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The METROWEST DAILY NEWS

Pilot commuter shuttle along Rte. 20 corridor to launch Monday

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Morning commuters board a MetroWest Regional Transit Authority bus bound for Marlborough at the MWRTA "banana lot" in downtown Framingham. [Daily News and Wicked Local File Photo / Ken McGagh]▲

The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority will launch a commuter shuttle pilot on Monday. The shuttle will make round trips along Rte. 20 between Marlborough and the Riverside Green Line station.

Searching for a lift to the MBTA's Riverside Green Line station? The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority has you covered.

The transit authority will launch a pilot shuttle Monday along the Rte. 20 corridor to provide commuters an easy connection to the Green Line. The MWRTA was awarded a \$350,000 grant from the state Department of Transportation's discretionary funding account to launch the yearlong pilot.

The shuttle will run from Target in Marlborough to the Riverside station in Newton, picking up passengers at the Wayside Country Store in Marlborough – where the MWRTA's existing Route 7C service ends – as well as at Sudbury Farms and the Wayland Town Center Plaza.

Stops at Longfellow Glen, Sudbury Plaza and Coach Grill in Wayland will be serviced as requested, according to the MWRTA's website.

The service will benefit not only riders in Marlborough, Sudbury and Wayland, but reverse commuters who need to travel from Boston to jobs along Rte. 20, said Emily VanDewoestine, MWRTA administrative and operations assistant.

VanDewoestine said the service aims to ease congestion on the region's crowded roads. Commuters can also get a head start on work assignments while traveling to the Green Line station, she said.

The shuttle will make three round trips in the morning and three more in the evening. A full schedule is available on the MWRTA's website.

The Rte. 20 corridor was selected because there is a lack of public transit in the Sudbury area, said VanDewoestine. Sudbury officials have been courting public transportation for the past few years. The Sudbury Senior Center operates a grant-funded shuttle on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., but there is no other public transit in town.

"We've been advocating for services to Rte. 20 because of all the growth," said Debra Gallway, Council on Aging director and a member of the town's transportation committee. "There's more demand here for transportation services."

Gallway is hopeful that if the shuttle is popular it could be expanded.

The pilot program will run through June 30, 2020. The initial ridership goal is 20 to 25 passengers per day. MWRTA officials hope ridership will increase throughout the year.

Transit authority leaders will determine if the shuttle will operate permanently based on ridership statistics and available funding at the end of the pilot, said VanDewoestine.

Adult fares are \$1.50 in cash and \$1.25 if paying by regular Charlie Card. For riders with disabilities and senior citizens, the fee is 75 cents and the disabled/senior Charlie Card fare is 70 cents. Children under 6, when accompanied by an adult, ride for free. Students with a valid student ID card can ride for \$1 cash.

For a full schedule and list of stops visit www.mwrta.com.

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