Downtown Transit Connector

Making Transit Work for Rhode Island 3.17.17
**Project Evolution**

- **TIGER award, $35M transit bond** (2014): $13M grant for streetcar project.
- **Decision to modify project** (2015): Streetcar funding unsustainable.
- **DTC project initiated** (2016): TIGER funds reallocated for DTC.
Meanwhile…

• Network Redesign in 2014
• Major Recommendations
  • Service Guidelines (Family of Services)
  • Bus Stop Spacing and Improvements
  • Focus on Frequency & Reliability
  • Identify Core and Regional Hubs
  • Encourage Intermodal Connections
  • Strengthen & Improve Hubs
  • User Friendly System
• Cost Neutral Operations
• Set Stage for Capital Program for Passenger Improvements
Dynamic Downtown

• 2,000 new residents arriving over next three years
• 1,500 new employees in DTC corridor over next three years
• Business community, young professionals, investors eager for better transit
Downtown Transit Connector

- Enhanced transit corridor providing fast, frequent connections through Downtown Providence
- Aligns seven existing bus routes into a high-frequency corridor

Coming 2019
Downtown Transit Connector: Project Goals

- Provide improved transit connectivity between downtown destinations
- Support decentralized connections between routes in downtown
- Build transit ridership through more reliable and attractive service
- Enhance urban design and support placemaking in downtown
Downtown Transit Connector: Project Elements

Infrastructure Elements
- Stations
- Streetscape
- Signals

Operations Elements
- Service Plan
- Branding
- Fare Policy
Downtown Transit Connector: Stations

- Six stations at major nodes in Downtown
- Ample, sheltered waiting room
- Off-board fare payment for faster boarding
- Bicycle amenities
- Integration with adjacent development
Downtown Transit Connector: **Stations**

- Stations can be located and designed in coordination with other development projects, and linked to other streetscape design efforts.
Downtown Transit Connector: Streetscape

- Private Autos
  - Traffic flow
  - On-street parking

- Bike-Ped
  - Sidewalk width
  - Bicycle infrastructure

- Transit Priority
  - Bus lanes
  - Robust stations
Downtown Transit Connector: Streetscape

- Bus bulb-outs
- Dedicated bus lanes
- Bicycle parking
Downtown Transit Connector: Signalization

- Transit signal priority
- Enhanced operational efficiency along corridor
- Optimal travel speeds for all corridor traffic
Downtown Transit Connector:  Service Plan

- Routes Affected: 1, 3, 6, 51, 55, 58, 72
- High Frequency: 5 minutes or better
- Current Ridership: 9,100 Riders Daily
Downtown Transit Connector: Branding

- Stations and stops – shelters and amenities
- Running ways – bus lanes
- Vehicles – distinctive vehicle design
- ITS and fare payment – fare collection, passenger information
- Service plan – stop spacing, frequency, direct routing
Downtown Transit Connector: Fare Policy

- Under consideration
- Options include:
  - Pre-paid boarding
  - Fare free service
Downtown Transit Connector: Timeline

Sep 2016
Conceptual Engineering

Apr 2017
Preliminary Engineering

Sep 2017
Final Design

May 2018
Construction

Jan 2019
Operations

We are here.
DTC Current Context
What We’re Excited About: Connections

- Providence Intermodal Center
- Pawtucket Bus/Rail Hub
- Newport Gateway
- Warwick, East Providence, University of Rhode Island

Why we love them:

- Simplicity and efficiency
- Connections allow for faster access to more places
What We’re Excited About: Frequency

• R-Line launched in 2014
• 6.2 million riders to date
• 8,500+ daily passengers
• Why we love it:
  • More frequent service and longer service span
  • Enhanced bus stops
  • Efficiency: excellent service with fewer buses
  • Speed: faster trip times thanks to TSP technology
What We’re Excited About: Reliability

• Web/mobile feed live 2016
• Kennedy Plaza real time signs 2015
• Why we love it:
  • System reliability. Customers are confident when they know their bus is on the way.
What We’re Excited About: Better Bus Stops

• Design Guidebook coming 2017
• Enhanced passenger amenities roll-out starts 2018
• New, informational, high-profile bus stop signs
• Why we love them:
  • Design standards deliver the consistency and accessibility riders need and want.
  • Comfortable, secure, informed customers are happy customers.
What We’re Excited About:  **Ease of Use**

- Mobile ticketing coming in 2019
- Integration with MBTA/GATRA
- Why we love it: Ease of use, customer flexibility, rider growth
What We’re Excited About: Speed

• Bus-on-shoulder action plan coming 2017
• Transit Signal Priority expansion 2018
• Why we love it: Huge return on transit investment
What We’re Excited About: Accessibility

• Pilot Program – Rural Ride
• Pilot Program – Vanpool
• Dynamic Scheduling
DTC Future Context
Planning Ahead

• Rhode Island preparing to update Long Range Transportation Plan
• RIPTA studies re: green fleet, BRT, bus on shoulder, New Starts opportunities
• Last system-wide analysis completed 2013, now implemented
• Time for a fresh look at Rhode Island’s transit network
What Might It Look Like?

• 25 million annual riders by 2025
• Grow transit mode share by 50% in 5 years
• Secure $2 billion in public and private sector investment
• Make Rhode Island the key to a resurgent Northeast Corridor
• RI Transit First investment policy
Envisioning Rhode Island’s Transit Future

RIPTA aspires to create a transit system that leverages the latest technology, enables seamless coordination among system partners, and drives economic growth to support thriving, livable communities throughout the State.
Thank You!