

2024 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation (HST) Plan

Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO)



Document Prepared by:

Staff of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization



CMMPO Endorsement

The Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) hereby endorses the 2024 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation (HST) Plan. The 2024 HST Plan was endorsed on June XX, 2024, at a meeting of the CMMPO.

June XX, 2024

Signature

Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Chair, Central Massachusetts MPO



Accessibility

Hearing or Speaking Impairments

CONTACT MASS RELAY

Mass Relay Website: <https://www.mass.gov/massrelay>

Translation Assistance

CONTACT THE TITLE VI COORDINATOR

Title VI Coordinator Email: titlevicoordinator@cmrpc.org

Title VI Notices and Complaints

CONTACT CMRPC

CMRPC Website: <http://cmrpc.org/title-vi-policy>

Translation

ENGLISH

If this information is needed in another language, please contact the CMRPC/CMMPO Title VI Specialist at (508) 756-7717.

SPANISH

Si necesita esta información en otro lenguaje, favor contactar al especialista de Título VI de CMRPC/CMMPO al (508) 756-7717.

FRENCH

Si vous avez besoin d'obtenir une copie de la présente dans une autre langue, veuillez contacter le spécialiste du Titre VI de CMRPC/CMMPO en composant le (508) 756-7717.

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VIETNAMESE

Nếu bạn cần thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ khác, xin vui lòng liên lạc với Tiêu đề VI Chuyên CMRPC/CMMPO tại (508) 756-7717.

CHINESE

如果用另一种语言需要的信息，请联系第六章专门CMRPC/CMMPO (508) 756-7717.

AFRIKAANS

As jy inligting nodig het in 'n ander taal, kontak asseblief die Titel VI Spesialis CMRPC/CMMPO by (508) 756-7717.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization operates its programs, services, and activities in compliance with following legislation including related federal and state statutes and regulations.

Federal

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act states that: “No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13166

Executive Order 13166 is a federal order that aims to improve access to services and programs for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). It was signed by President Clinton on August 11, 2000. It requires federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to LEP individuals, and develop and implement a plan to provide those services. It also requires federal agencies to provide guidance to their recipients on the Title VI obligation to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION ACT OF 1987 “GROVE CITY BILL”

The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, or Grove City Bill, is a U.S. legislative act that specifies that entities receiving federal funds must comply with civil rights legislation in all their operations. The Act was introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Grove City, which severely limited the application of coverage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities. As a civil rights law, the ADA ensures that individuals with disabilities have equal access and opportunities in various aspects of public life, including transportation.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1963

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities by entities who receive federal funds or are conducted by federal agencies. It also requires positive actions to assist qualified individuals with disabilities in all programs, services and activities that fall under its scope. Section 504 was the first disability civil rights law to be enacted in the United States.

State

MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION LAW

The Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law ensures civil rights protections related to public accommodations through the Attorney General’s Office. Under this law, it is prohibited to make any distinction, discrimination, or restriction in admission to or treatment in a place of public accommodation.

MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE ORDER 526, SECTION 4

Executive Order 526 requires all programs, activities and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted for by the state shall be conducted without unlawful discrimination.

Filing a Complaint

Nondiscrimination Complaints

Individuals who feel they have been discriminated against in violation of Title VI or related Federal nondiscrimination laws, must file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory conduct to:

Ms. Janet Pierce, Executive Director
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
1 Mercantile Street, Suite 520
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 756-7717

Public Accommodation Complaints

To file a complaint alleging violation of the State's Public Accommodation Law, contact the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory conduct at:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
One Ashburton Place, 6th floor
Boston, MA 02109
(617) 994-6000
TTY: (617) 994-6196

Notice Requirement

This notice is provided as required by Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding ADA and Section 504 may be forwarded to:

Ms. Janet Pierce, Executive Director
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
1 Mercantile Street Suite 520
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 756-7717

Accessible Document Formats

This notice and document are available from the in large print, on audio tape, and in Braille upon request.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An executive summary will be provided in this plan and can be translated into other languages upon request.

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Executive Summary

Section I: Introduction

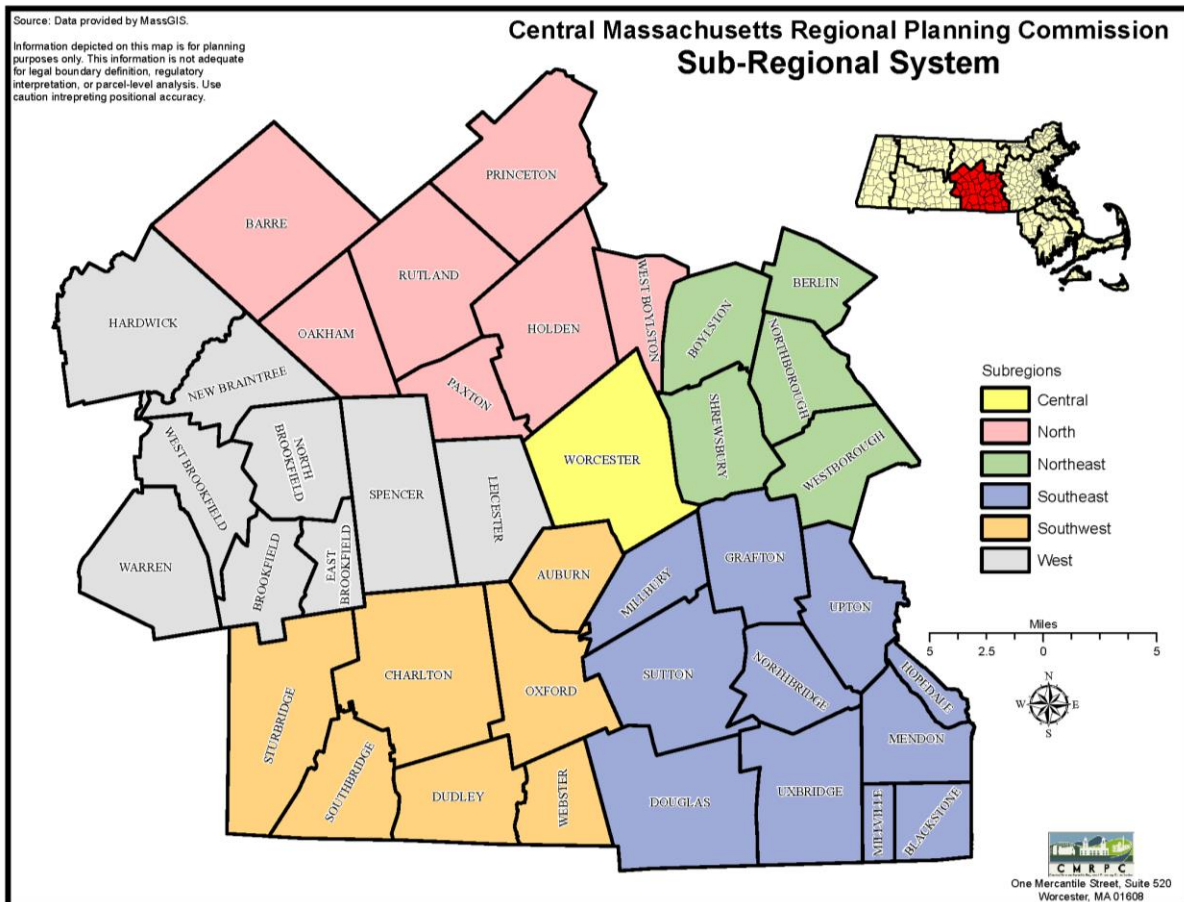
Section II: Available Services Assessment

Section III: Transportation Needs Assessment

Section IV: Strategies & Priorities

Section I: Introduction

| Subregion | Communities |
|-----------|---|
| Central | Worcester |
| North | Barre, Princeton, Rutland, Oakham, Paxton, Holden, West Boylston |
| Northeast | Boylston, Shrewsbury, Berlin, Northborough, Westborough |
| Southeast | Grafton, Millbury, Sutton, Northbridge, Upton, Hopedale, Mendon, Blackstone, Millville, Douglas, Uxbridge |
| Southwest | Charlton, Auburn, Oxford, Webster, Dudley, Southbridge, Sturbridge |
| West | Hardwick, New Braintree, West Brookfield, Warren, Brookfield, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, Spencer, Leicester |



Metropolitan Planning

Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) makes transportation policy in urbanized areas for over 50,000 people within its planning region. The Central Massachusetts MPO (CMMPO) includes the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Secretary of Transportation, MassDOT Highway Administrator, Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA), Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), Worcester City Manager, and 6 selectpersons representing their part of the sub-regional system.

The CMMPO was established in 1976 to undertake the “3Cs” comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative transportation planning process required by the United States Department of Transportation. The CMMPO is responsible for updating the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan and Long-Range Transportation Plan every 4 years, and the Transportation Improvement Plan and Unified Planning Work Program annually.

CMRPC GOVERNING COMMITTEES

CMRPC Executive Committee, Legislative Affairs Committee, Physical Development Committee, Transportation Planning Committee

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEES

CMMPO Committee, CMMPO Advisory Committee, Transportation Planning Advisory Group

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization

TITLE VI PROGRAM

Through the Title VI Program and Public Participation Plan, the CMMPO conducts all its programs and activities to ensure that protected populations have equal access to the benefits of, and have meaningful opportunities to participate in, the CMMPO’s transportation planning process. Additional Transportation Planning works to create and maintain a safe, dependable, and environmentally sound transportation system that promotes livable communities and the efficient movement of people and good throughout the region.

Plan Timeline

SEPTEMBER 2023 – APRIL 2024 (8 MONTHS)

- Review of planning guidance and best practices
- Public Involvement (See Appendix)

MAY 2024 – JUNE 2024 (2 MONTHS)

- Presentation to CMMPO Advisory Committee: March 27, 2024
- Presentation to CMMPO: May 15, 2024
- Formal Public Comment: June 3, 2024
- CMMPO Plan Endorsement: June 19, 2024 conflict with Juneteenth Holiday, date to be determined

2024 – 2028 (4 YEARS)

- Update the 2028 Plan with prioritizations ranked by time, feasibility, and available funding
- Track new or ongoing Community Transit Grant Program projects
- Develop implementation and evaluation metrics to measure progress

Plan Overview

Section 5310 Requirements

ⁱ The Safe Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) required that projects funded under Individuals with Disabilities, Job Access, and Reverse Commute Program (JARC), and New Freedom programs have a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan in 2007. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) included recommendations to increase participation by recipients of federal grants in locally developed, coordinated planning processes in 2015. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) now requires that projects selected for formula funds under the Section 5310 "Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities" program be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

I. AVAILABLE SERVICE ASSESSMENT

An assessment of available services that identifies current transportation providers (public, private, and nonprofit).

II. TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

An assessment of transportation needs for persons with disabilities and seniors. This assessment can be based on the experiences and perceptions of the planning partners or on more sophisticated data collection efforts, and gaps in service.

III. STRATEGIES & OPPORTUNITIES

Strategies, activities, and/or projects to address the identified gaps between current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery.

IV. PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Priorities for implementation based on resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.

Plan Benefits

The Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) receives funds to update the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation (HST) Plan every 4 years for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 "Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and People with Disabilities" eligibility. The HST Plan should integrate strategies to improve regional transportation and address gaps in human services transportation for seniors and people with disabilities using Section 5310 funds for mobility improvements.

The 2024 HST Plan will update the 2019 HST Plan and provide prioritizations on the use of funds from the annual competitive Massachusetts Community Transit Grant Program for the operating and mobility management application grant cycle and the Mobility Assistance Program vehicle application grant cycle.

The HST Plan addresses both regulatory and local community goals to meet the needs of diverse groups, such as people with disabilities, older adults over the age of 65, people with limited English proficiency, and people with low incomes. Implementation progress and future goals will be updated on a regular basis and be viewed as a living document that can be used toward the goal of coordinating transportation with age and dementia friendly planning, public health equity, transportation planning, and human services access.

HST Plans are developed through a meaningful public involvement process with all stakeholders from the public, private and nonprofit sectors that represent transportation and human service providers. The Federal Transit Administration suggests several public outreach strategies to garner full participation from all interested parties in an accessible and universally designed manner to meet a range of needs for a variety of community members.

2019 Planning Update

The City of Worcester

The City of Worcester and its partners have undertaken numerous topic-specific planning efforts since its last comprehensive planning effort in 1987. Recent planning efforts include Worcester for Everyone: A Regional Housing & Economic Study Outlining Local Opportunity (2019), Strategic Plan (2020), Community Health Improvement Plan (2021), the Mobility Action Plan (2024), and Vision Zero Safety Action Plan (2024).

