Rhode Island Public Transit Authority COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

Advisory Committee Meeting #2

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# Today's Agenda

- Introductions and Recap of Project Overview
- Service Guidelines
- Route Evaluations
- Hub Planning
- Update on Passenger and Non-Rider Surveys
- Advisory Committee Discussion/Input
- Next Meeting and Next Steps





# **Project Overview**

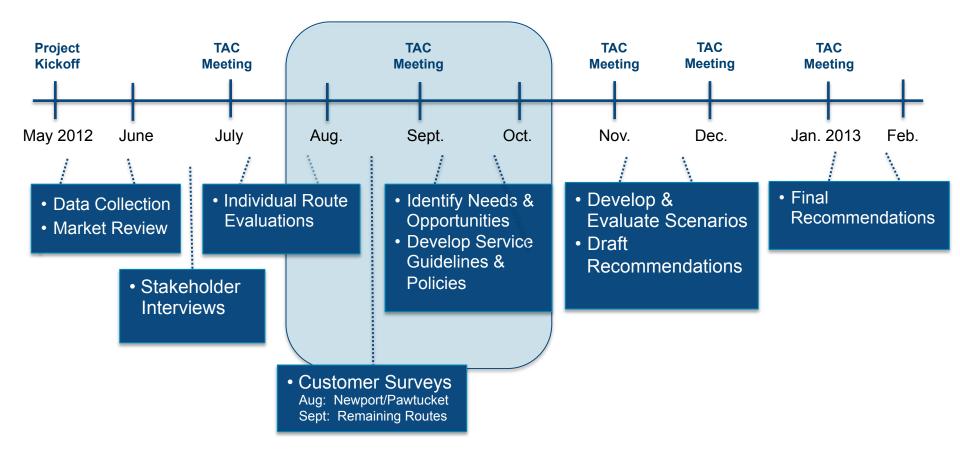
- What is a COA?
  - An in-depth look at RIPTA services to identify changes to improve service
- What does RIPTA hope to achieve
  - Better service to existing riders
  - Attract new riders
- Recommended actions need to fit within RIPTA's existing budget.
- Overall goal is to direct transit resources where they will be most effective.







# **COA Timeline**







Rhode Island Public Transit Authority COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

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Introduction to Service Guidelines

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# What are Service Guidelines; Why Use Them?

#### Service guidelines are quantifiable measures that are used to:

- Set service objectives
- Determine appropriate service levels
- Establish minimum levels of service performance
- Measure service performance

#### Service guidelines provide a mechanism to:

- Deliver service in a consistent and equitable manner
- Evaluate its service in an objective and consistent manner





# **Types of Service Guidelines**

#### COA-related guidelines include:

- Service coverage
- Service design
- Level of service (frequency and span)
- Productivity
- Economic performance





# **Examples of Coverage & Design Guidelines**

Measure	Example					
Service Coverage	Service provided within a 10 minute walk of all residents in areas with greater than 5,000 persons/ square mile					
<b>Directness</b> Key bus routes Local routes Community routes	Route length no more than: 1.2 times most direct distance 1.5 times most direct distance 2.5 times most direct distance					
<b>Route Variants</b> Economic performance Utilization No. of New Passengers	Must not degrade overall cost per passenger Must not degrade passengers per vehicle hour At least 25% of passengers inconvenienced					
<b>Bus Stop Spacing</b> Key Routes Local routes Community routes	Average of no more than: 6 per mile 8 per mile 10 per mile					





# Impacts of Coverage & Design Guidelines

#### Service Coverage

- Service provided in all areas that meet minimum thresholds
- Service provided in other areas only if it meets economic performance and productivity guidelines

#### Directness

- Higher volume routes are more direct
- Lower volume routes can be less direct

#### Route Variants

- Variants established only they serve significant volumes of riders
- Variants discontinued if they do not

#### Bus Stop Spacing

- On high volumes routes, longer walks to stops for faster service once onboard
- On lower volume routes, shorter walks to stops for transit dependents, but slower service





# **Examples of Level of Service Guidelines**

Measure	Example
Span of Service (minimum)	
Key bus routes	6:00 am - midnight
Local routes	7:00 am - 6:30 pm
Express routes	AM peak & PM peak
Service Frequency	
Key bus routes	10 min peak/15 min midday/20 min evening
Local routes	30 min peak/60 min off-peak
Express routes	3 trips AM peak/3 trips PM peak
Maximum Vehicle Loading	No more than:
Peak periods	120% of seated capacity
Off-peak periods	100% of seated capacity





