

## **TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN SUDBURY: ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE *LIVABLE SUDBURY ASSESSMENT***

Background. *Transportation* is the second of eight domains of community attributes that the World Health Organization characterized as vital to population health and quality of life: physical, social, economic, psychological, etc. Over the past year, researchers from UMAss Boston's John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies conducted an assessment of the livability of Sudbury. This summary of findings is provided to assist the town's Transportation Committee determine both short- and longer-term solutions to the urgent needs.

### Findings

- **Transportation is identified as crucial by a wide range of stakeholders:**
  - Families with children under 18 years
  - Residents age 60+
  - Residents of all ages with a participation limitation
  - Residents of all ages who are not financially secure.
  
- **The range of specific transportation needs identified implies a variety of options to meet them**
  - After-school transportation for children and youth (fixed route, vans)
  - Transportation to medical appointments, social service appointments, respite opportunities such as adult day care, etc. (scheduled and on-demand)
  - Transportation to shopping, appointments, evening, and weekend services, meetings, and socialization opportunities (shuttles, vans, etc.)
  - Affordable transportation to employment venues, childcare facilities, commuter rail, MBTA routes, as well as services similar to the preceding.
  
- **A number of the transportation options must be both affordable and accessible**
  - Residents with a participation limitation reported they “had missed, canceled, or rescheduled a medical appointment due to lack of transportation.”
  - More than a third of residents who are not financially secure are not satisfied with their “ability to get where they want to go.”
  - Nearly half of residents 60+ are not satisfied with their “ability to get where they want to go.”

- **Transportation gaps affect all livable domains, reducing the overall “livability” and long-term attractiveness of the town**
  - Lack of transportation limits *social participation*
  - Lack of transportation affects overall well-being (*domain of community and health services*)
  - Lack of transportation affects *housing* options and limits access to *outdoor spaces*
  - Lack of transportation limits *civic participation and employment*
  - Lack of transportation can result in segments of the town population “not feeling welcomed” (*respect and social inclusion*).

### Some Recommendations

- Internal agreement
  - “Build stronger consensus about core themes like housing and transportation.”
  - “In developing transportation improvements, prioritize options for those with participation limitations and financial insecurity.”
  - Transportation has to “meet differing needs—options to get around Sudbury, to neighboring towns, and to Boston.”
- External partnering
  - Local hospital Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs) have already noted the importance of transportation to medical and related appointments. Consider partnership with Emerson Hospital to provide option such as Uber Health in Sudbury.
  - “Build partnerships with commercial businesses, to support transportation to Boston, nearby communities, and/or local rail stations.”
  - Require developers to contribute annually to a town transportation fund, to help subsidize options.
  - “Evaluate the emerging regional transportation pilots underway and expand as appropriate.”