WRTA

Quarterly Paratransit Rider's Forum
Thursday, September 10, 2026
1:00 PM to 2:30 PM

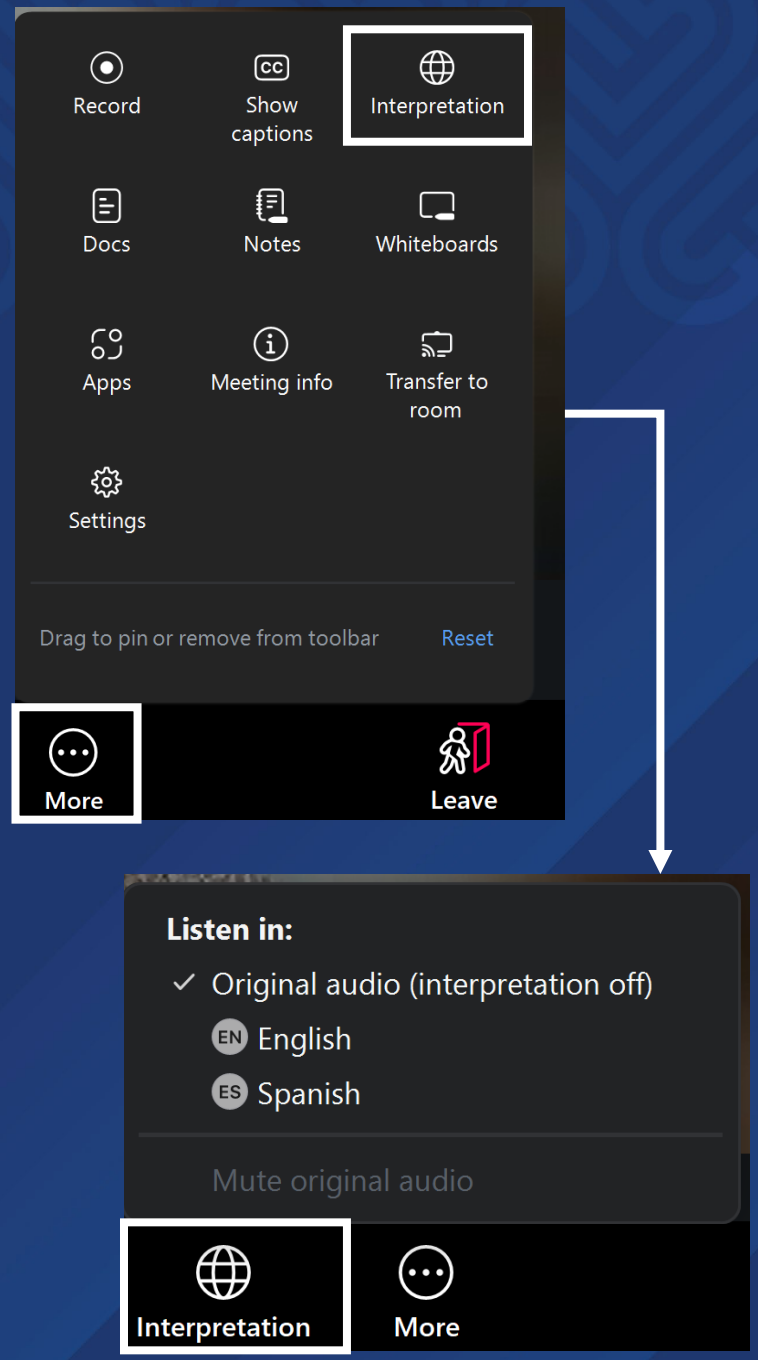
Language Interpretation

English

We offer Spanish interpretation during this meeting. In your meeting controls, click **Interpretation** (the small globe icon) and click the language that you would like to hear.

Spanish

Ofrecemos interpretación en español durante esta reunión. Para escoger el audio en inglés o en español tendrá que hacer clic en el botón de **Interpretación**, el cual tiene un ícono de un globo pequeño. Cuando haga clic en Interpretación, por favor escoja el idioma que desea escuchar.