WORCESTER DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

The Department of Transportation & Mobility (DTM) was created in July 2022 to improve transportation for pedestrians, people with disabilities, transit riders and cyclists, separate from the Department of Public Works and Parks which historically focused on traffic congestion and parking. The DTM will help bridge initiatives across the city from the Department of Sustainability & Resiliency to plan, coordinate, design and implement transportation initiatives that promote safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility options.

Worcester Regional Transit Authority

The new administrator was hired by the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) Advisory Board in August 2023 to replace the former WRTA administrator Dennis Lipka who was hired in February 2019. He was Assistant General Manager of Planning and Marketing at CT Transit prior to employment at the WRTA.

FARE EQUITY

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) transit service has been “fare free” since March 2020. The WRTA Advisory Board voted to extend free fares until June 2025. The Zero Fare Coalition and the Worcester Regional Research Bureau “Resurging Regional Ridership” analysis report advocate for permanent free fares.

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission

The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) completed its Long Range Transportation Plan – 2050 Connections (2023), Southern Worcester County Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (2023) Central Massachusetts Age Friendly Action Plan (2023), Quabbin Regional Rural Transit Study (2023), Imagine 2050 (ongoing), CMRPC Title VI program (2024), Worcester Regional Transit Authority Title VI program (2024) and The Greater Worcester Priority Climate Action Plan (2024).

COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

CMRPC contributed to the Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan (2024) developed by the Coalition for Healthy Greater Worcester and the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The FY 2024 Massachusetts budget included an increase of Regional Transit Authority state contract assistance funding and a Regional Transit Innovation Grant for discretionary operating and capital funding. The Worcester Regional Transit Authority received federal recovery funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in 2020 and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in 2021. An advocacy effort to pass the 2021 “An Act to increase transit accessibility in the Commonwealth” in the legislator is being led by the Regional Transit Authority Advocates coalition through the Massachusetts Public Health Association.

MASSDOT TRANSIT FUNDING TASK FORCE

Governor Healey signed an executive order to create a new Transportation Funding Task Force alongside her FY 2025 budget. This Task Force will be composed of public and private-sector leaders, representing communities of all sizes across Massachusetts, that will spend the next 12 months examining the state’s transportation system and developing recommendations for a long-term, sustainable transportation finance plan that can support safely and reliably support road, rail, and transit systems throughout the state.

Massachusetts Community Transit Funding

Community Transit Grant Program

ⁱⁱ The Community Transit Grant Program is an annual, state competitive grant program to expand mobility for older adults and people with disabilities. Transit authorities, municipalities, Councils on Aging, non-profit organizations, and private operators of public transit (shared-ride) services can apply for funds to operate transportation services, support mobility management initiatives, or receive wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

Projects initiated prior to 2012 were funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Freedom Program, which was repealed by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and merged into the FTA Section 5310 “Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities” program.

WRTA – READYBUS SERVICE (FY 2012 – 2024)

READYBUS service provides demand response employment transportation to residents, especially for people with disabilities and seniors over 60 in the towns of Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, and Webster.

WRTA – MIDDAY SERVICE (FY 2015 – 2024)

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) contracts with SCM Elderbus for midday paratransit service from the 21 rural communities within the WRTA service area to Worcester. The service significantly reduced wait time for riders who regularly waited several hours for a ride home after medical appointments.

WRTA – HOLDEN TO WORCESTER (FY 2015 – 2024)

This is a demand response service that replaced a WRTA fixed bus route for people with disabilities and seniors over traveling between Holden and Worcester when the Council on Aging vehicle is not in service.

TOWN OF SHREWSBURY – COUNCIL ON AGING (FY 2018 – 2024)

The Community Transit Grant funds provide out of town work and medical trips from Shrewsbury to Northborough and Westborough that are outside of the WRTA fixed bus route ADA paratransit service area.

TOWN OF RUTLAND – EXTENDED TRANSPORTATION (FY 2024)

The town of Rutland currently receives paratransit service from SCM Elderbus, a subcontractor of the Worcester Regional Transit Authority, acquired Community Transit Grant funds to launch a new Council on Aging transportation program to supplement existing options and fill gaps in the transportation network.

PVTA – QUABOAG CONNECTOR (FY 2018 – 2024)

The Quaboag Connector is operated by the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) through a partnership between the town of Ware and the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation. This demand response service serves 10 towns through an appointment-based system for \$2 fare per ride Monday – Saturday. The Connector has grown in popularity since its initial 700 rider projection to over 1,000 prior to the 2021 COVID-19 pandemic and down to 700 riders in 2024. The service provides reliable transportation for accessing healthcare, employment, and social resources between the PVTA and the towns of Brookfield, East Brookfield, Warren, and West Brookfield serviced by the Worcester Regional Transit Authority.

GATRA – MASSACHUSETTS RIDE MATCH (FY 2010 – 2024)

The Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) was awarded a Mobility Management Community Transit Grant to develop an in-depth directory of transportation options that would enhance customer service by connecting people with the knowledge about transportation services in their community and how to use them. In 2015, the state awarded GATRA another grant to expand the database and four Regional Transit Authorities agreed to participate in the pilot project. Today, all 15 Regional Transit Authorities and the MBTA participate in the state-wide program, making Ride Match an essential service for area agencies, medical centers and persons searching for accessible transportation options in Massachusetts.

Section 5310 Funding

iii Section 5310 “Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities” provides formula funding to states and designated recipients to meet the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities when the transportation service provided is unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to meeting these needs. Funds are apportioned based on each state’s share of the population for these two groups.

FUND RECIPIENTS

Formula funds are apportioned to direct recipients; for rural and small urban areas, this is the state Department of Transportation, while in large urban areas, a designated recipient is chosen by the governor. Direct recipients have flexibility in how they select subrecipient projects for funds, but their decision process must be clearly noted in a state/program management plan. The selection process may be formula-based, competitive or discretionary, and subrecipients can include states or local government authorities, private non-profit organizations, and/or operators of public transportation.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The program aims to improve mobility for older adults and people with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options. This program supports transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the transportation needs of older adults and people with disabilities in large urbanized (over 200,000), small urbanized (50,000-200,000), and rural (under 50,000).

Project Types

The funds can be used for “traditional” or “nontraditional” projects. “Traditional” projects are capital projects as defined in 49 U.S.C. 5302(3). “Nontraditional” projects are capital and/or operating projects that go beyond the scope of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) complementary paratransit services or public transportation alternatives designed to assist older adults and people with disabilities.

TRADITIONAL CAPITAL PROJECTS

Buses and vans; Wheelchair lifts, ramps, and security devices; Transit-related information technology systems, including scheduling/routing/one-call systems; Mobility management programs; Acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement.

NONTRADITIONAL CAPITAL AND/OR OPERATING PROJECTS

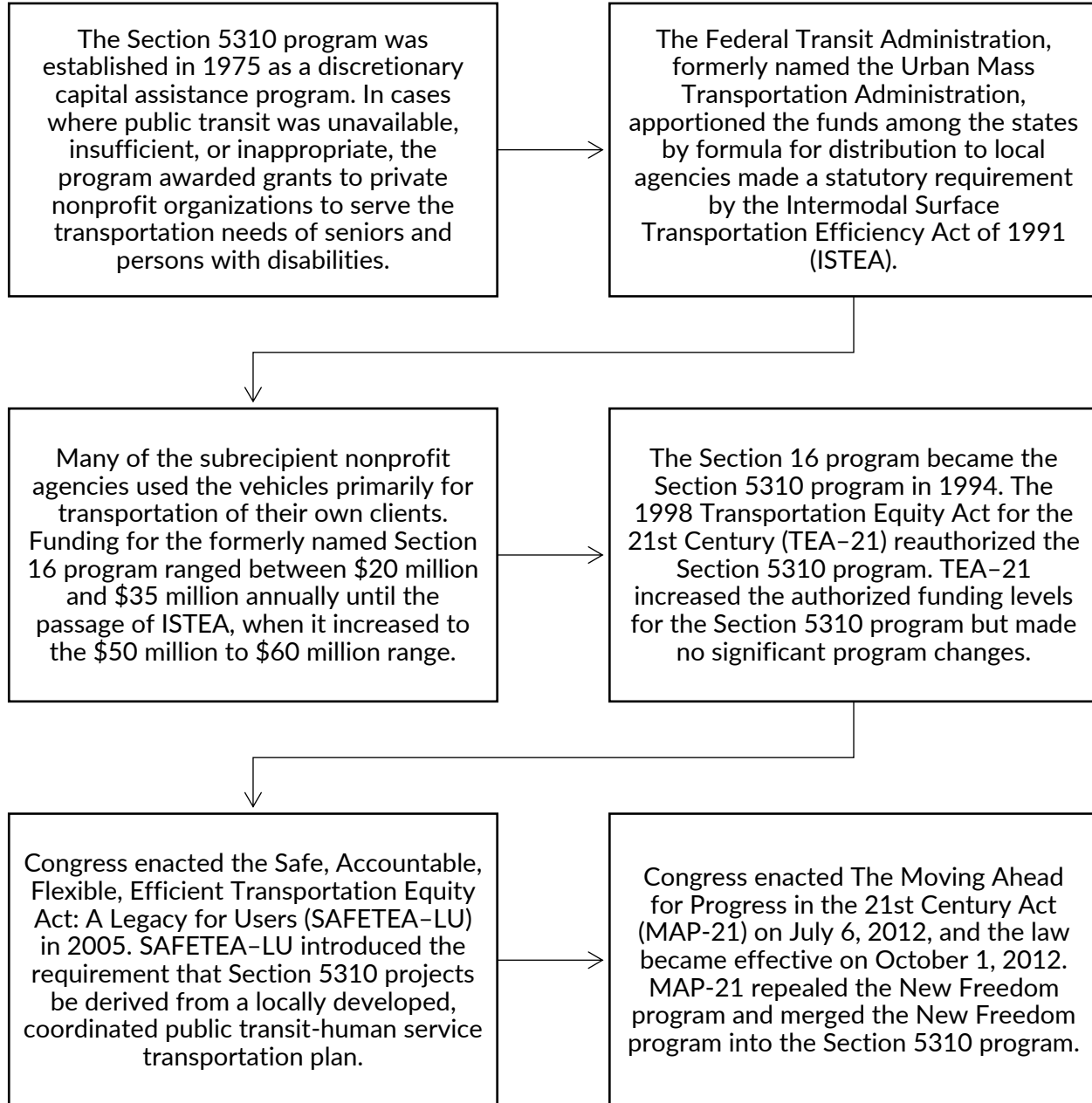
Travel training; Volunteer driver programs; Construction of accessible paths to bus stops, including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features; Improvements to signage, or way-finding technology; Incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service; Purchase of vehicles to support new accessible taxi, rides sharing and/or vanpooling programs; Mobility management programs.

Mobility Assistance Program Vans

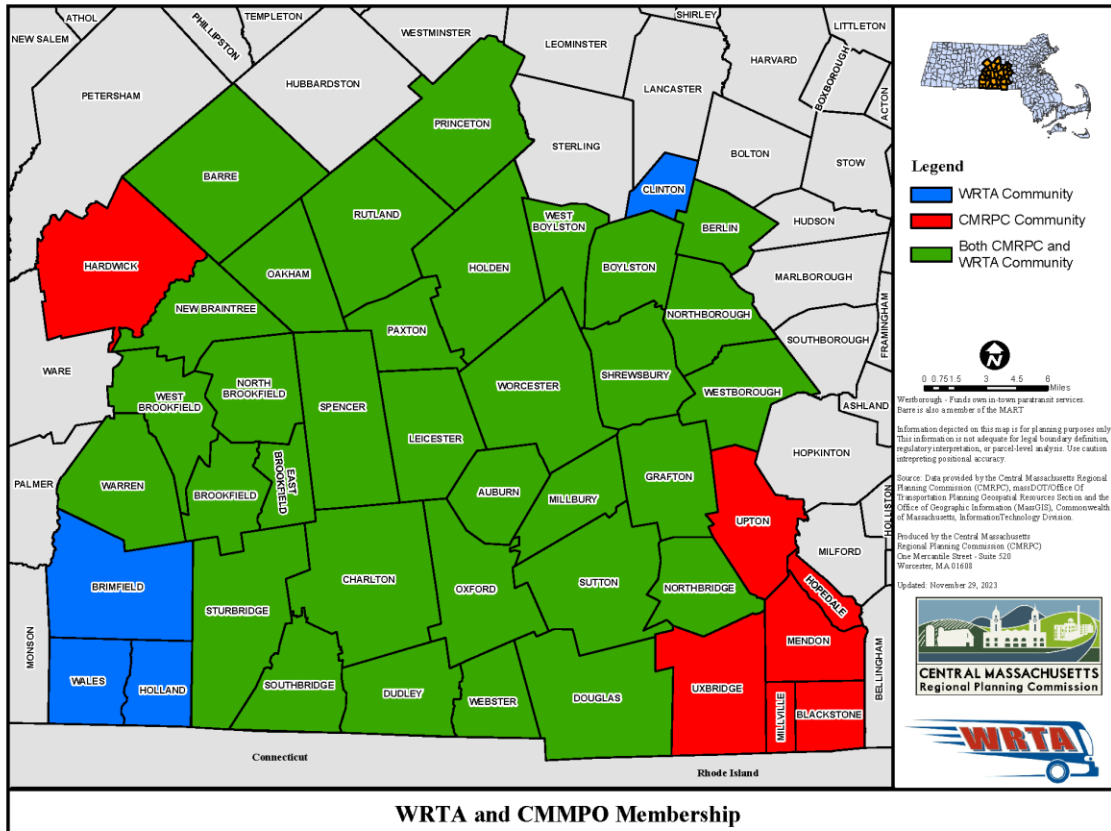
iv Section 5310 funds can pay up to 80% of the cost of each vehicle. Subrecipients pay the remaining 20% except for regional transit authorities whose local match is covered by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Municipalities and nonprofits are encouraged to partner, collaborate, or join a lease arrangement with regional transit authorities under the guidance of the Rail and Transit Division.

