

# **Event Summary:**

## **Making the Connections Program Information Session**

September 9, 2019

Flynn Building, Town of Sudbury, 278 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA

### **Purpose of Event**

The purpose of this event was to further inform interested participants of the “Making the Connections” initiative, to determine the framework for municipalities to join in the program, and to lay out next steps.

Making the Connections will create pilot projects to provide subsidized taxi and ride-hailing rides, and other innovative on-demand transportation options for seniors, people with disabilities, financially vulnerable residents, and veterans, with the objective of providing them with transportation services to health and community resources as well as economic opportunities.

This event was sponsored by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC). The meeting was hosted by the Town of Sudbury.

A recording of the full meeting is available on the Sudbury TV website [<https://www.sudburytv.org/>].

Participants were provided an agenda of the meeting as well as a draft of the components of the memorandum/intergovernmental agreement that participating municipalities would sign to join the program.

### **Briefing on Sudbury Efforts to Create Pilot**

*Alice Sapienza, DBA*

Sudbury is developing a pilot for on-demand transportation. The purpose of the pilot will be to collect data and learn the transportation needs of the most vulnerable members of the community, as well as to provide transportation. Collecting data and analyzing it for lessons learned, and to refine and improve transportation services are key objectives of the Making the Connections grant.

The needs identified in Sudbury in previous studies include a growing older population, particularly in more rural areas like Sudbury, and growth in Chapter 40B affordable housing, whose residents often need transportation assistance. Other municipalities in MAGIC had identified similar transportation needs in their community assessments, and like Sudbury, were admitted to the AARP/WHO Livable Communities network

Sudbury’s Transportation Committee has been working to develop eligibility and the program’s target populations (seniors, persons with disabilities who cannot drive, financially vulnerable residents, and veterans), the subsidy that might be needed, and the “geofence” that will determine the geographic limits for eligible trips. Alice can share this information with others on the steering committee to assist other municipalities as they develop their rider eligibility for their own pilots.

Sudbury will not use the grant subsidy funds for their pilot, but instead will use a local source (mitigation fund from recent development).

Sudbury is talking with nearby taxi and livery companies, as well as with ride-hail companies Uber and Lyft (sometimes known as Transportation Network Companies, or TNCs), to learn more about their possible interest and requirements. For example, Lyft now has a minimum agreement amount of \$50,000 over 12 months, for municipal contracts. Uber has requirements that riders sign waivers granting permission to share

data on trip origins, destinations, etc. The data waivers for Uber could be incorporated into the rider enrollment forms.

This program is similar to what several agencies did in the Community Accessing Rides (CAR) program with Uber in the Attleboro area. Summaries of the CAR pilot and other ride-hail partnership pilots can be found on the MassMobility [website](#) and on the July 23, 2019 meeting summary on Making the Connections [website](#).

## **Joining the Pilots/Steering Committee**

*Travis Pollack, MAPC*

A draft Memorandum of Agreement was distributed as a starting point for an agreement among the municipalities who will be part of on-demand transportation pilots. The draft includes these terms and conditions:

### DRAFT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In agreeing to have our municipality (known in this document as a “participant”) join in the Making the Connections program, we understand and agree to abide by the following.

- The participant will either join an existing on-demand transportation pilot, or will create a new transportation pilot within the terms and conditions of this agreement. The Making the Connections program will be deemed completed when the Community Compact agreement entered by the Town of Sudbury expires, or when the funds for the program are no longer available.
- The participant will identify a staff member to represent the participant on the Making the Connections Steering Committee throughout the length of the Making the Connections program. Those individuals who are part of the Steering Committee will work to mutually guide the program.
- The participant will ensure the staff representative will attend any required training sessions and will participate in the Making the Connections Steering Committee meetings (either in-person or via remote access) throughout the life of the program.
- The participant will assist in collecting the necessary data as agreed to by the Steering Committee to help determine the trip needs, origins, and destinations that will help scale a transportation program beyond the pilot.
- The participant shall have the authority to determine eligibility for riders in their jurisdiction (e.g., residents or workers within their municipal or service boundaries, or clients for their services) as part of the program.
- The participant, in determining ride eligibility, will prioritize rides when and where existing transportation (including CrossTown Connect, Council on Aging, MBTA, or Regional Transit Authorities) is not in service, or the time required to access such transportation is not possible, to ensure the program provides a complementary transportation service, and does not replace existing transportation services.
- The participant will help promote and market the program to the clients and community residents served.