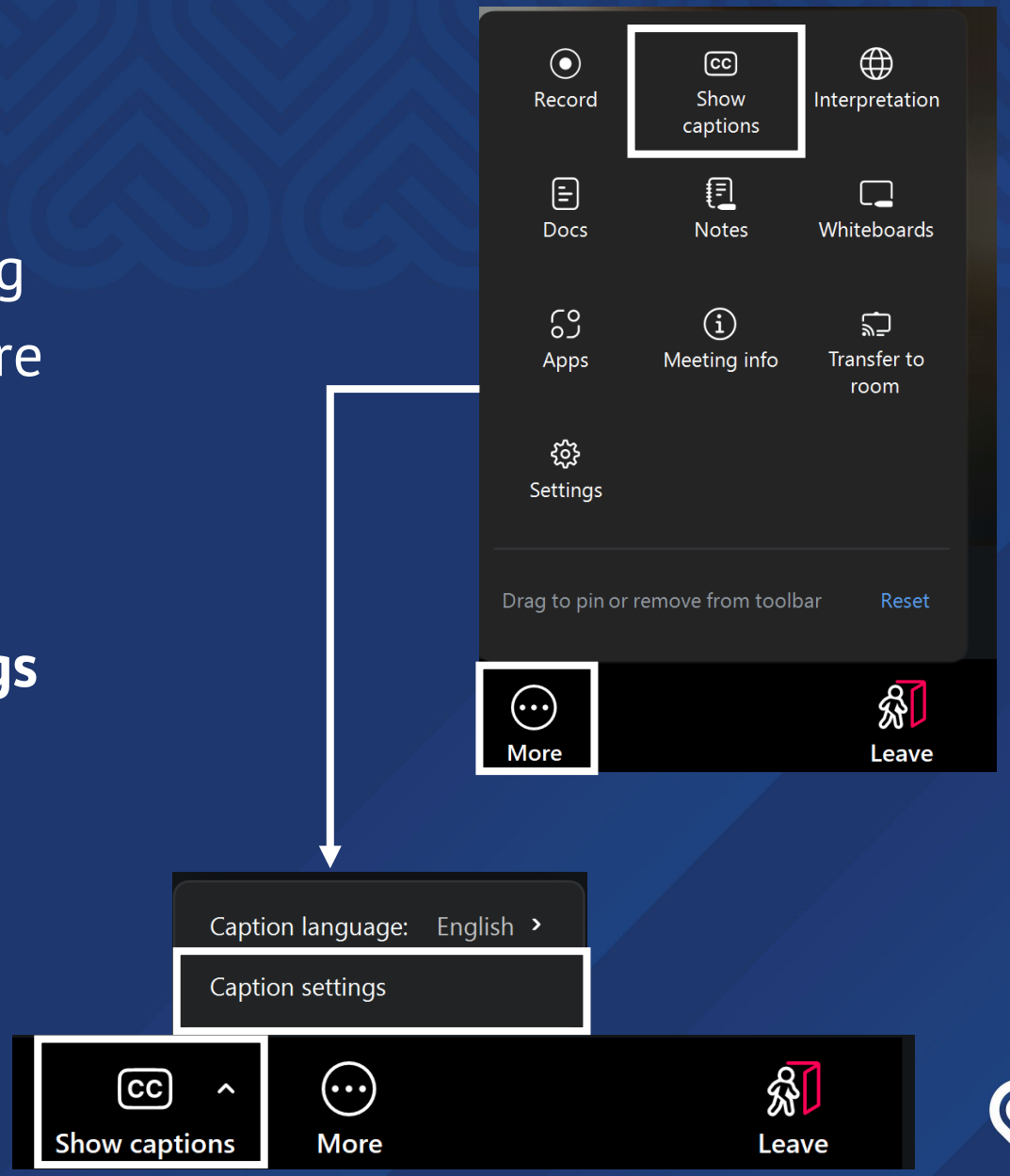


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Captioning

You can view closed captions by clicking the **Closed Captions** feature. Captions are only available in English.

Click the ^ and then the **Caption settings** menu option to customize caption settings. There should be options to customize font size, caption color, font type, and position.



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Participation Guidelines & Notes

- **This meeting is being recorded** and will be posted to the project website (**https://therta.com/qprf/**).
- **Please be respectful** and avoid inappropriate language or behavior.
  - Offending individuals may be removed from the meeting.
- **Use the Chat feature** to share any questions or comments during the meeting.
- **Technical Issues?** please share your issue in the Chat or directly message **Staff – Zack Gavel**. We will respond and help to resolve as quickly as possible.
- All participants are automatically muted upon entry. You will have the opportunity to speak during the public participation session later in the meeting.

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Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome, and thank you for attending today's meeting!
- Third quarterly Paratransit Rider's Forum this year after first two in February and May.
- Forum provides an opportunity for riders and members of the community to learn about ongoing service improvements, and to ask questions, provide feedback, etc.
- All information will be posted to new website: **https://therta.com/qprf/**.

