

# Massachusetts State Law

## *Mandated Transportation*

### **Mandates**

- Free transportation for K-6 students living  $> 2$  miles from school
- Fees must be waived for students receiving free or reduced school lunch who are otherwise eligible for paid busing under local School Committee policy

### **Does Not Mandate**

- Local School Committees may determine whether to offer additional busing for students  $< 2$  miles or 7-12 students
- Local School Committees may set fees for additional busing

# Watertown School Committee

## *Current Policy*

### **Free**

- Mandatory riders
- Hosmer K-5 students living > 1.5 miles from school

### **Discounted**

(\$200 / student; \$320 family cap)

- For students K-6 living South of the Charles River

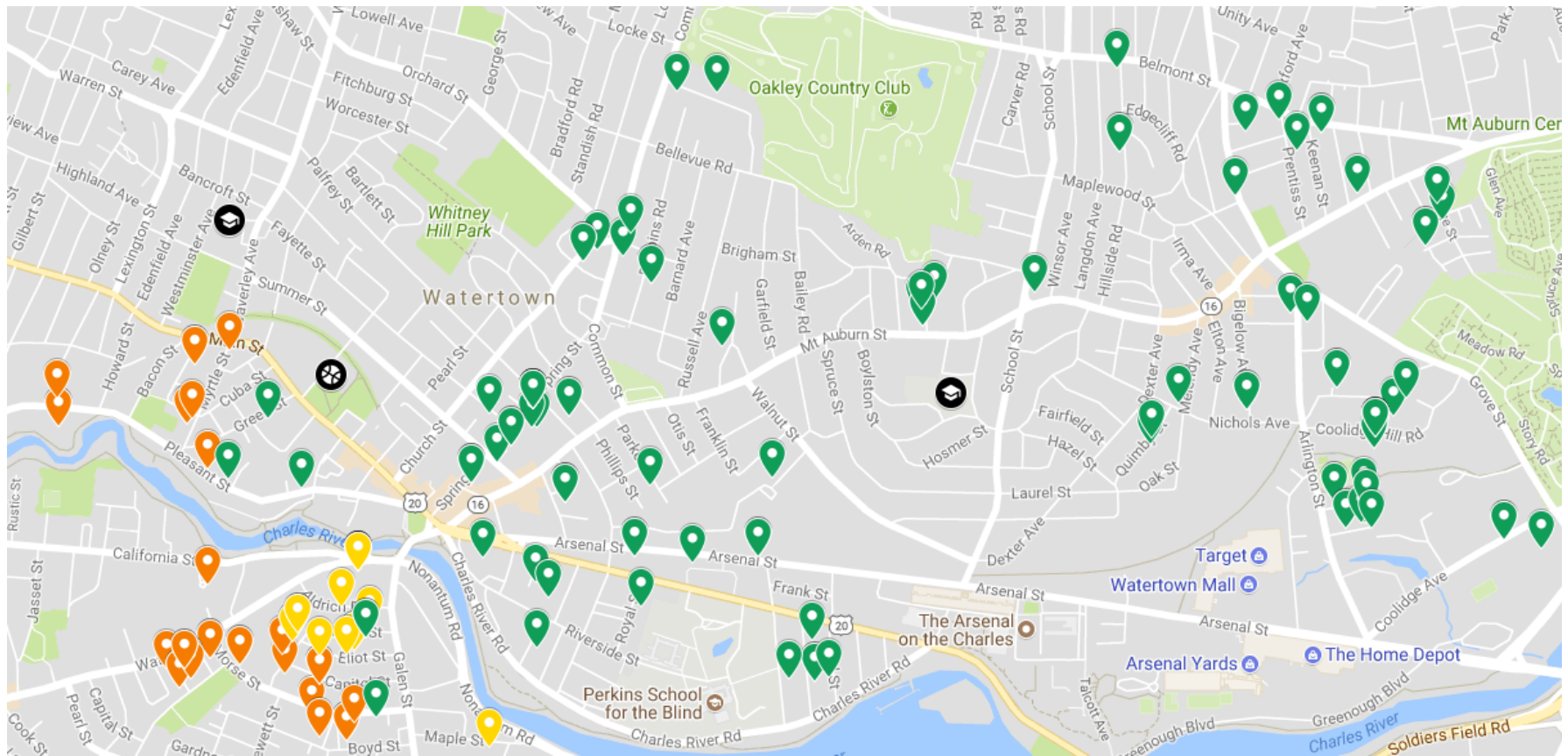
### **Paid**

(\$300 / student; \$475 family cap)

- For Hosmer students K-5 living 0.75 - 1.5 miles from school
- For Gr. 6 living 0.75 - 2 miles from school
- For Gr. 7-8 living > 0.75 miles from school

