CHAPTER 14 TRANSPORTATION EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

This chapter provides information and analysis of transportation policies and services necessary to assess the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization compliance with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 2000d) and USDOT’s implementing regulations. Title VI provides that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Title VI prohibits discrimination by recipients of Federal financial assistance on the basis of race, color, and national origin, including the denial of meaningful access for Limited English proficient (LEP) persons. Under DOT’s Title VI regulations, recipients of Federal financial assistance are prohibited from using “criteria or methods of administering its program which have the effect of subjecting individuals to discrimination based on their race, color, or national origin”.

REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 – SECTION 504
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq., states, in relevant part, that:

“...no otherwise qualified individuals with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

This requirement applies to each recipient of Federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and to each program or activity that receives or benefits from such assistance.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) OF 1990
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted on July 26, 1990, and provides comprehensive civil rights protections to persons with disabilities in the areas of employment, state and local government services, and access to public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications. The ADA is companion civil rights legislation to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
CIVIL RIGHTS RESTORATION ACT AND APPLYING TITLE VI
The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 clarified the broad, institution-wide application of Title VI. Title VI encompasses all of the operations and programs of covered entities without regard to whether specific portions of the covered program or activity are federally funded. Recipients are responsible for ensuring that all activities comply with Title VI.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
Environmental justice (EJ) requires identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects of the NMMPO’s programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens. This includes the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process. In 1994, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898, which mandated that each Federal agency develop an agency-wide EJ strategy that identifies and addresses disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. A Federal agency's EJ strategy must list programs, policies, planning, and participation processes that, at a minimum:

- Promote enforcement of all health and environmental authorities in areas with minority and low-income populations;
- Ensure greater public participation;
- Improve research and data collection relating to the health and environment of minority and low-income populations; and
- Identify differential patterns of consumption of natural resources among minority and low-income populations.

In 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency. This order directs Federal agencies and recipients of Federal funds to improve access to services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The order references Title VI and is relevant to Environmental Justice because some minorities may not speak English as a first language.

In August 2011, Federal agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Justice and Executive Order 12898 (EJ MOU), reinforcing and reinvigorating the Federal Government's commitment to EJ. The new EJ MOU required agencies to revise their EJ strategies, as appropriate, and to publicize the revisions. As a result, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) developed a new EJ Strategy and a revised EJ Order in 2012, and the operating administrations developed compatible guidance.
MASSDOT ADA/SECTION 504 TRANSITION PLAN

In 2017, MassDOT published an ADA/Section 504 Transition Plan for Public Rights of Way aimed at guiding changes to planning and implementation of necessary programs, activities and facilities over the next several years. This transition plan expands on previous work and reflects the reorganization of MassDOT into a single transportation organization. Given the complexity and need for a deliberate effort to follow through on the agency’s self-evaluation, the document sets forth all of the elements necessary to establish a final and executable multi-year transition plan. The plan commits MassDOT to the cultivation and maintenance of policies, programs, and facilities that ensure equal access to all who work, reside in, or visit the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

NMMPO COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Agencies that receive Federal funding - such as MPOs, State DOTs, and public transit operators - are responsible for involving traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations in transportation planning, and complying with relevant Federal agency guidance. Federal funding recipients can incorporate EJ into their planning activities through a variety of ways, but some common methods include:

- Developing EJ procedures, goals, and performance measures relating to the agency’s mission;
- Enhancing public involvement activities to ensure the meaningful participation of minority and low-income populations; and
- Analyzing and documenting how policies, processes, and planning products impact minority and low-income populations.

The NMMPO complies with these requirements through its Public Participation Plan, Limited English Proficiency Plan, and its submittals to MassDOT and the federal transportation agencies under Title VI. The preparation of this RTP involved extensive outreach to the low income and minority communities throughout the region, as discussed in previous sections of this plan.

The NMMPO reviews all projects with an appreciation for the benefits and burdens they provide to individual communities, low-income residents and minority populations. Where there is a change to the way services are provided, there has been a major effort by the NMMPO to reach out to the business community, political establishment, civic groups, special interest groups, neighborhood groups, social service agencies, economic development stakeholders and residents to solicit feedback. The Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization maintains a log of all complaints received by the agency. To date, the NMMPO has not received any complaints nor has it been named in any lawsuits that claim discrimination on the base of race, color, or national origin.
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS

Environmental justice as related to transportation planning can be defined by three overriding principles:

1. Avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations;
2. Ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and
3. Prevent the denial of, reduction, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.

