

# The Coordinated Plan



April 22, 2020

Coordinated Public Transit  
Human Services Transportation Plan



## Endorsement Page

### Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Endorsement of the 2020 Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan

This document certifies that the Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, at its meeting on April 22, 2020, hereby approves the endorsement of the 2020 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan. The plan is being endorsed in accordance with the 3C Transportation Planning Process and complies with the requirements set forth in Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP 21).

**Signatory Certification:**

**Date: April 22, 2020**

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Secretary/CEO MassDOT

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Joseph Costanzo  
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c/o Merrimack Valley Planning Commission  
160 Main Street  
Haverhill, MA 01830-5061  
(978) 374-0519, extension 15  
AKomornick@mvpc.org

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Boston, MA 02109  
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រូបភាពទៅលេខ 15។

**Arabic**

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، يُرجى الاتصال بمنسق الفقرة السادسة لمنع التمييز التابع لمنظمة التخطيط الحضري في ميريماك فالي على الهاتف: 978-374-0519 و ثم اضغط الأرقام 15

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# I. Introduction

## What is the Coordinated Plan?

The primary purpose of the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan) is to identify the unmet transportation needs for seniors and individuals with disabilities as well as strategies for addressing them. The Coordinated Plan is tied directly to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) 5310 grant program. An entity may apply for grants under this program only if the service is included in the Coordinated Plan.

According to the FTA, the purpose of the 5310 grant program is 'to improve mobility for seniors and individuals 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 special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all areas."<sup>1</sup>

Projects eligible under the 5310 grant program included traditional and non-traditional services:

### Traditional:

- Purchase buses and vans
- Purchase and installation of wheelchair lifts, ramps, and securement devices
- Transit-related information technology systems including scheduling/routing/one-call systems
- Implement mobility management programs
- Acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease, or other arrangement (both capital and operating costs are eligible capital expenses)

### Non-Traditional:

- Provide travel training
- Volunteer driver programs
- Building an accessible path to a bus stop including curb-cuts, sidewalks, accessible pedestrian signals or other accessible features
- Improving signage or way-finding technology
- Incremental cost of providing same day service or door-to-door service
- Purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, rides sharing and/or vanpooling programs
- Mobility management

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<sup>1</sup> FTA Fact Sheet, ENHANCED MOBILITY OF SENIORS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES Chapter 53 Section 5310.

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/funding/grants/37971/5310-enhanced-mobility-seniors-and-individuals-disabilities-fact-sheet.pdf>

## II. Population Projections

The region's share of Massachusetts' population has been growing at a relatively constant rate, from 4.79% in 1990 to approximately 5.15% as counted in the 2013-2017 American Community Survey. The Merrimack Valley Region's population is expected to grow by 14% between 2010 and 2040, which is slightly higher than the projected rate of increase in the total population of Massachusetts (12.7%) (Table 1). In addition, the population of ages 65+ is expected to significantly increase. Table 2 shows that the proportion of seniors to the whole population is due to increase from 10% to 25%.

These population changes have an impact on transit needs. As the population ages, there is a greater need for transportation for those who may be more fragile and have health issues. Projections for people with disabilities in Massachusetts have not been made. However, Table 3 shows the number of people who self-identified as having one of the following disabilities: difficult with hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care or independent living.

**Table 1**

<b>MVRTA Region Population Projections (Source: MassDOT)</b>						
<b>Community</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>% Change 2010- 2040</b>
Amesbury	16,450	16,283	16,852	17,391	17,800	9%
Andover	31,247	33,201	35,029	36,503	37,724	14%
Boxford	7,921	7,965	7,907	7,697	7,400	-7%
Georgetown	7,377	8,183	8,848	9,178	9,442	15%
Groveland	6,038	6,459	6,731	6,786	6,781	5%
Haverhill	58,969	60,879	65,090	67,340	69,095	13%
Lawrence	72,043	76,377	83,789	86,562	88,691	16%
Merrimac	6,138	6,338	6,596	6,623	6,587	4%
Methuen	43,789	47,255	52,711	56,453	59,900	27%
Newbury	6,717	6,666	6,673	6,708	6,680	0%
Newburyport	17,189	17,416	17,993	18,407	18,673	7%
North Andover	27,202	28,352	30,048	31,159	32,045	13%
North Reading	13,837	14,892	15,264	15,732	16,912	14%
Rowley	5,500	5,856	6,241	6,463	6,638	13%
Salisbury	7,827	8,283	8,843	9,016	9,115	10%
West Newbury	4,149	4,235	4,271	4,325	4,341	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>332,393</b>	<b>348,640</b>	<b>372,886</b>	<b>386,343</b>	<b>397,824</b>	<b>14%</b>

Higher than the state's projected growth.