The following categories can be used as local match: local government appropriations, local dedicated tax revenues, private donations, net income generated from advertising and concessions, organization contracts such as human service program funds, state funds such as formula grants, and Non-DOT federal funds such as from the Department of Health and Human Services, Labor, Interior or Housing and Urban Development.

Section 5310 Program History



Section II: Available Services Assessment



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Section II: Available Services Assessment

Section IV: Strategies & Priorities



Section III: Transportation Needs Assessment

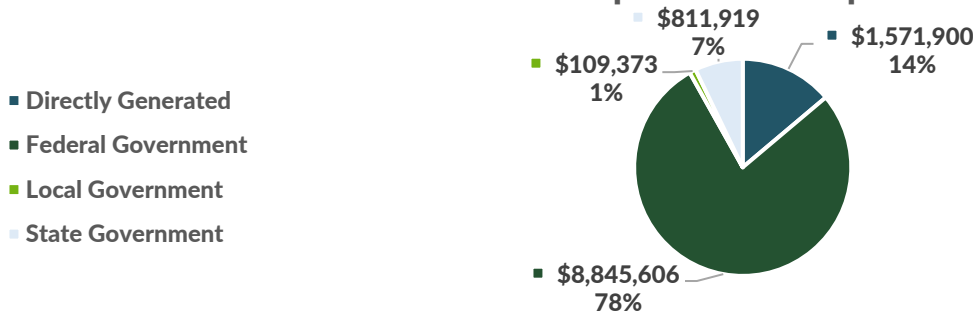
Worcester Regional Transit Authority

^v Chapter 161B of Massachusetts General Laws established funding for Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) in 1974 to provide a public transportation system under the control of municipalities. Each RTA member community pays a local assessment and is governed by an advisory board of the chief elected officials from those communities. RTAs are locally controlled and manage their own operations but are legally required to hire private operating companies.

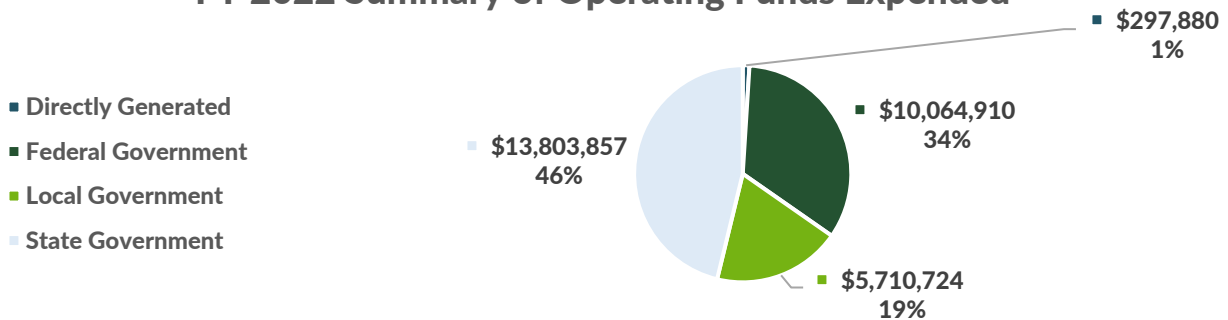
^{vi} The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) service area is 866 square miles with 578,732 people in both the Worcester, MA-CT Primary Urbanized Area (UZA) of 260 square miles and 482,085 people and Massachusetts non-UZA areas. The WRTA contracts with Central Massachusetts Transit Management to operate fixed route bus service. The WRTA also contracts with 10 local Councils on Aging, SCM Elderbus and Worcester Yellow Cab to provide paratransit services required by the American with Disabilities Act in Worcester and 37 communities.

Source: [National Transit Database Agency Profile](#)

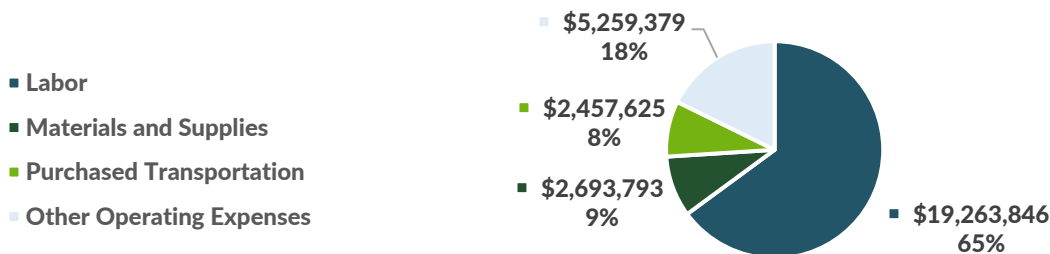
FY 2022 Sources of Capital Funds Expended



FY 2022 Summary of Operating Funds Expended



FY 2022 Summary of Operating Expenses



Fixed Route Bus Service

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority operates 26 fixed routes in 16 of its 37 member communities. The transit network uses as a hub and spoke system where bus transfers are concentrated at the Union Station Hub. Each bus route can be categorized according to its trip frequency and distance. City Routes operate in Worcester and adjacent communities with high frequency. Community Routes primarily operate communities outside of the core transit service with less frequency. Shuttle Routes operate in communities without returning to the Worcester Hub.


| Route | Destinations | Communities Served |
|-------|---|--|
| 1 | Mount St. Ann via Providence St. | Worcester |
| 2 | Tatnuck Square via Pleasant St. | Worcester |
| 3 | Worcester State University via Highland St. | Worcester |
| 4 | The Shoppes at Blackstone Valley via Millbury St | Worcester, Millbury |
| 5 | Southwest Commons via Grafton St. | Worcester |
| 6 | West Tatnuck via Chandler St. | Worcester |
| 7 | Washington Heights Apts. | Worcester |
| 825 | Park Avenue Connector | Worcester |
| 11 | The Fair Plaza via Vernon Hill and Greenwood St. | Worcester |
| 12 | Grafton St/South Plaza/Southwest Commons | Worcester, Shrewsbury |
| 14 | Showcase Cinemas/Holden via Burncoat St. | Worcester |
| 15 | Shrewsbury Center via Shrewsbury St. | Worcester, Shrewsbury |
| 16 | Lincoln Plaza via Hamilton St. and Lake Ave. | Worcester |
| 19 | Webster Square - Clark University via Main St. | Worcester, Leicester, Spencer |
| 23 | East Mountain Street via Lincoln St. | Worcester |
| 24 | UMass Medical Center via Belmont St. | Worcester |
| 26 | Great Brook Valley via Lincoln St. | Worcester |
| 27 | Auburn Mall via Main St. | Worcester, Auburn |
| 29 | Southbridge - Charlton | Worcester, Auburn, Charlton, Southbridge |
| 30 | W. Boylston Walmart via Grove St. & W. Boylston St. | Worcester, West Boylston |
| 31 | Lincoln Plaza via Grove St. & West Boylston St. | Worcester |
| 33 | Spencer - Brookfield via Main St. & Rt. 9 | Worcester, Leicester, Spencer, East Brookfield, Brookfield |
| 42 | Oxford - Webster via Southbridge St | Worcester, Auburn, Oxford, Webster |
| A | Northbridge Walmart - Blackstone Valley Shoppes | Northbridge, Grafton, Millbury |
| B | Rockdale - Stop and Shop - Grafton MBTA Station | Northbridge, Grafton |
| WDS | Webster - Dudley - Southbridge Shuttle | Southbridge, Dudley, Webster |

Route Service Schedule

| Route | Weekday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 5:50 am – 9:20 pm | 8:40 am – 4:35 pm | 9:50 am – 5:20 pm |
| 2 | 6:20 am – 9:25pm | 10:00 am – 6:00 pm | 10:00 am – 5:30 pm |
| 3 | 5:05 am – 9:00 pm | 9:30 am – 5:20 pm | No Service |
| 4 | 6:20 am – 9:35 pm | 6:00 am – 9:51 pm | 11:30 am – 5:45 pm |
| 5 | 5:05 am – 9:00 pm | 6:00 am – 8:38 pm | 10:00 am – 15:35 pm |
| 6 | 5:50 am – 9:45 pm | 7:00am – 7:52pm | No Service |
| 7 | 5:15 am – 9:05 pm | 5:55 am – 9:44 pm | 9:35 am – 6:15 pm |
| 825 | 6:15 am – 8:45 pm | No Service | No Service |
| 11 | 5:05 am – 11:35 pm | 6:05 am – 10:10 pm | 8:30 am – 7:30 pm |
| 12 | 6:10am – 9:25 pm | No Service | No Service |
| 14 | 6:30 am – 9:25 pm | No Service | No Service |
| 15 | 5:50 am – 9:10 pm | 9:50 am – 5:50 pm | No Service |
| 16 | 6:15 am – 9:35 pm | 8:25 am – 4:25 pm | No Service |
| 19 | 5:00 am – 11:20 pm | 6:40 am – 10:25 pm | 10:30 am – 6:30 pm |
| 23 | 5:30 am – 9:05 pm | 6:40 am – 9:25 pm | 11:30 am – 7:05 pm |
| 24 | 5:40 am – 9:03 pm | 6:40 am – 9:40 pm | 10:00 am – 7:05 pm |
| 26 | 5:20 am – 11:45 pm | 6:15 am – 9:15 pm | 9:15 am – 4:55 pm |
| 27 | 5:45 am – 9:46 pm | 6:05 am – 8:41 pm | 8:45 am – 4:31 pm |
| 29 | 5:35 am – 7:35 pm | 8:00 am – 8:00 pm | No Service |
| 30 | 5:30 am – 11:15 pm | 5:50 am – 9:35 pm | 11:00 am – 6:30 pm |
| 31 | 6:15 am – 10:15 pm | 8:25 am – 5:05 pm | No Service |
| 33 | 4:50 am – 8:45 pm | No Service | No Service |
| 42 | 5:25 am – 8:20 pm | 7:00 am – 8:15 pm | No Service |
| A | 9:10 am – 4:45 pm | No Service | No Service |
| B | 5:20 am – 7:35 pm | No Service | No Service |
| WDS | 5:10 am – 7:10 am | No Service | No Service |


SERVICE PERIODS


 4 am - 6 am
AM Early

 6 am - 9 am
AM Peak

 9 am - 3 pm
Midday

 3 pm - 6 pm
PM Peak

 6 pm - 10 pm
PM Late

 10 pm - 12 am
Late Night

Route Frequency

| Route | Weekday Frequency | Saturday Frequency | Sunday Frequency |
|-------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 | 25 – 60 mins. | 25 – 60 mins. | 50 mins |
| 2 | 50 – 65 mins. | 50 mins. | 50 mins. |
| 3 | 25 – 60 mins. | 25 – 60 mins. | No Service |
| 4 | 75 mins. | 60 – 75 mins. | 75 mins. |
| 5 | 40 – 60 mins. | 60 – 120 mins. | 60 mins. |
| 6 | 40 – 60 mins. | 60 – 120 mins. | No Service |
| 7 | 30 – 40 mins. | 45 – 65 mins. | 55 mins. |
| 825 | 75 – 85 mins. | No Service | No Service |
| 11 | 20 – 60 mins. | 60 – 70 mins. | 30 – 60 mins. |
| 12 | 50 – 60 mins. | No Service | No Service |
| 14 | 30 – 60 mins. | No Service | No Service |
| 15 | 60 – 70 mins. | 60 mins. | No Service |
| 16 | 40 – 80 mins. | 40 – 80 mins. | No Service |
| 19 | 15 – 60 mins. | 60 mins. | 60 mins. |
| 23 | 30 – 65 mins. | 45 – 65 mins. | 60 mins. |
| 24 | 20 – 40 mins. | 60 – 70 mins. | 55 – 110 mins. |
| 26 | 15 – 60 mins. | 30 mins. | 50 – 65 mins. |
| 27 | 20 – 35 mins. | 30 – 60 mins. | 70 mins. |
| 29 | 120 mins. | 120 mins. | No Service |
| 30 | 15 – 45 mins | 55 – 65 mins. | 60 mins. |
| 31 | 40 – 80 mins. | 40 – 80 mins. | No Service |
| 33 | 60 – 100 mins. | No Service | No Service |
| 42 | 80 – 130 mins. | 120 mins. | No Service |
| A | 60 – 100 mins. | No Service | No Service |
| B | 60 – 120 mins. | No Service | No Service |
| WDS | 45 – 85 mins. | No Service | No Service |

FRIDAY SERVICE REDUCTIONS

In January 2023 the WRTA decided to temporarily suspend or reduce Friday service due to driver shortages.