# Impacts of Level of Service Guidelines

#### **Provide bounds for amount of service provided:**

- Minimum levels of service set based on:
  - Minimum span of service guidelines
  - Minimum service frequency guidelines
- Higher levels of service set based on:
  - Loading guidelines (maximum loads per trip)
  - Strong economic performance or productivity





Measure	Example
Utilization (minimum)	At least:
Key bus routes	40 passengers per vehicle hour
Local routes	30 passengers per vehicle hour
Community routes	15 passengers per vehicle hour
Cost Effectiveness	Operating cost per passenger not greater than:
Key bus routes	\$3.50
Local routes	\$4.50
Community routes	\$8.00
Cost Effectiveness	Operating cost per passenger not greater than:
Key bus routes	2 times system average
Local routes	3 times system average
Community routes	4 times system average





# Impact of Productivity and Economic Guidelines

#### Impacts of Economic Performance and Productivity Standards:

- Utilization
  - No impact on routes that meet minimum standards
  - Service would be reduced on routes that doe not meet minimum standards (down to minimum service levels)
- Cost Effectiveness
  - Same impacts as with Utilization standards

#### For routes that could not meet standards even at minimum service levels:

- First step would be to identify and make changes to meet standards
- If not possible, discontinue service or make explicit decision to continue non-compliant route



# "Family of Services"

- RIPTA provides a "family of services" designed to tailor service to different demands
- Guidelines vary for different types of services
- Potential RIPTA service hierarchy:
  - Rapid Bus
  - Key Corridor
  - Urban Arterials
  - Crosstown/Suburban
  - Regional/Hub Connectors
  - Express
  - Flex
  - Lifeline



## Summary

#### For RIPTA, service guidelines will:

- Provide a consistent and quantifiable basis for the provision of service (and development of COA scenarios and recommendations)
- Provide the basis for the development of a service planning process that would ensure that service is adjusted periodically as markets change





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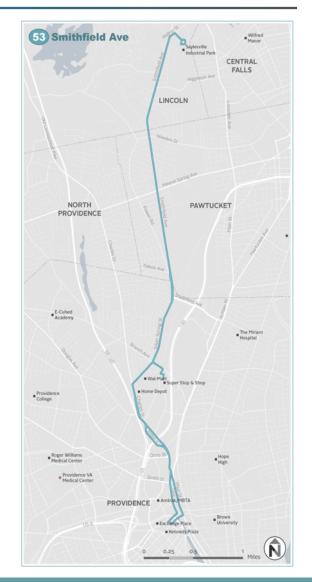
**Route Evaluations** 

# **Route Evaluations**

 A detailed assessment of RIPTA's 58 Routes and 8 Flex zones

#### Goals:

- Identify the purpose of each route (areas and activity centers served)
- Assess how well each route is performing compared to Service Guidelines
- Identify *potential* strategies or options to improve route performance
- Obtain public comment on the potential options suggested





#### Each Route Evaluation includes:

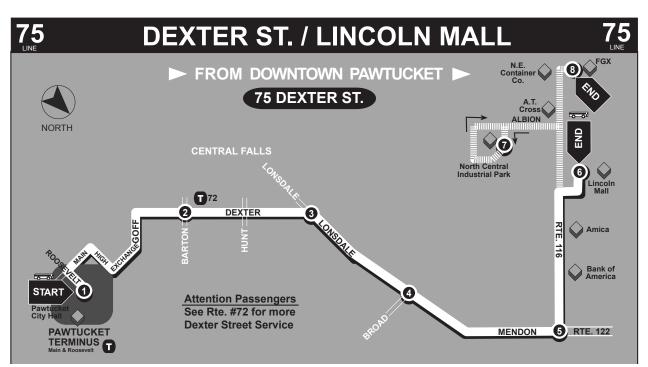
Alignment & Service Patterns	Route Performance	Overall Assessment
What is the Route?	Cost Effectiveness	What does this route do well?
How does the Route operate? (e.g. Schedule)	Efficiency	What might be contributing to less than average performance?
What is the Ridership?	Comparison to Other Routes	Options & Opportunities to improve performance





# **Alignment & Service Patterns**

- What areas and activity centers are served?
- Does the route have "variants", or certain trips that make short deviations to serve special activity centers (e.g. high schools or elderly housing)?