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Today's Forum Agenda

1. House Rules (Zoom Instructions, Code of Conduct) (1:00 – 1:05 PM)
2. Welcome, Agenda, Forum #2 Recap (1:05 – 1:20 PM)
3. Presentation: ADA Paratransit Education Series (1:20 – 1:50 PM)
4. Updates from WRTA (1:50 – 2:00 PM)
5. Public Participation Session (2:00 – 2:25 PM)
6. Wrap-Up and Next Meeting (2:25 – 2:30 PM)

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What We Heard in Forum #2

- Comments regarding vehicle size
  - Smaller wheel base to mitigate expense with “curb catching”
    - Many vehicles operate in smaller lots (medical facilities) which do not have as much paved width. Results in the older style vehicles catching curbs which then damages the tires.

- Same-day ADA request
  - Discussed with Advisory Board at the 8/27/2026 Advisory Board Meeting
  - Link to presentation: https://therta.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/WRTA-Advisory-Board-Presentation-8.27.26-Final.pdf

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Presentation: ADA Paratransit Education Series
Paratransit Ridership & Performance

Paratransit Ridership and Performance

- Overall paratransit ridership increased 4% in FY 2026 vs. FY 2025.
- CMTM (ADA) had largest weekday increase by 14% vs. last year.
- Some COAs decreased due to driver shortage, or Senior Center renovations.
- Anticipate further growth in FY 2027.

Provider	FY 2025	FY 2026	% Change
CMTM	43,303	48,367	12%
Yellow Cab	74,536	78,415	5%
Auburn	3,538	3,023	-15%
Clinton	4,004	4,539	13%
Grafton	3,111	3,125	0%
Holden	1,385	1,480	7%
Leicester	2,045	1,913	-6%
Millbury	7,086	6,349	-10%
Northborough	4,048	4,305	6%
Oxford	1,856	1,811	-2%
SCM Elderbus	43,179	44,175	2%
Shrewsbury	6,477	5,572	-14%
Westborough		4,220	
West Boylston	1,544	1,599	4%
Via	31,859	29,239	-8%
Total	**227,971**	**238,132**	**4%**

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Paratransit Statistics – Q4 FY 2026

- Quarter 4 (April through June 2026)– Fiscal Year 2026 vs. same time period in FY 2025
  - Trips Provided: Increased by **4.5%**
    - FY 2026 = 61,862
    - FY 2025 = 59,180
  - Trip Cancellations: Increased by **5%**
    - FY 2026 = 11,327
    - FY 2025 = 10,757
  - Missed Trips: Improved by **83%**
    - FY 2026 = 1
    - FY 2025 = 6

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Paratransit Statistics – Q4 FY 2026

- Quarter 4 (April through June 2026)– Fiscal Year 2026 vs. same time period in FY 2025
  - "No Shows": Improved by **8%**
    - FY 2026 = 1,447
    - FY 2025 = 1,568
  - Total # of ADA Eligible Clients: Decreased by **9%**
    - FY 2026 = 1,262
    - FY 2025 = 1,385

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Paratransit Statistics – Q4 FY 2026

- Quarter 4 (April through June 2026)– Fiscal Year 2026 vs. same time period in FY 2025
  - On-Time Performance:
    - FY 2026:
      - CMTM ADA: 86%
      - Yellow Cab: 84%
      - Councils on Aging: 94%
    - FY 2025:
      - CMTM ADA: 86%
      - Yellow Cab: 89%
      - Councils on Aging: 93%
- For future QPRF meetings, are there additional statistics the group wishes to include?

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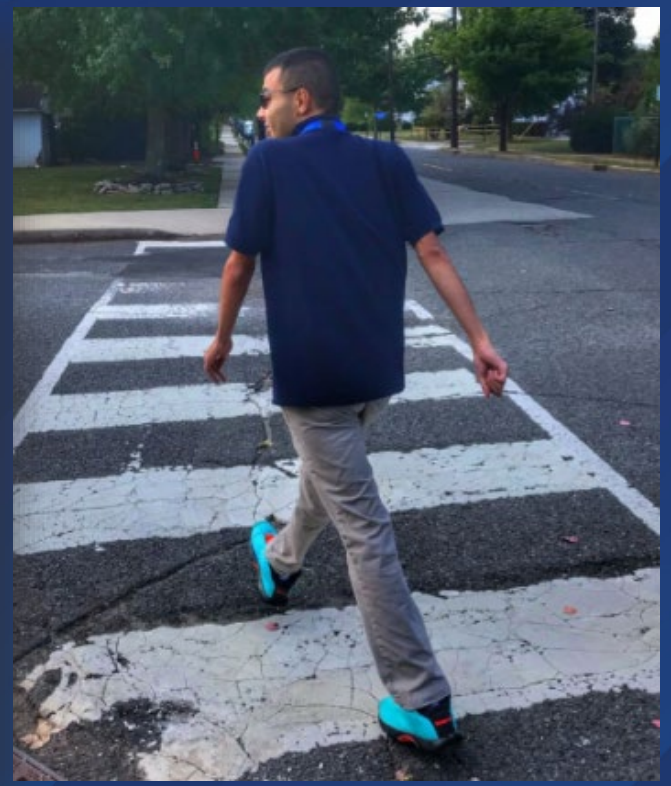
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Presentation: ADA Paratransit Education Series
Overview of WRTA Travel Training

Travel Training Overview

The Travel Training program is designed to teach individuals and groups how to safely, independently, and comfortable ride public transportation. The program helps individuals acclimate into the community, while enhancing personal lifestyles.





