

# **Older Driver Safety Summit Planning a Safe and Mobile Future for Seniors**

**June 2015**

**Jayne Colino  
Director, Newton Department of Senior Services**



# A Local Approach to Transportation Services for Elders

- 349 Councils on Aging across the state
- Most operate senior centers, not all
- Some COA's function as a consortium
- Some operate on all volunteer staffing
- Some operate under the umbrella of larger departments
- Some provide their own transportation services, some contract, some have volunteers

# Newton Department of Senior Services

## Vision and Mission

### Vision

To provide sustained leadership that helps Newton be a livable and age friendly community for all who choose to age here.

### Mission

The mission of the Department of Senior Services is to optimize quality of life for seniors and their families through welcoming, respectful and meaningful opportunities that engage and value older people, and empower them to remain independent and to be important assets in our community.

# Evolution of Senior Transportation Services in Newton

## THEN

- Very small portion of budget
- Multiple contracts for various destinations
- Limited destinations that addressed “basic needs”
- Same requested donation

## NOW

- 1/3 of budget
- Single providers for all destinations
- Expanded to multiple destinations that supports engagement
- Sliding required fee with exemption process

# Destinations that support Age- Friendly Livable Newton

- **SENIOR CENTER**
- **GROCERY SHOPPING**
- **MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS in Newton**
- **MEDICAL APPTs outside Newton**
- **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES & HOSPITALS**
- **HOUSES OF WORSHIP**
- **VILLAGE CENTERS**
- **NEEDHAM STREET**
- **MENTAL HEALTH APPTs**
- **ALL CITY SPONSORED PROGRAMS, EVENTS and MEETINGS**

# HOW IT WORKS

- PUBLIC BID PROCESS
- CONTRACT WITH LOCAL TAXI COMPANY
- RESERVATIONS MADE DIRECTLY WITH TAXI COMPANY
- RIDERS NEED VOUCHERS TO TRAVEL
- SELF SELECTED SLIDING FEE
- EXEMPTION PROCESS
- OVER 20,000 RIDES/YEAR PROVIDED

# STRAITS Center

(Senior Transportation Resources, Advice,  
Information, Training and Support)

- Brookline and Newton senior centers- to be replicable
- DOT grant
- Travel challenged seniors and others with disabilities
- Based on the SHINE model –trained volunteer counselors
- Computer based information and printed materials
- Group and one on one group discussions/support
- Use of Technology
- Travel buddies

## Additional Services that Support Transportation, Mobility and Engagement

- Information and Referral to other related resources
- MBTA Senior Charlie Pass Program
- Senior Parking Sticker Program
- Social Services
- Advocacy
- Representation on local committees to raise senior relevant questions/concerns



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MCOA  
413-527-6425  
[www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com)

# South Central Massachusetts Elderbus

Company Overview  
June 2015



# Company Profile

- Private, non-profit 501 (C) 3 corporation
- Company incorporated in 1974
- Company headquarters: Charlton, MA
- Twenty-nine employees
- Governed by a Board of Directors
  - ❖ Each of 21 towns serviced entitled to a Board representative



# Our Mission

- Provide transportation services to senior and disabled clients within service area
  - ❖ WRTA sub-contractor
- Service area includes 21 communities, covering 550 square miles
- 46,000 trips provided annually
  - ❖ 34% of all trips are healthcare related
  - ❖ 16% of all trips are work related
  - ❖ 14% of all trips for shopping