Sources: U.S. 2010 Census, ACS 2015. Projections produced by MassDOT for purposes of the long range transportation plan development.



**Table 2**

Projected Population of People Ages 65+								
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	% of Pop
Amesbury	2,011	2,403	3,075	3,885	4,680	5,203	5,531	31%
Andover	4,453	5,445	6,593	7,650	8,495	8,703	8,631	23%
Boxford	1,049	1,316	1,648	2,072	2,379	2,428	2,309	31%
Georgetown	924	1,262	1,635	2,047	2,422	2,599	2,654	28%
Groveland	973	1,230	1,531	1,902	2,177	2,330	2,361	35%
Haverhill	7,405	8,641	10,590	12,965	15,291	16,885	17,529	25%
Lawrence	6,557	7,466	8,872	10,460	11,887	12,920	13,521	15%
Merrimac	842	1,048	1,310	1,608	1,933	2,158	2,173	33%
Methuen	6,521	7,574	9,037	10,806	12,288	13,062	13,354	22%
Newbury	924	1,251	1,692	2,161	2,610	2,859	2,903	43%
Newburyport	2,880	3,741	4,734	5,647	6,469	6,933	7,008	38%
North Andover	3,768	4,523	5,541	6,624	7,733	8,503	8,734	27%
North Reading	1,845	2,245	2,778	3,414	3,960	4,348	4,393	26%
Rowley	672	947	1,308	1,745	2,086	2,270	2,291	35%
Salisbury	1,260	1,638	2,011	2,461	2,888	3,140	3,253	36%
West Newbury	484	675	943	1,182	1,398	1,467	1,460	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,723</b>	<b>49,160</b>	<b>60,519</b>	<b>73,215</b>	<b>84,736</b>	<b>91,460</b>	<b>93,712</b>	
<b>Regional Pop.</b>	<b>333,748</b>	<b>351,748</b>	<b>357,623</b>	<b>364,557</b>		<b>374,857</b>	<b>380,917</b>	
					<b>370,611</b>			
<b>% 65+</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>25%</b>	

Sources: U.S. 2010 Census, ACS 2015. Projections produced by MassDOT for purposes of the long range transportation plan development.

The percentage of the population of people 65+ will grow from just over 10% in 2010 to 25% in 2040.

Table 3

**Disabled Population (ACS 2013-2017; Table S1810)**

<b>Community</b>	<b>Total Population</b>	<b>With a Disability</b>	<b>%</b>
Amesbury	16,992	2,354	14%
Andover	35,099	2,101	6%
Boxford	8,228	613	7%
Georgetown	8,569	719	8%
Groveland	6,697	687	10%
Haverhill	62,297	8,448	14%
Lawrence	78,694	10,131	13%
Merrimac	6,728	910	14%
Methuen	49,253	5,427	11%
Newbury	6,957	552	8%
Newburyport	17,628	1,603	9%
North Andover	29,873	2,395	8%
North Reading	15,493	1,228	8%
Rowley	6,180	469	8%
Salisbury	8,988	1,220	14%
West Newbury	4,545	414	9%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>362,221</b>	<b>39,271</b>	<b>11%</b>

Disabled population numbers represent those who self-identified as having one of the following disabilities: difficult with hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care or independent living.

### III. Assess Current Transportation Resources

This section details many of the existing services being provided in the Merrimack Valley.

#### Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA)

The MVRTA is the primary provider of public transportation in the Merrimack Valley region. The MVRTA service district consists of the following 16 communities: Amesbury, Andover, Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, Haverhill, Lawrence, Merrimac, Methuen, Newbury, Newburyport, North Andover, North Reading, Rowley, Salisbury and West Newbury. While Rowley is within the service area, the Town has chosen not to receive transit services.

