

Needham Shuttle Ride-Along 2003

During a cold week in mid-February, the staff of the 128 Business Council performed a "Ride-Along" on the Needham Shuttle. The purpose of this exercise was to conduct an audit of the Needham Shuttle System—to learn which runs are the most popular and which runs are underutilized, whether the printed schedule actually reflects reality and whether the fare structure is understood. Quite a few other intricacies of the

system were noticed during the week and we wanted to inform our members of our findings.

We observed that overall the system runs very smoothly. It should be noted that during the week this audit was performed it was very cold but clear and therefore there were no adverse road conditions. Additionally, there were no mechanical problems with the bus and no major traffic problems

encountered on the roads.

All runs are well utilized with the majority of riders using the mid-rush hour runs. Buses ran at or close to the printed schedule in all cases.

The Needham Shuttle System's fare structure is understood by most of its riders. Whether or not a rider pays a fare to ride the Needham Shuttle is based upon his or her
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Needham Edition

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Commuter Choice Leadership Initiative

The *Commuter Choice Leadership Initiative* was launched in October 2000 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to address growing traffic congestion and traffic related pollution in the United States.

The initiative is a *voluntary* partnership program that publicly recognizes employers whose commuter benefits reach a national

standard of excellence. Participants of the initiative are part of a select group of employers who are working to improve the environment and quality of life for everyone. Recent changes to tax laws allow employers to offer their employees some commuter benefits on a tax-free basis.

During the first year of the program, more than 1,300 companies nationwide have signed on as

Commuter Choice employers. Your company could be next to enjoy these special benefits: Public Recognition, Training, Web Based Tools, One-on-One Assistance and Networking.

It is easier than you may think to qualify as a *Commuter Choice* employer. Many of the 128 Business Council's members already meet the basic requirements.
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Commuter Choice Leadership Initiative (continued from page 1)

By joining you will earn the distinction of being a commuter choice employer – your company will be listed among the nation's most progressive workplaces for commuters. Since the program's inception, *Commuter Choice* employers have:

- Reduced the number of miles driven by 3 million miles a day
- Saved 38 million gallons of gas

- Prevented the release of 300,000 tons of greenhouse gases
- Reduced the need for 75,000 parking spaces
- Provided excellent commuter benefits for more than 570,000 U. S. employees!

Being recognized as a *Commuter Choice* employer provides you with a competitive advantage in recruiting

and retaining the "best and brightest" employees. Break away from the pack today!

To find out more about being a prestigious *Commuter Choice* employer, call or email the 128 Business Council at 781-890-0093 or 128bc@128bc.com.

Needham Shuttle Ride-Along 2003

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employer's 128 Business Council membership status. With a valid Needham Shuttle ID the rider pays nothing. If a rider's company is not a member of the 128 Business Council, the fare is \$2.00 per trip. Convenient 10-ride passes are available for purchase on all buses for non-member company riders.

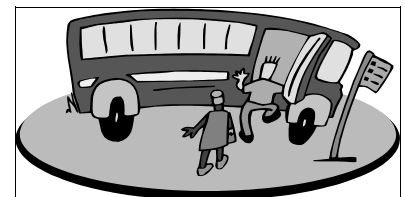
There were other issues that arose during our week out on the road that we would like to clarify for our riders. Most importantly, it is our policy that the drivers do not board or disembark passengers at unauthorized locations – this means *any location that is not listed on the current schedule*. This may seem like an inconvenient policy, however, it is important for non-member riders to understand that although their location may be along the scheduled route, drivers cannot travel onto private property without permission. This includes using any street or road that is not a "public way." It is also a safety risk to board or disembark passengers "curbside" on the street and we are not authorized to stop on major roadways for drop-offs. Furthermore, the shuttle is

privately funded by our member companies. When a company becomes a member of the 128 Business Council, funding is provided for the shuttle to serve the location and permission is given for buses to enter the property. Non-member company riders are always welcome to use the shuttle and travel to and from the nearest member-company location.

Another issue that merits acknowledgement is the schedule. As stated on our schedules, "arrival times are approximate and may vary depending on traffic and weather conditions." Riders should always plan on arriving at scheduled stops a few minutes before listed times.

Finally, our week on the road reminded us of riders' concerns about the speed and safety of the buses.

This may seem obvious; the bus is taller, heavier and has a rougher ride than a passenger car. Periodically we receive calls from riders concerned with the speed and/or the quality of their bus trip. Please keep in mind that speed, turns, bumps and noise are all factors that are inherently



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exaggerated while riding on a bus. Our drivers do their very best to get you to your destination safely and on time.

We want your feedback! As a result of our travels on the shuttle buses, we have installed "feedback forms" on each bus. If you have a complaint (or a compliment!) take one and fill it out then fax or mail back to us. We look forward to hearing from you!

