

2015 ICMA

AWARDS

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD

This award recognizes innovative programs or processes between and/or among a local government and other governmental entities, private sector businesses, individuals, or nonprofit agencies to improve the quality of life for residents or provide more efficient and effective services.

Populations of less than 10,000



Ledoux



Shaw



Bergman



Sweet



Ross

CrossTown Connect • Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard, and Westford, Massachusetts

Steve Ledoux, town manager, Acton • Selina Shaw, town administrator, Boxborough • Keith Bergman, town administrator, Littleton • Kevin Sweet, town administrator, Maynard • Jodi Ross, town manager, Westford

In Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard, and Westford—five towns about 20 miles northwest of Boston with populations ranging between 5,000 and 22,000—transportation needs were becoming acute.

The two stations on the Fitchburg Commuter Rail line had limited daily parking, poorly scheduled out-bound trains, and minimal last-mile transport. Residents working within the Metro-Boston area needed better commuting options; Boston residents commut-

ing to those towns needed last-mile transportation to reach their places of employment. Senior citizens who could no longer drive could not get to doctor appointments, shop for food, or attend social events. Parents of first-generation Asian citizens, hampered by minimal English-language skills, were stranded while

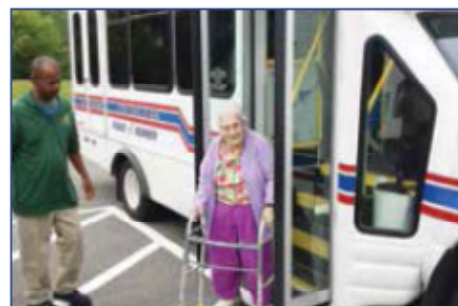
their children were at school or work. And lower-income populations, for whom equity housing was built, lacked transportation choices.

In 2009, the five towns worked with the Massachusetts Institute for Transportation Coordination to identify their transportation needs. At the same time, Work Without Limits, a statewide network of employers and innovative partners, was encouraging the formation of regional groups to address transportation gaps and increase employment among people with disabilities. The towns joined that effort.

In 2012, the towns and a private corporation, Clock Tower Place of Maynard, applied for and received a state grant to regionalize transportation services and put a formal association in place for future collaboration. The result was CrossTown Connect, which launched in September 2013. Soon after, four more private companies—Gutierrez Company, IBM, Juniper Networks, and Red Hat—joined the partnership through intermunicipal agreements and memoranda of understanding. The association then consolidated four towns' Council on Aging shuttles and on-demand ride services under one central dispatch call center, increasing each community's daily dispatch hours and

contribution is based on the average daily hours of service its van(s) provides and its average monthly ridership.

Meeting the transportation needs of more than 20,000 riders and 5,000 employees while reducing



Meeting the transportation needs of all riders

ridership. Currently it is working with two regional transit associations to enable vehicle sharing across municipal and regional transportation boundaries.

In 2014, CrossTown Connect lobbied successfully to expand the out-bound train schedule from Boston, and it is currently lobbying for more and earlier trains to meet the reverse commuting needs of its local businesses. It is also studying possible shuttle routes in hopes of growing its corporate membership and expanding the region's economic base.

Among the services it provides are an online database that matches people with similar commutes for carpooling, assistance with vanpool formation, emergency cabs or rental cars for carpoolers who need to leave work for an emergency, and information about commuter options and management of transit benefits.

traffic congestion and air pollution and increasing economic development opportunities, CrossTown Connect is well positioned to fulfill its goal of creating an economically thriving and socially equitable region.

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CrossTown Connect has an annual budget of \$236,000. More than half of its first year's budget was offset by grants; the rest came from MassRide (\$50,000), Private Partners (\$31,000), and Public Partners (\$31,000). Each town's