



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2015 Local Government Excellence Awards Program Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

(All programs nominated must have been fully operational for a minimum of 12 months, prior to January 31, 2015)

Deadline for Nominations Extended to March 30, 2015

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (*select only one*):

- Community Health and Safety
- Community Partnership
- Community Sustainability
- Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: CrossTown Connect

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Westford, Massachusetts

Jurisdiction population(s): 22,000

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented for at least 12 months prior to January 31, 2015, to be eligible. The start date [on or before January 31, 2014] should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: September Year: 2013

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington, September 2015. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Steve Ledoux

Title: Town Manager Jurisdiction: Acton

Name: Selina Shaw

Title: Town Administrator Jurisdiction: Boxborough

Name: Keith Bergman

Title: Town Administrator Jurisdiction: Littleton

Name: Kevin Sweet

Title: Town Manager Jurisdiction: Maynard

Name: Jodi Ross

Title: Town Manager Jurisdiction: Westford

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Doug Halley

Title: Health Director Jurisdiction: Acton

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The Towns of Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Westford Transportation initiative

This nomination describes a group of communities (Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Westford) achievement in planning and implementing a public/private partnership that addresses the transportation needs of commuters, reverse commuters, senior citizens, people with disabilities, special populations and the general population within the region. This initiative began almost seven years ago with informal meetings between the communities and culminated with the launching of a new Transportation Management Association, CrossTown Connect, in September of 2013.

CrossTown Connect consists of five public (Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard and Stow) and five private (Clock Tower Place of Maynard, Guitierrez Company of Westford, IBM of Littleton, Juniper Networks of Westford and Red Hat of Westford) partners bound together by Intermunicipal Agreements and Memorandum of Understandings; focused on reducing traffic congestion and air pollution while increasing mobility and commuting options. CrossTown Connect works both with communities to address transportation concerns and increase economic development opportunities and with employers to provide their employees with commuter services that enable them to have more options for getting to and from work.

The five communities are approximately 20 miles west-northwest of Boston at the intersection of Route 495, Route 2 and the Fitchburg Commuter Rail line. The population of each community is as follows: Acton 21,929, Boxborough 4,996, Littleton 8924, Maynard 10,106, and Westford 21,951. Together the five communities have an area of almost 85 square miles.

The greater majority of residents from the CrossTown Connect area work within the Metro-Boston area and are seeking better commuting options. Many businesses in the CrossTown Connect area rely on a young technically savvy workforce living in the Metro-Boston area and

need to bridge the last mile transportation connection to their place of employment. With two train stations (Acton and Littleton) on the Fitchburg Rail line, each with limited daily parking poorly scheduled outbound trains and minimal last mile transport, CrossTown Connect is breaking down the first mile/last mile barriers that inhibit employees from getting to their place of employment.

In the CrossTown Connect area the senior population has been growing each year. They are by and large long time residents living in single family homes, stranded in subdivisions when they lose the ability to drive. They, along with people with disabilities need transportation for hospital visits, doctor appointments, food shopping and social events. CrossTown Connect is removing the barriers for our most vulnerable populations allowing them to continue to live and thrive in their community.

Lastly, in the CrossTown Connect area population demographics are changing as superior school systems attract first generation Asian citizens and equity housing is built to accommodate the needs of lower income populations. Both of these populations have special transportation needs that CrossTown Connect is addressing. For the first generation Asian population it's their parents with limited to no English skills and a need to get around the community while their children work. For the lower income population it's recognition that their investment in housing has limited their transportation choices.

In 2009 these group of communities worked with the Massachusetts Institute for Transportation Coordination to determine the transportation needs of the area. The seed of this project grew to identify and include other interested stakeholders, concerned with the transportation gaps of the area. At the same time Work Without Limits, a statewide network of engaged employers and innovative, collaborative partners aiming to increase employment among individuals with

disabilities, began an initiative encouraging the formation of regional groups to address transportation gaps. Our group of communities joined in that effort, becoming one of six regional groups in the State and bringing our group to a more defined commonality of purpose.

