

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

## Mayor's Newton Update

### Introducing GoGo Newton

After six years of operating Newton in Motion (NewMo), we are transitioning to a new transportation system for people living here who need the most support - our older adults, our lower income individuals, and people with disabilities.

We are partnering with an experienced, national, "customer service centric" company, GoGo Technologies. Started in 2016, GoGo now works with over 500 municipal and non-profit organizations (including Brookline) to provide convenient, safe and reliable transportation at affordable prices seven days a week and 24 hours a day.

With superior customer service, GoGo links riders with carefully vetted, highly rated Uber and Lyft drivers who can meet (and whose vehicles can meet) the individual needs of our residents, 24/7.

GoGo Newton also supports people requiring a wheelchair-accessible vehicle by booking 48 hours in advance.

GoGo Newton launches on Monday, July 1, 2024, to provide rides for Newton residents who are 65 years and older as well as Newtonians 18 years and older who are low-income or have disabilities.

GoGo Newton will provide both on-demand and prescheduled rides. All rides have to originate or end in Newton. We can expect average wait times of less than 20 minutes. Riders will be able to book rides using the phone with an automated phone system or with GoGo customer service representatives, or on a computer or smartphone using the GoGo website.

GoGo Newton has a lot of great features. It provides around the clock and 365 days a year service, predictable and reliable vehicle arrival times, the option of sending text notifications to family members detailing the exact location of their family member throughout their trips, an expansive service area that includes 6 of our neighboring municipalities (Brookline, Needham, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, and Weston), and select medical facilities in Boston, including:

- Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- Boston Children's Hospital
- Boston Medical Center
- Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital
- Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Dana Farber Cancer Institute

- Jamaica Plain VA Medical Center
- Massachusetts General Hospital
- Mass Eye & Ear
- Mount Auburn Hospital (Cambridge)
- New England Baptist Hospital
- Shriners's Children's Hospital
- Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital
- St. Elizabeth's Medical Center
- Tufts Medical Center
- West Roxbury VA Medical Center

### GoGo Newton Service Area

(Click on the map for a larger version.)

The City of Newton is helping pay for GoGo Newton rides.

The amount a rider pays and the number of trips that are subsidized by the City depends on the income of the rider.

### GoGo Newton Rates

- **Very Low Income Riders - Available to Individuals 18 and over who are on Qualified Forms of Public Assistance:**
  - Riders are entitled to 12 subsidized one-way trips each month
  - Rider pays the first \$4 of a trip, the City of Newton pays the next \$10, and the rider pays the remainder for the first 12 trips each month. After the 12 subsidized trips, the rider can continue to use GoGo Newton by paying the full fare of additional trips in that month.
  - For example: if the cost of the ride is \$15, then:
    - Rider will pay the base price of \$4
    - The City will pay a subsidy of \$10
    - Rider will pay the remaining \$1 overage
    - Total cost to the rider is \$5.
- **Low Income Older Adults and People Living with Disabilities - Available to Individuals 65+ and People 18 and over with Disabilities with Gross Household Incomes \$78,600 or Less:**
  - Riders are entitled to 8 subsidized one-way rides per month.
  - Rider pays the first \$6 of a trip, the City of Newton pays the next \$8, and the rider pays the remainder for the first 8 trips each month. After the 8 subsidized trips, the rider can continue to use GoGo Newton by paying the full fare of additional trips in that month.
  - For example: if the cost of the ride is \$15, then:
    - Rider will pay the base price of \$6
    - The City will pay a subsidy of \$8
    - Rider will pay the remaining \$1 overage
    - Total cost to the rider is \$7.

- **Older Adults and People with Disabilities - Available to Individuals 65+ and People 18 and over with a Disability and Gross Household Incomes above \$78,600:**
  - Riders are entitled to 4 subsidized one-way trips per month.
  - Rider pays the first \$8 of a trip, the City of Newton pays the next \$6, and the rider pays the remainder for the first 4 trips each month. After the 4 subsidized trips, the rider can continue to use GoGo Newton by paying the full fare of additional trips in that month.
  - For example: if the cost of the ride is \$15, then:
    - Rider will pay the base price of \$8
    - The City will pay a subsidy of \$6
    - Rider will pay the remaining \$1 overage
    - Total cost to the rider is \$9.

### Chart of GoGo Newton Rates

Like Uber and Lyft, the cost of a trip depends on where the rider is going and other factors such as time of day and traffic. In other words, the price may be different each time you make the same trip. GoGo Newton will let a rider know the cost of the ride when they book it so there are no surprises.