**Fixed Route:** MVRTA operates 17 local fixed bus routes, 4 intercity routes, 1 employment route and 1 seasonal beach bus. The majority of fixed bus routes provide service in the greater Lawrence and Haverhill areas. Regional routes connect Lawrence to Lowell (Route 41), Lawrence to Haverhill (Route 01), Haverhill to Amesbury (Route 51) and Amesbury/Newburyport/Salisbury (Route 54).

Fares:

- Full fare one way: \$1.25 cash; \$1 with the Charlie Card.
- Seniors 60+: \$.60
- Various passes are available.
- Routes 34, 37 and 85 are free all day.

**Table 4 MVRTA Fixed Route Operating Characteristics**

Routes	Weekday Hours	Weekday Frequency	Saturday Hours	Saturday Frequency	Sunday Hours	Sunday Frequency
Route 01	5AM - 8PM	30 min	7AM-7PM	60 min	9AM-6PM	60 min
Haverhill-based	5:30AM – 7PM	60 min	7AM – 7:30PM	90 mn	9:30AM – 6PM	90 min
Lawrence-based	5AM – 8PM	30 Peak; 60 Off Peak	7AM – 7PM	60 min	9AM - 6PM	60 min
Route 41	4:45AM - 8PM	30 min	7AM – 7PM	60 min	9AM – 6PM	60 min
Route 54	5AM – 7:30PM	70 min	7:30AM – 7:30PM	70 min	9AM – 6PM	70 min
Route 56	7AM – 4PM	90 min	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Route 75	5:55/7AM 3:20/4:20PM	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Route 83	8:15/10:45AM; 1:50/4:20PM	n/a	Same as Weekday	n/a	9:15/11:45AM; 1:50/4:20PM	n/a

**ADA EZTrans:** The MVRTA operates required curb-to-curb ADA service within ¾ mile of the fixed bus route system to those qualified customers. Non-ADA service is provided beyond the ¾ mile area for those 65+ and/or qualified for ADA service.

Fares: \$2.00 one way within the ¾-mile zone.

**Non-ADA EZTrans:** The MVRTA operates an on-demand service within communities that receive fixed-route to customers who are 60 years and older. Hours: 8AM-5PM Monday-Friday

Fares: Vary between \$3-\$5 based on a zone system.

**Ring & Ride:** This curb-to-curb service is primarily operated in those Merrimack Valley communities not receiving fixed bus route service. Exceptions include Ring & Ride service in Methuen and Andover. North Reading Ring & Ride service is provided to destinations outside the MVRTA system.

Fares: Varies by community

**Medi-Ride Service:** In response to public input, the MVRTA instituted on-demand service from Merrimack Valley communities to select Peabody- and Boston-based hospitals and medical centers. The service is available to anyone registered with Special Services department.

Fare: \$8.00 one way

**Salem, NH Employment Shuttle:** MVRTA provides an advanced phone request service for residents of Andover, Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen and North Andover. The service provides weekday rides from a passenger's residence to their jobs on Rt. 28 in Salem, NH. For those who are looking to be employed by a business located on Rt. 28 in Salem, NH, temporary status will be granted to allow passengers to ride the Employment Run while applying for jobs in two week increments. Service hours are Monday thru Friday from 5:00am to 8:00pm excluding holidays.

**Boston Commuter Service:** The MVRTA operates commuter bus from Methuen, Lawrence, Andover and North Andover to several destinations in downtown Boston. More information provided in the 'Services to Boston' section.

**Table 5: MVRTA Ridership FY2010-FY2018**

Service	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	Change 17-18
<b>Fixed Route</b>	2,024,281	2,175,917	2,285,958	2,157,133	2,046,556	-5%
<b>Boston Commuter</b>	63,207	62,994	65,627	63,104	60,765	-4%
<b>Special Services</b>	66,271	62,228	63,192	70,534	77,962	11%
<b>Total</b>	2,153,759	2,301,139	2,414,777	2,290,771	2,185,283	-5%

## Human Service Transportation

Cape Ann Transit Authority provides human service transportation for the Merrimack Valley. These rides are for clients who qualify for specific state programs.