#### Schedule

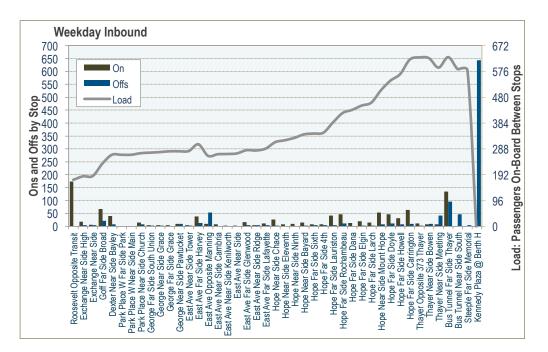
SERVICE DAY	SPAN OF SERVICE	ONE-WAY TRIPS (IB)	ONE-WAY TRIPS (OB)	HEADWAY (MINS)
WEEKDAY	5:50 AM – 7:00 PM	13	15	
Early AM	5:50 AM – 6:59 AM	2	2	47-50
AM Peak	7:00 AM – 8:59 AM	2	2	50
Midday	9:00 AM – 2:59 PM	5	5	35-95
PM Peak	3:00 PM – 5:59 PM	3	4	40-55
Night	6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	1	2	50
SATURDAY	6:21 AM – 7:00 PM	9	9	90
SUNDAY	7:53 AM – 7:00 PM	8	8	90

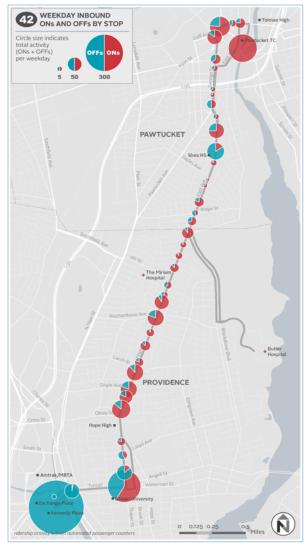




# **Ridership by Stop**

- Identifies boarding and alighting patterns by stop
- Identifies loading patterns

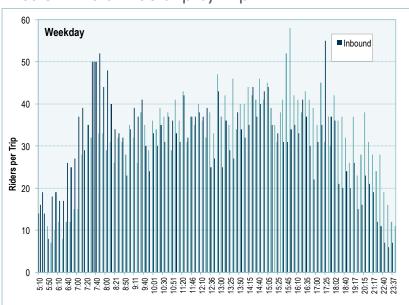






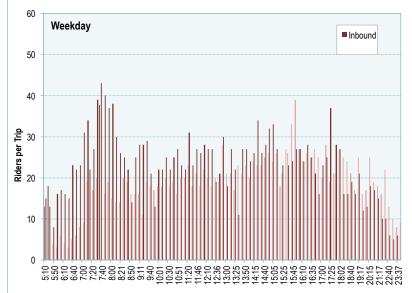
# **Ridership by Trip**

Identifies ridership by time of dayAlso used to identify maximum loads



Route 11 Total Ridership by Trip

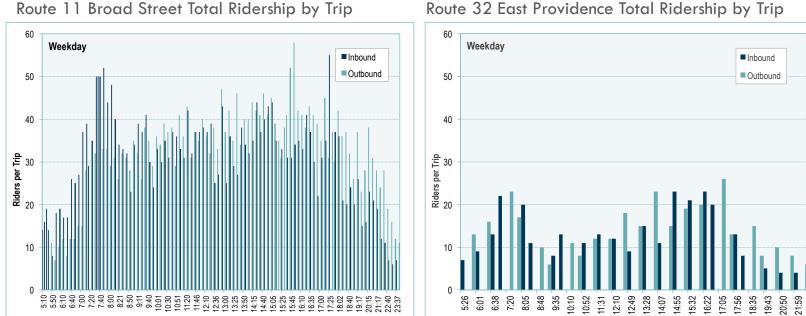






# **Ridership by Trip**

Some routes have high ridership all day; others strongest during commuting hours



Route 32 East Providence Total Ridership by Trip





### **Route Performance**

#### Also comparing performance to systemwide averages

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	SYSTEM AVERAGE	ROUTE 32	ROUTE 77	ROUTE 11
Operating Cost per Passenger	\$3.12	\$8.29	\$3.17	\$1.25
Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Hour	33.2	15.1	32.7	66.0
Passengers per Revenue Vehicle Mile	2.5	0.9	3.9	9.7
Total Vehicle Hours per Revenue Vehicle Hour	1.1	1.2	1.15	1.03
Average Speed (mph)	13.4	17.0	8.3	6.8
Bus Stops per Mile	5.6	5.9	10.6	7.2



# **Overall Assessment**

- How does this route perform overall? Why?
- What might be done to improve performance?
  - Eliminate variants or trip detours that inconvenience more passengers than they serve?
  - Revise the frequency or span of service?
  - Better coordinate with other routes in the same corridor?
- Should resources be redirected from certain low performing routes (or route segments) to increase service in areas of higher demand?

