

Microtransit: MWRTA Catch Connect

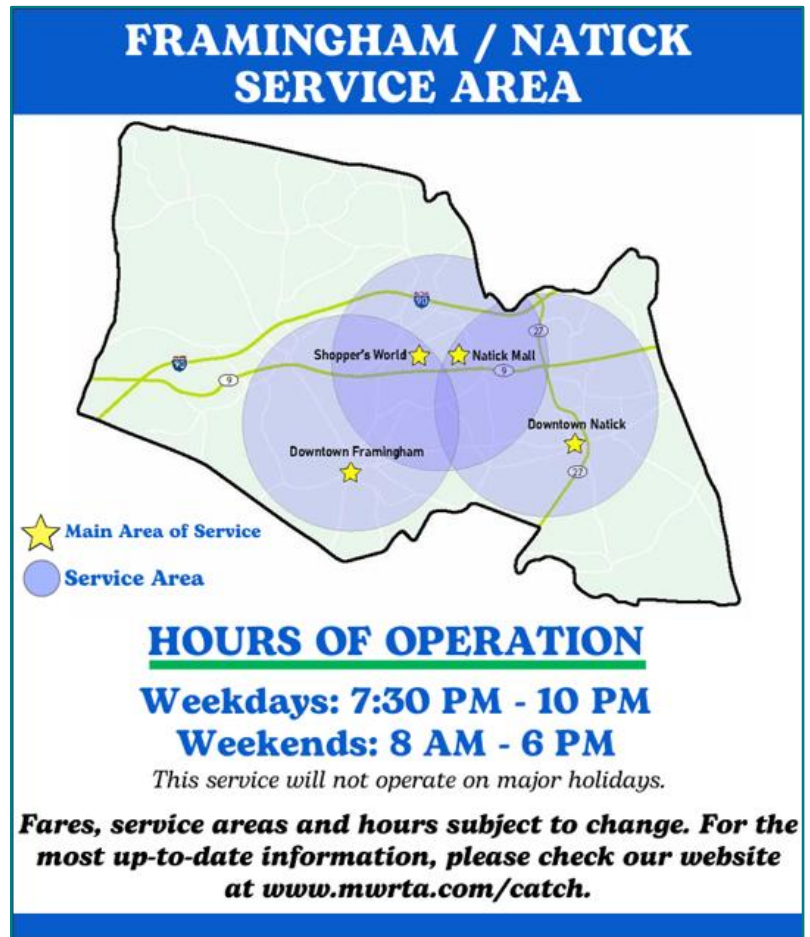
Location	Service
Multiple jurisdictions (Case study describes service in Framingham, MA and Natick, MA)	On-demand microtransit
Model	Grant Applicant
Operated by MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)	MWRTA

Introduction

MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) first launched Catch Connect in February 2021 as a curb-to-curb, on-demand microtransit service to replace fixed-route service in Wellesley, MA. Since then, it has expanded to several communities in the Boston metropolitan region. Catch Connect supplements MWRTA's fixed-route network by providing flexible shared rides within designated service areas and connections to transit, employment, healthcare, shopping, and other destinations.

What are the Details?

- Catch Connect currently operates in several service areas with schedules varying by community.
 - For expansion into municipalities of Framingham and Natick, service hours supplement public transportation following the conclusion of traditional fixed-route service. Service operates weekdays 7:30pm to 10:00pm and weekends 8:00am to 6:00pm.
- Service is fare free as of September 2026.
- Riders can schedule rides using the MWRTA Catch App on smartphones or call a phone number to book.
- All vehicles are fully electric and ADA accessible lift equipped.
- Rides are provided on a first come first served basis.





How was the Project Funded?

The MWRTA Catch Connect expansion was funded through the Boston Region MPO Community Connections Grant, which is funded by the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. Funding was planned for Federal Fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026. Fare free service is made possible through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and MA State Legislature's "Try Transit" program.

The MPO's Community Connections investment program funds first- and last-mile solutions and focuses on connectivity to transit and key destinations through non-single-occupancy-vehicle modes.

What are the Key Results?

The expansion into the municipalities of Framingham and Natick demonstrates a specific role for microtransit: extending transit availability after fixed-route service ends. Rather than duplicating the existing network, Catch Connect in Framingham and Natick fills a temporal service gap and maintains access for riders to travel to transit stations and other key destinations.

What are the Lessons Learned?

Catch Connect illustrates the value of funding microtransit as an expansion of an existing transit program rather than developing a completely new service from scratch. Specific strategies from the Catch Connect expansion into Framingham and Natick include:

- Provide service with a defined geography/zone and identify key destinations within service zone.
- Build on success and name recognition of an existing transit agency.
- Use established transit application developed by transit agency.
- Identify a specific transportation gap for microtransit service to fill.
- Provide multiple pick-up and drop-off points for the same destination based on route efficiency.
- Create step-by-step instructions on how to book rides.
- Promote transit service through community outreach, such as through local libraries.
- Partner with organizations to increase ridership, such as post-secondary institutions.

Want to Learn More?

- [Boston MPO Transportation Improvement Program, FFYs 2026-30](#)
- [Catch Connect, MWRTA](#)
- [Catch Connect Framingham & Natick, MWRTA](#)
- [MWRTA Launches New Evening Service, Framingham, MA Patch](#)
- [Expanded MicroTransit Service, MWRTA](#)
- [How to Use Catch Connect, Framingham Library](#)
- [Free Service for FSU students, Framingham State University](#)
- [Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces Fare Free Regional Transit Across State, Mass.gov](#)