**Table 6: Cape Rides provided by Cape Ann Transit for Human Services Transportation in or to the Merrimack Valley**

Agency Sponsor	FY19 Trips	Origin/Destination in the Merrimack Valley?
Department of Mental Health	822	Origin/Destination in MV
Department of Mental Retardation	82,625	Destinations in MV, origins may not be
Department of Public Health	7,060	Origin/Destination in MV
Department of Developmental Services	186,293	Destination in MV, but origin may not be

## Service to Boston

Almost 12,000 people commute to Boston every day for work from the Merrimack Valley (ACS 2011-2015). There are several options for taking transit to Boston. The services provided by the commuter coach companies as well as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and MVRTA provide a menu of options for accessing these alternatives as well as providing more than one option for destinations in Boston.

There are no buses to the Route 128 corridor business district from the Merrimack Valley.

**Table 7: Bus and Rail Options for Boston Commuting**

Company	Type	Merrimack Valley Stops	Boston Destinations	Inbound Trips	Fare: one way/ multiride pass
Coach Co.	Bus	Georgetown Boxford	Haymarket, Government Ctr, Park Street, St. James Avenue, Copley Square	2	\$8.20 Georgetown \$8.70 Boxford
C&J	Bus	Newburyport	South Station, Logan Airport	22	\$16/\$114 (10 rides)
MVRTA	Bus	Methuen Park & Ride McGovern Transportation Ctr, Lawrence Broadway, Lawrence Mt. Vernon, Lawrence Shawsheen Square, Andover Faith Lutheran Church, Andover	Government Center Cambridge/Somerset Sts Park Street Stuart/Tremont Sts Park Place South Copley Square South Station	3	\$6/\$50 (10 rides)
MVRTA	Bus	North Andover: West Mill Massachusetts Ave	Government Ctr, Cambridge/Somerset Sts, Park Street, Stuart/Tremont Sts, Park Place South, Copley Square, South Station	1	\$6/\$50 (10 rides)
MBTA	Rail	Newburyport Rowley	North Station	17	\$12.25 Newburyport \$11.00 Rowley
MBTA	Rail	Haverhill Bradford Lawrence Andover Ballardvale	North Station	15	\$11.00 Haverhill/Bradford \$10.50 Lawrence \$9.75 Andover \$8.75 Ballardvale

## Other Transportation Providers

Many non-profit organizations provide transportation services primarily for people who participate in their programs. Transportation is not their mission, but they fill a need for many of their members and clientele.

Relatively few organizations open transportation services to the general public. Many, though not all, Merrimack Valley **Councils on Aging** (COAs) own vans and provide limited transportation services for shopping, medical appointments and accessing COA programs. Those Councils on Aging with transportation programs include:

- Andover (received a grant in 2019 for a van purchase)
- Georgetown
- Groveland
- Merrimac
- Newburyport
- North Andover
- Rowley
- Salisbury (received a grant in 2019 for a van purchase)
- West Newbury

In addition, many COAs work with the **Northern Essex Elder Transport (NEET)** to coordinate volunteer drivers for medical appointments. NEET drivers provide approximately 260 one-way trips per month to elders in the Merrimack Valley. Elders using NEET must be ambulatory. Volunteers are reimbursed for their expenses associated with providing transportation in their own cars. Their demand-response service is currently provided Monday thru Friday between 6 AM and 6 PM.

The **Northeast Independent Living Program** provides transportation to its clientele, but will also provide transportation to other veterans and disabled persons upon request.

**Elder Services of Merrimack Valley** has initiated a pilot program to provide last resort transportation for seniors to medical appointments in the Greater Lowell area. This includes elders living in the Merrimack Valley region needing to go to appointments in the Greater Lowell area.

**Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)** such as Uber and Lyft have increasingly provided transportation throughout the region. While Massachusetts does collect information about the number of rides provided by these companies, we do not have information about time of day, day of week, etc. The table below provides a glimpse into the transportation provided by these companies.

**Table 8: Rides Provided by Transportation Network Companies in the Merrimack Valley**

<b>Community</b>	<b>ACS 13-17 Population</b>	<b>TNC Rides Origin 2018</b>	<b>Rides per Capita</b>
Amesbury	17,218	9,984	0.58
Andover	35,375	85,159	2.41
Boxford	8,228	2,526	0.31
Georgetown	8,569	2,488	0.29
Groveland	6,697	1,903	0.28
Haverhill	62,943	104,076	1.65
Lawrence	79,497	350,752	4.41
Merrimac	6,752	1,386	0.21
Methuen	49,575	104,578	2.11
Newbury	6,964	4,343	0.62
Newburyport	17,890	26,196	1.46
North Andover	30,170	55,409	1.84
Rowley	6,232	1,989	0.32
Salisbury	9,021	9,109	1.01
West Newbury	4,545	1,272	0.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>349,676</b>	<b>761,170</b>	<b>2.18</b>

