



# Metro Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

One Metropolitan Square, 211 N. Broadway, 6th Floor Training Room  
In-Person with Zoom option

## Attendees:

Committee Members (in-person)

Raymond Bishop (Chair), Edward Coleman Beals, Bobbie Fernandes Brantley, Steve Foelsch, Robert Hinkle, Ishak Hossain, April Mason Donovan, Lamar Neal, Dawn Walter

Committee Members (via zoom)

Kristi Vetri (Vice-Chair), Ryan Austin, Martha Darris, Roy Lantry, Tarika “Starry” Walton

Metro Staff (in-person)

Amy Parker, Lewis Lowry, Danielle Williams

Guests (in-person)

Kristina

Guests (via zoom)

Tracy Anderson, Jenny Carmack, Seyoon Choi, Annie Dowell, Mark Detjen, Kelly Dunlap, Steve Harris, LaTonya Jamerson, Barbara Sheinbein, Earl Simms, Robyn Wallen

## Welcome

Vice Chair Vetri called the meeting to order, and Roll Call was taken by Amy Parker. Public comments were moved to later in the agenda as Chair Bishop was delayed by circumstances outside his control.

## Previous Meeting Minutes

January 17, 2025 meeting minutes were approved by voice vote. Motion: Lantry, Second: Walter.

## Unfinished Business

### Report to BSD Board of Commissioners

Chair Bishop and ADA Coordinator Parker prepared a statement that was included in the Board Packet for the last BSD Board of Commissioners Meeting. Chief Operating Officer Charles Stewart also included mention of this statement in his operations report at the Board of Commissioners Meeting. Similar information will be submitted for subsequent meetings to promote awareness of this committee and open communication with the Board of Commissioners. A copy of the statement is included at the end of these minutes.

### Profiles/Bios of Committee Members for Website

Content of profiles of each Committee Member has been formatted by our Communications department. These have been reviewed by committee members. There was discussion regarding whether they should be presented in 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> person. After discussion, the consensus was to keep the tense consistent across all profiles.

### Formation of Subcommittees:

The Committee is forming 3 Subcommittees: Appeals, Training, and Accessibility. The members listed below are interested in serving as follows.

Appeals: Edward Coleman Beals, Kristi Vetri, Raymond Bishop, Martha Darris, and April Mason-Donovan

Training: Edward Coleman Beals, Bobbie Fernandes Brantley, Marth Darris, Steve Foelsch, Michael Lauf, and Kristi Vetri

Accessibility: Robert Hinkle, Ishak Hossain, Roy Lantry, Dawn Walter, and Tarika “Starry” Walton

Vice Chair Vetri requested a list of committee members who have not signed up for a committee so that she and Chair Bishop could reach out to provide any needed information. Members not currently assigned to a subcommittee include Lamar Neal and Ryan Austin. Mr. Austin indicated that he is not interested in serving on a subcommittee at this time.

## Public Comments

Public comments were limited to 3 minutes per person and are summarized here:

Robyn Wallen, RAISE Transit, MCB

Ms. Wallen reports that a Call-A-Ride Customer had to walk to get to the van and the van passed them by. She reports that she asked this customer to report this to Metro. She reports difficulty booking a round-trip on the new app. She is interested in transferring her E-Fare tickets over to the new app. Amy Parker will contact Ms. Wallen to address her concerns with the App and transferring her tickets.

Kristina

Kristina shared feedback about many items. She reports that Call-A-Ride drivers are not able to see the pickup window, which sometimes makes them arrive early or late; she believes that Call-A-Ride dispatchers are not able to move trips as easily as they could in the old system. She says that 80% of the work of Call-A-Ride is done by the drivers. She would like to have an after-hours voicemail for which customers could report complaints or concerns, along with signs inside the vans to advertise this. Chair Bishop asked Kristina to email any further comments to [STLMetroTAAC@MetroStLouis.org](mailto:STLMetroTAAC@MetroStLouis.org) as her comments exceeded the time limit. She agreed. She also had questions about elevator outages and security on platforms.

Kelly Dunlap

Mr. Dunlap is pleased that the Blue Line is able to extend to Emerson Park rather than just Forest Park. He would like to know the progress between Washington Park and Fairview Heights. Finally, he reports concerns about Battle Hawks Fans getting to the game with the Convention Center station closed. Metro Staff will provide a response about Washington Park to Fairview Heights to Mr. Dunlap via email and reports that there will be extra vans for the shuttle on Battle Hawks games, and some fans will choose to use the 8<sup>th</sup> and Pine or Laclede's Landing station to get to and from the game.

### Edward Coleman Beals, Committee Member

Mr. Coleman Beals shared concerns about drop-offs as well as security at 8<sup>th</sup> and Pine, where the MetroLink Station, the MetroStore, and the Transit Access Center are in close proximity. He reports that the path between the MetroStore and the Transit Access Center is narrow, without good visibility. There are dumpsters from the apartment area along the street, and the 3 parking spaces in front of the Transit Access Center are not reserved for customers. He says this is in a high crime area and there is no security. He is concerned about 5 to 10 Metro vehicles in the street where people must go around, and they sometimes go quickly around the corner. Amy Parker shared information about Downtown Safety Ambassadors as well as TAC staff reports that Public Safety checking in at the Transit Access Center on a regular basis. Amy Parker will follow up with BSD Safety Department regarding this report as well.