#### Public comments will be solicited through an on-line Route Evaluation "blog"



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### **Hub Planning**

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# **Hub Planning**

- Strengthening and Improving Hubs was a key concern noted by many stakeholders
- Kennedy Plaza
  - RIPTA is working with City of Providence and Downtown Parks Conservancy to improve the overall attractiveness and vitality of the Kennedy Plaza/Burnside Park area
- Pawtucket
  - RIPTA is working with the City of Pawtucket to consider potential new hub and bus routing options, particularly to enhance the attractiveness and vitality of the Slater Mill area
- Other hubs
  - How can these be strengthened?
  - Where might new hubs or "mini-hubs" be considered



## Kennedy Plaza

Goal is to redesign the Plaza as a more inviting activity center and pedestrian destination while enhancing the transit experience

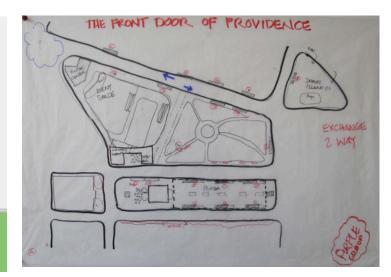


#### GREATER METRO TRANSIT STUDY – MEETING CURRENT NEEDS

Kennedy Plaza can be both a successful transit center and a vibrant urban place. The redesign of Kennedy Plaza will enhance rider experience, improve pedestrian space, and reconnect downtown Providence to the surrounding neighborhoods. Kennedy Plaza, while still the center of the RIPTA system, will become a vibrant, centrally coordinated, gateway to the City of Providence that offers activities, events, and commerce, as well as public transit.











#### Pawtucket

- 12 RIPTA routes serve the Pawtucket hub
- A large number of passengers are transferring to other routes
- Goal is to remove some RIPTA activity from Slater Mill area





### **Other Hubs**

- How might other existing RIPTA hubs be strengthened
  - E.g. Newport, Woonsocket, URI, Warwick
  - Better coordination of routes to ease transfers?
  - More customer amenities to improve their attractiveness and support local development goals?
  - Use of real time information applications providing convenient transit tools for the customer?
- Should other new hubs be considered?
  - Downtown Providence?





Rhode Island Public Transit Authority COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

# Survey Update

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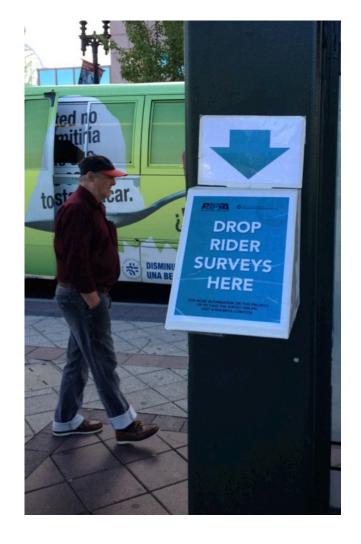
**On-Board Passenger Surveys / On-Line Surveys** 

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# **Passenger Surveys**

- Purpose:
  - Better understand travel patterns of RIPTA riders
  - Find out where they prefer resources be directed (e.g. weekday, night or weekend service)
- 15 routes surveyed in August
  - Including Newport, to capture seasonal demand
- 43 routes being surveyed this week
- Printed and on-line surveys available for both passengers and non-riders
- Available in English and Spanish







# **Passenger Surveys**

Initial round of surveys being analyzed now. Data will be used to understand:

- Travel patterns
  - Where are riders coming from and traveling to
- Rider demographics
  - Who rides frequently?
  - Who uses cash vs. passes?
- Preferences and tradeoffs
  - More day or night trips?
  - Weekends or weekdays?
  - More stops or faster service?