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Travel Training History

The Travel Training Program is designed to teach individuals and groups how to safely, independently, and comfortably ride public transportation. The program helps individuals acclimate into the community, while enhancing personal lifestyles.

Travel Training Origins

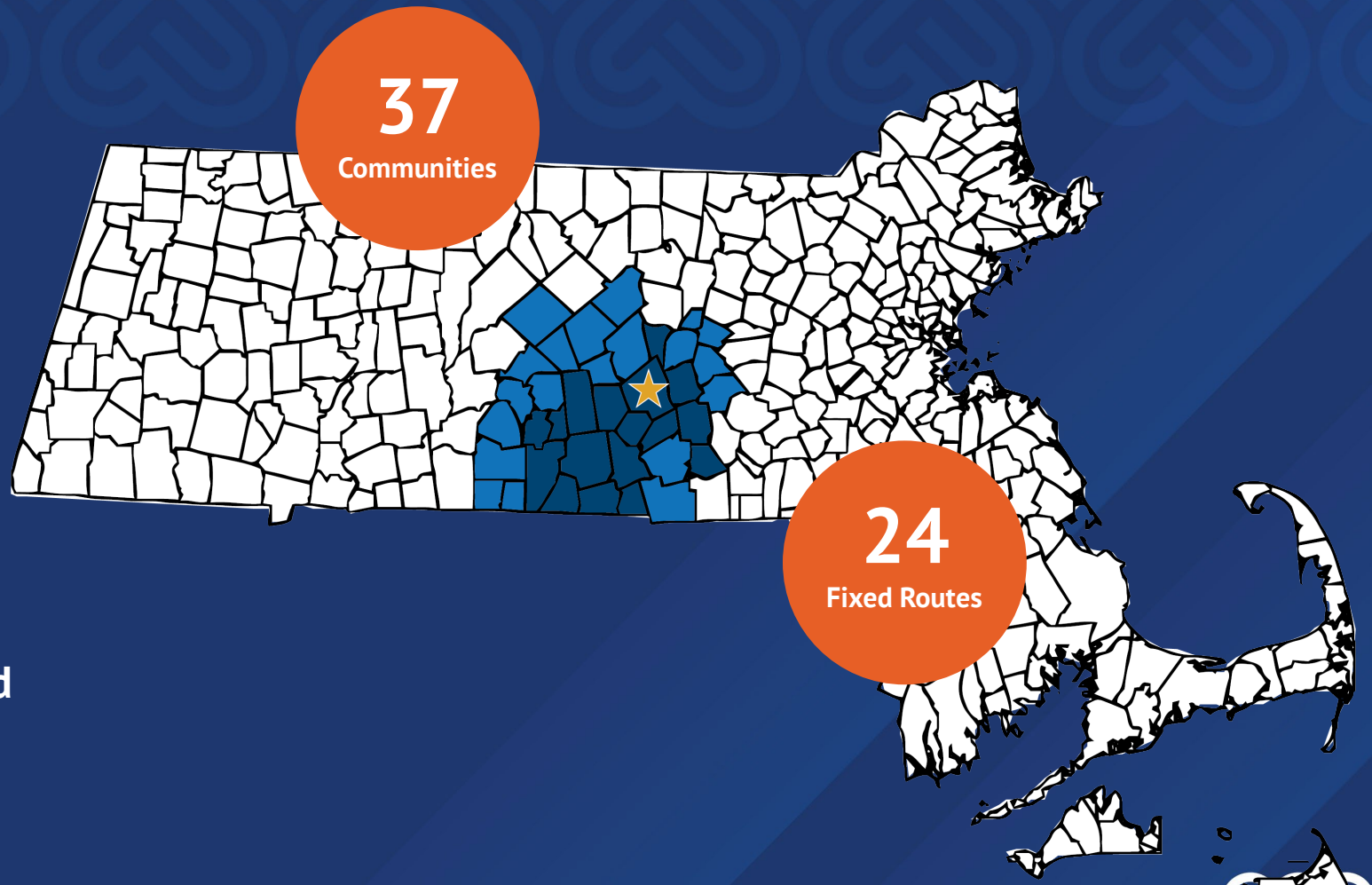
- Spearheaded by American with Disabilities Rights Movement Activist Peggy Groce in the late 1960's

