



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

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February 27, 2023

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

Honorable City Councilors:

I respectfully submit this docket item to your Honorable Council requesting authorization to accept and expend \$190,000 in grant funding from MassDOT's Community Transit Grant Program SFY23 for the Newton in Motion – NewMo Senior Transportation Microtransit Program.

The City is contracted with Via to provide this service. The grant supplements City funding, development mitigation funds, and other grants used to support the program.

Attached is a memo from Planning & Development Director Barney Heath requesting the docket item and the grant award letter from the MassDEP.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ruthanne Fuller

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CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02459



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

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Barney S. Heath
Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 8, 2022
To: Maureen Lemieux, Chief Financial Officer
Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer
From: Barney Heath, Director – Planning & Development
Nicole Freedman, Planning Consultant
Subject: Request to Docket Item to Accept MassDOT Community Transit Grant Program
SFY23

We request approval to accept and expend \$190,000 in grant funding from MassDOT's Community Transit Grant Program SFY23 for the following project:

NewMo Senior Transportation

The City is contracted with Via to provide this service. The City will provide a 50% match to MassDOT funds using part of the \$275,000 that the City puts towards NewMo senior transportation on an annual basis.

Attached:

- Award Letter
- Grant Application



Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Jamey Tesler, MassDOT Secretary & CEO
Meredith Slesinger, MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator



December 8, 2022

Nicole Freedman
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Dear Nicole Freedman:

On behalf of Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito, I am pleased to notify you that the City of Newton has been competitively selected to receive a State Fiscal Year 2023 Community Transit Grant Program award for the following project:

NewMo Senior Transportation
BCG0011555
in the amount of **\$190,000**
to be matched with \$190,000 in local funds

Through this funding, we hope to ensure that you continue to provide meaningful transportation options for older adults and individuals with disabilities in Massachusetts.

In the coming weeks, you will receive further instructions from the MassDOT Transit Division detailing next steps. In the meantime, please feel free to contact Rachel Fichtenbaum, Manager of Grant Programs and Mobility Management, at Rachel.L.Fichtenbaum@dot.state.ma.us with any questions.

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving mobility in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamey Tesler".

Secretary Tesler
Secretary and CEO
Massachusetts Department of Transportation



Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

Mark if project was funded with CTGP funds previously. Yes No

Operating Project Request - FY23

(Information requested is for the project funding request only, not the entire transportation program or service.)

1. **Funding Request.** Please enter only the total project cost. The form will auto-calculate federal and local match.

FTA Section 5310 Operating Funding Request	\$	190,000.00
Local Match	\$	190,000.00
Total Project Cost	\$	380,000.00

2. Provide an in-depth **Project Description** related to the funding request. Include information on service start date, service type (demand response, etc.), and service area to include cities and towns supported by the project. Please identify in this section if a companion vehicle replacement or new service request is being applied for to support this project. (1055 characters)

In 2019, with CTGP funding, Newton launched NewMo, a state-of-the-art transportation system providing seniors on-demand, dynamically routed, shared trips in hybrid vehicles, ensuring a sustainable service and social experience. In fall 2021, NewMo expanded into an all-ages citywide service, greatly benefitting seniors. 1) Seniors now travel everywhere in Newton, not just select locations 2) Service runs weekdays 7-6:30, from 8-5 3) Seniors can pre-book for medical trips, instead of just real-time booking 4) Seniors pay \$2/trip down from \$5. Low-income rate is \$.50 5) More vehicles (8 instead of 4) improved reliability. The new, expanded service is highly successful. Senior trips increased 80% from 188 per week to 342 and 200 new seniors took trips. Riders with disabilities are increasingly using NewMo. NewMo has provided 65,498 total trips and 40,533 senior trips since inception. In 2022, NewMo will expand again, serving hubs in Waltham and Watertown and transitioning to electric vehicles.

- a. **Project Service Area.** Indicate approximate percentage of census designated geographic areas the project will or does serve. Total percentage should equal 100%. To assist in determining your geographic service area, please see the 'Urbanized Areas 2010' map in the Resources tab on GrantsPlus+.