The NMMPO integrates these environmental justice principles into its comprehensive, cooperative and continuing (3-C) transportation planning process by identifying low-income and minority population areas and examining proposed transportation projects within these areas. In order to address the three environmental justice principles, the following policy statement has been developed by the NMMPO, in accordance with federal guidelines relative to Environmental Justice, Title VI and Limited English Proficiency requirements:

“In order to comply with 49 CFR Section 21.9(d), the NMMPO posts information for the public regarding their Title VI obligations and the protections against discrimination afforded to the public by Title VI. All meetings are posted in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Notices of meetings, document availability, and public comment periods are posted with each City/Town Clerk, advertised in regional newspapers, and distributed via the mailing list outlined in the Public Participation Plan. This information is also posted on the NMCOG website, www.nmcog.org.

The NMMPO conducts an ongoing consultation process with low-income and minority residents and with groups representing their interests, such as Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI), the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA) and the Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA). NMMPO staff also meets regularly with economic development organizations, workforce development entities and other groups charged with providing community support, job training, housing, employment placement and other services for low-income and minority residents. The input provided through this process is incorporated into the transportation planning process and considered during the development of the certification documents.

The RTP for the Northern Middlesex Region outlines the process utilized by the NMMPO to ensure compliance with federal requirements. Title VI and Environmental Justice concerns are also considered during project development and permitting, as well as during the planning process.
The following measures are undertaken in the Northern Middlesex region to ensure conformity to Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements:

- A demographic profile of the metropolitan area is developed that includes identification of socio-economic groups, including low-income and minority populations, as covered by the Executive Order on Environmental Justice and Title VI provisions.
- An assessment relative to the distribution of transportation policy and project impacts on affected socio-economic groups is undertaken for the required federal certification documents, utilizing racial/ethnic information from the U.S. Census and income information from the most recent American Community Survey. The objective of the analysis is to ensure that the needs of low-income and minority populations are identified in the planning process for the region.

The region’s Public Participation Plan includes strategies for engaging minority and low-income populations in the transportation decision-making process. In the event a proposed improvement is found to have negative impacts, appropriate mitigation is developed to offset any adverse effects.”

On October 30, 1997, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued Policy Directive 15, Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity, which established the minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity to be used in Federal statistics programs, administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance. The six (6) minimum categories are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White.

### 2010 POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

Table 14.1 on the following page highlights the change in the racial and ethnic composition of the Greater Lowell region between 2000 and 2010. The number of white residents decreased by 4.85% between 2000 and 2010, and their overall share of the region’s population decreased by nearly six percentage points from 85.05% in 2000 to 79.33% in 2010. Black or African American residents in the Greater Lowell region increased by 71.19%, from 5,709 in 2000 to 9,773 in 2010. This racial group’s overall share of the regional population increased from 2.03% in 2000 to 3.41% in 2010. The relatively small racial cohort of American Indians or Alaska Natives increased by 18.2% between 2000 (434) and 2010 (513), but its overall share of the total population increased slightly from .15% to .18%. The Asian population in the Greater Lowell region increased by 41.85%, from 22,597 in 2000 to 32,054 in 2010, and its overall share of the region’s total population increased by three percentage points from 8.04% to 11.17%. The smallest racial group in the Greater Lowell region, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, decreased from 75 residents in 2000 to 69 residents in 2010, a decline of 8%. Other or Multiple Races increased by 27.87% between 2000 and 2010 and currently represent 5.89% of the Greater Lowell population. The Hispanic or Latino population in Greater Lowell increased from 17,028 residents in 2000 to 22,704
residents in 2010, thereby increasing by one-third and representing 5% of the region’s population in 2010.

In terms of racial and ethnic breakout, the City of Lowell remains the most diverse community in the region. While more than 60% of its population is comprised of white residents, the City has significant Black/African American (6.8%), Asian (20.2%); other and two or more races (12.38%) populations, as well as a sizable Latino/Hispanic (17.27%) community. In 2010, the City of Lowell comprised 37.1% of the total population in the Greater Lowell region and was home to 28.2% of the region’s white population. The City of Lowell is an immigrant community and home to a large percentage of the region’s minority population – Black/African American (74.1%), American Indian (56.9%), Asian (67.1%), Hawaiian (63.8%), ‘Other’ and ‘Two or More races’ (78%) and Latino/Hispanic (81%). Within the suburban communities, there were a greater number of minority residents in Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut and Westford in 2010 than in 2000. Table 14.2 on the following page summarizes the 2000 and 2010 populations by race and Hispanic/Latino origin in each community.