- RTA's started Travel Trainer programs to help riders transcend from high overhead per rider ADA Paratransit costs to being able to ride fixed-route transportation

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Communities Served

Auburn*
Barre
Berlin
Boylston
Brimfield
Brookfield*
Charlton*
Clinton
Douglas
Dudley*
East Brookfield*
Grafton*
Holden
Holland
Leicester*
Millbury*
New Braintree
Northborough
Northbridge*
North Brookfield
Oakham
Oxford*
Paxton
Princeton
Rutland
Shrewsbury*
Southbridge*
Spencer*
Sturbridge
Sutton
Wales
Warren
Webster*
Westborough
West Boylston*
West Brookfield
Worcester*



*Communities offering WRTA fixed route service

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What our Vehicles Look like



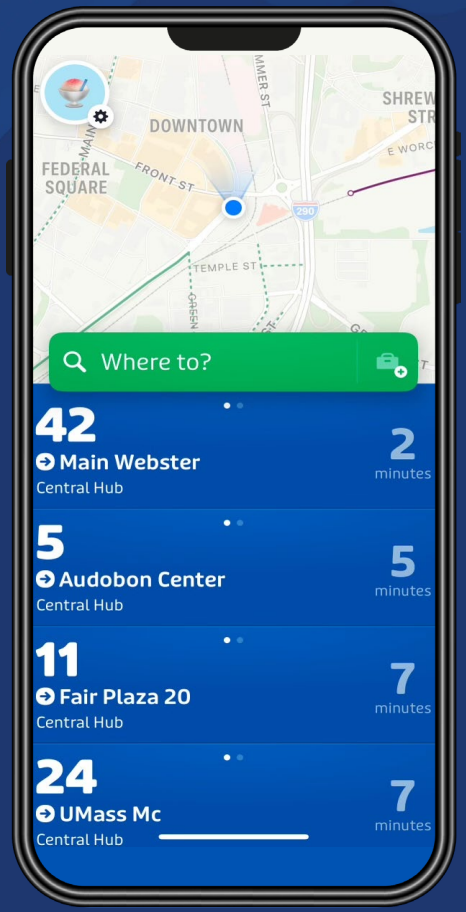






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How to Track your Bus!



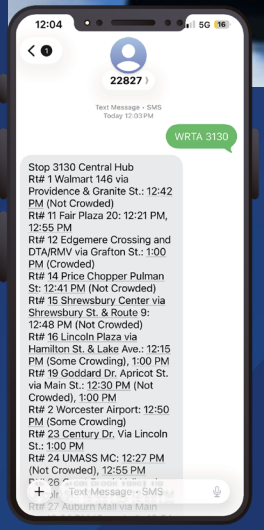
New bus tracking tools launched January 2026!





Transit Royale



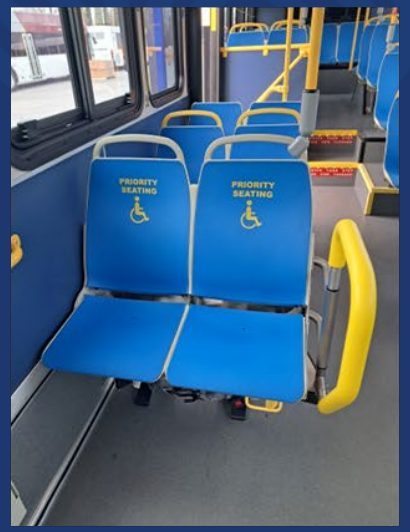


Text
WRTA Stop Id # to 22827
to Track!

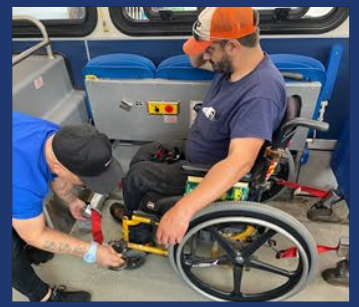
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Ways we support ADA Passengers











- Service animals are permitted, but cannot occupy seat
- Oxygen tanks are allowed
  Lifts are available on smaller vehicles
- Buses “kneel” to accommodate wheelchair users
- Priority seating that can be stowed away to access wheel chair locks
- Priority Seating is reserved for persons with disabilities.
- These seats fold up to accommodate wheelchairs

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Travel Training Steps

- Research routes & Perform route analysis
- Train door to door with trainee to specific destination or whole WRTA system
- Introduce, model, evaluate, & practice routines with Trainee
- Shadow Trainee on bus, or in car following bus, gradually adding more independent travel segments & travel planning tasks
- Follow up & keep in touch with Trainee for future needs



