



September 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes for the Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council

The Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council (Coordinating Council) meeting was called to order at 2:01 PM in the RIPTA board room, 705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence, and online through Microsoft Teams. An attendance sheet is attached to these minutes.

Joelle Kanter, RIPTA planner, began by announcing the Coordinating Council's vision: accessible, coordinated statewide mobility for all Rhode Islanders.

Maureen Maignet motioned to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2024 Coordinating Council meeting. Holly Snyder seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Joelle Kanter then introduced Liza Farr, supervising planner on the transportation planning team at the Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning. Liza presented on two projects: a demonstration of the state's new social equity mapping tool and the long range transportation plan update, Moving Forward RI 2050. An outgrowth of the federal Justice40 initiative, the new data platform aligns current plans and processes such as the state transportation improvement program (STIP) with an equity lens. Instead of building new data sets, the team used existing sources to pull together indicators on economics, public health, environmental justice and transportation. The working group will continue seeking feedback from government agencies and advocates to help update the platform next spring.

Liza then presented on Moving Forward RI 2050, a limited 5-year update on the current Long Range Transportation Plan which was published in 2020. Through this process, Statewide Planning will document what has changed, determine what needs to be updated, and set a vision for the state's multimodal system. The result should be a fiscally constrained plan that's actionable and realistic, building on planning work that's already been done. The Transit Master Plan, Transit Forward RI 2040, will get a small update, including new ridership projections and cost estimates, taking into account the impact of Covid-19.

The project team will continue public engagement through the spring with a goal of releasing the first draft by next summer and completing the final plan by December 2025. A link to an online survey will follow.

Partner agencies and organizations then shared updates:



- Mario Olivieri, RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services, described a slight change in Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) and Elderly Transportation Program (ETP) guidance from the Public Utilities Commission, requiring vehicles to be registered as part of the NEMT program. He also mentioned that the second NEMT contract amendment for MTM, the state's broker, went into effect on July 1, 2024 with new performance standards.
- Brandon Lehman, RI Department of Transportation, said the agency received a grant award for charging and fueling infrastructure and is pursuing other funding opportunities.
- Maureen Maignet announced that the RI Senior Agenda Coalition is hosting an event on October 9th.

RIPTA project updates followed.

- Flex on Demand: Last month, RIPTA launched a microtransit pilot program in the 203 Flex zone (Narragansett and South Kingstown), allowing passengers to use a smartphone app to request trips and track them in real time. Riders without smart phones may continue to call RIPTA to request trips.
- Ride Anywhere Pilot Program: Through December 31, 2024, RIPTA is testing an expansion of the paratransit service area across the state. Qualifying passengers with disabilities must apply for the Ride program and be accepted before they can request these trips. RIPTA will prepare a report for the General Assembly by June 2025.
- Low Income Pilot: RIPTA is offering organizations an opportunity to purchase fare products at a discounted rate for their clients who are facing housing insecurity or homelessness. Organizations must apply to participate in the pilot program.
- Metro Connector Study: Sarah Ingle, executive director of planning, said that RIPTA is leading a study that will lay the groundwork for bus rapid transit or light rail in the Providence metro area, starting with public meetings, community outreach, and a survey.
- Feasibility study for a South Kingstown Mobility Hub: RIPTA is developing a conceptual plan to increase transit service, improve facilities, and add bike/pedestrian access at Kingston Station.
- Pawtucket/Central Falls Transit Center: A groundbreaking is scheduled next week for a new building that will house passenger amenities.

Due to Veterans Day, the next Coordinating Council meeting will likely be postponed by a week to 2 PM on Monday, November 18, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 3:17 PM.



**Rhode Island Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council
September 9, 2024 Attendance List (in person and Teams)**

Name	Organization
Benny Bergantino	RI Division of Statewide Planning
Jean Bousquet	RI Office of Rehabilitation Services
Deb Burton	RI Elder Info
Melissa Cocroft	RI Primary Care Physicians Corp.
Jacques Dextrateur	RI Office of Veterans Services
Grant Dulgarian	Community advocate
Liza Farr	RI Division of Statewide Planning
Kristen Frady	Wood River Health
Ishaa Gatkari	RI Department of Health
Sarah Ingle	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Joelle Kanter	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
Brandon Lehman	RI Department of Transportation
Maureen Maignet	RI Senior Agenda Coalition
Mario Olivieri	RI Executive Office of Health & Human Services
Donna Rook	RI Department of Human Services
Charon Rose	RI Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner
Holly Snyder	AARP RI