In 2012 the Massachusetts Governor's Office launched a regional collaboration initiative through a Community Innovation Challenge Grant. Our group of communities along with a private corporation, Clock Tower Place of Maynard, applied for and received a grant from this program with the goal to regionalize transportation services and to put a formal structure in place for future collaboration. CrossTown Connect is the result of that effort

In 2013 CrossTown Connect continued to regionalize community transportation services by consolidating the Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, and Maynard Council on Aging shuttles as well as the Acton MinuteVan Dial-A-Ride and Road Runner services under one Central Dispatch Call Center. For each community this increased their daily dispatch hours from two to eight, which led to greater efficiency in trips, an increase in ridership and a decrease in cancellations.

Building on that effort CrossTown Connect put in place Geodetic Positioning System/Geographic Information System (GPS/GIS) technology in all of the vehicles used for transportation by the partners. This technology documents trip information of each vehicle to correlate redundancies and inefficient scheduling which leads to improved dispatch service and performance; both long term and real-time.

Since CrossTown Connect's original launch we have added four additional private companies; Guitierrez Company, IBM, Juniper Networks and Red Hat. With the partnership in place and growing, CrossTown Connect is implementing its core mission of addressing:

- **Traditional Commuting** – from suburban locations into the City
- **Suburb-to-Suburb Commuting** – from one suburb to another across the region

- **Reverse Commuting** – from the City into the suburban area
- **Daily Needs Trips** – non-commuting trips for shopping, medical appointments, etc.)

Along with its dispatch services CrossTown Connect is also providing commuter services to its employer partners. These services include:

- Carpool Database –online program matching people with similar commutes into carpools
- Assistance with vanpool formation
- Emergency Ride Home – in case a person who has carpooled experiences an emergency and needs to leave work, a cab or rental car will arrive within ½ hour
- Workout to Work – provide information to employees and facilitate active modes of commuting
- Management of transit benefits
- Commuter promotional events – to educate commuters about their options

In the past year CrossTown Connect lobbied for the expansion of the outbound train schedule from Boston to this area. This effort was rewarded in August of 2014 when a new schedule was put in place bringing outbound trains into this area one hour earlier than previously scheduled, with four additional trips to/from the stations each day. This lobby effort is still on-going as CrossTown Connect seeks more and earlier trains to meet the reverse commute needs of its local businesses.

Currently CrossTown Connect is working with the Lowell Regional Transit Association (LRTA) and the Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART) to further regionalize the services of the Councils on Aging by allowing for the sharing of vehicles across municipal and regional transportation boundaries. Current requirements didn't foresee the need for riders to have access to vans outside of their own town or regional transit association. With three of our communities

partnered with LRTA and two partnered with MART CrossTown Connect will remove all barriers for the riders allowing them access on the van that can best meet their trip needs. CrossTown Connect is also partnering with the Central Transportation Planning Staff of Massachusetts Department of Transportation to conduct studies on possible community and corporate shuttle routes. Through this effort we will work to grow our corporate membership and assist in the expansion of our region's economic base.

CrossTown Connect's aim is to create an economically thriving and socially equitable region by facilitating the provision of diverse transportation options for citizens and commuters alike.

Through a unique private/public partnership CrossTown Connect is well positioned to deliver on its core mission and provide transportation services to those most in need.

With seven vans currently being dispatched CrossTown connect is connecting more than 20,000 riders to their transportation needs each year. Providing transportation management services to the businesses and communities is also connecting more than 5,000 employees to transportation alternatives each year. In recognition of these efforts CrossTown Connect has been recognized by the 495 Metrowest Partnership with the Don Wheeler Award, by the Community Health Network Area 15 Janice Hanson Award and by the Local Officials Human Services Council Peter Kirwin Award.

In combination the CrossTown Connect Transportation Management Association services, along with the dispatching services, has an annual budget of \$236,000. More than ½ of the first year budget was offset by grants received. The remainder of revenue comes from three sources, MassRide (\$50,000), Private Partners (\$31,000), and Public Partners (\$31,000). Each community's contribution is based on the average hours of service their van(s) provides during the day and their average monthly ridership.