

RI ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 2, 2025
MEETING MINUTES

In attendance: Jean Bousquet, Christopher Bove, Daria Brashear, Myles Brawn-Husband, Vice-chairperson Rui Cabral, Kerry Clark, Frank Cummings, Vincent DeJesus, Laurie Diorio, Grant Dulgarian, Rachel Ferreira, Mark Fields, Casey Gartland, Zachary Gauthier, Dylan Giles, Barbara Henry, Justin Henry, Mona Hussein, Melanie Lawhead, Diane LeSuer, Crystal Martin, Brian Rice, Chairperson Heather Schey, Christie Seymour, Angelina Stabile, Mark Susa, Paula Vinacco.

RIPTA: Zachary Agush, Brooks Almonte, Steve Fiorentini, Joelle Kanter, Joseph Solomon.

Presenters: Adam Jensen, Reveal Transit/MTM; Bill Schwartz, Nelson\Nygaard; Daniel Solomon, Blind Urban Subject; Julia Spande, Nelson\Nygaard.

Call to Order: Vice-chairperson Rui Cabral called the Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

Angelina Stabile made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2024 ATAC meeting. Myles Brawn-Husband seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Minutes were approved.

Blind Urban Subject presentation: Joelle Kanter then introduced Daniel Solomon, a Brown University student who was born with ocular albinism and uses a white cane. During an introductory class on urban studies, Daniel imagined a [public art installation](#) that offers different perspectives on interacting with the city and helps people understand the spectrum of blindness. With two project partners, he designed a cast iron tower viewer with a rotating dial that simulates four eye conditions. It is currently installed on the corner of Thayer and Angell streets along with nine sidewalk decals that have QR codes to provide additional information about each disease. The installation launched in November and will remain in place through the beginning of February before it moves to a park in New York City. Daniel and his partners are reviewing project survey data and plan to publish their results in April.

RIPTA updates:

- **Key performance indicators:** RIPTA's fixed-route on-time performance was 74.0% in November 2024, which was a 3.9% decrease from November 2023. Systemwide ridership totaled 1.07 million trips in November 2024 and was 1.57% lower than November 2023.
- **Ride Anywhere pilot program:** The statewide paratransit pilot program has approval to continue past the scheduled end date of December 31, 2024. Bill Schwartz, Nelson\Nygaard, reported that the consulting team is reviewing ten months of ridership data to understand pilot trip demand and the program's impact on Ride ADA paratransit service operations. They plan to start interviewing frequent riders, and others may have an opportunity to participate in a small

focus group session instead. A survey link (in English and Spanish) will also be sent to pilot program customers who provided their email addresses. More information will follow next month.

- Project updates

- Travel training project: RIPTA received an FTA grant to update travel training materials, bring a network of organizations together, and coordinate with staff to train their own clients including older adults and people with disabilities. The goal is to launch this spring with new training modules, videos, and a pocket guide covering topics such as planning a trip, paying for a trip, and riding on board.
- Earn as you go: In December, RIPTA's board of directors authorized the agency to cap the cost of Wave account-based fare products for Ride customers. Details about the rollout are forthcoming.
- Reveal app upgrade: Adam Jensen gave a brief update on the new Ride Reveal app, confirming that it is screen reader compatible. High contrast color profiles are in development, and the team is also working on a pinch-to-zoom feature. RIPTA staff will coordinate with volunteers to start beta testing the app on their phones. Since the app has already been approved, it can be published soon after testing. The current Reveal app is no longer available in the Google Play and Apple store while it is being rebuilt, but customers may still use the Reveal website online.

A discussion followed:

- One participant noted that the app will help riders who have speech impediments request trips directly. Adam reminded that group that RIPTA staff will still need to confirm and accept each trip request.
 - Another participant asked whether riders will be able to track taxi locations before they get picked up. Adam said that feature won't be available since taxis don't have Ride tablets.
 - Another participant suggested that volunteers should test the app with accessible enabled large print. He said he uses pinch-to-zoom primarily to expand maps.
 - The group also discussed the app notification for trips scheduled on taxis. The app includes a vehicle description, and taxi company names may be added.
- Winter service changes: On Saturday, January 18th, RIPTA will implement winter service changes on Routes 10x, 14, 17, 19, 24L, 27, 28, 29, 35, 55, 72, 78, and Flex 203. Changes include improved frequency on some high performing routes, new service to a major employment center and the elimination of a low-performing route segment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:29 PM.