

Creating an Inventory of Community Vehicles

An important step towards building partnerships and facilitating increased use of community vehicles is to develop an **inventory of existing vehicles**. Once you have established an overview of what resources are available, it is useful to develop an understanding of whether the owners/operators of such vehicles are interested in participating in vehicle sharing in your area. This document offers you questions to ask when reaching out to potential partners while developing an inventory of vehicles. Answering these questions will help you determine if the potential exists for sharing community vehicles in your area and whether it is feasible for your organization to participate. Make sure you start by answering these questions about your own organization.

Create a resource inventory based on the following questions:

- Who owns the vehicles?
- How many vehicles does the organization have?
- Are the vehicles accessible to people with disabilities?
- Who drives the vehicles? (e.g. agency staff, volunteers)
- How many drivers does the organization have?
- Where are the vehicles housed?
- What time of day and week are the vehicles in use?
- Do the vehicles typically run full or below capacity? (e.g. how many empty seats are on an average run?)
- Do the vehicles run only within town, or do they take riders to other communities?
- Who is the target clientele served?
- Does the agency charge its clientele for rides?

Potential for a vehicle share model:

Once you have established a preliminary relationship with the organizations in your area through researching your inventory, think about the following questions as you reach out to potential partner organizations:

- Are vehicle owners receptive of expanding their service? (e.g. adding new trips or stops)
- Are vehicle owners receptive to transporting others at the same time as when their clients ride? (Commingling)
- Are the current passengers of vehicles receptive to sharing rides with others?
- Are vehicle owners receptive to allowing other organizations to operate their vehicles during times when the owners are not using the vehicles?

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Reference: Aniko Laszlo. (2012) *Creating an Inventory of Community Vehicles*, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Center for Health Policy and Research, Shrewsbury, MA.

For additional resources, briefs, and information related to community transportation in Massachusetts, please visit www.mass.gov/hst. For suggestions on building a strong partnership, see *Sharing Community Vehicles: A Promising Practice from Northern Berkshire County, MA*.