Percent of Total Trips		*If in urbanized area , provide name(s) of service area:
100	%	*Urbanized Area
	%	Small Urbanized Area
	%	Rural Area
100	%	Total Percentage

Applicant Organization Name: GrantsPlus Newton Senior Services Department

Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

3. Project Service Operations.

Days and Hours of Project Operation	Weekdays 7 AM-6:30 PM, Weekends 9 AM - Noon
Service Project Operator (applicant, subcontractor, other)	Via
Average Project Fare or Donation	\$ 1.48
Primary Project Trip Purpose (medical, shopping, etc.)	medical, errands, senior, job, social, other
Estimated Project One-Way Passenger Trips per Day	100

Describe how the estimated trip number was determined. (345 characters)

Pre-pandemic, NewMo averaged 85 weekday senior trips. We project a return to pre-pandemic levels next year, with the pandemic receding. Additionally, we estimate a 15-20% increase over pre-pandemic levels related to the Waltham/Watertown expansion, recent service improvements, and increased awareness.

4. Project Effectiveness and Performance Indicators.

a.(1) Project Implementation Plan - Complete for New Operating Projects Only. Describe the proposed project implementation plan. Information should include project tasks, benchmarks, key milestones, key personnel, routes and schedules as applicable. How will the organization market the project to target populations? Include as attachments, if applicable: formal service plan, timetable, route map, and/or service map. (990 characters)

N/A not a new operating project

a.(2) Performance Measure Data - Complete for Existing Operating Projects Only. Data is requested for the previous and current year as comparison.

Data Type	2021 Data	2022 Data (YTD)
Total Operating and Related Administrative Expenses:	\$ 497,000.00	\$ 1,020,118.00
Annual One-Way Passenger Trips:	9,696	38,992
Annual Vehicle Service Miles:	65,434	240,034
Total Vehicles in Service (exclude spares/backups):	4	7
Cost Per Mile:	\$ 7.50	\$ 4.20
Cost per Passenger Trip:	\$ 51.00	\$ 26.00

Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

b. How did your organization determine that the service type (i.e. fixed route, demand response, etc.) and route/schedule proposed or currently in place is the most effective to meet the needs of the passengers served? (330 characters)

In 2019 and 2021 Newton accepted proposals for a model-agnostic transportation service. Bids included taxi, TNC, microtransit and shuttle models. Newton selected Via (microtransit) because they met requirements (service area, door-to-door, and phone, WAVE) and excelled at customer service, technology, pricing, and sustainability

c. Describe what performance measures have been identified or are being used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. Measures can include number of passengers, cost per mile, or cost per trip. (330 characters)

Our contract with Via stipulates the following service levels: Avg wait (< 20 min); On Time % (95% within +-10 minutes); Customer satisfaction (4.8/5); Weekday Ridership (215-360). We also track shared trips percent, trips/vehicle hour, total cost, driver hours and miles, cost/trip and more.

d. Describe the organization’s plan for monitoring and evaluating project performance. What types of documentation will be used (i.e.: demographic materials, surveys)? (330 characters)

The City monitors performance as follows: 1) Vendor is obligated to provide access to real-time dashboard with 30 + metrics 2) Vendor must meet above service levels 3) Senior Center staff communicate regularly with seniors 4) City staff meet weekly with vendor 5) City issues annual rider survey for demographics and more.

5. **Proposed Project Budget** (do not complete all expense categories, only specific to project type and applicable to the total requested project cost.) All in-kind and indirect costs listed must be approved by MassDOT in advance of application submission. Fares and donations for service are subtracted from total operating expenses to calculate total project cost eligible for reimbursement.

Expenses	Cash	In-Kind
a. Drivers/Dispatch Salaries	\$	\$
b. Drivers/Dispatch Fringe Benefits	\$	\$
c. Vehicle Insurance	\$	\$
d. Vehicle Fuel	\$	\$
e. Vehicle Materials and Supplies (e.g., oil, tires, etc.)	\$	\$
f. Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Services	\$	\$
g. Operations License Fees and Taxes	\$ 1,313,404.00	\$
h. Contract (Purchased) Transit Services (identify):	\$	\$
i. Transportation Project Direct Administrative Costs*	\$	\$
j. Indirect Cost Rate through approved ICAP or 10% de minimis rate	\$	\$
Total Expenses:	\$ 1,313,404.00	\$ 0.00