The payment for the ride happens through GoGo Newton; you do not pay the driver directly. More specifically, the rider provides a credit card number to GoGo Newton for their portion of the cost. If you do not have a credit card, you may also use a debit card, a gift card in the amount of \$60, or send a check for \$60 to Gogo Newton as a payment method; checks and gift cards must be replenished in increments of \$60.

### Signing Up for GoGo Newton

#### Step 1:

To use the GoGo Newton service, all riders must register and complete Newton's verification process online or in person in Newton by appointment. All registrants must provide documentation demonstrating their age, Newton residency, disability status (if applicable), and income or public assistance status (if applicable). To complete Newton's verification process today or learn more, visit [newtonma.gov/gogo](https://newtonma.gov/gogo).

For further assistance:

- Email [gogo@newtonma.gov](mailto:gogo@newtonma.gov) or call 617-796-GOGO (617-796-4646)
- Schedule an in-person appointment in Newton to register for the service by calling 617-796-GOGO (617-796-4646) or emailing [gogo@newtonma.gov](mailto:gogo@newtonma.gov)
- Attend the drop-in session at the Druker Auditorium at the Newton Free Library on Monday, June 24, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. More drop-in sessions will be added; find dates/times below and on our website: [newtonma.gov/GoGo](https://newtonma.gov/GoGo).

## Step 2:

Once you are approved by GoGo Newton, GoGo Newton will help you get started using the service. They will need to keep a credit card on file.

### Getting Support:

As we transition to GoGo Newton, we anticipate there will be questions and people may need some help. City of Newton and GoGo staff will be available to assist with the sign-up process. Email [gogo@newtonma.gov](mailto:gogo@newtonma.gov) or call 617-796-GOGO (617-796-4646) for assistance.

We have more detailed information, including frequently asked questions, on our website, [www.newtonma.gov/GoGo](http://www.newtonma.gov/GoGo).

We will also be holding “drop-in” sessions (both on Zoom and in person) to answer questions and walk people through the sign-up process. The first session is scheduled for Monday, June 24, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at Newton Free Library’s Druker Auditorium. Two virtual GoGo Information Sessions are also scheduled on Wednesday, June 26 at 10:00 a.m. (Click [here](#) for the zoom link) and on Wednesday, July 10 at 2:00 p.m. (Click [here](#) for the zoom link) After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the webinar.

Any additional sessions scheduled will be posted at [www.newtonma.gov/GoGo](http://www.newtonma.gov/GoGo).

### Why did we end Newton in Motion (NewMo) and switch to GoGo Newton?

NewMo was terrific for six years, providing an affordable and, in many cases, critical transportation service for many Newtonians with our partner Via.

As significant federal and state grants ended, we had to reimagine our goals with a more targeted transportation system that was also financially sustainable. We also decided to prioritize service all day every day, a broader service area, and even more rider-friendly customer service. After a Request for Proposal process, we think GoGo Newton meets these goals well. We are looking forward to GoGo Newton’s first service day on Monday, July 1.

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## Swim Season Starting

The official opening of the two new Gath Pools for the summer of 2024 is Monday, June 24.

Enjoy a new 8-lane lap pool and a family friendly recreation pool, plus diving boards, a water slide, shaded areas, gender neutral restrooms, a fully accessible bathhouse, a splash pad and more.

While both pools will be open on June 24, the splash pad surfacing needs a few more weeks to “cure” so we’re looking at mid-July.

*(Photo: Finishing touches on one of two pools at the new Gath Pool complex.)*

### Gath Pool Summer Schedule

During the week of June 24 through June 30 when most of our lifeguards are still finishing up the school year, operating hours are more limited:

- Monday through Friday, 4:00 p.m. to dusk
- Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The regular summer schedule begins on Monday, July 1. Click [here](#) for a full schedule.

Click [newtonma.gov/aquatics](http://newtonma.gov/aquatics) for more information:

- A downloadable Gath Pool schedule
- Summer memberships
- Swim lesson registration
- Scholarship application

Gath has a new telephone number this summer: 617-796-1520

### Crystal Lake

Preseason at Crystal Lake begins on Monday, June 17 and runs through Friday, June 28 from 4:00 p.m. to dusk on weekdays, and 1:00 p.m. to dusk on weekends.

The regular season at Crystal Lake with longer hours begins on Saturday, June 29. Regular season hours at Crystal Lake are 9:30 a.m. to dusk on weekdays and 1:00 p.m. to dusk on weekends.

