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Rhode Island

Public Transit Authority

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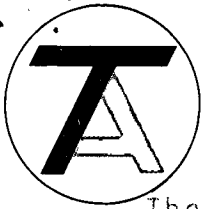
January 30, 1978

The Honorable Robert J. Haxton
President, Providence City Council
City Hall, 25 Dorrance Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Mr. Haxton:

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority is charged with the responsibility of providing reliable public transportation to the citizens of the State of Rhode Island. In furtherance of this charge, we have developed comprehensive programs to improve the quality and extent of our bus service, and at the same time to provide such improved service within the parameters of the financial resources available to us. We have embarked on a far-reaching public information and marketing program, the tangible results of which are beginning to be seen. For the first six months of FY 1977-1978, our ridership is up, as is our revenue. In part, this is attributable to easily recognized new color scheme, widespread distribution of RIPTA's first system map, and a program of highly visible bus stop sign markings. In addition, we have embarked on a program of careful evaluation of all of our individual routes and services and have already begun to expand service where justified while at the same time curtailing service which is not needed. As we move into 1978, we will continue this program aggressively. This summer we will receive 77 new buses of the most modern design yet seen in the United States. As a result of a bond referendum approved by the voters last June, these buses, as well as a radio communications system, will be installed in order to provide increased reliability and safety.

A vital portion of our program is the provision of shelters at bus stops. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority has long recognized the need for such shelters, particularly where large numbers of passengers who are elderly are served. To date, we have had over 400 requests by civic leaders, elected officials and citizen groups for shelters to be located at specific sites throughout our service area.



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Yet, the financial resources we command are completely incapable of meeting this demand since a typical shelter may cost \$3,000 to erect and \$800 to \$1,000 per year to maintain. Fortunately, there is a program which has been adopted by several cities, including New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Louisville, Kentucky, and others, which allows authorities such as ourselves to provide large numbers of shelters at no cost to the taxpayers. For Rhode Island we estimate that such a program could provide minimum of 150 such shelters at key locations and could be implemented before the winter of 1978-1979 sets in. We have officially contacted all of the communities which we serve, and to date have received enthusiastic support from many of these communities for this program.

However, in order that the program can be implemented, it is necessary to receive approval from the City of Providence before we can put the necessary contract documents out for bid. As you are aware, there is an ordinance in effect in Providence which bans uncontrolled advertising in the City, and includes such advertising on a RIPTA bus shelter. It is my understanding from statements made in support of the ordinance during the course of its adoption, that the purpose of such ordinance is to assure that the City of Providence, through its officials, maintains appropriate control on any advertising displayed in the City. Such a desire does not conflict with the program we propose.

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority feels strongly that its proposed program of bus stop shelters can be of major benefit to its users and to the State in general. We further feel that the proposed program is especially appealing in view of the fact that it will impose no additional tax burdens on the citizens of any community within the State. Accordingly, I respectfully request the opportunity to present our proposed program to the entire Council and/or the appropriate committee thereof at the earliest possible date so that you may review its elements and reach appropriate decision.

Should you have any further questions concerning this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me in order that we may expedite matters.

Respectfully yours,

Paul J. Fournier
Chairman

PJF/Ja3

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DEPT. OF CITY CLERK
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

IN CITY COUNCIL

FIRST READING
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON

CLERK

IN CITY COUNCIL

FEB 16 1978

READ:
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

Rose W. Mendonca CLERK

*and referred to Joint Committee
on Public Welfare &
Public Works*