Table 14.1: Population Change in Greater Lowell by Race and Hispanic Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Origin</th>
<th>2000 Population</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>2010 Population</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>239,190</td>
<td>85.05%</td>
<td>227,587</td>
<td>79.33%</td>
<td>-4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>5,709</td>
<td>2.03%</td>
<td>9,773</td>
<td>3.41%</td>
<td>71.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>22,597</td>
<td>8.04%</td>
<td>32,054</td>
<td>11.17%</td>
<td>41.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Race or Two or More Races</td>
<td>13,220</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
<td>16,905</td>
<td>5.89%</td>
<td>27.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>281,225</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>286,901</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census
Table 14.2: 2010 Population by Race and Hispanic/Latino Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black or African American</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaska Native</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</th>
<th>Other Race/Two or More races</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino (any race)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>40,243</td>
<td>36,285</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>2,194</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>1,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>33,802</td>
<td>29,944</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2,846</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>29,457</td>
<td>26,610</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1,186</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>1,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>3,179</td>
<td>3,031</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>106,519</td>
<td>64,240</td>
<td>7,238</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>21,513</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13,192</td>
<td>18,396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepperell</td>
<td>11,497</td>
<td>11,082</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>28,961</td>
<td>27,327</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyngsborough</td>
<td>11,292</td>
<td>10,390</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westford</td>
<td>21,951</td>
<td>18,678</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2,762</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>286,901</strong></td>
<td><strong>227,587</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,773</strong></td>
<td><strong>513</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,054</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,905</strong></td>
<td><strong>22,704</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

In evaluating the minority populations by Census Tract, the average percentage population for each racial and ethnic group in the region was compared to the percentages within each Census Tract. Based upon this analysis, the areas with significant concentrations of minority racial and ethnic groups were located and mapped. The average regional percentage for each minority racial or ethnic group was as follows, according to the 2010 U.S. Census:

- Black/African American – 3.25%
- American Indian – 0.17%
- Asian – 10.47%
- Native Hawaiian – 0.02%
- Other and Two or More races – 5.43%
- Hispanic/Latino – 7.26%

Twenty-four (24) of the twenty-five (25) Census Tracts in the City of Lowell and the several Census Tracts in the suburban communities exceed the regional average for at least one racial or ethnic group. The areas within the suburban communities are detailed in Table 14.3 on the following page, and include the entire towns of Dunstable and Westford. In total, nineteen (19) of the thirty-six (36) Census Tracts within in the region’s suburbs contain concentrations of minority populations. These areas are also shown on Maps 14.1 to 14.7 on the following pages.
Table 14.3: Census Tracts with Minorities or Ethnic Groups Greater than the Regional Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Census Tract</th>
<th>Race/Origin</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3162.01</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>3162.02</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3164</td>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>4.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3165</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3171.02</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>3172.01</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3173.01</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>14.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3141.01</td>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>4.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>3142</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3143.01</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3143.02</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>Town-wide</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3281</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepperell</td>
<td>3271.01</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3271.02</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3271.03</td>
<td>Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>3154.02</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westford</td>
<td>Town-wide</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>12.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3181</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>16.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3183</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3184</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 U.S. Census

Note: Regional averages exceeded all Lowell Census Tracts
CHAPTER 14 TRANSPORTATION EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Map 14.1: 2010 U.S. Census Tracts in the Northern Middlesex Region

Resources:
- US Census 2010 (tracts)
- MassGIS (town boundaries)

Data provided on this map is not sufficient for explicit boundary determination or regulatory interpretation.

Produced by NMCOD 8/1/2019
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Map 14.2: Black or African American Population in the Northern Middlesex Region
Map 14.4: Asian Population in the Northern Middlesex Region
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LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS

In comparing the regional income figures in the Greater Lowell region, staff utilized the 2009-2013 and 2013-2017 American Community Surveys developed by the U.S. Census Bureau. Three major income indices were examined: Per Capita Income, Median Household Income and Median Family Income, as well as poverty data. This data was used to compare the Greater Lowell region with statewide and national averages.