- Route 8/25 (in its entirety) will be suspended.
- Service on Routes 11/24, 14, 19, 26, 27, and 30 will be reduced.
- These schedule changes will not affect paratransit services.

Transit Operations

Central Massachusetts Transit Management

First Transit, Inc. of Cincinnati, OH (First Transit), acquired by Transdev, incorporated in Massachusetts as Central Massachusetts Transit Management (CMTM), provides transit management and operations services for fixed route bus and paratransit van service under contract to the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. CMTM drivers bid on their preferred operating routes during service changes in June, August, and January annually. Outside of Worcester the bus driver will pick up riders who wave the bus down through a “flagging system”.

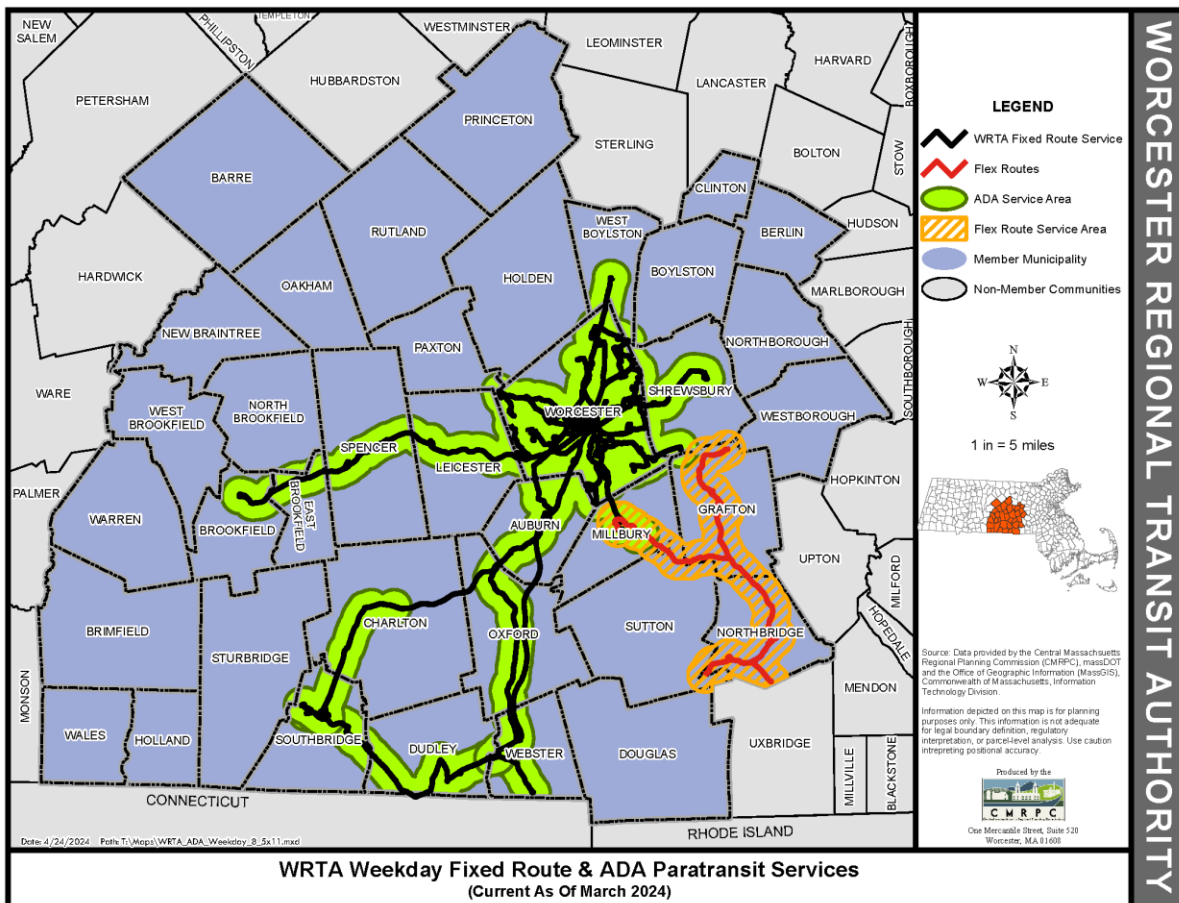
The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) Travel Training is a free service open to riders at least 13 years old who would like to learn how to use the WRTA fixed routes to access various desired destinations.

FLEX SERVICE

Shuttle routes A and B provide flexible routing ¼ mile along its route if requested the day before called the FLEX service allowing riders to access more locations on a need basis while maintaining route efficiency.

WRTA ADVISORY BOARD

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) Advisory Board is responsible for the policy making decisions of the WRTA including decisions on service changes, and fares. The Advisory Board members are appointed by their respective community with each community having a weighted vote based on population and level of service. The two appointed board members are from the passenger and disability communities.



WRTA Paratransit Service

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service

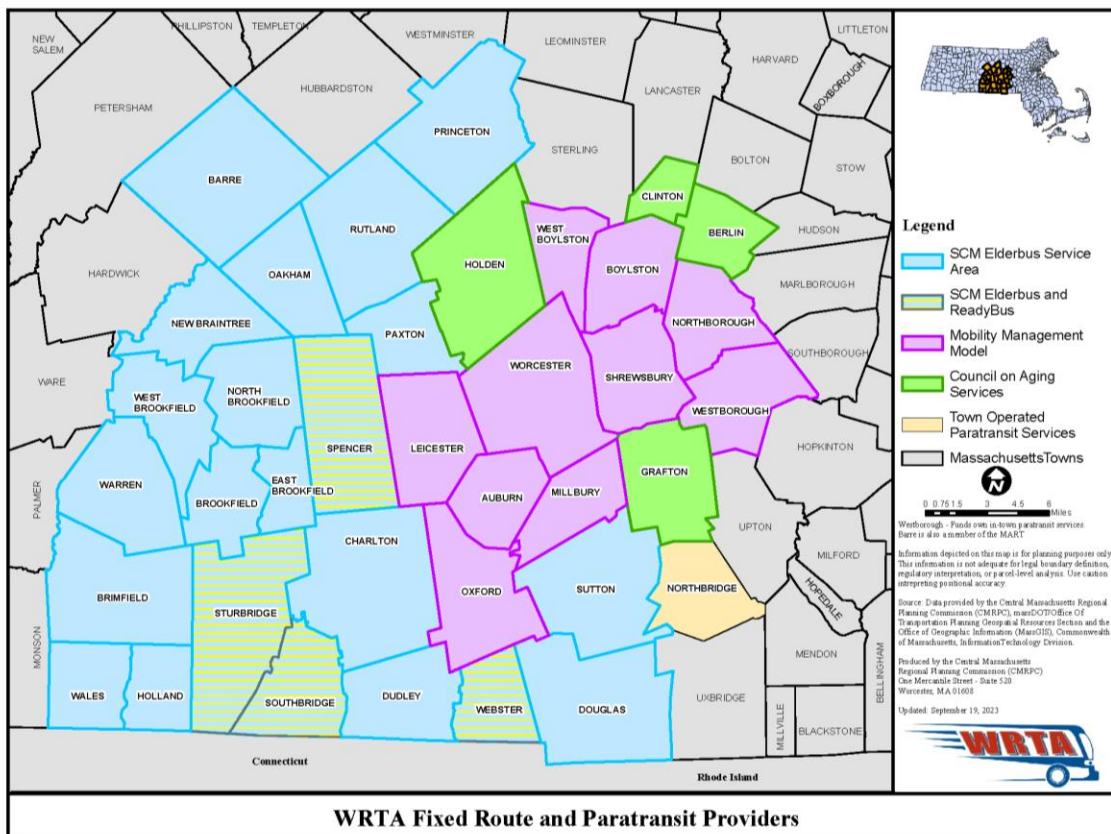
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. Complementary ADA service is only provided in areas where fixed route buses operate and does not include Express Commute service, Intercity or Dial-A-Ride services. ADA paratransit service is provided only during the hours and days that the fixed route bus or rail service is operating. A trip is only considered ADA paratransit when both the pickup and drop off are located within ¼ of a mile of a fixed route bus route.

NON-ADA PARATRANSIT

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) provides paratransit service beyond the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Non-ADA paratransit service is provided for 37 member communities through local councils on aging and other contractors. Older adults over 60 and people with a disability are eligible.

ADA DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

Any person with a disability who is unable, because of a physical or mental impairment, and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift), to board, ride, or disembark from any fixed route bus. Any person with a disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents them from traveling to or from a bus stop on the fixed route bus system. Architectural and environmental barriers such as distance, terrain, or weather do not form a basis for eligibility alone. However, a person may be eligible if the interaction of disability and environmental barriers prevents travel to the stop.



Paratransit Providers & Other Services

Worcester Regional Transit Authority

vii The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) offers a curb-to-curb shared-ride paratransit service for seniors over 60 and people with disabilities regardless of age. Paratransit riders will be picked up by a lift-equipped van or an accessible Worcester Yellow Cab within a 20 minute pickup time window. The paratransit vehicle may stop to pick up or drop off other riders and requires a trip reservation by 4:30 pm the day before but may be scheduled up to a week in advance. Drivers receive regular training on the equipment they use and the people they serve. The WRTA provides weekend paratransit service outside of the Council on Aging and SCM Elderbus weekday hours.

WORCESTER YELLOW CAB

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) contracts with the privately owned 24/7 taxi company Worcester Yellow Cab to fill paratransit service coverage gaps when WRTA vans are unavailable or for scheduling convenience.

MOBILITY MANAGEMENT MODEL

Paratransit service is managed and operated by towns and Councils on Aging through a contract with the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). Towns and Councils on Aging in the Mobility Management Model use Paratransit Brokerage Services Transit Management (PBSTM) services through the WRTA.

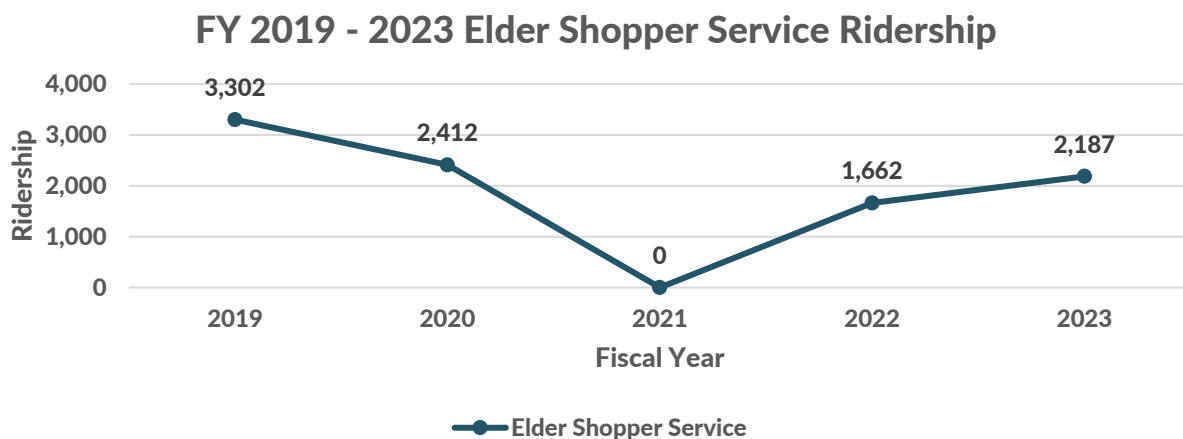
First Transit, also incorporated in Massachusetts as Paratransit Brokerage Services Transit Management (PBSTM) manages the WRTA paratransit service to provide a centralized location for call-taking, reservations, scheduling, call backs and reporting for community transportation through the Mobility Management Model.