## Transportation Coordination

### Mass Ride Match

Ride Match was created in 2010 to provide an on-line searchable directory of transportation providers. Understanding how hard it is for customers to identify transportation service providers across the Commonwealth, the Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) initiated this project to help “fill the gaps and provide the state’s most vulnerable populations, and the agencies that serve them, with a way to easily identify all the transportation options within their communities.” After testing it out locally, GATRA expanded the program statewide. GATRA provided the following information on those searches conducted between January-August 2019 that originated in the Merrimack Valley region. Mass Ride Match can be found at [www.massridematch.org](http://www.massridematch.org). Overall, the data shows that not many people are using the service in the Merrimack Valley. This could be due to a lack of knowledge about the service or that they learn about services elsewhere, such as through the Councils on Aging.



**Figure 9: Number of Users of Mass Ride Match Service (January-August 2019)**

City	Users	New Users	Sessions
Amesbury	64	63	73
Andover	105	102	113
Boxford	11	10	12
Georgetown	6	6	6
Groveland	13	13	13
Haverhill	229	224	282
Lawrence	260	257	379
Merrimac	2	2	2
Methuen	135	128	155
Newburyport	48	48	63
North Andover	75	73	83
North Reading	10	9	16
Rowley	6	6	6
Salisbury	6	6	7
West Newbury	6	6	6
Newbury	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>1,216</b>

**Figure 10: Mass Ride Match Search by Purpose (January-August 2019)**

Trip Purpose	Number of Searches
Medical/Healthcare	379
Employment	240
Other	169
Education	100
Commuting	81
Recreation	71
Business	55
Boston hospital trips	43
Shopping	38
Dialysis center	13
Adult daycare	8
Religious	7
ADA - No restrictions on trip purpose	5
Airport service	5
No restrictions on trip purpose.	2
<b>Grand Total of Searches with Type</b>	<b>1206</b>
<b>Total Number of Searches</b>	<b>1754</b>

## IV. Identify Unmet Transportation Needs

The 2020 Coordinated Plan draws upon several sources of public input including:

- 2019 Haverhill Transit Needs Report, MVRTA.
- The 2020 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan survey.
- City of Lawrence Age-Friendly survey, preliminary findings based on the first 500 surveys.
- Outreach conducted for the 2020 Merrimack Valley Regional Transportation Plan, such as meetings with Veterans and the meeting with Chinese-speaking elders.
- Coordinated Plan Public Meeting held on January 23, 2019 at Phoenix Row senior housing.
- Meeting with Asian elders on January 17, 2020.
- Massachusetts Public Health Association legislative breakfast held at the Lawrence Center on January 10, 2020.
- Individual meetings.