PER CAPITA INCOME

The Per Capita Income for the Northern Middlesex region increased from an average of $31,065 in 2009-2013 to $37,016 in 2013-2017, an increase of 19%. Per capita income in the Greater Lowell region increased at a greater rate than the United States (15%), and was on par with the Commonwealth’s growth. While the per capita income in the Greater Lowell region continues to exceed the per capita income at the national level ($31,177), it lags behind incomes for Massachusetts ($39,913).

Within the Northern Middlesex region, four communities experienced per capita income growth rates higher than the regional growth rate – Billerica (21.1%), Chelmsford (22.9%), Dunstable (43.2%), and Tewksbury (24.7%). The City of Lowell had the lowest per capita income in the region at $23,768 in 2017, which is 76% of the national per capital income. The highest per capita income figures were in Westford ($51,526) and Dunstable ($57,005).

The per capita income figures for 2009-2013 and 2013-2017 in the Greater Lowell region, individual communities, United States, and Massachusetts are summarized in Table 14.4.

Table 14.4: Per Capita Income Trends in the Northern Middlesex Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/ Region</th>
<th>2009-2013</th>
<th>2013-2017</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>$31,659</td>
<td>$38,383</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>$40,340</td>
<td>$49,564</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>$31,243</td>
<td>$36,323</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>$39,799</td>
<td>$57,005</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>$22,831</td>
<td>$23,768</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepperell</td>
<td>$35,671</td>
<td>$40,919</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>$33,045</td>
<td>$41,193</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyngsborough</td>
<td>$36,789</td>
<td>$43,787</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westford</td>
<td>$44,872</td>
<td>$51,526</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>$31,065</td>
<td>$37,016</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>$33,460</td>
<td>$39,913</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$27,041</td>
<td>$31,177</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The median household income for the region increased by 9% from $74,336 in 2009-2013 to $81,061 in 2013-2017. This percentage increase was below both the national (12.1%) and the state (32.40%) averages during this time period. The median household income for the region ($81,061) in 2013-2017 was greater than the State ($74,167) and the nation ($57,652). Median household income grew in each community, with the exception of Lowell where it declined by 2.5%. Dunstable ($138,700) had the highest median household income in 2013-2017, while the City of Lowell had the lowest median household income at $48,581.

The median household income figures for 2009-2013 and 2013-2017 in the Greater Lowell region and individual communities, United States and Massachusetts are summarized below in Table 14.5.

Table 14.5: Median Household Income Trends in the Northern Middlesex Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Region</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>$87,048</td>
<td>$99,453</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>$89,022</td>
<td>$106,432</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>$71,480</td>
<td>$86,697</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>$109,333</td>
<td>$138,700</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>$49,816</td>
<td>$48,581</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepperell</td>
<td>$88,185</td>
<td>$90,029</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>$83,709</td>
<td>$93,817</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyngsborough</td>
<td>$98,413</td>
<td>$101,303</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westford</td>
<td>$119,081</td>
<td>$138,006</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>$74,336</td>
<td>$81,061</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>$64,496</td>
<td>$74,167</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$51,425</td>
<td>$57,652</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME

The median family income in the region increased by 15.5%, from an average of $87,096 in 2009-2013 to $100,581 in 2013-2017. This increase in median family income outpaced the 13.6% increase at the national level, but lagged behind the 16.4% increase in the State. The greatest percentage change reported was in Dunstable (33.9%). The City of Lowell (1.1%) and Town of Pepperell (0.9%) experienced little growth in family income. Similar to the median household income, Westford ($152,239) and Dunstable ($155,231) had the highest median family incomes in the region, while the City of Lowell had the lowest median family income at $57,091.
The median family income figures for 2009-2013 and 2013-2017 for the Greater Lowell region and individual communities, United States, and Massachusetts are summarized in Table 14.6.

