

## Hilltown RCC Meeting

### CPT-HST Plan Outreach

January 27, 2020

#### Hilltown Community Development Corporation

On Monday, January 27, 2020, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission presented concepts from the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan to the Hilltown Regional Coordinating Council for community transportation (Hilltown RCC). The Hilltown RCC represents Becket, Blandford, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Granville, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Plainfield, Russell, Southampton, Southwick, Tolland, Westhampton, and Worthington.

Topics within the presentation included:

- Funding Sources
- Identified Populations of Transportation Need
  - Individuals with disabilities
  - Individuals over 65
  - Individuals with low-income
- Traditional Transportation Services
- Medical Transportation Services
- Roadway Infrastructure to spur better transportation access

Next, the RCC was asked to consider all these concepts and discuss gaps in services with three questions:

- Do you feel that certain populations are left out of certain services?
- Do you feel any services don't work as intended?
- Do you feel that new services could better serve certain populations?

Lastly, the RCC was asked to add to or amend the Hilltown RCC Transportation Inventory of 2020.

<p><b>Identified Transportation Concerns</b></p>
<p>Transportation for the general public  <b>(No reasonable transportation services exist for the general public that does not have access to personal vehicles. The community understands concerns about geography and population that would preclude traditional public transportation options.)</b></p>
<p>Transportation for individuals with disabilities  <b>(While transportation does exist through a partnership between the Hilltown CDC and FRTA, this service is extended only to individuals over the age of 60. Individuals with disabilities, but under 60 years old, do not have a public transportation option.)</b></p>
<p>Transportation for youth  <b>(For the youth within the community seeking employment, they are dependent on access to personal vehicles or family members for commuting. Existing rules imposed by funding of transportation services preclude youth from utilizing public transportation.)</b></p>
<p>Access to Area Agencies on Aging and Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Services  <b>(Both Area Agencies on Aging and VNA services are integral to the wellbeing of seniors and those with disabilities. Hilltown Elder Network (HEN) to provide these in home services to Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Peru, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg, and Worthington. HEN is a service of the Hilltown Community Development Corporation and is funded through Community Development Block Grants through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, allocations from the Town of Williamsburg, patient receipts, and Highland Valley Elder Services (the local Area Agency on Aging). The community feels that funding for this program is not as stable as the needs being met by the program.)</b></p>
<p>Hilltown Community Health Center (HCHC) Transportation  <b>(Due to recent developments in the interpretation of insurance policy, HCHC has discontinued their vital transportation service patients to their medical appointments. HCHC provides much of the health services within the Hilltown region. Without transportation, many of their patients have to find other means to get to appointments.)</b></p>
<p>Funding Sources  <b>(Concerns brought by the Rural Policy Plan of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are consistent with concerns brought by the Hilltown RCC. A first goal of that plan is to provide an equitable adequate and sustainable funding source to ensure a safe, reliable, accessible, and resilient rural transportation infrastructure. A second goal aims to develop and fund sustainable, efficient, and convenient transportation options in rural areas to provide optimal mobility and accessibility to goods, services and employment.</b></p> <p><b>Rules imposed by funding sources are extensive and difficult to navigate. Under certain circumstances, this inhibits the ability to perform certain transportation services. Regulation prohibits the use of contractors to provide transportation with personal vehicles. The Volunteer Driver Pool is made up of employees rather than contractors, increasing the expense of services.)</b></p>
<p>Transportation Infrastructure  <b>(The act of crossing the street is dangerous within some of the more populated downtown areas. The most dangerous are through roads. These roads are more heavily travelled by those looking to leapfrog smaller towns. Without crosswalks or sidewalks residents must navigate roads with high speed and obstructed visibility. There is some resistance to sidewalks and crosswalks due to the ongoing maintenance costs.</b></p> <p><b>Along with roadway infrastructure, cell service determines the potential for newer mobility as a</b></p>

**service or on-demand transit options. Many of the Hilltowns have intermittent cellular service.)**

Gaps in coordination between traditional town boundaries

**(Regional Transit Authority boundaries are town based. Assessments are paid by each town based on transit usage including van service. To keep cost reasonable, residents of towns that fall within the FRTA region are unable to take trips to Springfield. Likewise, PVTA cannot provide service within these towns without an additional assessment paid by each interested town.)**