South-Central Massachusetts Elderbus

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority contracts with South-Central Massachusetts (SCM) Elderbus, a private nonprofit paratransit service provider incorporated in 1974 and headquartered in Charlton, MA. In town transportation is provided on weekdays from 8:30 am – 4 pm to requested destinations scheduled 24 hours in advance. Out of town medical transportation is provided 3 days per week depending on the town.

Elder Shopper Service

viii The Elder Shopper Service (ESS) is a shuttle that provides trips for the public between apartment complexes and grocery stores in Worcester that are often affiliated with the Worcester Housing Authority or senior communities. The service operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays to provide older adults with one hour of independent shopping.



Community Profiles

^{ix} The Worcester Regional Transit Authority provides paratransit service for Worcester and 37 communities.

| | |
|-----|--|
| ADA | ¾ mile radius American with Disabilities Act Paratransit |
| COA | Local Council on Aging Paratransit |
| ESS | Elder Shopper Service |
| MMM | WRTA Mobility Management Model |
| SCM | SCM Elderbus Paratransit |
| VIA | Via-WRTA on-demand service |
| WYC | Worcester Yellow Cab |

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Auburn | ADA, COA, MMM, WYC |
| Barre | SCM |
| Berlin | COA |
| Boylston | COA, MMM, WYC |
| Brimfield | SCM |
| Brookfield | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| Charlton | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| Clinton | COA |
| Douglas | SCM |
| Dudley | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| East Brookfield | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| Grafton | ADA, COA |
| Holden | COA, WYC |
| Holland | SCM |
| Leicester | ADA, COA, MMM, WYC |
| Millbury | ADA, COA, MMM, WYC |
| New Braintree | SCM |
| North Brookfield | SCM |
| Northborough | COA, MMM, WYC |
| Northbridge | ADA, COA |
| Oakham | SCM |
| Oxford | ADA, MMM, WYC |
| Paxton | ADA, SCM |
| Princeton | SCM |
| Rutland | SCM |
| Shrewsbury | ADA, COA, MMM, VIA, WYC |
| Southbridge | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| Spencer | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| Sturbridge | SCM |
| Sutton | SCM |
| Wales | SCM |
| Warren | SCM |
| Webster | ADA, SCM, WYC |
| West Boylston | ADA, COA, MMM, WYC |
| West Brookfield | SCM |
| Westborough | COA, MMM, VIA, WYC |
| Worcester | ADA, ESS, MMM |

Community Transportation Services

Demand Response

VIA-WRTA

The WRTA contracts with VIA technology through federal grant funding to operate an on-demand accessible van service in Shrewsbury and Westborough on weekdays from 7 am – 7 pm by mobile app or phone call registration.

WORCESTER VETERAN AFFAIRS CLINIC

× Disabled American Veterans vans provide rides to independent ambulatory passengers. Other veteran transportation services including buses, shuttles, and wheelchair-accessible transport are also available.

WORCESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY

xi The Worcester Housing Authority (WHA) offers wheel-chair accessible transportation for WHA residents to the Worcester Senior Center on weekdays from 12:30 – 3pm and to Walmart on Mondays from 8 – 11 am.

Intercity Buses & Shuttles

PVTA B79 AMHERST TO WORCESTER

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) operates the PVTA B79 from UMass Amherst to Worcester at 6:55 am, 11:55 am and 4:10 pm Monday – Sunday and with reduced fares for seniors and the disabled with accepted transfers within the PVTA service area. The Quaboag Connector co-operates with the PVTA B79.

MART SHUTTLE

The Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) provides shuttle services for the public to medical facilities in Worcester. The shuttle service departs from the Fitchburg Intermodal Transportation Center at 7:30 am, 11:30 am and 3:30 pm Monday – Friday for \$5 and reduced prices for older adults and veterans.

PETER PAN & GREYHOUND

The Peter Pan Bus Line and Greyhound Lines, Inc. are the two major intercity bus carriers providing service from Union Station in Worcester to Springfield, MA, Hartford, CT, New York City, NY, and Providence, RI.

OUR BUS

Our Bus is a private intercity bus service that provides trips from Union Station in Worcester to Albany, NY Ithaca, NY, Bridgeport, CT, White Plains, NY Methuen, MA Boston, MA, Everett, MA, Utica, NY, Lowell, MA and New York City, NY. They offer affordable bus tickets with comparable amenities to similar competitors.

Commuter & Regional Rail

MBTA FRAMINGHAM/WORCESTER LINE

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) operates the Framingham-Worcester Line that directly serves the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) communities of Grafton, Westborough, and Worcester. The WRTA Community Shuttles function as local public transit connections to the MBTA stations.

AMTRAK LAKE SHORE LIMITED & THRUWAY BUSES

Lake Shore Limited provides regional rail connections between Boston and Chicago. Worcester station was updated in 1999 to include accessible elevators and bathrooms and remains open from 5:30 am - 11:59 pm. Amtrak Thruway bus service links New Bedford and Worcester to Providence Station to access rail service.

Section III: Transportation Needs Assessment



Section II: Available Services Assessment

Section IV: Strategies & Priorities



Section III: Transportation Needs Assessment

Statewide Coordination

2024 Beyond Mobility Plan

^{xii} The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is required by Federal and State regulation to prepare a statewide long range transportation plan. The priorities and strategies established in “Beyond Mobility: The Massachusetts 2050 Transportation Plan” reflect the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s vision for enhancing transportation and economic development in Massachusetts beyond auto-centric transportation.

- Safety: The ability of travelers to move throughout the transportation system free of physical or other harm.
- Reliability: The consistency of transportation network conditions.
- Supporting Clean Transportation: The transportation network’s ability to accommodate low emission and carbon-free travel modes.
- Destination Connectivity: The degree to which travelers of any mode can access opportunities and the places they need or want to go.
- Resiliency: The ability of the transportation network to anticipate, prepare for, and withstand the ongoing impacts of climate change.
- Travel Experience: The conditions faced by travelers throughout the transportation network, including level of comfort and state of good repair.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

- Social and Geographic Equity: The Plan’s Public Engagement Plan prioritizes historically underserved communities, such as non-English speakers, lower-income residents, tribal organizations, and youth.
- Financial and Staffing Resources: Staff attraction and retention and the high cost of living pose are major challenges. The public sector will also need to adapt to emerging research, maintenance, and other needs around new transportation technologies including funding more public transportation.

2023 Regional Mobility Managers Study

^{xiii} “Would a System of Regional Mobility Managers Benefit Massachusetts?” investigated Mobility Management, its implementation in other states, and how it could address transportation needs across the Commonwealth. The Worcester Regional Transit Authority uses a Mobility Management Model in 10 communities for paratransit service.

1. Obtain Sustainable Funding for Regional Mobility Management
2. Define Mobility Management Areas and Hire Regional Mobility Managers
3. Improve Coordination and Connections between Areas and Service Providers
4. Improve Access
5. Share Knowledge

2024 Statewide ADA Paratransit Application

^{xiv} The Greater Attleborough Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) is leading a statewide standardization of the American with Disabilities Act Paratransit eligibility application to establish consistent requirements and facilitate eligibility transfers between Regional Transit Authorities. The GATRA brokers provide transit services for six agencies through the Human Services Transportation along with the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority.

2018 Task Force on Regional Transit Authority Performance and Funding

^{xv} The Task Force on Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Performance and Funding investigated the challenges and opportunities facing transit service providers and produced a report “A Vision for the Future of Massachusetts Transit Agencies” on specifically how the RTAs could best provide and improve transit services that meet identified community needs, conduct regular service planning to maximize ridership using available resources and ensure that fares, local contributions, and other revenues cover an appropriate share of costs.

2018 GOVERNOR’S COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION

The Commission explored anticipated changes in technology, climate, land use, and the economy through a 2-part report on transportation needs and challenges facing the Commonwealth between 2020 and 2040. Part 1 lays out key mobility challenges facing the Commonwealth and recommendations to best account for potential changes in transportation. Part 2 represents ten months of research, learning and input from a range of academic, industry, and advocacy sources on trends that will affect transportation in 2040.

2019 A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF MA TRANSIT AGENCIES REPORT

The Task Force report includes twenty four recommendations broken down into five categories: Investment & Performance, Accountability, Service Decisions, Quality of Service, and Environmental Sustainability.

2019 MassDOT Discretionary Grants

In FY 2019, the Massachusetts Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) received \$88 million in total, with \$82 million as base funding, \$4 million in competitive innovation funds, and \$2 million for debt relief payment to Pioneer Valley Regional Transit Authority (PVTA) and Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA). The WRTA requested innovations funds for projects which would introduce new or improve existing services.

ONLINE ACCOUNT BASED PARATRANSIT RESERVATION SYSTEM

The online account based paratransit trip reservation and fare collection systems improved operational efficiency and customer satisfaction by eliminating cash handling. The online trip reservation system can be used as an alternative to calling for people with hearing impairments when paratransit fares are reintroduced.

SCM ELDERBUS RESERVATION WINDOW REDUCTION

The reduced trip reservation window from 48 to 24 hours in advance for SCM Elderbus paratransit service was made possible by system upgrades like 5G technology, mobile tablets, and Cloud database hosting.

WRTA SOLMON POND FIXED ROUTE SERVICE EXPANSION

The fixed bus route expansion would have funded a regional transit connection and expanded job access between the Metro West Regional Transit Authority and the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) at the Solomon Pond Mall as recommended in the WRTA’s 2015 Comprehensive Service Assessment.

Regional Coordinating Councils

^{xvi} The development of Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) in Massachusetts came from the “2012 Final Report of the Community, Social Service, and Paratransit Transportation Commission”. This Commission grew out of the 2011 Executive Order 530 which instructed state agencies to work together to identify ways to improve the quality and efficiency of paratransit and community transportation services. Commonwealth administration changes and shifting priorities reduced support for RCCs and led many to stop meeting.

The South-Central Massachusetts Regional Coordinating Council (SCMRCC) was active from 2014 – 2018. The SCMRCC identified distinct transportation gaps during their previous meetings including increased employment transportation, transportation with additional support (door-to-door, escorts, etc.), services outside of Worcester especially in the edges of the region, and the need for more information dissemination.

Massachusetts Age Friendly Planning

2022 – 2025 State Plan on Aging

^{xvii} The goals, objectives, and strategies documented in the Massachusetts State Plan on Aging reflect the voices of communities, including older adults, their families, caregivers, and community-based organizations. The plan also incorporates other strategic planning efforts and recommendations, including the Governor’s Council to Address Aging in Massachusetts blueprint, ReIMagine Aging: The Age-Friendly Massachusetts Action Plan, and the Massachusetts State Plan on Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias.

STATE PLAN ON AGING GOALS

The State Plan on Aging includes several goals: Support aging in community; Strengthen Massachusetts as an Age- and Dementia-Friendly State; Empower and support optimal aging; Prevent injury, violence, and exploitation of older adults; Optimize access to information and services for older adults and improve the consumer experience; Ensure quality, equity, and value in person-centered, community-based care.

2017 GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL TO ADDRESS AGING IN MASSACHUSETTS

The blueprint released by the Governor’s Council includes several strategies: Improving economic security; Ensuring access and affordability of health and supportive services necessary to maintain; Maximum health and independence; Promoting age friendly communities; Facilitating connection and engagement.

2019 MASSACHUSETTS AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

1. Deepen and strengthen age- and dementia-friendly efforts to be inclusive of all communities and populations.
2. Communicate information in an accessible and user-friendly manner to residents, organizations, and municipalities.
3. Change the conversation about aging from a “challenge” to an “asset,” increase literacy about issues related to aging, and eliminate ageist images and expressions in language and across social, print, and other media.
4. Encourage the adoption of age-friendly policies and practices in all sectors.
5. Take specific actions to improve economic security for older adults and caregivers.
6. Leverage existing structures to sustainably guide and support the work of Age Friendly Massachusetts and partner initiatives.

2021 PLAN ON ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS

The Alzheimer’s Advisory Council identified priorities in the Plan on Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias: Caregiver Support and Public Awareness; Diagnosis and Services Navigation; Equitable Access and Care; Physical Infrastructure; Public Health Infrastructure; Quality of Care; Research.

2022 THREE YEAR PROGRESS REPORT INSIGHTS & LESSONS LEARNED

The progress report highlights the urgency of addressing structural racism and prioritizing mental health support while recognizing the value of care work. Efforts in civic engagement focused on voting rights, while concerns persisted about digital equity, particularly for older adults facing barriers to technology access.

2023 REIMAGINE AGING PODCAST

The ReIMagine Aging podcast was released in place of the four year progress report by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The podcast highlights local efforts that make Massachusetts a great place to grow up and grow older together. Each episode takes listeners to different Massachusetts communities that are delivering unique and innovative age- and dementia-friendly programs.

Regional Aging & Disability Planning

Central Massachusetts Aging & Disability Resource Consortia

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs provides programs and services locally through the aging services network of 21 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), 25 Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs), 350 Councils on Aging (COAs) and senior centers, and 11 Aging and Disability Resource Consortia (ADRCs).