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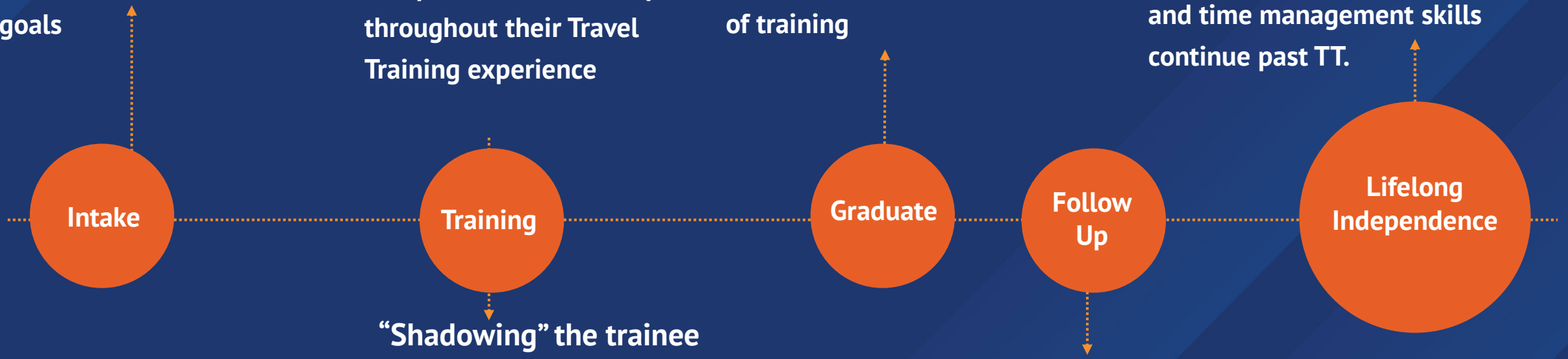
Building Independence

Initial meeting learning about trainee's interests, skills & needs setting Travel Training Program goals

Support skills building toward gradually mastering independent tasks safely throughout their Travel Training experience

Encouraging continued practice upon completion of training

Established safety, navigation and time management skills continue past TT.



"Shadowing" the trainee to assess their skills competency and confidence

Checking in with the trainee offering additional training (as needed)

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Let’s Connect!



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Update on Ongoing Work and Service Improvements

WRTA Hub Lobby Renovation

- Opened Friday August 28th!



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WRTA Hub Lobby Renovation

- Sliding doors replaced traditional pull doors

- Pull Door issues
  - Locking Mechanism
  - Wind
  - ADA Button



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WRTA Hub Lobby Renovation

- Customer Service Transaction Window location

Interior Window



Exterior Window



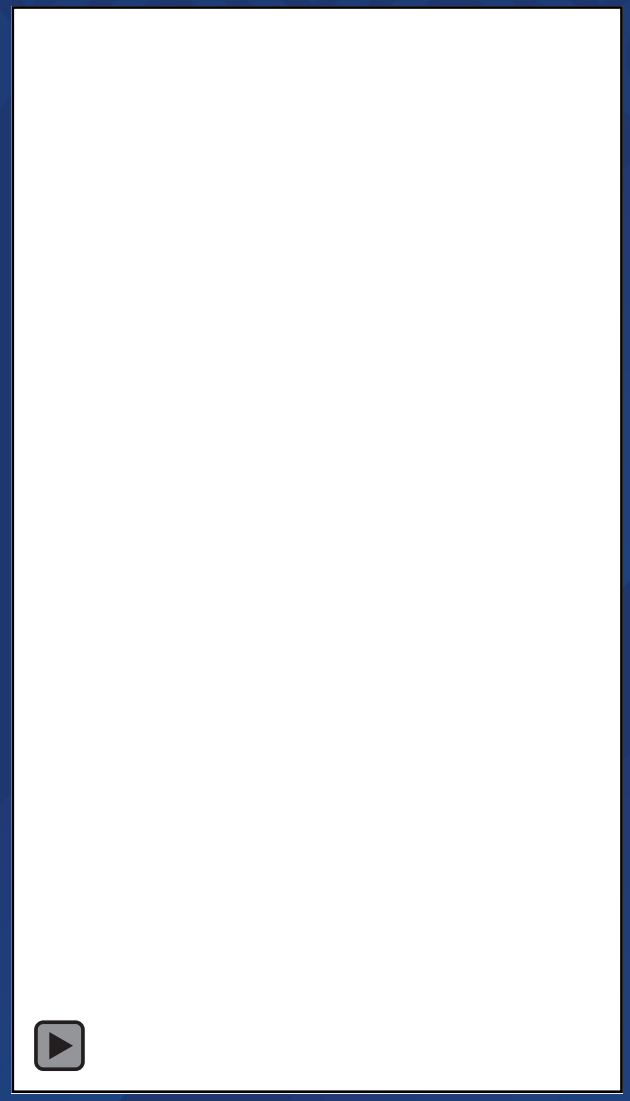
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WRTA Hub Lobby Renovation