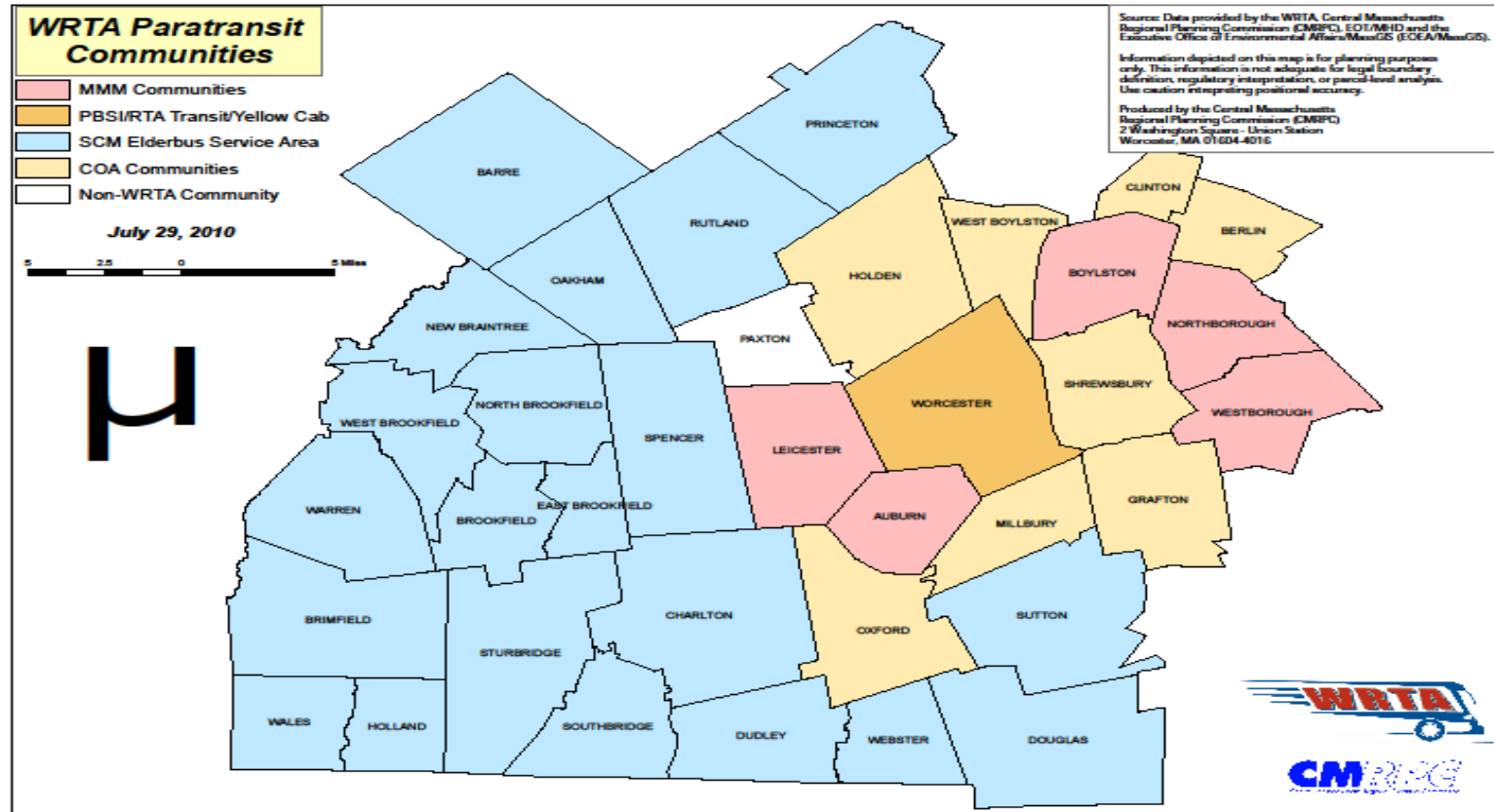


# Designated Service Area

- Barre
- Brimfield
- Brookfield
- Charlton
- Douglas
- Dudley
- East Brookfield
- Holland
- New Braintree
- North Brookfield
- Oakham
- Princeton
- Rutland
- Southbridge
- Spencer
- Sturbridge
- Sutton
- Wales
- Warren
- Webster
- West Brookfield