### Unmet Transportation Needs

Figure 11: Unmet Needs

Category	Identified Transportation Need
Transportation Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shuttle/free service in South Lawrence</li> <li>• Service to the Airport from Lawrence</li> <li>• Rowley (to/from) other communities</li> <li>• Plaistow, NH beyond the plaza (i.e. Walmart)</li> <li>• Seabrook, NH from Newburyport</li> <li>• Middleton on Route 114</li> <li>• Service to Danvers</li> <li>• Border areas to communities within LRTA area (i.e. Methuen to Dracut)</li> <li>• Regions that connect MVRTA and MBTA service area</li> <li>• Salem, NH beyond the Route 28 corridor (too restrictive) and to the shopping mall. Getting to Salem from Haverhill.</li> <li>• Medical appointments</li> <li>• Service to Senior Center in Salisbury Pettengill Food Pantry, Free Dinners at the Elks in Newburyport</li> <li>• Georgetown service</li> <li>• Better access to colleges (UMass Lowell/Merrimack College, NECC evening classes)</li> <li>• Extended service to other towns, to medical appointments or just personal or social reasons.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More frequent service to employment centers</li> <li>• Evening service after 8 pm for people working at restaurants and in retail and also for people trying to access meetings (i.e. civic, AA)</li> <li>• Boxford, Andover and North Andover need more transit.</li> <li>• Job access to S. New Hampshire</li> <li>• Make bus Route 13 bus bi-directional on same road</li> <li>• 30 minute service for all fixed routes</li> <li>• More direct service to Lowell</li> <li>• Service to all senior housing</li> <li>• More places in Newburyport Industrial Park, such as 10 Opportunity Way</li> </ul>
Specific to On-Demand Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same day flexibility</li> <li>• Ring &amp; Ride communities are limited in access</li> <li>• St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Boston. It is associated with Holy Family, so people get sent there.</li> <li>• 30-minute wait window too long</li> <li>• Many residents of Boxford like to go to medical appointments farther east of the Merrimack Valley, such as Mass General North in Danvers, Peabody, etc. They can't use the MVRTA service for that.</li> </ul>
Access to Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need bus stops and better sidewalk snow removal</li> <li>• Need a bus shelter on Mt. Vernon Street near 4-way stop at Beacon St. Lots of Asians living in that area.</li> <li>• Better pedestrian access</li> <li>• Accessibility for large power chair, which may not fit on the lift.</li> <li>• Concern about relocation of Washington Square Transit Center.</li> </ul>
Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better connections between transit service areas (LRTA and MBTA regions)</li> <li>• Connections between Newbury/Newburyport and Ipswich, etc. Bus route along Route 1/1A.</li> <li>• Visually-impaired person must go to Boston to get their Charlie Cards.</li> <li>• Develop an app for people with disabilities to request service.</li> </ul>
Veterans Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need coordination between different Veterans services. For example, there are shuttles to get to Bedford for healthcare, but no shuttle to get</li> </ul>

	<p>from Bedford Veterans housing to the courts in Lawrence. No public transportation options.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an assisted living facility in North Andover. Veterans living there need ADA services to get to Bedford.</li> <li>• The Disabled American Veterans office offers transportation through volunteer drivers, but they are hard to get in touch with.</li> <li>• There is a VA clinic in Lowell behind the Target along the connector. There is a shuttle from there to Bedford. However, Lowell falls under the catchment area of Jamaica Plain. As a result, Veterans in the Merrimack Valley can't access the clinic in Lowell.</li> </ul>
Information/Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need a System map</li> <li>• Travel training for users</li> <li>• Better information to those who work with seniors. Many seniors get information from housing coordinators.</li> <li>• Transfers are confusing.</li> <li>• Seniors don't understand all the options for service or how to use them.</li> </ul>
MBTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited train service to/from Lawrence.</li> <li>• Lack of wheelchair friendly stops and broken elevators and broken sidewalks</li> </ul>

## V. Prioritized Strategies

Strategies are based on the feedback from the public at the different outreach meetings and from the surveys. Strategies were grouped when appropriate. At our final outreach meeting prior to drafting the plan, participants were asked to tell us how they would prioritize those strategies. The list represents that prioritization. Note that many of the identified unmet needs provide details to the strategies listed below.

### Service Expansion

- **Purchase of vehicles**
- **Expanded service:** 30 minutes, holidays, nights and weekends
- **Service outside of the Merrimack Valley** including:
  - Service to New Hampshire.
  - Coordination and service connections between transit authorities in Massachusetts
  - Better connections for Veterans
  - Service to additional medical centers on the North Shore (MassGeneral north) and in Boston (St. Elizabeth's Hospital)
  - Connections to medical appointments in Danvers/Peabody/Ipswich for Ring & Ride communities
  - Better connections to border communities
- **Micro Transit:** Uber/Lyft partnerships or Microtransit zones "Uber style" Transit

### Service Support

The following ideas would enhance or support existing and expanded services.

- **Bus Stops/snow removal** around bus stops
- More **marketing and information**, such as system map
- **Partner with healthcare providers** to get their support
- **Create a voucher program**
- **Training** including more training for service use and train the trainer programs
- **Recruit more volunteer drivers**
- **Sharing resources and partner services** for senior/programs for people with disabilities
- **Shorter pick-up windows**
- **More options for service**

## VI. Conclusion

The information provided in the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan resulted from meetings with residents and representatives of organizations who work with those who use transit. The plan provides an overview of existing services, identifies the unmet transportation needs and gaps in the Merrimack Valley and provides prioritized strategies.

Projects funded through the 5310 federal grant program must appear in this plan. Implementation of these strategies is primarily based on funding availability and feasibility.