Click [newtonma.gov/aquatics](http://newtonma.gov/aquatics) for more information:

- A downloadable Gath Pool schedule
- Summer memberships
- Swim lesson registration
- Scholarship application

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### **City Seal - Draft Designs**

The City Seal Working Group (which consists of Lisa Dady, Councilor Bill Humphrey, Hattie Kerwin Derrick, Jim Murphy, Ryan Naragon and Shubee Sikka) has been working with graphic designer Sebastian Ebarb on draft designs for a new City of Newton seal that capture the values, identity, and spirit of Newton.

Join them on Tuesday, June 18 at 6:30 p.m. in the War Memorial at City Hall, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, to see and learn more about three draft designs and provide your feedback. [You may also watch the meeting via Zoom](#) or on [NewTV](#). Ebarb will describe why certain design choices were made. These early drafts will be presented in black and white, with the next drafts incorporating choices about color.

The draft designs and survey are now at [newtonma.gov/cityseal](https://newtonma.gov/cityseal) to view and to provide feedback starting this Friday, June 14 prior to the formal presentation next Tuesday. You can also see them in-person starting on Friday at:

- Newton Free Library [Anteroom \(space to the left when you enter from the Parking Lot Entrance\)](#)
- City Hall (on the television inside the front door main entrance)

At both locations, you will be able to scan a QR code or pick up a feedback form to let us know your preferences. The survey will remain open for feedback until Tuesday, August 21.

These drafts come after years of discussion and community input. In the fall of 2020, I convened an Ad Hoc City Seal Working Group to look at our City Seal. I asked them to make recommendations about whether the image depicted is still relevant and meaningful 155 years after its creation, and whether there were graphics and/or words that would better portray Newton.

In November 2021, the Group submitted its final report with several recommendations. These included that the scene of John Eliot evangelizing Indigenous people be replaced with a more suitable image and that the overall design be simplified to allow for accurate reproduction in many formats (on vehicles, documents, trash cans, etc.). Click [here](#) for a summary and the full report.

Last spring, the City Council unanimously approved proceeding with the process of updating the City Seal and submitting a Request for Proposal for a graphic design professional. Sebastian Ellington Ebarb Design (SEED) was hired in December 2023.

By the way, if the City Council chooses a new City Seal, we do not expect to change the Seal on everything immediately. Rather, we expect generally to replace the current one as new items are ordered.

Find more information at [newtonma.gov/Mayor](https://newtonma.gov/Mayor) (click on City Seal Working Group). Questions or feedback in the meantime? E-mail us at [cityseal@newtonma.gov](mailto:cityseal@newtonma.gov).

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## Opioids

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health released data today showing some good news in the fight against opioid use disorder. Massachusetts

experienced a 10% decline in opioid-related overdose deaths in 2023, the largest single-year decline since 2010.

The data for Newton also shows a meaningful decline in opioid-related overdose deaths of Newton residents from 10 in 2022 to 4 in 2023. See the data by City and Town [here](#).

Yet, we know that even a single death is too many.

*(Photo: With Heath & Human Service  
Commissioner Linda Walsh with a naloxbox.)*

One way to decrease the number of deaths related to opioid overdose is to make Naloxone (also known as Narcan) readily available. Naloxone is a nasal spray that rapidly reverses the effects of an opioid overdose.

In Newton, we will be using opioid abatement funds to purchase and pilot placing naloxboxes (i.e., opioid rescue kits) in public buildings around the City.

The naloxboxes are wall mounted boxes that contain Naloxone, a rescue breathing barrier, and instructions sheets for recognizing and responding to a suspected opioid overdose.

We're starting with the Newton Free Library, City Hall and Newton Public Schools this summer.

Training will be provided for any staff wanting to learn more and any member of the public can access this lifesaving medication if needed.

If you or a loved one is struggling with opioid use disorder, help is available. Click [here](#) for resources.

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## **Two Mass Pike Ramps Into Boston Closed at Night Through June 27**

Two ramps onto the Mass Pike (I-90) eastbound from I-95 and from Commonwealth Ave./Route 30 in Newton and Weston will be closed during the overnight hours Sunday through Thursday from 11:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. the following morning through June 27.

The closure is to allow crews to conduct safely the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) construction operations related to the Newton/Weston bridge rehabilitation project at the I-90/I-95 interchange.

The overnight closure went into effect yesterday, Monday, June 10, and is likely to impact travel in both directions on I-95 and Commonwealth Ave./Route 30.

Drivers seeking to access the Mass Pike eastbound from I-95 and Commonwealth Ave./Route 30 will be detoured onto I-90 westbound for approximately 2.6 miles. Drivers will then be directed to a U-turn at the

Massachusetts State Police barracks in Weston to rejoin I-90 in the eastbound direction.