The Aging & Disability Resource Consortia reaches older adults with services that include home care, caregiver support, nutrition programs, protective services, health and wellness services, housing options, insurance counseling, dementia and behavioral health services, and a variety of other programs and services.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTERS

- Center for Living and Working: 484 Main Street, Suite-345, Worcester, MA 01608

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

- Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging: 330 Southwest Cutoff, Suite 203, Worcester, MA 01604

AGING SERVICES ACCESS POINTS

- Elder Services of Worcester Area: 67 Millbrook Street, Worcester, MA 01606
- Tri-Valley: 10 Mill Street, Dudley, MA 01570

Age-Friendly Central Massachusetts

^{xviii} Age-Friendly Central Massachusetts is an initiative by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) in collaboration with the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities in July 2022. This AARP initiative was established in April 2012 as an independent affiliate of the World Health Organization Global Network for Age-Friendly Communities.

CMRPC AGE-FRIENDLY ACTION PLAN

^{xix} The AARP's 8 Domains of Livability framework was used to prioritize the needs and potential actions to support aging in place and age-friendly environments for older adults and people of all ages.

1. Expand transportation services in rural communities.
2. Expand connectivity between Councils on Aging, senior housing, and the broader community/region.
3. Invest in accessible, equitable, and connected multi-modal infrastructure.
4. Support the financial sustainability and maintenance of localized and municipal older adult transportation services.
5. Bolster community participation and recreational opportunities through transportation access.

MEMORY CAFES

A memory café is a welcoming space for people with forgetfulness or memory changes to be supported and build community. Memory cafés can take place at coffeehouses, museums, or community organizations. All memory cafés share the same goal to help guests feel comfortable and to know that they are not alone.

IMAGINE 2050

The CMRPC Age Friendly initiative, which also includes dementia friendly community efforts, coincides with the Imagine 2050 long-range regional planning process. The work in Central Massachusetts follows a growing trend of communities working together as a region to support age and dementia friendly efforts.

Transportation Equity

Community Health

^{xx} The Massachusetts Executive Office of Health & Human Services (EOHHS) established Community Health Network Areas (CHNA) in 1992. EOHHS Region 2 (Central) contains South County Connects (CHNA 5), Community Partners for Health (CHNA 6) and Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester (CHNA 8).

2021 – 2026 GREATER WORCESTER COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN

^{xxi} The 2021-2026 Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) plan has 1 overarching goal of health equity through a racial lens, 12 policy change campaigns, and 6 community action agendas necessary to enact structural changes toward improved health for all. The plan is implemented, tracked, and evaluated by the Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester and the Worcester Division of Public Health/Central Massachusetts Regional Department of Public Health with the goal of health equity.

1. Provide Free Accessible Public Transportation
2. Implement Complete Streets Policy
3. Receive Massachusetts Age-Friendly Designation
4. Mobilize Community Health Services

Major Services Changes

^{xxii} The Federal Transit Administration’s Circular 4702.1B “Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients”, provides service and fare equity guidance to transit agencies with 50 or more fixed route vehicles in peak service in large, urbanized areas over 200,000 in population. For service changes, this requirement applies to "major service changes" only. The recipient should have established guidelines or thresholds for what constitutes a "major" service change. The Worcester Regional Transit Authority is encouraged to consider the impact of fixed route service changes and fare increases on riders.

2024 WRTA TITLE VI PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

^{xxiii} The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) uses its Public Participation Plan when considering fare changes, modifications to routes and schedules, and other transit planning projects. Specifically, this involves the establishment of a new route, elimination of an existing route, or a change of 25% or more of overall service hours or miles. Minor service changes not rising to the 25% threshold will be posted publicly.

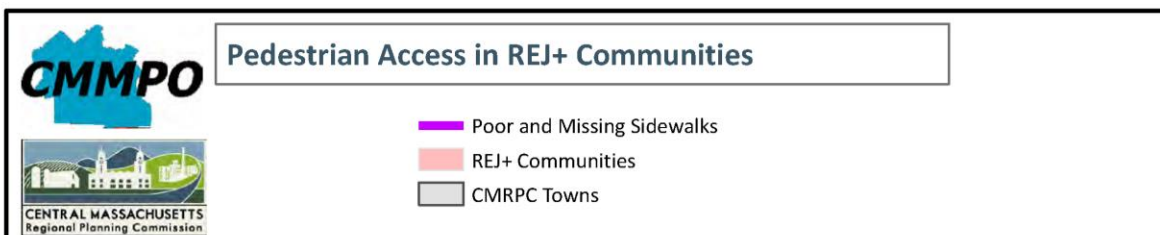
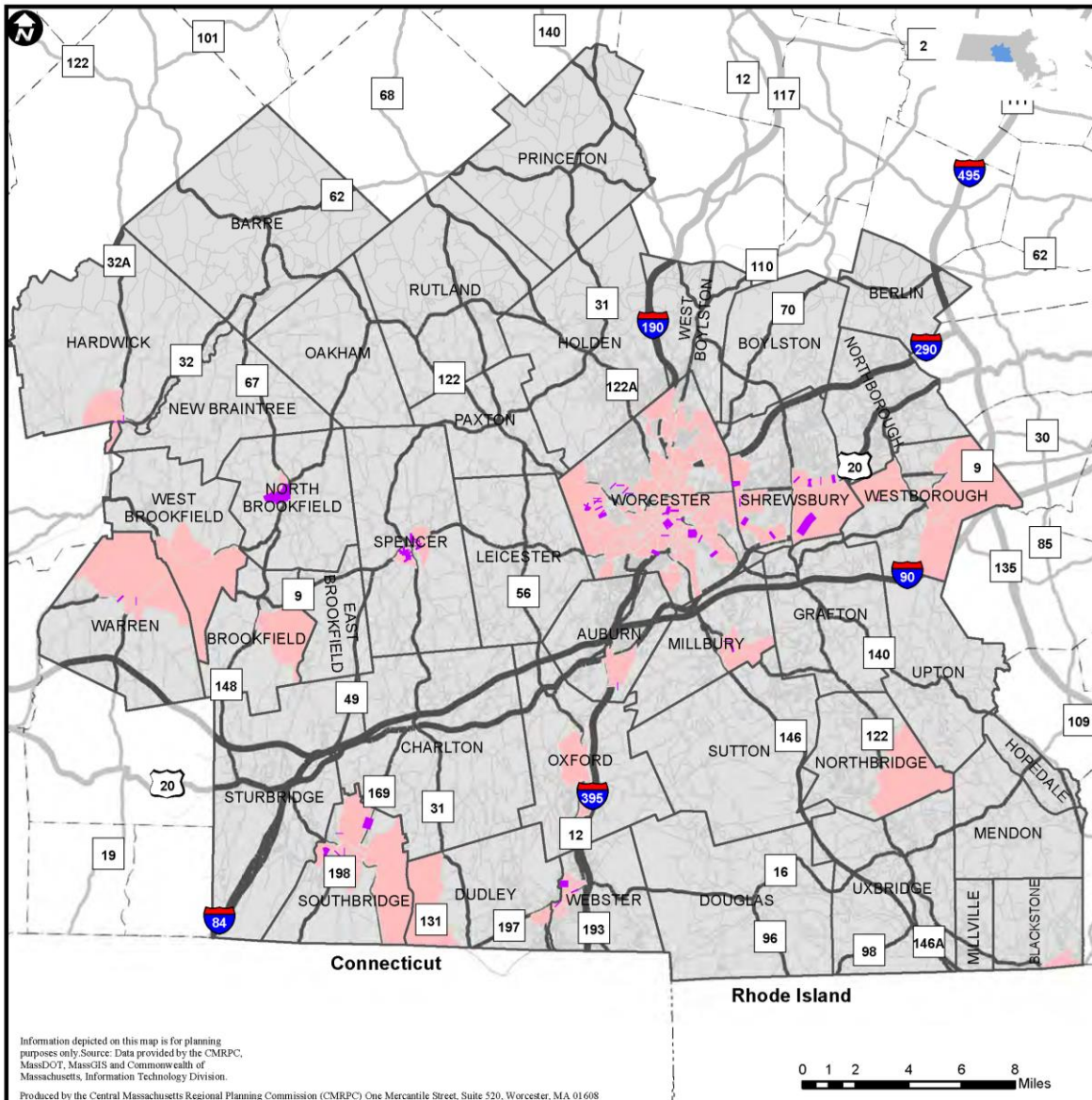
MPO REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE “PLUS”

^{xxiv} The Regional Environmental Justice “Plus” (REJ+) thresholds were developed for each Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to control the regional differences in socio-economic and demographic characteristics. The thresholds were developed to determine each MPO-specified threshold value within each EJ or “Plus” category. Block group-level values for each characteristic are compared to the CMMPO threshold to determine if the block group meets the criteria for REJ+ designation.

- Income: \$60,921 (Annual median household income < MPO 25th percentile)
- Race & Ethnicity: 41% (Percent of individuals that identify as non-White > MPO 75th percentile)
- Limited English Proficiency: 8% (Percent of households with LEP members > MPO 75th percentile)
- Car Ownership: 32% (Percent of households without an available vehicle > MPO 75th percentile)
- Disability: 32% (persons with a disability > MPO 75th percentile)
- Age: 21% (Percentage of individuals aged 65 or older)

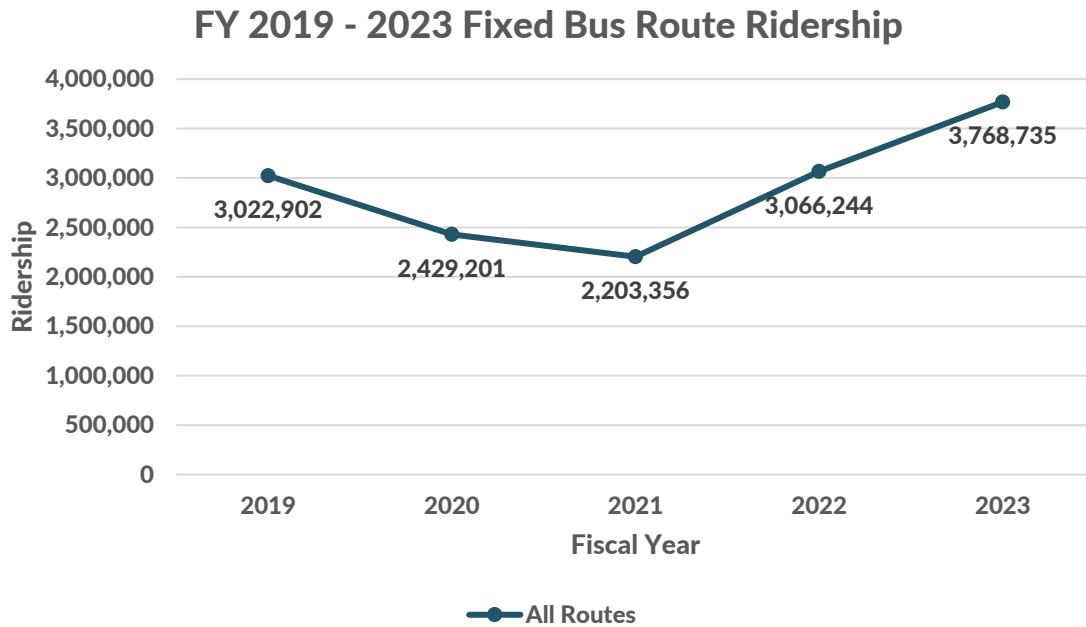
REJ+ Communities

The following communities contain one or more REJ+ block group: Auburn, Blackstone, Brookfield, Dudley, Hardwick, Millbury, North Brookfield, Northbridge, Oxford, Shrewsbury, Southbridge, Spencer, Warren, Webster, West Brookfield, Westborough, and Worcester. The REJ+ distribution is spread throughout the Central Massachusetts region; however, the North and Northeast subregions contain no REJ+ block groups.