# Service Area



# General Service Overview

- 'Curb-to-curb' transit service
- Service operates Monday – Friday, generally from 8:00am to 4:00pm
- Available to residents 60 years of age and those with disabilities
- No restrictions on trip purpose
  - Medical, shopping, banking, etc.
- Must schedule trips 2 business days in advance



# Common Questions...

- When is the service available?
  - ❖ Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm
- Is the service only for medical appointments?
  - ❖ There are no restrictions pertaining to the trip purpose.
- What about out-of-town medical appointments?
  - ❖ Out-of-town medical trips provided three days per week.
- Is it expensive?
  - ❖ In-town trips are \$1.25; out-of town an additional \$0.25 per town traveled through.





# Resources Are Available

- Allows clients to remain self-sufficient within their home
  - Don't have to rely on family and friends for every day transit needs
- Helps clients maintain social contact within the community
  - No restrictions regarding trip purpose
- Can be a cost effective alternative to private car ownership as population ages
  - Partial solution to a growing issue



# Additional Information...

- Inquiries and Reservations
  - ❖ **1-800-321-0243**
- **SCMELDERBUS.ORG**
- **READYBUS.ORG**



# ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

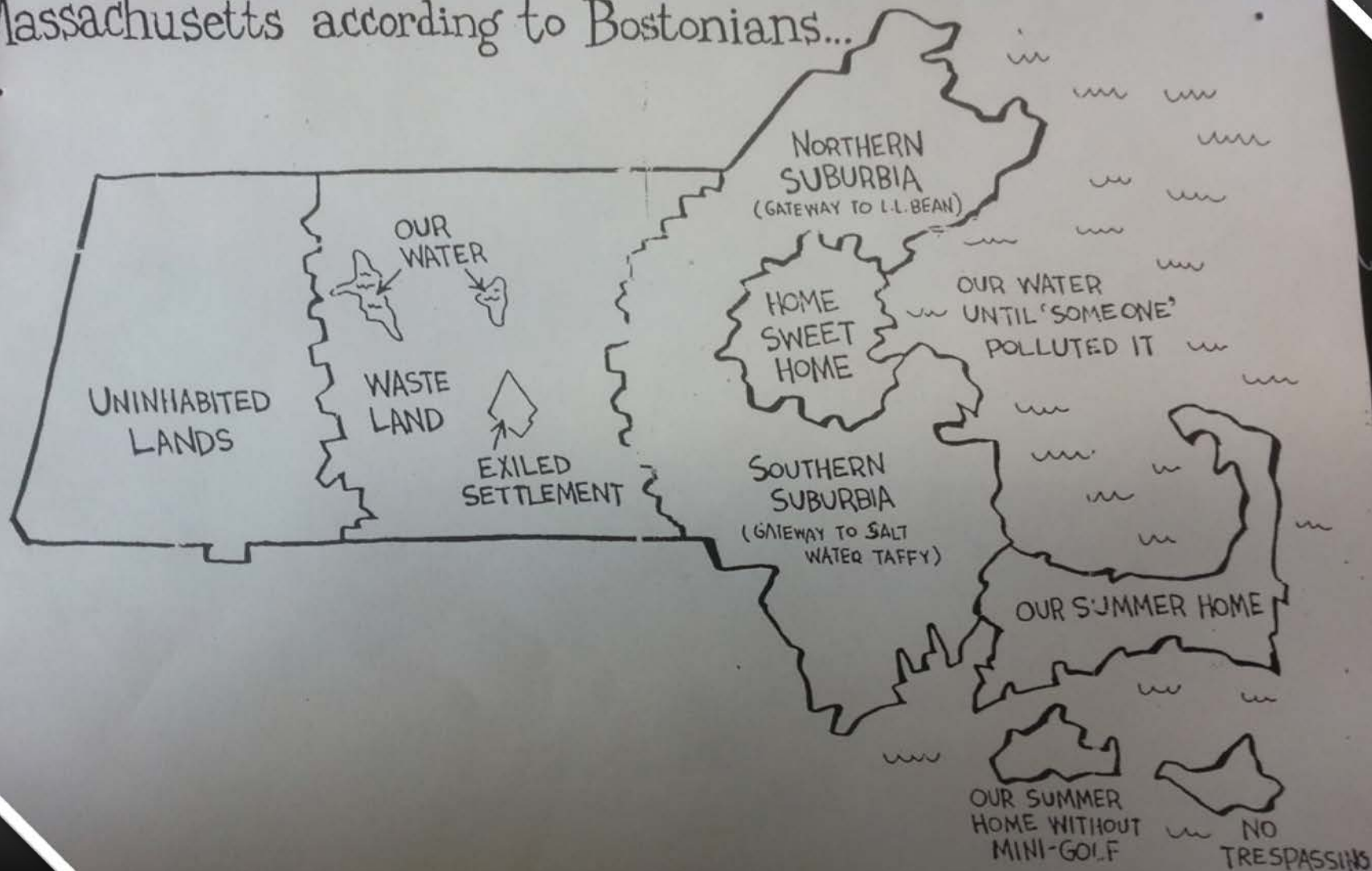
“Stepping” in front of the challenges



# OVERVIEW...

- ▶ Massachusetts according to Bostonians
- ▶ Getting to know the Berkshires
- ▶ Challenges to overcome
- ▶ “Stepping” in front of the challenges

