

COMMUNITY COMPACT BEST PRACTICES GRANT:

Making the Connections—Filling the On-Demand Transportation Gaps

Gaps in transportation present significant barriers to seniors and especially to the most vulnerable (including seniors) in our communities, who experience limited access to food pantries and grocery stores; to employment opportunities; to medical services; and to social opportunities.

The pilot program intends to address these urgent needs.

Questions About the Pilot

- ❖ What MAGIC towns are involved?
 - ✓ Towns listed in the CCC proposal are Acton, Bolton, Boxborough, Carlisle, Stow, and Sudbury as lead. These towns have sparsely populated areas with identified transportation gaps, but **all MAGIC towns are welcome!**
- ❖ What approaches will be used to fill transportation gaps?
 - ✓ The grant provides a large umbrella for many approaches. There is no “one size fits all” involved or intended. Ideas for pilots include partnerships with taxi companies, ride-hailing (Uber, Lyft), and possibly microtransit (dynamic, on-demand public transportation). **Each municipality is free to experiment** with what works best for their town. Carlisle (for example) has already committed to a pilot (outside of this program) with a ride-hailing firm.
- ❖ If each town is free to experiment, what is the objective of the pilot?
 - ✓ The objective of the pilot is for participating towns to **collect consistent data** on ride numbers, destinations, points of origin, time, etc., which can be automated by software or (in certain cases) manually accomplished. Where the transportation services provided will vary, the data collection technology will be common to all pilot participants.
- ❖ Why consistent data?
 - ✓ Data from this pilot will be used to (1) explore the **future applicability of shared microtransit platforms** and (2) **inform improvements to regional transportation, particularly for residents with the greatest needs.**
- ❖ What residents are to be served?
 - ✓ The grant is targeted to **seniors, people with disabilities, financially vulnerable residents, and veterans**, with the objective of providing transportation services to health and community resources as well as economic opportunities. We anticipate that if there is more than one pilot, municipalities could tailor the pilot to meet the needs of their residents.
- ❖ Will the pilot take trips away from existing transit services?
 - ✓ A key component of the program is to **make sure that the pilots provides new services that fill in gaps, and do not compete with existing transportation options.**
- ❖ How is the pilot being coordinated or managed?

- ✓ The pilot includes funding for a **part-time, contract, Program Manager**, who will be responsible for managing and coordinating the program tasks and sub-tasks.
- ✓ A **key role of the Program Manager is program communication**, to ensure clarity of understanding and cohesion of efforts.
- ✓ In addition to the contract Program Manager, the **grant also provides money for marketing and outreach staff for your town**. To ensure effectiveness of your pilot, communication, advocacy, and customer support are vital.
- ✓ MAPC will provide technical assistance on the project, and work in coordination with the Program Manager.

Questions About Involvement

- ❖ You say all MAGIC towns are welcome to participate. What are the ways my town can participate?
 - ✓ A representative from your town can **join the Steering Committee**. The Steering Committee will **help in the overall guidance of the program and to provide input to issues and questions** that may arise. Joining the Steering Committee does not commit a municipality to participate in a pilot.
 - ✓ Your town can **join the Pilot**. Participation in the pilot means extending subsidized ride-hailing services to eligible residents in your town. Towns participating in the pilot will be required to have a town representative on the Steering Committee. To participate, towns will be expected to partially-fund the subsidy to their residents. The grant does include some funding for trips, but towns are expected to provide a match. Funding sources towns leverage may include donations, mitigation funds, Community Health Needs Assessment funds, etc.
- ❖ What is my time commitment likely to be?
 - ✓ As often as possible, Steering Committee meetings will be held in locations with audio-video resources, so that **you can participate remotely or view the meeting at a later time and respond when needed**. We are very aware of people's time availability and will use technology to **reduce your time commitment to a fixed location/time**.

If you have any questions, please contact Travis Pollack, Senior Transportation Planner at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council at tpollack@mapc.org.

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