MassDOT will have signage, law enforcement details, and advanced message boards to guide drivers through the work area.

All scheduled work is weather dependent and/or may be impacted due to an emergency.

For more information on traffic conditions, travelers are encouraged to:

- Download the Mass511 mobile app or visit [www.mass511.com](http://www.mass511.com) to view live cameras, travel times, real-time traffic conditions, and project information before setting out on the road. Users can subscribe to receive text and email alerts for traffic conditions.
- Dial 511 and select a route to hear real-time conditions.

### **... and Sumner Tunnel Closing Again This Summer**

The Sumner Tunnel will close for two weekends - this weekend of June 14 and next weekend of June 21 - and then completely close for five weeks from Friday, July 5 through Friday, Aug. 31.

The second summer of the Sumner Tunnel closure is to allow MassDOT to address the 100-plus year old tunnel's safety, ceiling, lighting & security systems, and cell phone, GPS and radio service within the tunnel.

For Newtonians driving home from Logan Airport, the closure is expected to make the drive longer and more challenging. For everyone, officials say to expect and to plan for tie-ups and traffic getting *in* and *out* of Boston while the tunnel is closed. (They expect backups in both directions.)

Click [here](#) for more information about the Sumner Tunnel project and click [here](#) to sign up for weekly project email updates. Questions? Email the project team at [Sumner100@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:Sumner100@dot.state.ma.us). The Construction Hotline number is (508) 510-2920.

MassDOT is encouraging us all to "Ditch the Drive" and use public transportation or private ride share options to help reduce the impact on traffic while the tunnel is closed.

Use [MassDOT 511](#) to see travel conditions before making a trip, and the MBTA's [Trip Planner](#) to help find alternative ways into and out of Boston and Logan Airport.

Questions? Email the project team at [Sumner100@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:Sumner100@dot.state.ma.us).

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*Tried and true meets brand new at The Street on Rt. 9/Boylston Street in Chestnut Hill with the opening of its newest building and a wave of new stores tomorrow, June 13. The Street is hosting a special community celebration on Saturday, June 15, from noon to 2 p.m. (Click [here](#) for the full list of establishments and a schedule of Saturday activities.)*

*When fully opened, the building at 27 Boylston Street (the former movie theater and Container Store) will host more than 25 retail stores and restaurants, health and wellness places, office space and community gathering spots.*

*(Photo: With Dick Marks, a partner at WS Development, this afternoon.)*

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## **Recycling Right**

All of us need reminders on how to recycle right. A few key “don’ts” are:

- No plastic bags, plastic films, or plastic wraps
- No plastic utensils
- No food or beverage cartons
- No black plastic take out trays
- No small plastic bottles (e.g., prescription medicine bottles)(they are too small)

To help us remember, the City of Newton is continuing to put large educational cart-top decals on our green recycling carts.

Since we're going to be at the curb, we'll also be gathering some data. Data collection on what's in our trash and recycling carts throughout the city helps us understand how these services are functioning and how they can be improved . We're emphasizing waste reduction efforts which is important for the environment, and helps financially as disposal costs are expected to increase significantly in the next decade. We are seeking volunteers to assist with these efforts and we are also hiring a few, paid part-time project leaders. Here is the [job posting](#).

Details about the project:

- Volunteers will walk neighborhood routes, adhere stickers to recycling carts and lift cart lids and leave messaging about contamination, if needed. It's important to note that this is not an enforcement project.
- The effort will start in late June/early July and will run through mid-October. We are looking for as many volunteers as we can to commit to walking a minimum of one route per week from 7:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Monday through Friday Our goal is to apply decals to every recycling cart in Newton.
- This is a fair-weather project. If it is raining, the routes that day are cancelled.

The benefits of volunteering for this project include:

- Assisting in recycling education to reduce recycling contamination
- Getting exercise and spending time outside by walking neighborhood routes
- Hours worked in this campaign count toward Newton's Senior Property Tax Work-Off Program

Interested? Please complete this [survey](#) about your availability. Questions? Email us at [recycling@newtonma.gov](mailto:recycling@newtonma.gov) for more information.

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## Celebrate July 4<sup>th</sup> in Newton

Watch Newton's spectacular fireworks over Albemarle Field/Halloran Field (250 Albemarle Road) in Newtonville starting at 9:00 p.m. on Thursday night, July 4.

This caps off a full day of fun in Newton.