* Explain the expenditures proposed for transportation project direct administrative costs. Costs can include office supplies, telephone services, office rental. (435 characters)

Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

Revenue: Local Match Sources - IDENTIFY SOURCE(S) OF LOCAL MATCH (BOTH CASH and IN-KIND)	Status - Attach Local Match Letter to support Status	Cash	In-Kind
a. City	Already in Budget	\$ 275,000.00	\$
b. Developer	Already in Budget	\$ 188,333.00	\$
c.		\$	\$
d.		\$	\$
e.		\$	\$
Total Local Match:		\$ 463,333.00	\$ 0.00

6. Describe the organization’s efforts to leverage funds from other contract revenue sources to help implement or continue the project. Examples are human service or workforce type contracts. (790 characters)

The City uses, and regularly seeks, funds from a diverse type of funders in order to leverage existing funds and ensure ongoing financial sustainability. Sources include Grants (CTGP, MassDOT Workforce Transportation, MPO Community Connections), Developer (Trio, Riverdale), Higher ed (UMass, William James), EOE state formula grant, State Supplemental Budget, and City funds. On another note, the citywide expansion introduced significant economies of scale that reduced cost per trip and cost per mile substantially.

7. Describe the service area’s local commitment to transportation funding. Is the organization receiving local sources of city or county revenue to sustain transit service for the proposed project? (790 characters)

Newton has funded senior transportation for 35+ years. The service is a cornerstone of Newton’s commitment to being an age-friendly community. In 2019 the City upgraded the service to create NewMo which dramatically improved the service for seniors. Seniors could now reliably book trips in real time, instead of reserving trips 72 hours in advance. To support this improved service, Newton increased annual funding for senior transportation by \$100,000 to \$275,000+. The City continues to invest in senior transportation at this higher level. In addition, the City is committing \$250,000+ of developer mitigation funds, and higher education institutions have pledged \$75,000. Onqoina fundraising from developers and business partners ensues.

8. Will you be acquiring goods or services from an external source as part of the project and needing to conduct a procurement to do so?

Yes No

If yes, please fill out the supplemental procurement questionnaire.



Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

Coordination Of Transportation Services and Collaboration With Other Organizations

Please answer the following questions in regards to transportation service coordination and organization partnerships. The ability to coordinate and collaborate with regional and local entities = 20% of your total application score.

1. Does the organization regularly attend, and engage in, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and/or Regional Planning Agency (RPA) planning meetings tied to regional coordination requirements (such as coordinated human service transportation plan updates)?

Yes No

2. Does organization staff regularly attend and actively participate in Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) meetings / activities?

Yes No

3. Has your organization verified that the project applied for not only meets Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan inclusion requirements, but is not duplicating any other regional service efforts?

Yes No

If yes, please describe how. (575 characters)

Yes. NewMo meets CHST Plan inclusion requirements and is the only service dedicated to providing senior transportation in Newton. Most NewMo seniors are able bodied and do not qualify for paratransit which is offered in Newton. However many seniors require added assistance (door-to-door service) which NewMo provides for seniors and disability community members. Two WAV vehicles are part of the 8 vehicle fleet, ensuring short wait times for persons requiring WAV.

4. Is your organization participating in any service coordination initiatives with other organizations or through a Regional Coordinating Council project?

Yes No

If yes, please describe. (575 characters)

In 2019, the City met with 7 municipalities regarding senior transportation best practices and a potential regional procurement. The procurement proved impractical, but Newton's contract allows other cities to purchase off the contract. In fall 2022 NewMo will expand to key locations in Waltham and Watertown. The City worked closely with Watertown on the expansion and is discussing a potential integrated Newton-Watertown service. City staff regularly talk with other municipalities about senior transportation, best-practices, NewMo, and microtransit.

Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

5. Does your organization partner with any medical type organizations to provide appropriate service coverage for medical related trips (e.g.: hospitals, clinics, non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) broker)?

Yes No

If yes, describe what partnerships have formed and what has been the result. (685 characters)

Newton Senior Services works in collaboration with Newton Wellesley Hospital, Home Health Agencies, and public health organizations to ensure awareness of the senior transportation services. The City does not formally partner with these organizations.