**Table 14.6: Median Family Income Trends in the Northern Middlesex Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community/Region</th>
<th>2009-2013</th>
<th>2013-2017</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>$94,346</td>
<td>$107,454</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>$108,494</td>
<td>$133,677</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>$86,881</td>
<td>$99,591</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>$115,964</td>
<td>$155,231</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>$56,494</td>
<td>$57,091</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepperell</td>
<td>$103,320</td>
<td>$104,265</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>$96,059</td>
<td>$111,449</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyngsborough</td>
<td>$104,303</td>
<td>$120,579</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westford</td>
<td>$127,210</td>
<td>$152,239</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>$87,096</td>
<td>$100,581</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>$80,822</td>
<td>$94,110</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$62,363</td>
<td>$70,850</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Poverty Line

Between 2009-2013 and 2013-2017, the number of residents living below the poverty line in the Greater Lowell region increased 56%, with Tyngsborough increasing by 267%. During the same time period, the number of residents living below the poverty line decreased in Chelmsford (-6.4%) and Dunstable (-59%), as shown in Table 14.7.

**Table 14.7: Northern Middlesex Region - Residents Below Poverty Line**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>40,932</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>42,791</td>
<td>1,779</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>88.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>34,199</td>
<td>1,346</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>35,067</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>-6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>29,968</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>31,113</td>
<td>2,221</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>160.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>3,255</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>3,337</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>-59.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>107,466</td>
<td>17,550</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>110,964</td>
<td>23,776</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14.7: Northern Middlesex Region - Residents Below Poverty Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pepperell</td>
<td>11,645</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>12,049</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tewksbury</td>
<td>29,429</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>30,666</td>
<td>1,621</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyngsborough</td>
<td>11,675</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>12,232</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>267.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westford</td>
<td>22,458</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>24,087</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>122.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>291,027</td>
<td>22,763</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>302,306</td>
<td>35,532</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


PROJECT ANALYSIS

The projects recommended in the RTP were analyzed in relation to their impacts on the minority and low-income communities. Analysis of potential impacts relied on the three (3) criteria mentioned at the beginning of the chapter:

- Disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental impacts to low-income/minority areas;
- Minimizing/blocking access of minority/low-income areas to the transportation system; and
- Neglect of the transportation system in minority/low-income areas or a reduction or delay in the receipt of benefits to those areas.

As part of the public outreach process for the RTP Update, NMCOG staff met with local organizations to identify the transportation needs of the minority and low-income populations. Key findings reported through this outreach effort include the following:

- There is a need for longer hours of bus service and more frequent service, especially during the evenings and on weekends;
- Many low-income residents are employed in the service and retail sectors and would benefit from Sunday bus service and service on holidays;
- There is a need to extend service to new areas, including the Pheasant Lane Mall and along Pawtucket Boulevard in Lowell, as well as to improve connectivity to neighboring transit providers;
- There is a need for improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including additional bike racks and sidewalks that are ADA accessible; and
• Public communication and access to information should be improved through the use of social media networks.

An evaluation of the Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) fixed route bus system found that the system serves the areas with the highest population density, including areas with concentrations of minority and low-income residents. In terms of the distribution of routes, hours of operation, equipment condition, and other operational characteristics, minority and low-income neighborhoods are served as well as the rest of the service area. Additionally, the equipment is rotated throughout the system so that the older equipment is utilized on all routes equally.

A similar analysis of the highway projects and programs recommended in the RTP showed that the condition of existing facilities and the future capital projects contained in the plan are equitable throughout the region. It has been determined that these projects do not have a disproportionate negative impact on low-income or minority neighborhoods.

NMMPO staff delineated the RTP project recommendations on a regional map to identify those projects in the designated environmental justice or low income areas. A project was considered to be within an environmental justice area if 50% or more of the project length or service area was within the environmental justice or low income area boundary or if a project was on the boundary of the environmental justice or low income area. Table 14.8 on page 14-28 provides a list of the recommended projects within the environmental justice areas, and Maps 14.8 and 14.9 show the location of these projects in relation to the environmental justice areas.

RTP projects and their associated costs were compared in order to assess the equity of project distribution across the region. The current RTP identifies nineteen (19) fiscally constrained projects, of which ten (10) or 53% are located in low income and/or minority population environmental justice areas. The total funding for the financially constrained project recommendations outlined in the RTP is $87,108,150, of which $51,605,974 (59%) is recommended for projects within the environmental justice areas.