*Kids Morning* begins our Independence Day festivities in Newton from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Newton Centre playground "bowl" off Tyler Terrace. Join in the patriotic costume promenade, the decorated bicycle parade, or bring your loyal companion to the grand pet parade. Enjoy music, crafts and free ice cream courtesy of Cabot's.

Then head over to Albemarle Field/Halloran Field where the fun starts at 1:00 p.m. with carnival rides and an open-air market with handmade and international crafts. The band [East Coast Soul](#) will start playing at 6:30 p.m. until it's time for the pyrotechnics to begin at 9 p.m.

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## Celebrating School Crossing Guards, Bus & Van Drivers

Wonderful to celebrate the "Safety Superheroes" who help get our students to school safely and on time on Crossing Guard and Van/Bus Driver Appreciation Day last week.

*(Photo: At breakfast with Liam Hurley and Regina Moody of NPS, Newton Transportation Planning Director Jenn Martin and Newton bus drivers last week.)*

Special thanks go to the PTO Council, the Newton Safe Routes to School Task Force, and Green Newton for their donations and volunteer people-power in delivering flowers to all 48 crossing guards and providing wonderful breakfasts for our bus and van drivers.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

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**P.S. Trash and recycling collection will be on our regular schedule next week** with no delays even with the Juneteenth holiday on Wednesday. Please place your blue and green carts at curbside on your regularly scheduled days on Monday, June 17 through Friday, June 21.

P.P.S. Join the Newton Lodge of Elks to honor our flag on the steps of the City Hall War Memorial, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, on **Flag Day, this Friday, June 14** at 6:00 p.m.

P.P.P.S. **Celebrate the release of *Inside Out 2* and the West Newton Cinema Foundation** this Saturday, June 15, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Watch the movie and enjoy Inside Out themed activities sponsored by three wonderful local West Newton businesses, Paper Mouse and Hipstitch & pizza donated by Sweet Tomatoes; dress up as your favorite emotion for a chance to win a prize. Click [here](#) for more information.

P.P.P.P.S. Registration is open for the **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Schultz Family Kids Triathlon** which will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 11 at Newton North High School. The triathlon is for youngsters ages 6 to 12 and thanks to Newton Athletes Unlimited includes an adaptive division for children and adults with disabilities. The registration deadline is Friday, July 5 and limited to 250 athletes. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

P.P.P.P.P.S. Help **celebrate Newtonians who will be joining the United States Armed Forces and attending West Point and the United States Naval Academy** this fall. Join the Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary at American Legion Post 440, 295 California St., at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 26 to honor their service.

P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Include your selfie in Newton Community Pride's **Community Photo Album**. Twelve decorated selfie stations designed by local and regional artists are scattered around the City. Join the fun and take a photo in front of one of these murals, then upload it to the [community photo album](#) using this [link](#). Click [here](#) for more information and list of selfie station locations.

P.P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Hear the candidates for the two open **State Representative seats** in Newton share their views on the **Climate and the Environment** on Thursday, June 20 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall War Memorial, 1000 Commonwealth Avenue. Green Newton, Mothers Out Front Newton, and 350 Mass Newton are sponsoring the forum. Mark your calendar: the **State Primary Election is Tuesday, Sept. 3**, the day after Labor Day. (We'll let you know how to vote by mail or vote early in-person; stay tuned.)

P.P.P.P.P.P.S. Game 3 is in the first quarter. **Go Celtics!**



### Past P.S.s happening soon:

P.S. Pride Month activities continue with a **Celebration of Queer Culture** at City Hall this Saturday, June 15 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Bring the family to learn about queer culture through history, art and conversation in a welcoming environment. Click [here](#) for more information.

P.P.S. Celebrate African-American heritage and culture through food, music, dance and story-telling at **Newton Juneteenth Celebration** this Saturday, June 15, from noon to 4:00 p.m. at the Hyde Community Center, 90 Lincoln Street. Click [here](#) for more information.

P.P.P.S. **Historic Newton's Plant Swap** is this Saturday, June 15, from at 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds, 286 Waverley Ave. Find more information [here](#).

P.P.P.P.S. The **Highland Glee Club** "love in" concert is this Sunday, June 16. The concert begins at the 7:00 p.m. at the Hyde Bandstand, 90 Lincoln St. in Newton Highlands. (Rain date is Monday, June 17.)

P.P.P.P.P.S. **Stroll through the Newton Cemetery with Historic Newton** on Thursday, June 20 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. and learn about the namesakes of many of our elementary and middle schools. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.



Mayor Ruthanne Fuller | 1000 Commonwealth Avenue | Newton, MA 02459 US

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