6. Does your organization partner with any local or regional human service type organizations to develop service area criteria or client eligibility for work or social related trips?

Yes No

If yes, describe what partnerships have formed and what has been the result. (685 characters)

Yes. We have worked with 20+ social service agencies to spread awareness of NewMo and, in particular, the low-income \$.50 fare. Agency types include food pantries, health care centers, senior housing, affordable housing, and community centers. This has resulted in a rider demographic that has lower income and fewer transportation options than the general population. 58% of NewMo riders are from households earning less than 80% of the AMI (family of 3), 34% live in households without a car and 28% choose NewMo because they have "no viable alternative".

7. Is your organization listed within a regional referral system that provides information on transportation services, programs, and resources? (example is RideMatch)

Yes No There is no such resource list in our region.

8. Organization procedures that support transportation coordination in the following areas. The organization:

- | Yes | No | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | a. Has shared vehicle agreements with other organizations. |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | b. Participates in training provided by other organizations (i.e. travel training, driver training). |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | c. Makes current training programs available to other organizations (i.e. travel training, driver training). |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | d. Has an agreement in place with another organization to provide or obtain services if needed (e.g. if there is a vehicle breakdown or a staff shortage). |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | e. Other: (describe) senior and all-ages service are now integrated |



Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0011555

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

Demonstration of Need and Project Benefit

Please answer the following questions in regards to transportation service need and benefit. The ability to maximize resources to address a formally documented (identified) need in the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan = 20% of your total application score.

1. Describe the local or regional unmet need or gap in service that the project applied for seeks to address. Please provide any census or concrete population data that can illustrate how many individuals in your population area are underserved due to this gap in service. (1345 characters.)

NewMo launched to improve mobility for Newton seniors, enabling more seniors to age in place without a car while maintaining their quality of life. Since expanding citywide, the disability community has increasingly started using NewMo. NewMo fills myriad public transit gaps. Intra-Newton travel is difficult without a car, evidenced by high drive-alone rates in Newton: 64% of Newton trips are drive-alone versus 35%, 37% and 30% in Brookline, Boston and Cambridge. Transit functions poorly for the senior and disability communities, in particular. Rail stations are not accessible and outdated, posing challenges for even ambulatory seniors. None of the commuter rail lines and only 4 of 7 green line stations are accessible. MBTA routes and schedules are designed for commuters with limited intra-Newton service. NewMo fills a severe unmet transportation need by low-income and transportation limited populations, as evidenced by their disproportionately high ridership. 1) 44% of NewMo seniors do not have a personal vehicle 2) 33% of riders they had "no viable alternative" to NewMo 3) 46% of NewMo seniors make less than 50% of the AMI for a family of 3 4) 85% of senior trips were by low-income seniors on a fare subside. 2020 5) 57% of senior trips were taken by seniors on public assistance.

2. Describe how this unmet need / gap in service was identified.

Yes

No

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a. Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan? |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | b. Through Regional Coordination Council (RCC) meetings/activities? |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | c. Local service evaluation/research? |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | d. Other: (describe) |

3. Provide the target number of individuals this project will serve. How did your organization determine this number? (360 characters)

NewMo serves 966 unique riders per month and 225 unique seniors. We project NewMo to grow 10-15% to serve 1081 unique monthly riders, with 25-30% seniors. To date, nearly 9,500 individuals and 4,000 seniors have registered for NewMo and 2,454 individuals and 579 seniors booked 1+ trip. Via's data dashboard automatically provides this data.

4. Who will be served by the proposed project? List client and trip type. (360 characters)

Seniors take 30% of NewMo trips with low-income and transportation limited seniors riding disproportionately. 44% of NewMo seniors don't own a vehicle; 46% live in HH's earning <50% of AMI (family of 3). Senior trips include: Medical 53%, Errands/Shops 23%, Senior Programs 5%, Jobs 5%, Social 3%, Other 11%. Riders with disabilities increasingly use NewMo.



Applicant Organization Name: Newton Senior Services Department

GrantsPlus Project Number / UPIN: BCG0010541

Project Name/GrantsPlus Project Description: Newton Senior Transportation Operating, FY23

5. Are all Section 5310 funds used for services that meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities?

Yes No