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	Route 63	RIPTA
Number of valid surveys:	109	-
Percent taken in Spanish:	5%	5%
Percent completed online:	-	-
Percent of riders with access to a car:	5%	9%

9% Average weekday ridership: 224 19,659 Weekday ridership per revenue hour: 26.4 29.3

#### **Trip Characteristics**



Mode of Access

Walked

Someone

drove me

Transferred

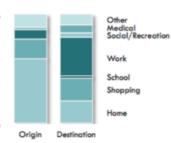
from bus

Rhode Island Public Transit Authority

COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

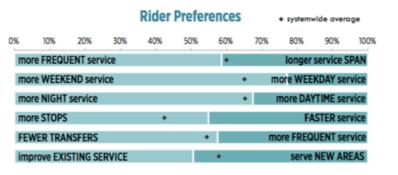
Drove

#### **Origin & Destination**



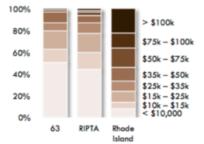






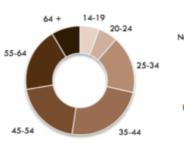
#### **Rider Demographics**





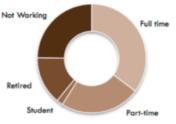
Age

#### **Rider Frequency** Rarely Occassionally



#### **Employment Status**







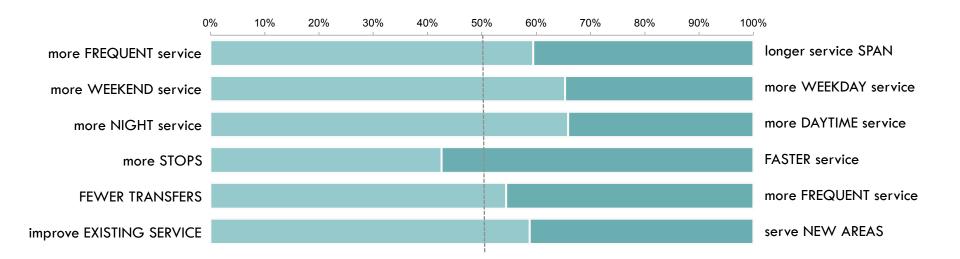
Frequently

#### **Rider Survey Report**

63 Broadway / Middletown Shop

## **Passenger Survey**

Preliminary results from tradeoff questions...





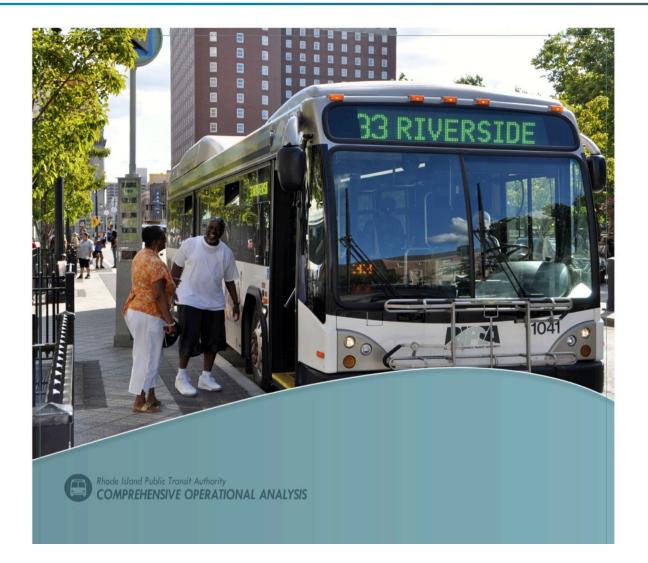
# Non-Rider Survey

- Non-riders are also being surveyed to identify how RIPTA might attract more new riders
- Survey looks to identify how familiar "non-riders" are with RIPTA services, and the reasons these individuals don't use RIPTA
  - Sensitivity to gas prices?
  - Availability of car? Cost of travel?
  - Survey also looks to identify improvements that would attract more "choice" riders
    - Faster service? Lower fares? Higher frequency? etc.

# Please encourage your co-workers and peers to visit: <a href="https://www.ripta.com/coa">www.ripta.com/coa</a> to take the survey!



#### **Discussion & Comments**







# Next Steps / Next Meeting

#### Next Steps

- Draft & Propose Updated RIPTA Service Guidelines
- Use data and evaluation results to identify opportunities to improve RIPTA's system (Service Scenarios)
  - Transit Market Review
  - Survey Results
  - Route Evaluations
- Work with Partners on Hub Planning

#### Next Meeting

- Anticipated for November
  - Discussion of Potential Service Scenarios