# Massachusetts according to Bostonians...



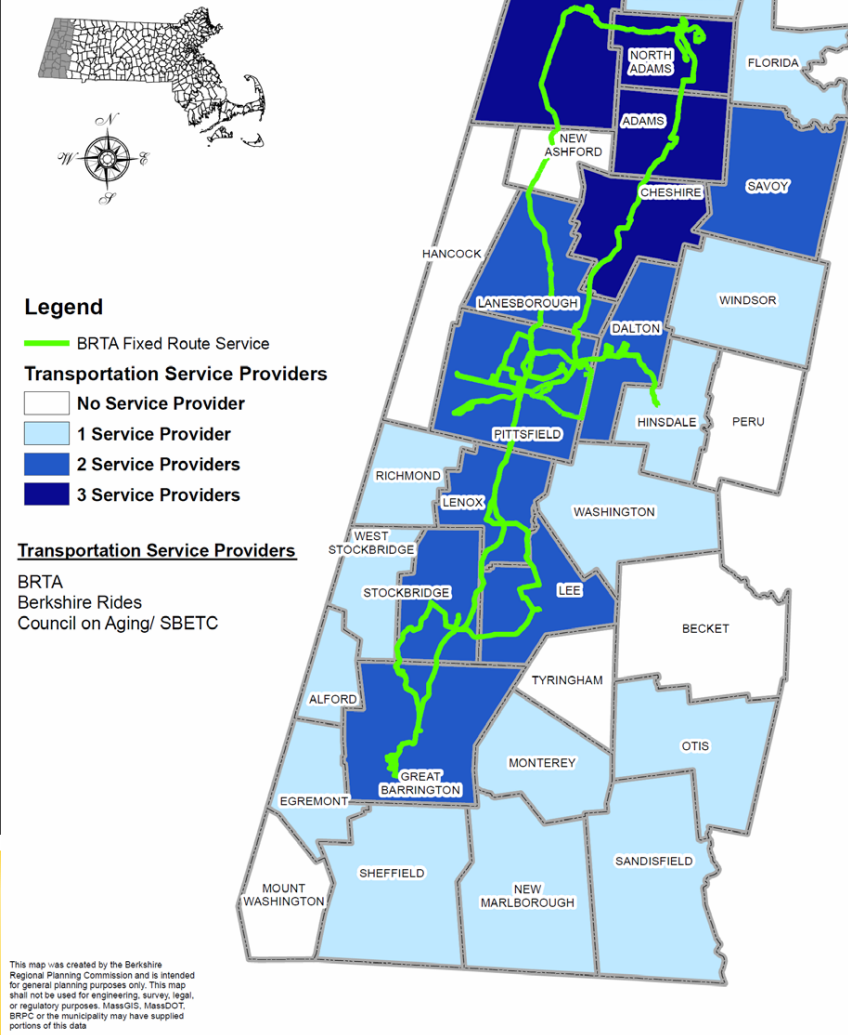


# GETTING TO KNOW BERKSHIRE COUNTY

- ▶ Border three different States on three of the four sides of our county
  - ~ Often there is a need to travel outside of state for services
- ▶ Second highest 65-plus population in the State
  - ▶ 24,386 persons 65 and older
  - ▶ By 2030 all but one town will be 20% or greater, Tyringham will be 54.8%
  - ▶ In 2010, the 55+ population within Berkshire County was 33.4% (state average is 26.1%)
- ▶ Poorest County in the State
- ▶ 946 sq miles with a population of 131,219 people
  - ▶ Hampden County (Springfield area) which has 634 sq. miles for 463,490 people
  - ▶ Franklin County which has 725 sq. miles for 71,372 people

# CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME:

## Transportation Services for Seniors



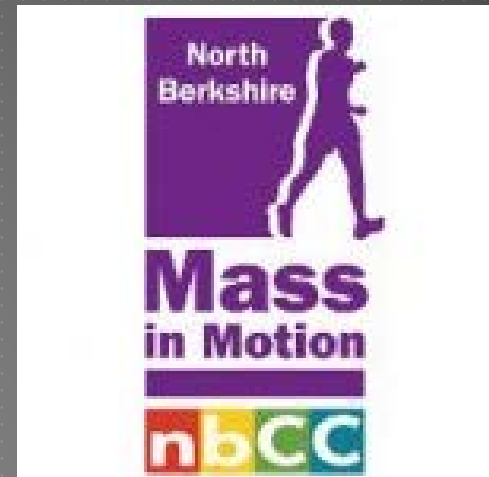
- ▶ Limited public transportation
- ▶ No Sunday service, “second shift” service
- ▶ Lack of public awareness around transportation options = lack of ridership
- ▶ Limited Municipal Support for COA vans
- ▶ Many, many more...

TALK ABOUT WHAT WE DON'T  
HAVE AT  
EVERY  
HUMAN SERVICE MEETING





# THANK YOU R.C.C & MASS IN MOTION



- Two recumbent bikes donated
- Created safe walking and biking loops that featured grocery stores, farmer's markets, etc.
- Produced brochures / maps
- Promoted bike / walking safety
- Safe routes to school with senior volunteers







# QUESTIONS?

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Adams Council on Aging

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# Thank You



*FriendshipWorks*

**Ending Elder Isolation**

**105 Chauncy Street, Boston, MA 02111**

**(617) 482-1510**

[www.fw4elders.org](http://www.fw4elders.org)







**FriendshipWorks was founded in 1984 to meet the needs of frail and isolated seniors. For the last 30 years, the organization has resolutely pursued its mission to reduce isolation, enhance the quality of life, and preserve the dignity of older adults in the Boston area.**



All of FriendshipWorks' services are provided by volunteers and are free to elders. Programs include:

- Medical Escort
- Friendly Visiting
- Friendly Helping
- La Cadena de Amistad
- PetPals