In addition, eight regionally significant projects, outside of the financially constrained portion of the Plan, are located in environmental justice areas, as shown in Table 14.8 and on Maps 14.8 and 14.9. This includes major infrastructure projects like the Rourke Bridge Replacement project in Lowell and the extension of commuter rail to New Hampshire.
Table 14.8: RTP Recommended Projects located in Minority and/or Low Income EJ areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>MassDOT Project #</th>
<th>NMCOG Project ID</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Project Cost</th>
<th>RTP Rec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Financially Constrained Recommendation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunstable</td>
<td>608603</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>Dunstable-Improvements On Main Street (Route 113), From Pleasant Street To 750 Ft East Of Westford Street</td>
<td>$4,895,986</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>607885</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Lowell-Pedestrian Walkway &amp; Bicycle Connection At Pawtucket Falls Overlook From Vandenberg Esplanade To School Street (Statewide CMAQ)</td>
<td>$2,232,100</td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dracut</td>
<td>608350</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Dracut- Improvements On Nashua Road</td>
<td>$5,210,396</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>605178</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>Billerica- Rehabilitation On Boston Road (Route 3a) From Billerica Town Center To Floyd Street</td>
<td>$10,910,825</td>
<td>2022 / 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>608227</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>Billerica-Yankee Doodle Bike Path Construction (Phase I)</td>
<td>$9,673,932</td>
<td>2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>605966</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Lowell-Reconstruction &amp; Related Work On VFW Highway</td>
<td>$6,215,865</td>
<td>2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>609250</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Billerica-Intersection Improvements At Boston Road (Route 3a), Lexington Street And Glad Valley Road</td>
<td>$3,003,500</td>
<td>2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>604694</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Lowell- Connector Reconstruction, From Thorndike Street To Gorham Street</td>
<td>$3,409,870</td>
<td>2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>602945</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Billerica-Middlesex Canal Enhancement</td>
<td>$3,003,500</td>
<td>2029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>609050</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>Lowell-Church Street 2-Way Conversion</td>
<td>$3,050,000</td>
<td>2029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regionally Significant Recommendation (Illustrative, not constrained)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>Upper Pawtucket Canalway Construction Bridge Rehabilitation, B-12-003, ST 3A (Boston Road) over Concord River</td>
<td>$9,000,000</td>
<td>2030-2034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billerica</td>
<td>605503</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>Rourke Bridge Replacement, L-15-088, Wood Street Extension over Boston and Maine Railroad and Merrimack River</td>
<td>$4,140,000</td>
<td>2025-2029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>607887</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Rourke Bridge Replacement, L-15-088, Wood Street Extension over Boston and Maine Railroad and Merrimack River</td>
<td>$69,000,000</td>
<td>2030-2034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>Lowell Connector Bridge over I-495 B-11</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>2034-2039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>Beaver Street Bridge over Beaver Brook Rehabilitation</td>
<td>$4,000,000</td>
<td>2034-2039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>Boylston Street Bridge Rehab over I-495</td>
<td>$8,000,000</td>
<td>2034-2039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell/</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>Extension of Commuter Rail to Nashua with new station and area roadway Improvements</td>
<td>$120,000,000</td>
<td>2034-2039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelmsford/</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell/Tyngsborough</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>Extension of Commuter Rail to Nashua with new station and area roadway Improvements</td>
<td>$120,000,000</td>
<td>2034-2039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell/</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>I-495 Mainline Widening from Westford to Tewksbury</td>
<td>$100,000,000</td>
<td>2034-2039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Westford/Chelmsford/lowell/Tewksbury</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This page intentionally left blank.
Map 14.8: Environmental Justice Populations Relative to Regional Transportation Plan Projects (2010 U.S. Census)
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Map 14.9: Environmental Justice Populations in Lowell Relative to Regional Transportation Plan Projects (2010 U.S. Census)

* RTP projects are labeled by project number. See Table X.X for RTP project listing.
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LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

The NMMPO developed and adopted a Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP) in 2014. The intent of the LEP plan is to ensure that residents of the region who do not speak, understand or read English proficiently have access to the planning process and published information, and that public notification is provided to these individuals. The production of multilingual publications and documents and/or interpretation at meetings/events is provided upon request, based on current laws and regulations.

Strong evidence of compliance with Title VI under the LEP “Safe Harbor” provision involves providing written translations of vital documents for each language group of LEP persons that constitutes 5% of the population or 1,000 persons, whichever is less, eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered by the recipient. If that 5% is comprised of less than 50 persons, then translation of vital documents can be provided orally. Also, under the “Safe Harbor” provision, oral translation of non-vital documents is deemed sufficient to meet the requirements of Title VI.

