



# Town of Sudbury

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<https://sudbury.ma.us/transportation/>

## Sudbury Transportation Committee

### Minutes

Friday, February 17, 2023

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Alice Sapienza, Adam Duchesneau, Debra Galloway, Kay Bell, Bob Lieberman

Core Members Absent: None

Advisory Group Present: None

Advisory Group Absent: Martha Welsh, Scott Nix, Carmine Gentile, Bethany Hadvab, Silvia Nersessian, Mary Warzynski

Guests: Ana Cristina Oliveira, Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV), Linda Faust

**Confirmation of Quorum:** The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as Chair convened the meeting at 10:31 AM. Dan Carty made an announcement that this was a public meeting, and the meeting was being recorded via Zoom and by Sudbury TV. He took roll call, noted a quorum was present, and announced that he was making Adam Duchesneau co-host of the Zoom session.

**Selection of Clerk:** Debra volunteered to take meeting minutes.

**Administrative Updates:** Dan summarized the major topics for today's discussion—not necessarily in the following order:

- Financial review
- Annex Transit – Feedback and Eligibility
- Discussion of ride constraints, including vouchers, co-pays, etc.
- Updates: Unified Program Work Plan, and MPO/CTPS, MWRTA and AARP Grant

Dan reviewed the Action Items from last meeting:

- Dan ensured that the ride limits were updated on the GoSudbury application.
- Adam communicated with Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) re: remaining funds and invoice.
- Alice submitted the Unified Program Work Plan ideas with input from Dan.

- Kay, Bob and Ana Cristina did some work on the eligibility and communications regarding Annex Transit.
- Adam will be reaching out to Uber regarding the geofence change.

**Financial Review:**

Dan shared the screen with the Financial Update provided by Adam. Dan highlighted the new additions to the spreadsheet, including invoice amounts from Tommy's Taxi and Uber. JFK Transportation's invoice has not been received yet. The cost of Taxi service is now being paid from the Mass Development grant funds. Alice noted that there are about 7 months' worth of Town funding available for the GoSudbury Uber service.

**CTPS/MWRTA and AARP Grant:**

Alice summarized the grant proposal that she is developing with the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA), along with technical assistance from the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS). This will be a "proof of concept" proposal for the AARP Demonstration grant. Alice originally proposed funding the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) Microtransit service, called Catch Connect, along Route 20, with the target service areas of Sudbury and Wayland. With Wayland deciding not to participate, the proposal will include only Sudbury.

The proposed MWRTA Microtransit service could possibly provide service to all parts of Sudbury, during certain key hours. Evening and weekend hours, when the Sudbury Connection vans do not run, are under consideration. CTPS staff are analyzing the data the Transportation Committee provided from the GoSudbury Uber service. Their analysis should help with decisions about the most useful service hours and service area for the proposal.

The MWRTA Microtransit Catch Connect is wheelchair-accessible and capable of providing shared rides. Both of these capabilities are advantages over the current Uber service.

Dan commented on the large workload involved in preparing this grant proposal with thanks to Alice. The proposal is due on March 15. Alice reminded the group that other towns are working on these types of partnerships with RTAs, including Greater Attleboro and Taunton Regional Authority (GATRA) and Scituate, as well as Stow and Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART). The grant funding available is \$30,000-\$50,000 funded by Toyota Corp for a 6-month service period.

Linda Faust, Sudbury resident, expressed concern about the MWRTA having enough drivers to provide this service.

**In-person vs. Remote Meetings:**

Linda Faust expressed concerns about Committee meetings moving to in-person. She uses the Sudbury Connection van service and needs to reserve a ride 48 hours in advance. The state law allowing for virtual meetings expires on March 31. The committee may need to move back to in-person meetings at that time. A quorum of members would need to be in-person. In addition, meetings may continue to be accessible virtually to members of the public. All of these decisions are pending resolution before March 31, based on any input/decisions by the state.

**Annex Transit:**

Ana Cristina reported the feedback from the rider who agreed to use the Annex Transit accessible van service on a trial basis. A family member was accompanying a person using a wheelchair. They used the service 3 times, with the same van driver, and shared that each experience was not positive. The van service was late with pickups and in particular, the last trip included a pickup that was 20 minutes late (from the home) and a pickup at the medical facility that was an hour and 15 minutes late for the return ride. The user also reported that the van was somewhat older and cramped. Ana Cristina and Debra will share the user's feedback with Adam, who will contact Annex Transit to discuss the rider's concerns. Ana Cristina will locate one to two more riders to test out the service as soon as possible.

The discussion then turned to the communications about who is eligible for Annex Transit. Dan shared onscreen eligibility information from both Kay and Bob. The goal is to provide rides for people who are not able to use Uber due to a disability, which means that Annex Transit would be available to them for any ride purpose. Annex Transit will also provide supplemental accessible service to the GoSudbury "Medical" Taxi program.

Annex has wheelchair accessible vans, more availability than JFK Transportation wheelchair-accessible service, and extended service hours. However, we will not make the service available until we find that concerns from the test rider are resolved and have had a few other riders use it and receive positive feedback.

There was extended discussion about eligibility for this service as a reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities who cannot access the GoSudbury Uber service. We agreed to consider simple language to communicate with users, and to have them identify themselves to Ana Cristina for registration. Debra suggested some basic language: "Persons who are not able to use the GoSudbury Uber program due to a mental or physical disability, may be eligible to use an alternative livery service. To find out if you are eligible, please contact Ana Cristina Oliveira, Outreach Specialist, Sudbury Senior Center, at [oliveiraa@sudbury.ma.us](mailto:oliveiraa@sudbury.ma.us) or 978-639-3268."

We discussed possible examples of people who could use the service: 1) someone who uses a wheelchair, as Uber does not have accessible vehicles; 2) someone who may not be able to use the Uber app – due to limited vision, cognitive challenge, or limited dexterity.

Should they be eligible, Ana Cristina will add them to a spreadsheet and share with CrossTown Connect dispatch. Users would then contact dispatch directly to order a ride.

Debra noted that we will need to add information about Annex eligibility to our policies on the application, and to have our own general guidelines for eligibility. Dan and Debra will meet with Sudbury Town Counsel to receive feedback on the proposed language for eligibility for this service.

**Ride Constraints:**

This topic is time sensitive as we may want to change ride limits before March 1. Dan stated that this discussion will be the first item on the next meeting's agenda.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be February 24 at 10:30 AM (Zoom).

**Minutes:** Minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

**Adjournment:** Dan listed the topics to be continued at the next meeting:

- Finances
- Ride constraints (copay, vouchers, etc.)
- Annex (beta test and eligibility requirements)
- Update on MPO meeting.
- Preparation for Annual Town Meeting Transportation Article.

Alice moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 PM, Debra seconded, and roll call agreement was unanimous.