant fair adjustment for metro access. Riders and from starting in July, the fare the maximum fare for any metro access ride will be \$4. For each ride, so I I this is a significant and wonderful. Benefit for persons with disabilities, I wonder? Uh, how that might impact, if at all. Patrons of star and mentioning star I, I do look forward to see civic engagement with star writers coming up and getting input and feedback from them on what they need from the service and what they would consider fair and equitable policies going forward for stark and I did want to mention that I tried to call into the Accessibility Subcommittee meeting and maybe somebody gave me the wrong number because it

was also the number for this this meeting. But I want. I appreciate the opportunity to observe and participate in your meeting.”

Approval of Minutes from the March 14, 2023, Meeting

- The amended meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Arlington Transit Operations & Maintenance Facility Update

- Pierre Holloman provided background information on the project and provided a visual and verbally descriptive overview of ongoing construction activities on site. The financial plan to construct the project was noted as a bulk of the funding from the project is coming from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority as well as the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.
- The TAC inquired about activities which will take place once the new facility open. It was noted that the facility will be the main maintenance facility for Arlington Transit but will also be the home base for bus operations as well as administrative functions for Arlington Transit.

WMATA Better Bus Network Redesign Update

- William Jones gave an update on WMATA’s Better Bus Network Redesign Project. The project is to rethink, redesign, and revitalize bus service and includes many ongoing and future efforts to improve bus service. It was noted there will be a public engagement opportunity on Wednesday, May 10, from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm at the Arlington Central Library. Draft visionary network essentials include: all non-commuter service should operate seven days/week across the region, all service should operate as frequently as possible, and at least every 30 minutes Regional 24-hour network to key job and nightlife areas.
- Draft Visionary Network Considerations include:
 - Data and public, bus operations, jurisdiction partner input formed the basis for the draft Visionary Network;
 - Implementing the draft Visionary Network will require a 35 percent increase in funding for bus in the region;
 - Network does not specify which operator will operate the service nor have we yet specified stops or stopping patterns; and,
 - Temporary bus route numbers to accommodate new routes and changes to existing routes
- It was noted that WMATA staff have met with Arlington Transit staff as well as with staff from other regional transit partners to look at network options so that there is a collaborative effort.
- Andre Stafford mentioned the new network will actually create new connections throughout the region that don't currently exist and are very time consuming about by Metrorail; moreover, WMATA is looking at those gaps to provide alternative services to reduce our dependency on private vehicles. WMATA is looking at connecting to transit hubs; such as the Shirlington bus station. This project is also looking at land use connections and new points of interest such as, such as the new Inova Alexandria hub at the old Landmark site that's also included in our long-term vision plan with the transit center going in and to have services going to various parts of the Northern Virginia area to that area as well. WMATA is also looking to improve access to Dulles Airport by having connections after hours after Metrorail closes.
- The TAC inquired about bus routes which could cross state lines such as a route between Tysons and Bethesda. It was noted that WAMTA is looking at provide service across municipal

boundaries as much as they can including understanding where people want to go. The TAC also inquired about the focus on middle schools, high schools, and university connections. It was noted that WMATA is looking to make additional connections to George Mason University.

WMATA Metrorail Fare Changes, Potomac Yard Opening, Upcoming Station Closures

- Kirk Dand gave an overview of the upcoming Metrorail fare changes. The FY2024 fare optimization simplifies the Metrorail fare structure for customers, grows ridership and revenue, and makes transit more affordable for Metro's most price sensitive customers. The proposed rail fare structure ranges from \$2 to \$6.00 for weekdays and maintains the \$2 late night and weekend fare. Weekday peak and off-peak fare structure would be consolidated. The mileage rate would be standardized at \$0.40 per mile (after 3 miles) The rail base fare would match the bus base fare of \$2 all week. Metro will expand reduced fares to low-income customers. This fare simplification offers advantages over a general across-the-board fare increase by growing ridership while maintaining a positive budget impact. The proposed low-income fare program would provide customers enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) a 50 percent discount on trips, similar to the senior and disabled reduced fares. Metrobus fares remain the same. MetroAccess fares are capped at \$4.00.
- It was also noted the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station will open on May 19th, 2023, at 5 a.m. A Grand Opening ceremony is scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. It was also noted there will be a continuous shutdown between Ballston to Vienna/McLean from June 3, 2023 through June 25, 2023 with Vienna, Dunn Loring, West Falls Church and East Falls Church stations being closed. The Orange Line will be shut down between West Falls Church and Vienna from June 3, 2023 through July 15, 2023 with Vienna and Dunn Loring stations being closed. Shuttle services will be established to move customers between the closed station.
- The TAC inquired on when the fare changes will take effect. It was noted to be effective on July 1, 2023. The TAC also inquired about what WMATA plans to do with gate jumpers. It was noted that WMATA is testing a higher salon style gate at Fort Totten and results from that test may help WMATA decide how to move forward.

Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance Update

- Kenex Sevilla noted the project includes the design and construction a second entrance to the Ballston –MU Metro Station at Fairfax Drive and N Vermont Street. New entrance enhances connectivity within the Ballston area and extends the distance pedestrians can reasonably walk to access the station by nearly one-quarter mile. This project will relieve congested conditions by providing more even distribution along the platform and provides additional egress path for evacuation during an emergency. This is an Arlington led project and being in coordination with WMATA. The FY23-32 CIP Project Budget is \$150M. In 2019, Arlington brought on a consultant who was tasked with updating prior 35% design documents to current standards; however, as a result of changes since the original plans were developed in 2006, some elements had to be redesigned. As of today, the 35% design has been submitted to WMATA and the design updates include 3 regular and 2 ADA faregates and 2 street elevators and stairs. The mezzanine level includes: 4 stairs (2 on each platform) and 3 elevators (2 on South side & 1 on North side). Regarding funding, the project is fully funded and received \$80M from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority in the summer of 2022 (as well as a \$12M in prior regional funding from NVT), \$4.5M from the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, \$32M in local funds from Arlington, \$10M from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and \$11.5M from developer contributions.

Report from the Accessibly Subcommittee

- Alexa Mavroidis noted Count staff is providing the Subcommittee with more detailed information on STAR metrics, including information about missed trips. It was noted that County staff mentioned the proposed STAR policy changes will be reviewed again and there was not an estimated time for when such will be reviewed and when there will be public engagement to seek feedback on such proposed changes. It was noted there were deep concerns about the proposed changes; however, the Subcommittee was happy to hear that staff was looking to go back to the drawing board again. The Subcommittee also noted to staff that staff should be more descriptive for persons with visual disabilities when verbalizing data and graphs.
- Hershel Kanter noted the Subcommittee requested that staff advertise and post the meeting agenda well in advance of the meeting as well as ensure the meeting links work prior to such being posted.

Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff

Upcoming Transit Capital Projects Tour – Pierre Holloman noted a poll will be sent out to the TAC to see if 7/18/23 or 7/25/23 is the preferred date of the tour. Due to upcoming vacations, the TAC inquired about changing the tour date from 7/18/23 to 7/25/23.

Pierre Holloman noted there will be more discussions on the proposed TAC Charter changes in the fall as there are still internal reviews by Arlington leadership.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be Tuesday July 18 or July 25, 2023.