As a recipient of federal funding, the NMMPO takes reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to information and services. A four factor analysis was undertaken by the NMMPO to determine the level and extent of language-assistance measures needed to ensure meaningful access to programs, activities and services taking into account the following:

1. The number and percent of LEP persons in the region who are served by the program;
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with the program;
3. The importance to the LEP person of accessing the particular program or service; and
4. The resources available to the NMMPO and the costs involved.

In order to understand the language assistance needs within the region, an analysis of U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data was performed. Within the Northern Middlesex region, 16% of individuals five years of age or older speak Spanish, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Chinese or Khmer at home.

The analysis indicates that region-wide, 10% individuals age five and over speak English less than “very well”. Of those residents who speak Spanish at home, 40% speak English less than “very well”. Of those who speak Vietnamese at home, 61% speak English less than “very well”. For those individuals who speak Portuguese at home, 44% speak English less than “very well”, and for those individuals that speak Khmer at home, 43% speak English less than “very well”. Of those who speak Chinese at home, 43% speak English less than “very well”.

Lowell’s population is known for its rich cultural and linguistic diversity. Clearly, the greatest need for language assistance is within the City, where 35% of the population five years of age or older live in a household where Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Vietnamese or Khmer are spoken. Of these individuals,
approximately 50% report that they speak English less than “very well”. Of those residing in a household that speaks Spanish, 44% speak English less than “very well”. For those individuals who speak Portuguese, at home 52% speak English less than “very well”. Of those individuals residing in a household where Khmer is spoken, 52% report that they speak English less than “very well”. Of those individuals residing in a Vietnamese-speaking household, 65% speak English less than “very well”. For those residing in a household where Chinese is spoken, 54% speak English less than “very well”.

Based upon the analysis, frequency of contact with LEP individuals and resources available to the NMMPO, and associated costs, it was determined that language assistance will be provided for LEP individuals through the translation of some key materials, as well as through oral language interpretation when necessary and possible. Translation of all NMMPO plans and materials is not possible due to cost restrictions. However, the NMMPO will provide the following translatable written materials:

**NMCOG WEBSITE** - This free service, powered by Google Translate program, allows the NMMPO and NMCOG website to be translated for users into 80 languages including the five NMMPO regional language groups of, Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese.

**CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS** - An Executive Summary for the following key documents will be made available in Spanish, Portuguese Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese:

- The Regional Transportation Plan;
- The Unified Planning Work Program; and
- The Transportation Improvement Program.

**OUTREACH MATERIALS** – Spanish, Portuguese Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese language outreach materials will be utilized whenever possible.

**ORAL TRANSLATION SERVICES** - The NMMPO will provide limited oral language services to Spanish, Portuguese Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese speaking LEP individuals upon request. In order to provide these services, the Language Access Coordinator will do the following:

- Maintain a list of the points of contact where a LEP person interacts with the organization. At this time, it is anticipated that the key points of contact for LEP individuals are the front-desk receptionist and the NMMPO transportation staff performing outreach activities.
- Inventory staff language capabilities.

**TRAINING** - In order to establish meaningful access to information and services for LEP individuals, employees in public contact positions, and those who will serve as translators or interpreters will be properly trained. Such training will be developed to ensure that staff is fully aware of LEP policies and
procedures and are effectively able to work in person and/or by telephone with LEP individuals. NMMPO staff will be included in this training, even if they do not interact regularly with LEP persons, to ensure that they are fully aware of and understand the plan so they can reinforce its importance and ensure its implementation by staff.

**PROVIDING NOTICE OF AVAILABLE LANGUAGE SERVICE TO LEP PERSONS** - The NMMPO has established the following methods to inform Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese speaking LEP individuals, supporting organizations, as well as the general public, of available no-fee LEP services:

- **POSTING SIGNS** – A sign, in Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese, will be posted at the front-desk reception area to notify LEP individuals of any available services and how to obtain these services.
- **OUTREACH DOCUMENTS** – Key NMMPO outreach documents will include a notice that some language assistance services are available. This notice will be listed in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese.
- **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS** – The NMMPO staff will notify area community-based organizations and other stakeholders of available language assistance services.
- **PUBLIC NOTICES** – The NMMPO will periodically issue notices, in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Vietnamese and Chinese about available LEP services. All public meeting notices will contain the following language:

“Individuals requiring special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or requiring translation services (free of charge) should contact (insert name of designated staff member) at (978) 454-8021 ten work days in advance of the Public Meeting.”