# Current Ridership by Distance

## Hosmer



**>2 miles**  
0

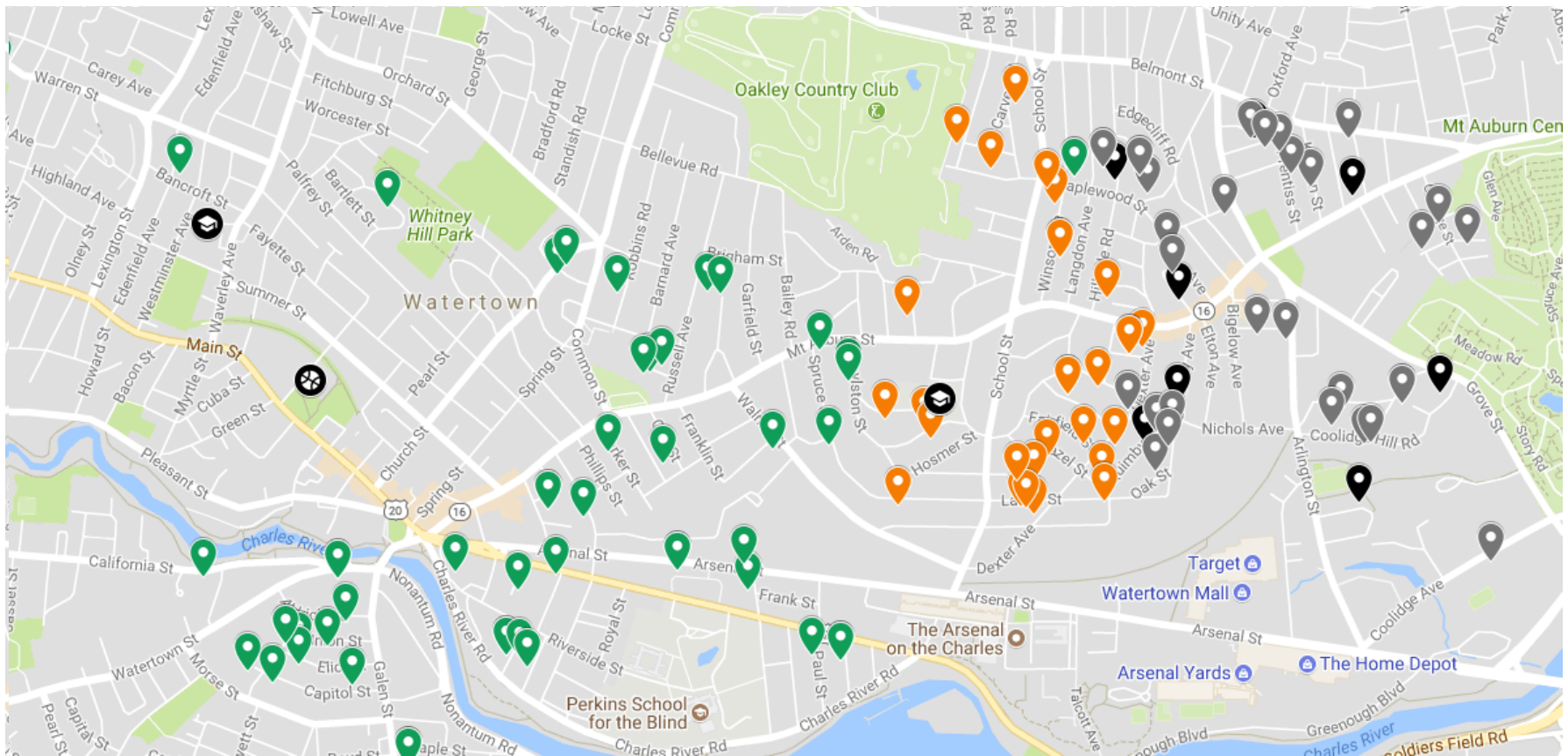
**1.5-2 miles**  
32

**<1.5 miles SoCha**  
15

**<1.5 miles**  
107

# Current Ridership by Distance

## WMS



**>2 miles Gr.6**  
13

**>2 miles Gr.7/8**  
30

**1.5-2 miles**  
30

**<1.5 miles**  
52

# Current Situation (FY'18)

- Currently operate 3 buses, across two tiers
- Watertown Middle School late bus also operates four days per week (\$90 per day)
- Each Hosmer bus stops at the Boys & Girls Club first
- FY'18 Gross Expense is \$206,280 (\$352 per bus per day)
  - Unsubsidized per rider charge would be approximately \$1,250
- Currently 45 “mandatory” riders and 234 “non-mandatory” riders
- Of the 234 “non-mandatory” riders:
  - 28% are eligible for free transportation due to their Federal F&R eligibility
  - 30% pay less than the full amount due to family caps
  - 12% receive the South of the Charles Discount
  - 30% pay the full fee of \$300
- Current year revenue projected to be \$37,095 which offsets 18% of the total cost (i.e. district subsidizes 82% of the cost of transportation)
- Net cost to the district is currently \$169,185

# “Business as Usual”

- Would require 6 buses
- Total expense projected to be \$378,000
- With same fee, revenue offset of \$37,095 would mean district is subsidizing 90.2% of the expense
- Net expense would be \$337,740 with net impact to the budget of \$168,555
- Maintaining the subsidy at 82% would result in a new fee of approximately \$650 per rider

# Three Bus Solution

- Two buses for the Hosmer, one for WMS
  - At Hosmer, 9 of the current 154 riders would be impacted; all projected to live within one mile of Hosmer
  - At WMS, 68 of the current 125 riders would be impacted; 13 mandatory riders would continue to be transported for free; 30 additional that are > 2.0 miles would also be transported for a fee
- Continue WMS Late Bus
- Total Gross Expense would be \$189,000
- Revenue would decrease due to fewer MS riders to a projected \$17,600
- Net cost would be \$171,400 with impact to the budget of \$2,215
- No fee increases would be required to remain budget neutral

# The Four Bus Option

- Two buses for Hosmer and two for WMS for a total of four buses
- Total cost, including WMS Late bus, would be \$269,100
- Revenue would drop slightly due to reduction in riders to approximately \$33,000
- Net cost would be approximately \$219,000
- Impact to the budget would be an increase of \$49,815
- Fee increase to offset budget impact would be approximately \$300 per rider additional (total fee of \$600)