- If creating a new pilot that draws on grant funds, the participant will submit monthly invoices to the Town of Sudbury for reimbursement from the Community Compact funds for the program. The Town of Sudbury will pay the invoice within 30 days.

Some suggested using recent MAGIC affordable housing service inter-governmental agreements as a template. Other suggestions included adding to the “promote and market” training for people on how to use smart phones at libraries and senior centers. MBTA/the RIDE has recently completed this with Boston Public Library to train people how to use the Uber/the Ride partnership.

A question was raised if participating in the pilot as part of the grant would prohibit a municipality from being eligible for participating or obtaining additional Community Compact grants. This was not believed to be the case, but each municipality should investigate this as factors may vary from community to community.

## Program Manager Position Update

Adam Duchesneau, Town of Sudbury

The Town of Sudbury is investigating how to hire a contract program manager to assist all of the participating municipalities. The Town is considering putting the position out as a scope of services, where individuals or consulting firms can submit a proposal. Jesse and Teri suggested the position could be similar to the housing program manager that was hired for several MAGIC towns. Aniko suggested the RFP could be advertised in the MassMobility newsletter.

## Wrap Up, Next Steps/Next Meeting

- The representatives of the municipalities present – Sudbury, Acton, Concord, Bolton, Stow – agreed to meet again on September 26 and to set a deadline of September 30 for municipalities to join the steering committee. Those present expressed interest in joining the steering committee and plan to check in with Select Boards and Town Managers. Joining the steering committee does not obligate to be part of a pilot. Committee members will work to write an inter municipal agreement to be signed by the municipalities. The agreement will be the formal decision whether to join the program and pilot.
- Travis will reach out to other municipalities that have previously expressed interest, including Carlisle and Bedford. Travis will also reach out to Lincoln and Maynard.
- Travis will revise the draft agreement, after reviewing the inter-municipal housing agreement. Adam will revise the program manager scope of services based upon feedback from today. The steering committee will review both of these at the next meeting.
- Members suggested establishing deadlines to develop a schedule:
  - Deadline for agreeing to be a member of the steering committee: September 30, 2019
  - Deadline for hiring a program manager: October 30, 2019
  - Deadline for finalizing the MOA or inter-municipal agreement: October 30, 2019
  - Goal for establishing pilots: November 30, 2019
- The next information session and first Steering Committee meeting will be held on **September 26, 2019 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon** via WebEx. More information on this next event will be sent

out separately. Topics will include a review of the revised program manager scope of services and the revised draft agreement.

## **Attendees**

Teri Ackerman, Select Board, Town of Concord  
Austin Cyganiewicz, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Town of Acton  
Adam Duchesneau, Director of Planning & Community Development, Town of Sudbury  
Aniko Lazlo, MassDOT/MBTA  
Kelsey Magnuson, Emerson Hospital  
Jesse Steadman, Town Planner, Town of Stow  
Franny Osman, Town of Acton, Transportation Advisory Committee and Commission on Disabilities  
Travis Pollack, MAPC  
Alice Sapienza, Sudbury Grant Contract Manager  
Erica Uriarte, Town of Bolton, Town Planner (via phone/WebEx)  
Elaine Zhang, MAPC (via phone/WebEx)

*Updated September 19, 2019*

*Please email Travis Pollack ([tpollack@mapc.org](mailto:tpollack@mapc.org)) for changes or corrections to this document.*