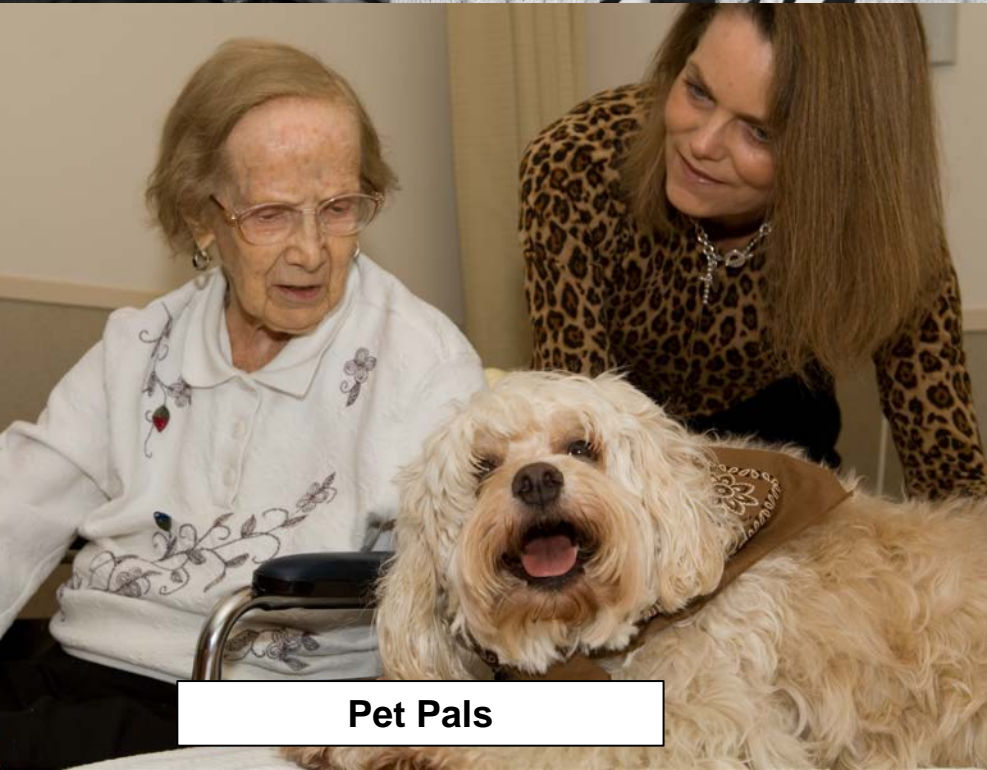




**Friendly Visiting**



**Friendly Helping**



**Pet Pals**



**La Cadena de Amistad**





FriendshipWorks provides volunteer escorts door-through-door for elders (60+) in Boston and Brookline. This is not a transportation program, but helps those who need extra assistance to access health care.



Elders require escorts for a range of needs that transportation options alone cannot meet, including:

- Physical disability (vision, mobility)
- Emotional support
- Hospital requirement for procedure (colonoscopy, cataracts, outpatient surgery)
- Language (Spanish)

# Who are the Volunteers?

Volunteers are interviewed, reference checked, CORI checked, and trained prior to starting as medical escorts. Many are:

- Retirees
- Pre-medical undergrad and graduate students
- Medical professionals





# Volunteers' Role

Volunteers provide extra support door-through-door, from the elder's home, to the hospital, during the appointment, and back home again. Support may include:

- Light physical assistance
- Listening to an elder's concerns and going over questions before the appointment
- Advocating for an elder at the hospital
- Sitting in on an appointment to take notes or ensure elder understands
- Making alternate arrangements if there are problems with transportation



# The Elders we Serve:

- **95%** live alone
- **80%** have functional limitations
- **64%** have 0 or just one friend/family member near by
- **72%** would otherwise be unable to attend appointments

**“I’m normally sad after my procedure and I feel tired and weak. But today, [the volunteer’s] smile lifted my spirits! You gave me hope!”**

***-Service recipient, June 2015***

**“What people! It makes you still believe in the human race.”**

***-Service recipient, Feb. 2015***

**“[My mother] was absolutely thrilled with the help today with her appointment. [The volunteer] was so kind and helpful with the wheelchair... she had a great day!”**

***-Adult child of recipient, April 2015***

# To Make a Referral

- Call Mark Byrne: (617) 482-1510 or Lillyana Hebbert for Spanish-speaking elders (617) 277-5248
- Provide contact information and specific details of appointment
- 2 weeks' notice is required