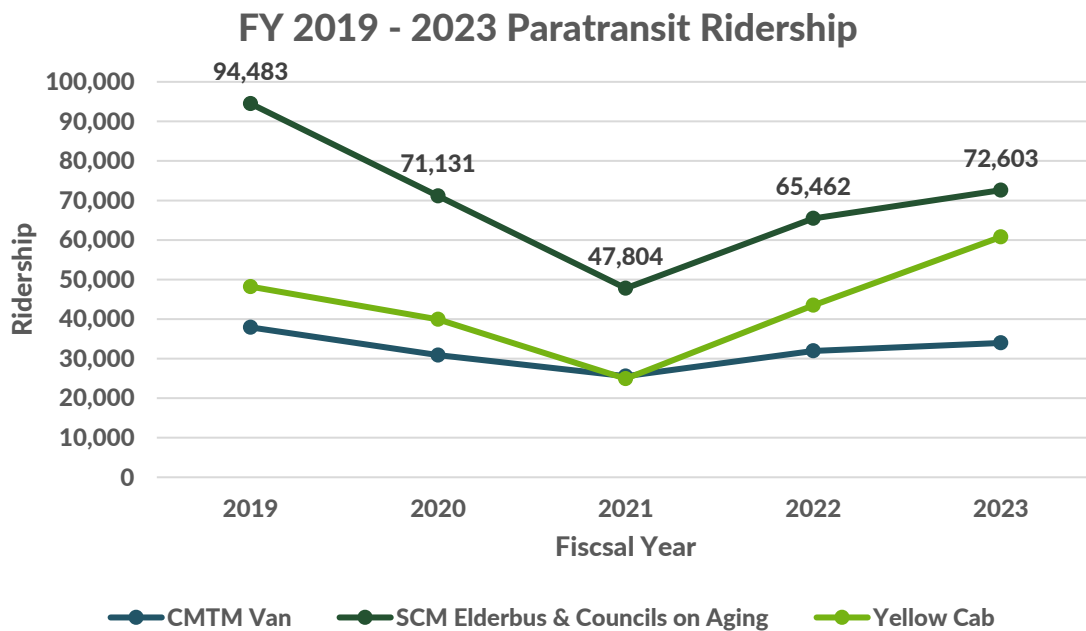


Ridership Trends

WRTA Fixed Bus Route



WRTA Paratransit



Transit Planning

2015 WRTA Service Standards

The Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) monitors on-time performance utilizing outside auditors known as “Mystery Riders”, street supervision and periodic checks of the on-board vehicle camera surveillance system. The WRTA also uses the Automatic Vehicle Location system which is used to better monitor these criteria and shares its performance standards with the WRTA Advisory Board monthly.

2020 WRTA COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE ANALYSIS

^{xxv} The primary goals of the Worcester Regional Transit Authority 2020 Comprehensive Service Analysis are:

- Provide an agency and service overview, including fare structure.
- Identify essential markets, gaps in service and ridership growth opportunities given demographic, socioeconomic and employment data, and the impacts of COVID-19.
- Evaluate the results of performance indicators and assess performance monitoring systems.
- Provide recommendations for a strategic 5-year vision that will prioritize the development and implementation of decision-making driven by data analysis and focused on performance.

2023 WRTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan

Projects included in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) to purchase new buses, vans, and support vehicles will help reach the safety targets as the new vehicles are replacing older vehicles and are expected to be more reliable and safer on the roadways. In addition, the TIP also includes projects for purchasing of support equipment and associated capital maintenance items to assist the repair of older vehicles. Further, the purchase of new bus shelters will help keep the transit riders safe while waiting for the bus.

2022 WRTA TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

One provision of the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan is for Regional Transit Agencies (RTAs) to work with Metropolitan Planning Organizations to set performance targets for each four-year cycle. The RTAs must submit an annual condition report of assets to the National Transit Database annually and set asset performance targets every 4 years. Each asset category has its own performance measure targets including:

- Rolling stock: % of revenue vehicles exceeding Useful Life Benchmark (ULB).
- Equipment: % of nonrevenue service vehicles exceeding ULB.
- Facilities: % of facilities rated under 3.0 on the Transit Economic Requirements Model (TERM) scale

WRTA Consultant Contract

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

The procurement aims to address various challenges stemming from outdated software and inefficient route scheduling in low ridership towns. These challenges include complaints about insufficient driver time, resistance to mobility management, varied paratransit fare charging methods, difficulties in driver training logistics, retention issues, digital literacy gaps among riders, and concerns regarding transit worker safety.

2024 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Cambridge Systematics plans to collect over 500 WRTA customer satisfaction surveys. The WRTA administrator plans to propose recommendations to the Advisory Board based on the survey results.

Rural Transportation

2023 CMRPC Rural Transit Dialogue

The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission coalesced statewide partners, federal partners, regional planning agencies and town officials, and community organizations in August 2023 to discuss rural transportation needs, educate partners on current efforts, and coordinate solutions to regional challenges.

TRANSIT PLANNING NEEDS

- Non-Regional Transit Authority communities: Blackstone, Upton, Uxbridge, Mendon, and Millville
- Long Range Transportation Plan: elder transportation, on-demand Response transit needs
- Community Master Plans transit options
- Veteran Affairs transportation
- WRTA communities limited to Council on Aging transportation
- Large developers access to employees

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

- Statewide economic development public outreach mentioned the need for increased transit access.
- Continuing efforts to improve transit access in region and statewide through Mobility Plans.
- Financial sustainability and cross-organizational collaboration for unique rural transit solutions.
- Transit needs to travel in both directions to access health services outside of town or region.
- Councils on Aging have the potential to manage more transit requests with increased capacity.
- Possibility of piloting a region-specific software to connect riders to services given proper funding.
- Rural towns are often situated on the border of regional transit authority service areas.
- Rural towns may be situated outside of core transit services and only travel in one direction.
- Density and trip distance differences in rural areas need alternative metrics to measure success.
- Lack of promotional services, limited outreach to isolated populations, and unfamiliarity with transit.
- Rural large employers, chambers of commerce and senior centers should be included in solutions.

Community Surveys

2023 CHNA 9 RURAL TRANSIT STUDY

^{xxvi} The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) developed the “Quabbin Region Rural Transit Study Report” with the Health Equity Partnership of North Central Massachusetts (CHNA 9) and the Montachusett Regional Planning for 5 communities of the rural East Quabbin region – Barre, Hardwick, Hubbardston, New Braintree, and Oakham – all are served by CMRPC except for Hubbardston.

2024 NORTHBOROUGH TRANSPORTATION NEEDS SURVEY

Northborough surveyed 265 respondents (98% of respondents were residents) on transportation needs.

2024 BLACKSTONE VALLEY SURVEY

The Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission collaborated to conduct a survey on public transportation needs with a total of 148 recorded responses.

2050 Connections

^{xxvii}2050 Connections is the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) developed by the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) to address transportation needs over the next 25 years.

Performance Management

IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL MODES BY IMPROVING ROADWAY INFRASTRUCTURE.

1. Reduce mileage of sidewalks in poor condition by 10% over 10 years.
2. Increase the number of ADA compliant ramps in the region by 100 per year for a total of 2,975 compliant ramps in 10 years.

EXPAND THE BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN, AND TRANSIT NETWORK IN THE REGION.

1. Add 200 miles of bicycle and pedestrian facilities by 2040.
2. Continue the downward trend of the reduction of drive alone commute modes.

ACHIEVE GEOGRAPHIC AND POPULATION EQUITY ACROSS THE REGION.

1. Maintain or increase the percentage of EJ population that intersects WRTA bus routes.
-

Transit Support Prioritizations

WRTA FIXED ROUTE PROJECTS

1. Update and improve transit bus stop signs and surroundings.
2. Expansion of late-night service and weekend service on select routes.
3. Implementation of Transit Signal Priority in Worcester.

PLANNING STUDIES

1. Southbridge/Sturbridge local transit service.
2. Regionwide same day in-demand transit service in rural communities; Transportation for older adults.

INITIATIVES

1. Continue the downward trend of the reduction of drive alone commute modes.
2. Provide bike-sharing stations at the WRTA Hub facility in Worcester.
3. East-West Rail, Updated bus transit information, MBTA Intermodal Travel Information Systems

PRIORITIES

1. Implementing recommendations of the Comprehensive Service Analysis.
2. Identifying State Contract Assistance for WRTA to provide more late night and weekend service.
3. Determining viability of fixed route service along US Route 9.
4. Implementing recommendations discovered from CHNA9 study.
5. Identifying sustainable funding source for rural transit.
6. Identifying viable options for communities not served by a Regional Transit Authority.
7. Promoting funding options for micro-project applications.

Southern Worcester County CEDS

^{xxviii} The 2023-2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) completed by Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization synthesizes input from communities, regional and local data, best planning practices, and state and federal law. It is the product of community engagement through a public survey, a visioning workshop, and expertise of committee and subject matter experts.

Limited mobility and social isolation are common among the region's older adults. While access to public transportation can help alleviate such issues, community engagement has revealed that many older adults do not take advantage of public transportation opportunities due to these services' lack of convenience, accessibility, timeliness, and information and communication materials.

Older adults who cannot or do not feel comfortable driving use walking as a key mode of transportation, yet poor sidewalk conditions and ADA compliance issues often made walking more difficult in some locales. Additionally, many older adults depend on call-to-service shuttles to get to medical appointments and other essential services; however, these shuttles are not readily available to all older adults in the region.

TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

- The region is automobile-centric and difficult to navigate without access to a personal vehicle.
- WRTA services are not sufficient to support students, lower-income persons and new immigrants who struggle to get to work, school and RMV locations.
- Transportation systems could be improved through additional first and last mile connections which allow workers from smaller communities to get to emerging employment opportunities.
- Ownership configuration of current freight rail poses barriers to new passenger rail services.
- Transportation infrastructure requirements from grocery store chains are an obstacle to reducing food deserts in the region.
- Paratransit services for medical appointments are insufficient for rural residents in health care deserts (more than 5 miles from an acute care facility) who have difficulty traveling long distances.
- There is strong support for fixing insufficient infrastructure, increasing transit options, and making town centers more walkable which will bolster economic development opportunities.
- There is an unsatisfied demand for walkability, especially with younger generations like Gen Z.

Objective 3.6 Implementation

FACILITATE AGE-FRIENDLY POLICIES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS AGE-FRIENDLY PLAN.

Action Item 3.6.1: Coordinate with local businesses and grocery stores to expand elderly shopping hours to accommodate transportation needs, per the Central Massachusetts Age Friendly Plan (2022).

Action Item 3.6.2: Promote organizations or agencies that provide eligible seniors with at-home services, per the Central Massachusetts Age Friendly Plan (2022).

Action Item 3.6.3: Promote the importance of towns, businesses, organizations, and other institutions attaining age-friendly credentials, such as through the Age-Friendly University (AFU) Global Network and the Age and Dementia-Friendly Massachusetts designation, per the Central Massachusetts Age Friendly Plan (2022).

Action Item 3.6.4: Encourage employers to maintain an age-friendly workplace and to commit to age-friendly hiring practices for older adults seeking employment, per the Central Massachusetts Age Friendly Plan (2022).

Public Involvement

Transportation Planning Advocacy Group

The Zero Fare Coalition advocacy efforts during the pandemic led to the suspension of fares in March 2020. The coalition leveraged broad support into securing two extensions from the WRTA Advisory Board – one into the Spring of 2023 and a subsequent additional year extension. As a result of the Worcester area communities and key stakeholders organizing and advocacy, the Worcester Regional Transit Authority is fare free through June 2025, marking it as one of the longest running fare free regional transit systems nationally.

Transportation Advocacy Coalition

The Transportation Advocacy Coalition (TAC) is a grass-roots organization formed in 2018 that advocates for responsive improvements to the transportation needs of greater Worcester. Its work is focused on transit dependent low-income residents. TAC received a grant from the Community Transportation Association of America through Easterseals Massachusetts to develop public capacity to engage in participatory planning.

RIDERS ACTION COUNCIL

The Riders Action Coalition (RAC) is the working group of the Transportation Advocacy Coalition. Its purpose is to ensure that Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) riders can advocate for affordable and accessible transportation. A rider representative is on the WRTA Advisory Board because of RAC advocacy.

Zero Fare Coalition

The advocacy efforts of the Zero Fare Coalition during the pandemic led to the suspension of bus fares in March 2020, resulting in increased ridership and improved access to resources for diverse groups including seniors, families, and low-income individuals. The success of the fare-free policy is evident in economic benefits, positive effects on climate and public health, and inspiration for similar programs elsewhere.

Coalition for Healthy Greater Worcester

The Worcester Division of Public Health (WDPH) and Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester collaborate to manage the Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) development and implementation across the Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA). The Coalition has several subcommittees and partner organizations for people to get involved in improving public health.

Worcester Food Policy Council

Worcester Food Policy Council has worked with multiple local stakeholders to foster a vibrant, healthy, abundant, and equitable food system in the City of Worcester since 2006.

Worcester Community Action Council

The Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC) was founded in 1965 as part of the War on Poverty to address disparities national disparities. Their values of advancing equitable access, elevating all voices, and partnering with people are embedded in the role they play as the federally designated anti-poverty agency for Central and South-Central Massachusetts. WCAC embodies service to the community through their mission – helping people move to economic self-sufficiency through programs, partnerships, and advocacy.

Center for Living & Working

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission's (MRC) Community Living Services support the operation and staffing of 11 Independent Living Centers (ILC) with federal and state ILC funding. MRC staff monitor and evaluate the performance of Independent Living Centers and fund a variety of services delivered by a center. The Center for Living & Working provides consumer directed independent living services.