The Needham Shuttle schedule is always available. Please ask your driver, call our office or visit our website for a copy.

www.128bc.com

(781)890-0093

Keeping 128 moving for 16 years!

Member Profile

**128 Business Council
Welcomes
IM Logic**



The 128 Business Council welcomes its third new member for 2003. This February, *IM Logic* moved its offices from Downtown Boston to 265 Winter Street, Waltham. IM Logic provides enterprise-class instant messaging infrastructure software. IM Logic's new location has been added to the Alewife Shuttle schedule. 2003 is off to a great start – together we keep 128 moving!

Needham Traffic Study

The Advisory Task Force of the Needham – Newton Traffic Impact Study, in partnership with the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), has been working hard on traffic impact analysis and roadway improvement plans.

Over the past several months, the Task Force has been presented with a Travel Time survey and a License Plate survey done by CTPS. These surveys have been very instrumental in determining not only where the traffic in Needham is coming from and going to but also how long it is taking for people's commutes within and around the Town of Needham.



The group will be meeting in April to discuss planning models and intersection improvement alternatives. The meeting will be held at Needham Town Hall in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 1471 Highland Avenue, on Friday April 11, 2003 at 8:30 AM.

Community Corner

Boys & Girls Club Auction.

The Waltham Boys & Girls Club announces their 13th Annual Auction. This major fundraising event for the Club is scheduled for Friday, April 11, 2003 at the Westin Hotel in Waltham. Business leaders and supporters can help in a variety of ways by being a sponsor, donating an item or attending the event.

The Waltham Boys & Girls Club serves over 1,200 youth ages 6 – 18 in Waltham. Presently, membership is 59% male and 41% female. The youth that we serve come from a very diverse population. Our Main Club facility is handicapped accessible and offers inclusive programs for youths of all abilities.

For more information about the Club and/or the Auction, call Ann Ormond, the Executive Director or Kate Erickson, Marketing Assistant at (781) 893-6620. Information can also be found on the Club's web site at www.walthambgc.org.



The Community Corner is a place for community news. If your non-profit group has an announcement it would like to publish, please contact the 128 Business Council. Announcements will be posted on the condition of space availability and approval by the 128 Business Council. We are especially in need of Newton/Needham community news!

Mark Your Calendar!

Thursday

May 15th, 2003

is

Rider

Appreciation

Day

Be on the lookout for

more information

as we approach the

month of May.

Earth Day is
April 22, 2003



A New Direction for Route 128

What will you, your employees, your customers and your neighbors encounter as the Route 128 Corridor is expanded over the next 10 years? Find out at the

128 Construction Overview

Tuesday, April 15, 2003

8:00—10:00 a.m.

Putnam Investments

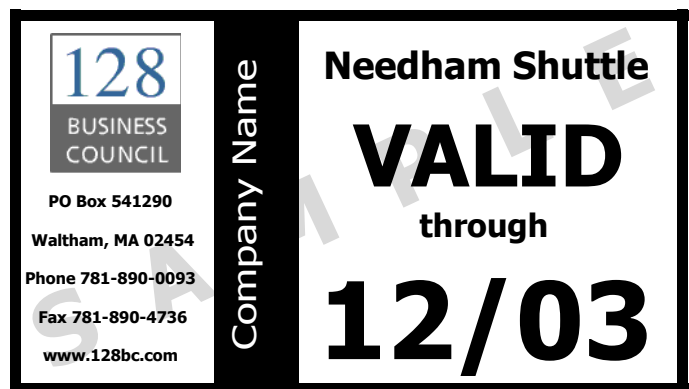
Investors Way (off Route 1A)

Norwood, Ma

For directions visit: www.putnaminvestments.com

2003 Needham Shuttle Identification Cards

Current Needham Shuttle ID cards are distributed each year to all 128 Business Council member-company Transportation Coordinators. Unless other arrangements have been made, every shuttle rider must present this card to the driver to ride the shuttle for free. It is very important that employees/tenants of member companies are identified. If you don't know who your company's or property owner's Transportation Coordinator is, please give the Council a call at 781-890-0093.



The 128 Business Council is a non-profit public/private partnership formed to help reduce traffic congestion on Route 128/West by providing alternative transportation services and information. The Council also works with state and federal transportation agencies on behalf of member businesses. The Council is funded by member companies that are committed to the economic vitality of the Route 128/West area.

128 Business Council Contact Information

P.O. Box 541290 • Waltham • MA • 02454 • Phone 781-890-0093 • Fax 781-890-4736 • E-mail: 128bc@128bc.com

Caroline Connor, Executive Director • Jeff Bennett, Transportation Coordinator • Lisa Bilozur, Administrative Assistant

Visit us on the web: www.128bc.com