

Sapienza, 11.18.18

**TO** Sudbury Transportation Committee  
**FROM** Alice Sapienza, DBA  
**DATE** 11/18/18  
**Re:** MWRTA<sup>i</sup> and TransLoc Microtransit Pilot

After considering the potential TransLoc microtransit pilot, MWRTA decided not to pursue it with Sudbury at this time. As stated by their IT expert, Dan Fitch: *We do not have any capital or operating dollars identified at this time for the [TransLoc Microtransit pilot] project. I think before we can proceed, a large hurdle is finding operating dollars to provide operating vehicles for the [TransLoc] software to schedule to.*

During a meeting with me on 11/16/18, MWRTA representatives (Ed Carr, Dan Fitch, Eva Willens) identified the following issues:

- Sudbury is an anomalous community in the MetroWest service area, because of its rural character. The low population density makes it difficult for the authority to provide transportation services beyond Council on Aging vans.
- There is no money in the current MWRTA budget for additional services in Sudbury.
- Even if vehicles could be provided for new services in Sudbury (i.e., beyond the current “Connection” vans), there is no money from the local/Sudbury assessment to operate these services.
- MWRTA Dial a Ride is the paratransit/demand response service. MWRTA would not risk adversely affecting an existing service based on simulation data. The agency would need additional vehicles to mitigate any potential risk of changing services until proven in real world conditions. If TransLoc simulations suggested Dial a Ride efficiencies (that, e.g., freed up vehicles and drivers), the authority would do nothing that would impact those services.
- MWRTA fixed route services provide nearly three times the annual passenger miles as their demand-response services.

The following additional information on the MWRTA is taken from publicly available documents and may provide context for further discussion:

- Kiessling accounted for about \$5.6M (two-thirds) of MWRTA operating expenses as “purchased transportation” (2016).
- MWRTA had 70 demand-response vehicles available for maximum service; 621 were actually operated (2017).
- Vehicles operate at an average occupancy of 50% or less.
- The full cost of operating an MWRTA vehicle is about \$60/hour. In 2018, the average cost per demand-response trip was \$23; for the bus, it was \$8.

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<sup>i</sup> The MWRTA reimburses for the costs of running the Sudbury “Connection” vans, including the van drivers’ salaries, benefits, van insurance, and other expenses. The MWRTA provides the vans and maintains them.