



In This Issue

[Welcome](#)

[Stakeholders discuss coordination and equity in Greater Boston](#)

[Marlborough pilots transportation for seniors](#)

[Coordination efforts assess needs](#)

[Community Transit Grant Program opens Feb 3](#)

[FTA clarifies urbanized funding & JARC](#)

[Research from 2013](#)

[From the desk of the Statewide Mobility Manager](#)

[Follow us on Twitter](#)

[We want to know your stories](#)

Quick Links

[Contact Us](#)

[HST website](#)

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Happy New Year!

This January 2014 issue of the [MassMobility](#) newsletter contains news of interest to anyone who is interested in community transportation, human service transportation coordination, or mobility management in Massachusetts. [MassMobility](#) is compiled by the [Human Service Transportation \(HST\) Office](#) of the [Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services](#) (EOHHS), as part of our federally funded grant to develop a [Mobility Management Information Network](#) across Massachusetts.

Do you have a resolution related to transportation coordination or mobility management for 2014? Please [share it with us](#) or tweet us [@MassMobility](#).

Stakeholders discuss transportation coordination and equity in Greater Boston

On January 14, over 60 stakeholders gathered at a transportation equity forum hosted by the [Boston MPO](#), [Metropolitan Area Planning Council](#), [HST Office](#), and [MassDOT Rail and Transit division](#). The goal of the forum was to promote transportation services for populations who historically have had problems accessing, paying for, or receiving transportation in Greater Boston. These target populations include seniors, minorities, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, those with limited English proficiency, veterans, and people living in zero-vehicle households in the MPO region, which spans [101 cities and towns](#) in Greater Boston.

Three panelists shared presentations on programs that are working. Jayne Colino, Director of Senior Services for the Town of Newton, noted that the fastest growing segment of the Massachusetts population is those age 85 and over. Her center provides [information on the transportation options](#) available to area seniors to help them learn about options and plan trips. Doug Halley, Health Director for the Town of Acton, presented on the CrossTown Connect model under development in his region. He showed how trip data for Councils on Aging in adjacent towns can reveal overlapping routes and opportunities for coordination. Valerie Parker Callahan, Director of Planning and Development at [Greater Lynn Senior Services](#) (GLSS), discussed how GLSS provides [transportation](#) in the North Shore, helps individuals identify transportation services through [options counseling](#), and brings information about options directly to seniors in the community.

The final two panelists discussed opportunities for coordination. Mark Whitmore, Executive Director of the [North Shore Career Center](#), gave

a brief history of transportation coordination on the North Shore and talked about the Regional Coordinating Councils developing across Massachusetts. Theadora Fisher, the [HST Office's](#) Mobility Outreach Coordinator, discussed why coordination benefits organizations and individuals.

After a brief question and answer period, attendees broke into small groups to discuss transportation challenges and coordination opportunities in their subregions. MPO staff members are working on compiling the feedback from these sessions to share with attendees.

Marlborough pilots transportation for seniors

The [Marlborough Council on Aging](#) (COA) launched a pilot transportation service in October 2013, which will run through March 2014. The COA has been considering implementing a transportation program for a few years, but the time was right when a recently-retired volunteer decided to dedicate his time to getting it launched. Funding for the program comes from several different sources, including the state, the community of Marlborough, a local non-profit, and a local private foundation.

The pilot transportation program takes residents to shopping as well as medical appointments, and once a month they make a field trip to a restaurant out of town. This service gives Marlborough's seniors a new option. The town has a FISH program, which is a volunteer service that picks people up and takes them to medical appointments. However, FISH is limited to individuals 65+, while the COA serves individuals who are 60 or older. Marlborough is also served by the [MetroWest Regional Transit Authority](#).

Service is currently provided through a contract with a local non-profit agency to provide vehicles. Going forward, the senior center is considering acquiring its own vehicle to provide greater schedule flexibility, but will review its options with the Mayor and City Council at the end of the pilot.

Coordination efforts assess needs

We all know that the transportation system has gaps, but finding exact data on where people want to go can be difficult. In an attempt to identify some specific transportation challenges, newly-forming Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) in Berkshire County and Southeastern Massachusetts and on Cape Cod and the Islands are each developing a needs assessment. These surveys are targeted to agency staff, who will respond with information about the transportation barriers their consumers face. The RCCs will use this information to identify projects to work on and to recruit additional stakeholders to participate.

In addition to these regional efforts, the town of Carlisle is developing a survey to mail to residents. This survey aims to measure demand for transportation for people with disabilities under age 60.

Has your organization conducted a needs assessment for transportation? [Share your story with us here](#). If you are interested in learning more about the Regional Coordinating Council forming in your area, please contact us at hstmobility@state.ma.us.

Community Transit Grant Program opens February 3

In late January, [MassDOT announced](#) that its annual community transit grant program funding will open on February 3. Applications will be due March 3. [Training](#) on the online grant application system is available the week of February 3 in locations across Massachusetts, with an additional online training to be scheduled. For more information, visit MassDOT's [Community Transit Grant Program](#) website.

FTA clarifies urbanized funding, including JARC projects

On January 16, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) released a [circular](#) with guidance on the Urbanized Area Formula Program regarding changes to the 5307 program from last year's new federal transportation legislation, MAP-21. For example, the circular clarifies that although the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program is no longer a stand-alone program under MAP-21, projects in urban areas that were formerly eligible for funding under JARC are now eligible for funding under 5307. The circular discusses what has changed for JARC projects under MAP-21 and what policies remain the same. FTA also provided a [summary](#).

Research from 2013

2013 was a busy year for community transportation researchers, who published on a wide range of topics. For example, the Transit Cooperative Research Program published a guidebook on [developing partnerships between transportation agencies and disability communities](#), and AARP published a report on [funding senior transportation](#). A report out of Minnesota discussed [strategies for sharing vehicles](#), and a MassINC report highlighted [the important role that regional transit authorities \(RTAs\) play in Gateway Cities](#) around Massachusetts. Our own [MassMobility reports](#) covered volunteer drivers, insurance, and wheelchair-accessible taxicabs. What were you reading in 2013? [Email us your favorite reports](#), or tweet us @MassMobility.

From the desk of the Statewide Mobility Manager

Aniko Laszlo, Statewide Mobility Manager at MassDOT, blogs monthly on topics related to community transportation in Massachusetts. This month, she discusses MassDOT's BusPlus+ program, a public-private partnership to expand intercity travel around Massachusetts. Check out her [current posting](#) and [archives](#) to learn about ongoing efforts around the state.

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