Section IV: Strategies & Priorities



**Section II: Available
Services Assessment**

**Section IV:
Strategies &
Priorities**



**Section III:
Transportation
Needs Assessment**

Coordination Recommendations

Themes

- I. FARE EQUITY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**
 - II. TRANSPORTATION LINKAGES**
 - III. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**
 - IV. INTEGRATED INTERNAL PROCESSES**
-

I. FARE EQUITY & SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

- a. Continue working with the Zero Fare Coalition to gauge public interest on free or reduced fares.
 - b. Educate stakeholders on the economic, public health, and equity benefits of free WRTA transit.
 - c. Use the WRTA Title VI program to guide public participation for fare and route equity analyses.
 - d. Improve CMTM driver retention to reduce frequent missed trips and improve service reliability.
 - e. Investigate the use of digital cards to collect data on rider demographics and ridership trends.
-

II. TRANSPORTATION LINKAGES

- a. Develop a Housing Coordination Plan with attention to Transit Oriented Development per the BIL.
 - b. Coordinate safety efforts between transit operators, security officers and police, and social workers.
 - c. Explore the findings from rural community transit surveying to identify and meet a variety of needs.
 - d. Utilize the Greater Worcester CHIP for health and digital equity improvements for REJ+ populations.
 - e. Identify and address the changing transportation needs of migrant families with the WRTA services.
-

III. PUBLIC & PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- a. Collaborate with businesses for snow removal, signage, wayfinding, and employment transportation.
 - b. Support the efforts of the CMRPHA and Worcester State University Latino Education Institute.
 - c. Use the Ascentria Care Alliance and WRTA immigrant driver partnership as a model for collaboration.
 - d. Collaborate with the Worcester Food Policy Council and the City of Worcester on food access.
 - e. Coordinate WRTA, Worcester Housing Authority, and VA Clinic transportation to limit redundancies.
-

IV. INTEGRATED INTERNAL PROCESSES

- a. Coordinate sidewalk, bike, and trail networks, and Microtransit for first and last mile connections.
 - b. Integrate municipal mobility, safety and resiliency planning into transportation planning processes.
 - c. Incorporate AARP Age Friendly practices designation into organizational and municipal decisions.
 - d. Align schedules for transit agencies, commuter rail, shuttles, and intercity buses for easier transfers.
 - e. Encourage leaders to use transit, do walk audits and blind walks to understand riders' experiences.
-

Transportation Recommendations

Themes

- I. SERVICE EXPANSION
 - II. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
 - III. ACCESS & TRANSPARENCY
 - IV. REGIONAL TRANSIT PLANNING
-

I. SERVICE EXPANSION

- a. Expand late night bus service beyond routes 11, 19, 26 and 30 and restore all Friday service trips.
 - b. Increase weekend service and early morning fixed routes service to facilitate discretionary transit use.
 - c. Explore opportunities for crisis response teams through human service transportation collaboration.
 - d. Schedule paratransit trips to allow for shorter travel times by reducing the frequency of shared rides.
 - e. Improve connectivity between senior centers, libraries, grocery stores, hospitals, and senior housing.
-

II. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

- a. Update the WRTA Information Technology Systems to streamline public information dissemination.
 - b. Provide additional mobility support to paratransit users when pedestrian infrastructure is insufficient.
 - c. Solicit feedback from riders and drivers on accessibility, code of conduct and performance standards.
 - d. Develop metrics to track age and dementia friendliness and expand transparent accountability tools.
 - e. Pair Travel Training with health professionals to integrate human services and transportation access.
-

III. ACCESS & TRANSPARENCY

- a. Diversify transit promotion engagement tools and locations for people with sensory impairments.
 - b. Provide local in-person driver training on rider sensory impairments and mobility accommodations.
 - c. Improve public transparency of the WRTA transit route planning process in the 5 year strategic plan.
 - d. Update the state Ride Match database and track the Community Transit Grant projects in the region.
 - e. Support WRTA Transit Asset Management “state of good repair” goals and vehicle decarbonization.
-

IV. PLANNING COLLABORATION

- a. Work with municipalities on a bus shelter ownership consolidation plan for maintenance efficiency.
- b. Conduct a bus stop and shelter infrastructure inventory in coordination with marketing rebranding.
- c. Investigate alternative bus stop and transit network designs to improve reliability and accessibility.
- d. Present the WRTA findings on bus schedule optimization and bus bunching to transit stakeholders.
- e. Identify transit connectivity for future East-West regional rail and between adjacent transit agencies.

Funding Sources

Federal Funding

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES)
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- Congestion Mitigation Air and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program
- FTA Section 5307, 5310, 5311, 5337, and 5339 Formula Funding.
- FTA Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Grants (ICAM)
- CCAM Federal Fund Braiding
- FHWA Flexible Funding for Transit Access
- Toll Development Credits (for local match)
- Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP)
- Surface Transportation Block grant (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Funding (TAP)
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Discretionary Grants
- HUD Community Development Block Grants

State Funding

- State Contract Assistance
- Complete Streets Program
- Community Transit Grant & Mobility Assistance Program
- Massachusetts Community Health & Healthy Aging Funds
- Massachusetts Broadband Institute
- “Fair Share” Amendment Regional Transit Innovation Grant
- MArTAP Helping Hand Mini-Grant and community transportation driver training

Other Funding

- WRTA member community local assessments & MBTA Assessment transfers
- Transit Advertisements
- AARP Community Challenge Grant
- Point 32 Health Foundation Grants
- Health Foundation of Central MA
- Community Transportation of America Grants
- T-Mobile Hometown Grant

WRTA Riders Forum

The WRTA Riders Forum was held at Union Station Hub on Thursday, October 12, 2023 between 11 am and 2 pm. Rider comments were collected verbally through note taking, written responses and online surveys.

Customer Experience

I. INFORMATION SHARING

- a. Implement a reliable bus tracking app for real-time transit updates.
- b. Enhance website functionality to provide live information sharing.
- c. Install displays for arrival and departure times, especially for complex routes.

II. COMMUNICATION

- a. Enhance communication channels for bus delays, cancellations, and fare policy changes.
- b. Provide alternatives to digital payments for those without phones including reduced or free fares.
- c. Improve signage for visually impaired, hard of hearing, and LEP riders.

III. ACCESSIBILITY

- a. Develop travel training programs for immigrants with assisting agencies.
- b. Provide printed system maps and ensure language inclusivity.
- c. Train drivers to accommodate passengers with disabilities.

IV. CUSTOMER SERVICE

- a. Hire staff to handle customer service complaints in real-time.
 - b. Ensure clarity on bus driver qualification requirements and application process.
 - c. Improve communication regarding refunds on fare accounts.
-

Operational Improvements

I. HUB CONDITIONS

- a. Address cleanliness concerns and ensure regular maintenance.
- b. Enhance signage and amenities at transit hubs for improved customer experience.
- c. Consider adding facilities like Wi-Fi access and a coffee shop.

II. SAFETY AND CLEANLINESS

- a. Address cleanliness issues on buses and at stops.
- b. Ensure safety measures for drivers and passengers, including intoxicated individuals and security.
- c. Enhance human resources management, including driver recruitment and retention.

III. SERVICE EXPANSION

- a. Expand service to key locations based on demand and community needs.
- b. Coordinate with other transit authorities for better regional connectivity.
- c. Adjust routes, frequencies, and amenities to address crowding and accessibility needs.

WRTA Technology Inventory

- Mobile and desktop accessible website
- AVL system uses GPS technology to track buses for the real-time bus tracker
- On-board Automatic Passenger Counters (APCs)
- General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) Feed
- Mobile Bus Tracker application. Bus Tracker audio or text arrival times.
- Hub bus arrival announcements, Hub digital arrival time displays, on-board ADA announcements
- Masabi Modular payment systems on buses
- Online account based paratransit payment system
- Ridecheck by Clever Devices
- Stratagen
- Adept by Stratagen
- HASTUS by CSched
- Remix by Via

Accessibility Requests

- Add an automated text reminder for paratransit appointments, trip cancellations and late arrivals.
- Create a paratransit vehicle tracking application in partnership with local universities or businesses.
- Make WRTA service standards and code of conduct more accessible on the buses and the website.
- Modify the WRTA code of conduct to accommodate more shopping bags and service animals.
- WRTA snow routes, public notices and missed trips reported on cable news and other media modes.
- Schedule more direct paratransit trips through different scheduling software or more van operators.
- Redesign of the hub and spoke bus system to get across the city more direct and reduce transfers.
- Increased amount of pilot programs to improve transit accessibility working with advocacy groups.
- Create designated bus bays to reduce the confusion of finding buses for people with disabilities.
- Difficulty locating transit vehicles without audio announcements for people with visual impairments.
- Ensure that ADA announcements are consistent on buses for people with hearing difficulties.
- Add signage outside of buses or at bus stops to remind riders of priority wheelchair boarding.
- Improve the mobile use experience of the bus tracker, system wide route map and bus schedules.
- Improve customer service responsiveness, especially after PBSTM is closed and CMTM takes calls.
- Promote transit at senior centers, cable TV, local churches, and social media for younger people.
- Provide transit service between senior centers regardless of which town the rider's residency status.
- Mail paper information packets to paratransit providers especially for service outside of Worcester.
- Install displays for arrival and departure times at bus stops especially for routes with many transfers.

Supplemental Information

Memory Café Locations

xxix Making Connections Memory Café Worcester Senior Center, 128 Providence Street, Worcester
 Hacer Conexiones Cafe de la Memoria..... Christian Community Church, 108 Beacon Street, Worcester
 Coffee Talk Memory Café Jewish Healthcare Center Auditorium, 629 Salisbury St., Worcester
 Sunflower Memory Café.....Spencer Senior Center, 68 Maple Street, Spencer
 Good Day Memory Café 609 Main Street, Shrewsbury
 Memory Lane Café.....Shrewsbury Senior Center, 98 Maple Ave., Shrewsbury
 Millbury Memory Café Millbury Council on Aging, 1 River Street, Millbury
 Common Ground Memory Café..... Dudley Municipal Building/ Senior Center, 71 W. Main Street, Dudley
 Charlton Memory Café.....88 Masonic Home Rd., Charlton
 Here and Now Memory Café..... Pakachoag Church, 203 Pakachoag St., Auburn
 In the Moment Memory Café..... S. Worcester County Elks Lodge #2118, 754 Southbridge St., Auburn
 Sunshine Memory Café..... Westborough Senior Center, 4 Rogers Road, Westborough

SCM Elderbus Out of Town Transportation

Monday, Tuesday, ThursdayBrookfield, East Brookfield, West Brookfield
 Monday, Tuesday, WednesdayPaxton, Princeton, Rutland
 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday Charlton
 Monday, Wednesday, Friday North Brookfield, Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, Sutton, Warren
 Tuesday, Thursday, FridayBarre, Brimfield, Holland, New Braintree, Oakham, Wales
 Wednesday, Thursday, Friday Douglas, Dudley, Webster

Coordinating Council on Access & Mobility

xxx The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) was established in 2004 by Executive Order 13330: Human Services Transportation Coordination. The CCAM is a federal interagency council that focuses on people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals of low income to achieve mobility for all.

TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COORDINATION LIBRARY

- National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC)
- National Center for Applied Transit Technology (N-CATT)
- National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM)
- National Rural Transit Assistance Program (National RTAP)
- Shared-Use Mobility Center (SUMC)
- Transit Workforce Development Technical Assistance Center (TWC)

Human Service Resources

Massachusetts

- Mass Mobility
- Mass Office of Emergency Medical Services
- Mass Office of Health Equity
- Mass Options
- Human Service Transportation Office Brokerage
- Mass Office for Immigrants & Refugees
- Mass Health, Department of Development Services, Department of Public Health Early Intervention Program, Mass Rehabilitation Commission, Commission for the Blind, Department of Mental Health
- Mass Home Care Assistance Program
- Mass Hire
- Care Coordinate
- WIC & SNAP
- SHINE Counseling
- Mass Equipment Distribution Program (MassEDP)
- Rental Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Nutrition Services (Meals on Wheels)
- Mass Office of Community Services
- Jewish Family & Children Services Programs

Greater Worcester

- Open Sky Community Services Programs
- Regional Environmental Council Programs
- Worcester Housing Authority Programs
- Veteran Affairs Clinic Programs
- Libraries, Neighborhood Centers, Councils on Aging, Senior Centers
- Central MA Agency on Aging Programs
- Elder Services of Worcester Area Programs
- Center for Living and Working Programs
- Worcester Community Action Coalition Programs
- Alyssa's Place Peer Recovery and Resource Center
- Seven Hills Foundation Programs
- Memory Cafes

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