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Transportation in Wellesley – Just What Exactly IS Micro Transit?

By Colette Aufranc, Select Board and Mobility Committee and Marybeth Martello, Climate Action Committee

This is the second in a series of guest columns about transportation actions in Wellesley to support “May is Mobility Month.” The columns are authored by members of the Select Board, Climate Action Committee, Mobility Committee, School Committee, and Trails Committee.

Changes to transportation behavior in our community are critical to meeting our state and town climate and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction goals. As our first column explained, the **MBTA Commuter Rail** is moving toward “clock face scheduling” where trains will run hourly to better meet regional rail needs. But what if you need door-to-door service? Try micro transit!

What is Micro Transit?

Micro transit is a curb-to-curb ride share service similar to Uber or Lyft, run by the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA). The service is called [MWRTA Catch Connect](#) and it helps solve first-mile and last-mile service gaps – the need for a second mode of transportation to reach your end destination. Micro Transit feeds existing fixed transportation infrastructure – home, work, school, recreation, retail or dining to the Green Line, MBTA train station or bus transfer. Riders using Micro Transit also highlight transportation needs that are not currently serviced by fixed infrastructure and help identify where there are transportation gaps and fixed line service would be worthwhile.

How to use the MWRTA Catch Connect Service. Like most ride-share services, the best way to access the Catch Connect is with a smartphone.

- Download the [MWRTA Catch app](#) to a smartphone, set up an account, then use the “connect” button to enter your destination and wait for the transit (usually a mini-bus) to pick you up.
- Catch Connect fares are currently free. Once fare collection begins, the cost of a Catch Connect ride will be fixed at \$2.00 per one-way trip.
- Use the app anywhere in Wellesley and select destinations outside of Wellesley including Newton Wellesley hospital, Woodland and Waban T stations, Natick Community Center (to link with other Fixed Route bus services), Volante Farms and Trader Joe’s Needham (Catch Connect currently doesn’t offer service for trips in and around Needham.)
- Service is first come, first served; wait times vary but could be up to 30 minutes or more during peak use. Hours are currently 6:45 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. Monday through Friday, and may be expanded with additional use.

If you are unable to use the app or do not have a smartphone, you can still access Catch Connect by calling MWRTA Customer Service at 508-283-5083.

As with all public transportation operated by MWRTA, Catch Connect service is fully accessible; riders under 12 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. MWRTA generally offers fare

reductions for senior, disabled and student riders. The MWRTA Catch app also provides bus schedule and tracking information for their bus network.

Meeting Town-wide Climate and Transportation Goals

With this convenient ride share service, we can reduce dependence on single-use vehicles and encourage the adoption and possible expansion of public transportation. Fewer vehicles on the roads also means less congestion. Learn more about Transportation goals for Wellesley by visiting the Public Transportation pages (<https://www.wellesleyma.gov/476/Public-Transportation-Parking>) and the [Climate Action pages](#) on the Town of Wellesley website.

And check out Wellesley's newly launched [Sustainable Mobility Plan](#) to learn more about community-wide initiatives the town is targeting to enable more mobility offerings in our community.

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