### Ryan Austin, Committee Member

Mr. Austin asked about the latest time that MetroLink runs. Amy Parker will email Ryan the schedule and the answer to his question.

### Dawn Walter, Committee Member

Ms. Walter has concerns about functionality at the Central West End MetroLink station. The sidewalk is 3 about 3 feet wide as folks enter and exit towards the bus bays from the platform. When a person in a wheelchair is approaching, it is a very tight fit for folks coming the other direction. And if 2 people in wheelchairs were coming in opposite directions, it would be even more difficult to navigate. Amy Parker spoke of balance between safety/z-crossing and usability. Will pass this observation on to SPP project team.

### Robert Hinkle, Committee Member

Mr. Hinkle shared a summary of written comments that he had collected from Call-A-Ride users, and he provided the written copy to Metro Staff Parker. Vans sometimes show up earlier than the early window or later than the late window. A van was told to proceed when they had arrived early, but then the rider came out and the driver spent several minutes trying to find them in the parking lot. Sometimes they call to say the van is outside, but it is not, because the driver is in the wrong building. Sometimes the driver drives past a person's destination to get someone else on multiple trials before dropping them off. When people have appointments, they are sometimes dropped off very early or late. There is a suggestion that ADA people should do ride alongs on Call-A-Ride to see how ineffective they do things.

## Unscheduled Business

### Committee Members Van Demo Feedback

Mr. Hinkle liked the van, but had concerns about the steps in the back of the van and the number and size of the securement areas.

Mr. Hossain liked that the ramp had a less steep slope than the current vans but had concerns that there were no handrails or grab bars as the ramp extends. He understood that those extra bars could be an option.

Mr. Bishop spoke of the need for a service animal to safely travel and wondered if there was room for an animal in the rear section of the van up the steps.

Mr. Lowry, General Manager at Call-A-Ride, shared a few comments about van design, reminding the members that there are transit agencies across the country who use these vans, and we must balance feedback from our customers, budget, maintenance needs, safety, and the like. His goal is to procure a functional fleet that meets the needs of our passengers and makes the best use of our funding. He looks forward to the committee seeing other van demos.

### Meeting with LRV Team

Ms. Mason-Donovan met with 2 Metro Team members working on the design of the new Light Rail Vehicles regarding assisted listening technology. She shared her expertise about T-Coil technology vs. the newer Bluetooth based Auracast technology that is becoming more available. She shared that if Metro goes with the Auracast technology, we might be the first agency to implement this technology on our system.

## Spare Implementation Update

Lewis Lowry provided an update about Spare Implementation. Mr. Lowry has been at Metro for a few months now. Prior to that he served in Des Moines and Kansas City in the public transit world and prior to that he worked in School Bus Transportation.

Call-A-Ride went live with the new dispatching and scheduling software, Spare, in January. They are seeing improvements in terms of service delivery for our customers. The MetroGo! app is being used

by a small number of customers currently and they can book trips, pay fare, and see trip status with the app. Mr. Lowry is excited for the technology within Spare that can provide automatic notifications of the van's arrival and can significantly reduce outgoing calls that dispatchers currently make.

Mr. Lowry shared information about ongoing work with Spare to improve the product, such as making it possible for the operators to see 3 or 4 upcoming trips instead of just their next action. They are also working to minimize the disruption of vans arriving early.

Mr. Lowry shared that more and more trips are being scheduled, and if people travel on off-peak times for trips, that can be helpful both for the folks who are trying to get to appointments and work at a specific time as well as to put less stress on the system. He shared that after 9:30 a.m. and before 1 p.m. are times that demand is typically less during the week.

## Announcements

Member Lauf asked if there have been any Federal Executive Orders that will impact transportation. Mr. Lowry indicated that transportation has not been directly impacted at this time, but that the agency will keep up with any changes that we would need to address. Member Walter reports that for the continuing resolution, transit was funded in the same way as last year, possibly increased by 1%.

Amy Parker indicated that she would ask via email what information the committee is interested in receiving at regular meetings in terms of ADA Coordinator Report.

Next Meeting is May 16, 2025, at 1 p.m.

## Adjournment

Motion to adjourn-Coleman Beals, Second-Hossain. Passed by voice vote.

## COMMUNICATION FROM METRO TRANSIT ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, RAYMOND BISHOP-CHAIRPERSON

Dear Commissioners,

Please see the message below from Raymond Bishop, Chairperson of the Metro Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee (MTAAC).

“We are a newly appointed committee with fifteen (15) members and two (2) Metro employees. We meet every other month, and our next meeting will be 21 March 2025. Our first two meetings have been productive as we adopted bylaws and our mission statement. We elected our Chair (myself, Raymond Bishop) and Vice-Chair (Kristi Vetri). We have identified 2 high-priority topics we wish to address--training and accessibility. We as a committee hope to help and guide Metro into having as good a transit system as possible for those who have disabilities. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the committee if you have questions and we always welcome your participation and engagement.”

MTAAC would like to include a short report to the Board of Commissioners on a regular basis and invites your engagement. Information about the committee, including meeting dates and materials, can be accessed at [Metro Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee | Metro Transit – Saint Louis](#). The mission of Metro Transit Accessibility Advisory Committee is to cultivate accessibility, usability, and inclusion through effective relationships between people with all abilities and Metro.

The Committee can be reached by email at [STLMetroTAAC@MetroStLouis.org](mailto:STLMetroTAAC@MetroStLouis.org).

Thank you,

Amy Parker, Director, ADA Services--ADA Coordinator