

For CTPS and MWRTA:
PROOF OF CONCEPT PROPOSAL

Background. The Town of Sudbury has expressed interest in having Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) evaluate the potential for the first stage of a regional pilot transportation program, emphasizing livability, transportation equity, and economic vitality... The Town seeks ideas for proof-of-concept programs that may also involve additional communities and regional transit authorities (RTAs), among others, that would help provide transportation access in areas with limited options beyond the private automobile.

Proposed Concept, 2/6/23. *Provide new transportation service along Route 20 in Sudbury and Wayland, for older adults, people with a disability limiting driving, and financially vulnerable residents, so they can access employment, medical, religious, and social opportunities along Route 20 in both towns, as well as connect to such opportunities in Marlborough and Framingham via existing transit services.*

Desired service parameters:

- Operator and vehicles:
 - MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) 12-person accessible vehicles
- Hours:
 - Weekdays, commuting hours (e.g., 6 AM – 6 PM)
 - Weekends, 8 AM to 2 PM (TBD, based on faith communities in area).
- Booking:
 - MWRTA Catch Connectⁱ (smartphone app) service
- Routes:
 - Route 20, Wayland through Sudbury
 - Connecting to MWRTA routes in Marlborough and Framingham
- Fares: TBD (e.g., \$2/ride)
- Marketing:
 - Direct communication to Wayland and Sudbury CoA, Senior Centers
 - Direct communication to directors of affordable developments (Section 8, Chapter 40B)
 - Town websites and social media
 - Other (TBD).

Funds. Potential funding is available from the AARP Community Challenge grant program ([AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](https://www.aarp.org/CommunityChallenge)), particularly the new Demonstration Grants:

[These grants support a]dvancing solutions that build capacity towards **transportation systems changes** for residents (especially those 50-plus) (approximately \$30,000 – \$50,000 each with funding support from Toyota)... [Applicants must demonstrate] 1) How your organization has been involved in past work to make this community more livable (with a focus on people 50-plus); and 2) How this project will support existing efforts to make this community more livable for all (with a focus on people 50-plus)... *We anticipate that grantees will receive selection notifications in May and payment in June/July. Projects must be completed by November 30 and After-Action Reports are due December 31.*

Note that the “Concept” description is aligned with the second project purpose, above. Moreover, Sudbury has been a member of the AARP Livable Communities Network since 2018 and has been focusing on transportation since that time.

Coverage. The proposed concept is a values-based service that will be measured by *coverage performance metrics* rather than patronage (fare-box) metrics:

Public transport faces an increasingly intense conflict between patronage goals and coverage goals. Broadly speaking, patronage goals seek to maximize patronage of all types, while *coverage goals lead to the provision of service despite low patronage – to achieve social inclusion objectives*, for example. ... [T]he decision about how to balance social versus patronage goals [must be] made consciously rather than inadvertently, with a clear understanding of the consequences of the choice [emphasis added].ⁱⁱ

Wayland and Sudbury have a growing number of residents age 50+ as well as financially vulnerable residents in affordable developments along Route 20, such as:

- Wayland
 - Oxbow
- Sudbury
 - Coolidge
 - Landham Road
 - Meadow Walk
 - Longfellow Glen.

With regard to transportation needs, Sudbury’s Livable Assessment demonstrated that:

- 42% of residents with a participation limitation reported they “had missed, canceled, or rescheduled a medical appointment due to lack of transportation.”
- More than a third of residents who are not financially secure are not satisfied with their “ability to get where they want to go.”

- Nearly half of residents 60+ are not satisfied with their “ability to get where they want to go.”

We can assume that Wayland data are similar.

Conclusion. The AARP funding opportunity closes on 15 March and will fund only 6 months of service. However, if the application is successful, we believe it will provide leverage for a wider (more communities, more service, additional RTAs) initiative that can be supported by Community Connections, CMAQ, E&R and other large grants at the State and Federal levels.

Clearly, this document is a basis for discussion and may or may not lead to a Demonstration Grant application.

ⁱ “An alternative to commercial software is to develop an app in-house, as is used by MWRTA CatchConnect and CCRTA SmartDART. Although in-house app development is more time-consuming and requires staff with relevant skills and knowledge, the end result is a platform that gives agencies full control of their data, communications, and operations. The CatchConnect and SmartDART apps include functionality for trip booking, vehicle tracking, automated dispatch, routing, and ongoing system monitoring.” MassDOT Report “Flexible Transit Services,” Report 21-020.

ⁱⁱ *Purpose-driven public transport: creating a clear conversation about public transport goals.* Jarrett Walker. McCormick Rankin Cagney, Level 13, 167 Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia © 2008 Elsevier Ltd.