- PA Announcements
  - Ockers system

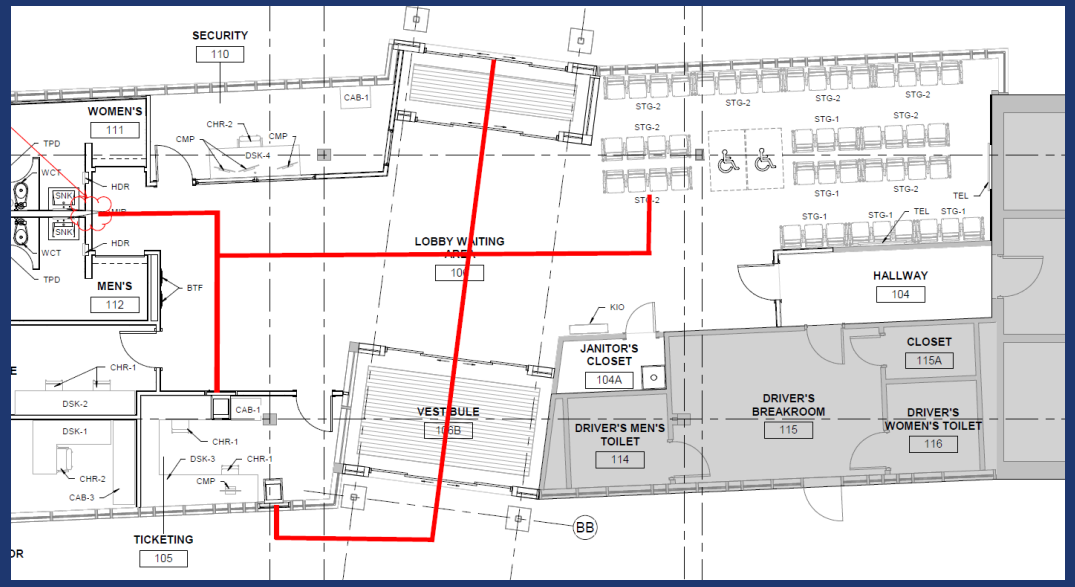
- Next Steps:
  - Finalize Outdoor install
  - Passenger Information Representative (2 FT & 1PT)

- System Go-Live in October 2026



WRTA Hub Lobby Renovation

- Tactile Strip and Intersection domes

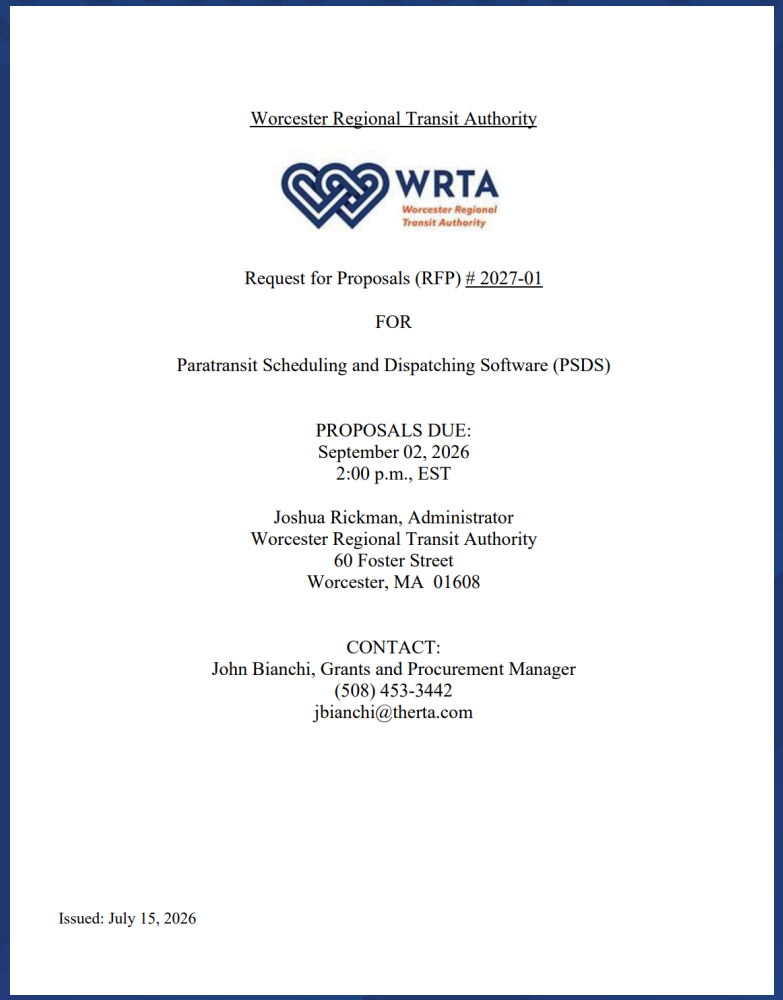




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Demand Response Software Procurement