# To Volunteer:

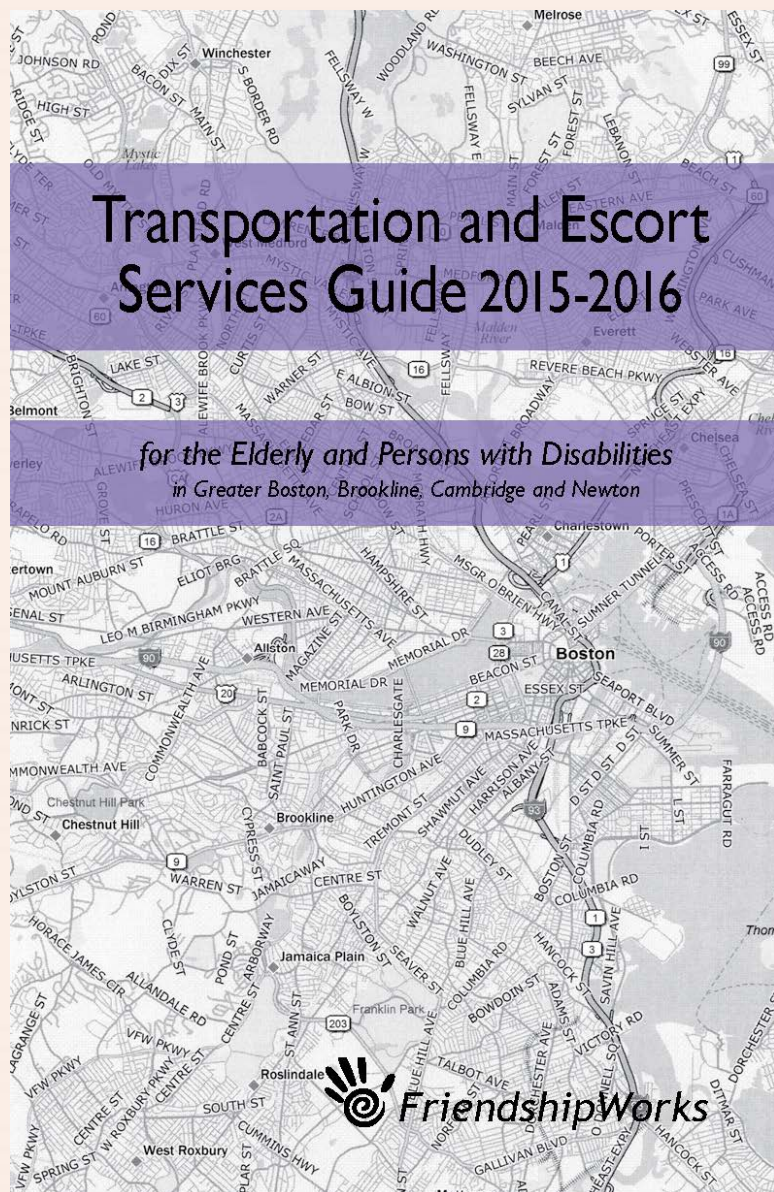
- Fill out an online application at:

<http://www.fw4elders.org/volunteer/apply-online/>

Or:

- Call the main office at (617) 482-1510 and we will happily mail you an application





This guide serves as a resource for agencies and elders in Greater Boston seeking transportation and/or escort options.

- To order a hard copy, please mail a check for \$5 to FriendshipWorks, 105 Chauncy Street, Ste. 801, Boston, MA 02111 (\$2 for each additional copy)
- The 2012 guide is available online at <http://www.fw4elders.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Transportation-Guide-2012.pdf>

# Non-Medical Escorts (Friendly Helping)

- RIDE eligibility screenings
- Housing appointments
- Attending special events



# Q&A

**FriendshipWorks**  
**105 Chauncy Street, Boston, MA**  
**02111**

**(617) 482-1510**

**[www.fw4elders.org](http://www.fw4elders.org)**