



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 12

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Memorandum

TO: Elderly & Disabled Advisory Committee DATE: May 30, 2008

FR: Tom Spiekerman, MTC Staff

RE: 511 Transit Web site Trip Planner Replacement Update

This memo is an update to previous reports given to EDAC regarding new developments on the 511 Transit trip planner and Transit Web site.

511 TakeTransit Trip PlannerSM Replacement

As described at previous presentations to EDAC by MTC staff in January and July 2007, and January and May 2008, the transit trip planner currently in use on 511 Transit is obsolete and no longer supported by its developer. MTC approved the contractor's recommendation for a new commercial "off the shelf" trip planner in early 2007, after a comprehensive evaluation of options in the latter part of 2006. MTC's contractor has been working since then to adapt the trip planner software to MTC's Regional Transit Database and 511 Transit's Web site revision.

511 Transit Web Site Update

In response to many requests from the public for improved features, the 511 Transit project reviewed newer technologies that are currently being adapted by transit information Web sites around the world. During this review, it became apparent that many of the latest and more useful improvements in Web site usability and interactive mapping that the 511 Transit Web site customers have been requesting were not expected to be fully adaptable to current screen reader technology.

Subsequently, as mentioned at previous EDAC meetings in July 2007, and in the first half of 2008, MTC developed the following approach for providing 1) a new Transit Web site and trip planner that uses the

newer, more complex technology that enables improved ease of use for the general public, and 2) a parallel, live version of the existing and more accessible 511 Transit Web site that would contain an accessible version of the new trip planner, to be completed by July 2008. The work regarding Web site accessibility will be conducted via an accessibility consultant, who will be advising MTC. The new Web site was launched as a beta test Web site on May 12th, 2008, while the existing 511 Transit site currently remains live using the previous trip planner.

At an EDAC technical working group in May, we had additional discussions regarding this approach, in addition to information regarding wheelchair accessibility on trip planning. There were concerns raised by a new representative from the EDAC working group regarding the approach to the new beta Web site while concurrently offering a parallel accessible Web site version. MTC is consequently revisiting the planned approach to the accessibility review of the 511 Transit website at this time.

MTC staff will be at your June 5 meeting to update you on progress on the 511 Transit Web site accessibility review and features. Staff will describe this update on the replacement trip planner and Web site review, and receive your input at this meeting.