

Technical Assistance for Sudbury Transit

Background

The Town of Sudbury has expressed interest in having CTPS evaluate the potential for **a first stage of regional** pilot transportation programs, with an emphasis on livability, transportation equity, and economic vitality, through the Regional Transit Service Planning technical assistance program. The town seeks ideas for **proof-of-concept** programs **involving additional communities and regional transit authorities, among others**, to help provide transportation access in areas with limited options beyond the private automobile.

Objectives

The objective of this project is to conduct an analysis of the existing conditions of transit service, population, and employment in the **MAGIC region, focusing first on the town of Sudbury and collaborating towns**, and identify **where there** are unserved or underserved areas where new demand response or shuttle services could provide new or improved transit connections. **Also included in “existing conditions” are the identified systemic issues affecting collaboration: municipal staffing, and RTA and Home Rule policies.**

Task 1 Identify Proof-of-Concept Issues Relevant to Strategic Goals

As part of this task, CTPS will identify existing employment hubs within **a selected area (e.g., within MAGIC region)** and the density and demographics of the resident population, primarily using the U.S. Census American Community Survey and Longitudinal Household Dynamics data. **Available more recent and detailed inputs to these data include the following:**

- **MAGIC livability and 495 Partnership economic data,**
- **Outcomes of current regional transportation pilots: Urgent Taxi/Livery initiatives (two pilots) and Making the Connections (Community Compact initiative).**
- **Individual town needs assessments (e.g., Livable Sudbury, 2019) and surveys relevant to transportation,**
- **Regional transportation survey of towns collaborating in the Making the Connections initiative, conducted by Nelson/Nygaard (2021),**
- **Recent demographic data from town housing production plans and census data, showing aging-in-place and in-migration trends and outcomes,**
- **Stakeholder feedback on transportation challenges (e.g., Public Safety, Boards of Health, social service organizations, etc.).**

In the first stage, CTPS will also examine present travel patterns between locations in the town of Sudbury, and to other locations in the service area of the MWRTA and MBTA transit networks. This will include travel by all modes combined—**such as Council on Again and similar modes**—and transit shares of this travel. Information sources for work journeys will include the U.S. Census American Community Survey and

Longitudinal Household Dynamics data; information for both work journeys and non-work journeys will include passenger counts and passenger surveys for existing MWRTA services, and other information such as taxi ridership data and ridesharing data that Sudbury planners may have available. **Because the regional initiatives noted above include additional transit providers (Lowell RTA and Montachusett RTA), travel patterns affected by the latter RTAs may be part of a next stage of effort.**

Task 2 Identify Potential New Transportation Services **Involving Sudbury and Collaborating Towns**

The information collected in Task 1 will show present and potential demand for transit by residents **of a designated area including Sudbury**. In Task 2, CTPS will use this information to formulate potential strategies for serving this demand. Changes could include recommendations for a new town-sponsored fixed-route service, expansion to the existing MWRTA fixed route network, or a new municipally subsidized on-demand service by ride-share companies.

For each suggested strategy, CTPS will utilize peer comparisons to estimate the potential ridership and cost. Staff will also describe potential implementation strategies, such as possible funding sources, types of vehicles, and operator(s).

CTPS will document the results of Tasks 1 and 2 in a technical memorandum **and provide suggested follow-on strategy and tasks.**