- RFP Update
  - Released
  - Proposals Received
  - Award by 10/2/2026
- Improved customer tools
  - App Features
- Improved Efficiencies
  - Routing & grouping
  - Future Capabilities
- Beta Testing



Worcester Regional Transit Authority

WRTA
Worcester Regional Transit Authority

Request for Proposals (RFP) # 2027-01

FOR

Paratransit Scheduling and Dispatching Software (PSDS)

PROPOSALS DUE:
September 02, 2026
2:00 p.m., EST

Joshua Rickman, Administrator
Worcester Regional Transit Authority
60 Foster Street
Worcester, MA 01608

CONTACT:
John Bianchi, Grants and Procurement Manager
(508) 453-3442
jbianchi@therta.com

Issued: July 15, 2026

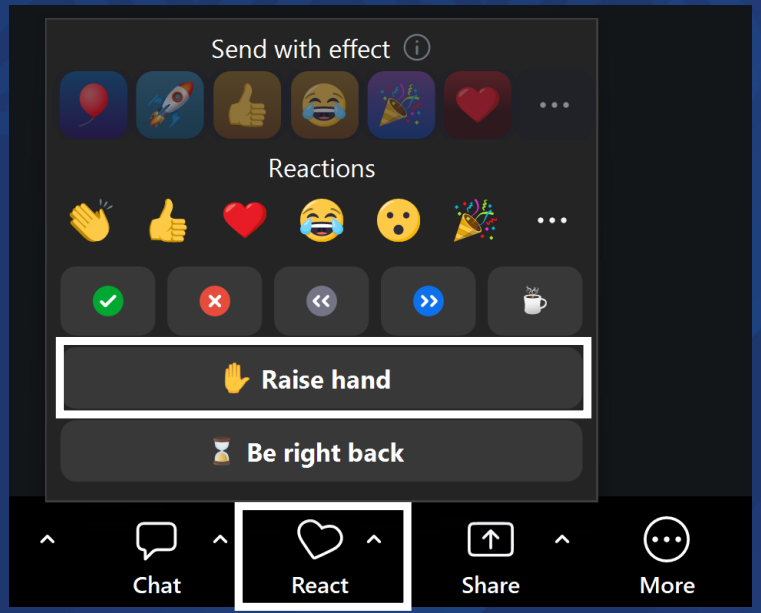
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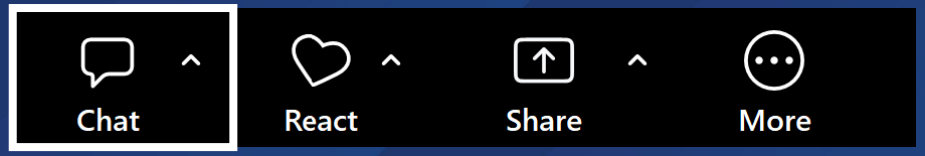
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Public Participation Session

Participation Guidelines

- Please share only one question or comment at a time.
- Use the **Raise Hand** feature to share a verbal question or comment. Wait for the moderator to recognize and unmute you before speaking. Aim to keep your question or comment under 2 minutes.
- Use the **Chat** feature to submit a typed question or comment. The moderator will read it aloud on your behalf.
- Use the **Chat** feature to request interpretation to share your question or comment.
- If you have joined by phone only, you may "raise your hand" by pressing the star button and then nine (*9).
- *After you speak, staff will lower your hand, and you will be muted to allow the team to respond and provide opportunities for others to participate.*





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Participation Guidelines

- Please share only one question or comment at a time.
- Do not share personal information, e.g. your exact home address.
- If you have a question that requires sharing personal information, please let us know in the chat if you are online, and we will move you to a separate break-out room with a staff member.
- For those in-person, please speak to a WRTA staff member **after** the Q&A session.

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Wrap-Up and Next Meeting Date

Next Meeting Dates and Times

- Thursday, December 3, 2026 at 1:00 PM
  - All future meetings will be hybrid-model (in-person at the WRTA Hub, and virtual)

- All information will be posted to the website: **https://therta.com/qprf/**.
  - For those who have signed up, information will also be emailed.
  - New contacts can sign up through the website.

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