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Issues related to transportation accessibility are discussed throughout the RTP. Whether it is ADA accessibility in the regional transit system, the “walkability” of our communities and neighborhoods, or public access to the many business areas, parks, trails and open spaces within the Northern Middlesex region, the NMMPO strives to improve access to all residents, workers and visitors. Paying attention to design elements that accommodate those with disabilities is essential to ensuring that our infrastructure is as accessible as possible. For example, curb design, ramps and crossing signals designed for the hearing- and sight-impaired facilitate safe travel for all ages and abilities.
COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Federal transit law requires that projects selected for funding under the Enhanced Mobility for Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program be "included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan," and that the plan be "developed and approved through a process that included participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and other members of the public" utilizing transportation services. These coordinated plans identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provide strategies for meeting these needs, and prioritize transportation services for funding and implementation.

The NMMPO, through an annual task in the Unified Planning Work Program, develops and maintains a coordinated human services transportation plan. The NMMPO Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan was adopted by the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO) in January 2015. The Plan serves as a framework for improved coordination of transportation services among both public and private providers in order to enhance transportation services for disadvantaged, disabled and senior populations. The document has been developed to meet the federal requirements outlined in FTA Circular 9070.1G for “a locally developed, coordinated human services transportation plan” that includes the following elements:

- “An assessment of available services that identifies current public, private and non-profit providers;
- An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities and older adults;
- Strategies, activities and/or projects to address identified gaps in current services and needs, as well as opportunities to achieve efficiencies in service delivery; and
- Priorities for implementation based on available resources (from multiple program sources), time, and feasibility for implementing specific strategies and/or activities identified.”

Copies of the 2014 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan are available on the NMCOG website at: www.nmcog.org. A more in depth discussion of service improvements from recommendations of the plan can be found in Chapter 6.

LRTA ADA ACCESSIBILITY

Transit accessibility is delivered by the LRTA, which operates twenty (20) fixed bus routes in seven (7) of the Northern Middlesex communities. The LRTA fixed route bus fleet is 100% wheelchair accessible with low-floor buses that eliminate any special lift treatment and instead allow the wheelchair customer to maneuver directly into the bus through the front door. In addition to the accessible fixed route fleet, the
LRTA provides complementary ADA paratransit service throughout the region within ¾ miles of all fixed bus routes. All ADA paratransit service is available with 24 hour advance notice and operates during the same hours as the fixed route bus service.

The LRTA further provides senior/paratransit van service to all of the Northern Middlesex communities (with the exception of Dunstable). These services are provided either by the Lowell-based Road Runner or by the LRTA-funded Council on Aging Road Runner service. These local services are generally available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

LRTA maintains an application process to determine paratransit eligibility for those individuals who apply, including an application form and verification of eligibility. The verification of eligibility is based on a Certification by the person’s physician, health care professional, or rehabilitation professional.

### LRTA PARATRANSIT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The LRTA eligibility requirements include the following:

- “Any individual with a disability who is unable, as a result of a physical or mental impairment (including a vision impairment), and without the assistance of another individual (except the operator of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device), to board, ride, or disembark from any vehicle on the system which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.”
- “Any individual with a disability who needs the assistance of a wheelchair lift or other boarding assistance device and is able, with assistance, to board, ride, and disembark from any vehicle which is readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities of the individual wants to travel on a route of the system during the hours of operation of the system at a time, or within a reasonable period of such time, when such a vehicle is not being used to provide designated public transportation on the route.”
- “Any individual who has a specific disability who has a specific impairment-related condition which prevents such individual from traveling to a boarding location or from a disembarking location on the system.”

### LRTA CLASSIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

LRTA classifies an individual’s eligibility into one of three categories:

1. UNCONDITIONAL/PERMANENT ELIGIBILITY – An individual will be classified with unconditional eligibility when the rider needs paratransit for all trips.
2. CONDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY – An individual will be classified with conditional eligibility when the rider needs paratransit for some trips but can use fixed route service for other trips.
3. TEMPORARY ELIGIBILITY – An individual will be classified as temporary if he/she is unable to use the Fixed-Route Bus system for a short time.

LRTA makes the determination of eligibility within 21 days of receiving a complete application.