

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 8/2/23

WOOD'S AMBULANCE BEGINS “WOODS PLUS” SERVICES THIS WEEK

City Of Gardner Welcomes New Ride Share Business, 10th new business in 2023



August 2, 2023 – GARDNER, MA - Gardner is in the midst of welcoming yet another new business to the city, albeit this time one with a familiar face. Woods Ambulance, a long-time city institution, is expanding its services this week to include a ride share service, which will operate under the name Wood's Plus. For a ten-dollar flat fee, residents and visitors to Gardner can reserve a ride anywhere within city limits.

The idea for the service was born following conversations between Wood's Ambulance and Mayor Nicholson about transportation needs in Gardner. “One of the questions we get asked most often in Gardner has been if there was a way to get either a taxicab or rideshare service in Gardner to help people get around the City, and this does just that,” said **Gardner Mayor Michael Nicholson**. “Now people have a way to get around the City at an affordable price whatever their needs are, with our own rideshare program, similar to Uber and Lyft in larger cities. I was happy to put forward the proposal to the City's ordinances to make operations like these more accessible in Gardner, and am glad to see how quickly this was able to come to fruition.”

Speaking to the development, **Wood's President and CEO Jennifer Wood** stated “Since 1954 Wood's has proudly served the people of this community with medical transportation. Post-pandemic, the world has changed and it has affected all of us. We are not exempt from this, and see the struggles that our community is facing. In and effort to help we are excited to announce Wood's Plus. This journey starts in the city

we love with “***Swift Ride***”, and we are excited about the endless possibilities this has to offer. Stay tuned!”

Wood’s Plus began operating on a 90-day trial basis starting August 1st. The hours will run 7 days a week from 9 am to 9 pm. During that trial period, they will be offering their “***Swift Ride***” service, which is an on-demand service for pickups beginning and ending in Gardner at a flat fee of \$10 per ride, regardless of the number of passengers in your party. Forms of payment accepted include cash, credit and debit cards, Cash App, Google Pay, and Apple Pay.

To request on-demand same-day service customers should call: (978) 400-9338.

Unlike taxis, ride share services, like ***Swift Ride***, must be called beforehand rather than hailed by travelers, but only those who reserved the vehicle will be in it during the ride. The \$10 per ride cost, regardless of the number of people in the party, was done specifically to keep the operation as affordable as possible for people around Gardner.

Mayor Nicholson, a longtime proponent of expanded transportation options within the city, echoed that sentiment. “It’s great to see a local business like Wood’s Ambulance, expanding their services to meet the needs of the City in this new fashion.” He said “I’d like to thank Jennifer and the entire Wood’s team for their continued dedication to our City and its residents.”

The Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce’s President and CEO, Rebecca Marois, added “We are thrilled to witness Gardner's continuous growth and prosperity as we welcome Wood's Plus, the latest addition to our city's business landscape. Woods Ambulance's expansion into the ride share service demonstrates their commitment to serving the community and meeting its evolving needs. This new venture will undoubtedly enhance accessibility and transportation options for our residents and visitors alike, fostering greater convenience and connectivity within Gardner's city limits. The Chamber of Commerce proudly supports this initiative and looks forward to witnessing the positive impact it will have on our vibrant city.”

Quick to coalesce, the emergence of ride share options in Gardner was the product of months-long, deliberate action on the part of the City’s leaders. In December of last year, the City Council unanimously approved Mayor Nicholson’s proposal to make operating

ride share services in Gardner easier, formally codifying the new ordinance into the City Code, and making this week's developments possible.

"When the topic of rideshare services in Gardner was before the City Council last year, one of the thoughts that came to my mind was what potential this was going to open in Gardner with the unprecedented amount of growth we have been seeing," said **City Council President Elizabeth Kazinskas**. "This is exactly what Gardner needed, by one of Gardner's longstanding partners. I'm glad we were able to help make this possible and I look forward to seeing the benefits that this will bring to our residents and visitors to Gardner."

Wood's Plus/Swift Ride now takes its place as the 10th new business to open their doors in Gardner in 2023, and the 43rd business since 2021. Other businesses to open or expand their operations in Gardner this year include Crown Fried Chicken, Gardner Spirits, the new Community Health Connections location on Timpany Boulevard, Scott's Fire House Nutrition, JP's Barber Shop, the Vihara & Vipassana Center, Inc., Bird Scooters, Art on the Rocks, and Strands Hair Salon.

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