

Acting Secretary and CEO Jamey Tesler's Report to the Board

June 21, 2021



Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB)

Established by Governor Charlie Baker on July 17, 2015 to help get the T back on track. The FMCB is now sunseting and a successor board has yet to be named.

FMCB members, past and present, deserve our gratitude and thanks for their years of volunteer service, dedication and the careful thought they have each put into decision-making.



(December 2017 photo)

COVID-19 Updates



June 15: State of Emergency lifted per Governor Charlie Baker. Registry of Motor Vehicles continuing some initiatives started during pandemic to provide essential in-person services in accordance with health and safety guidelines: dedicated senior citizen hours Wednesdays some customer locations, appointments for in-person transactions, road tests using state vehicles, etc.

Masks remain mandatory on public transit and private transportation. This includes MBTA and Regional Transit Authority property and vehicles, at Logan Airport, at municipal airports and at service plazas on the highways.

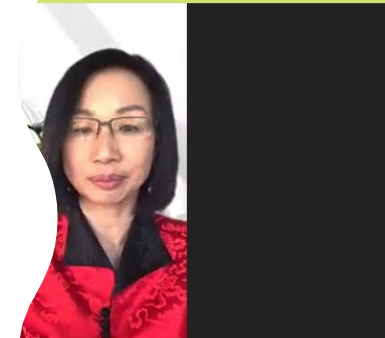
Special initiatives to continue getting residents vaccinated: Vax Express MBTA commuter train which started June 16 and VaxMillions lottery ticket offer which starts July 1.

MassDOT and MBTA Employees – Thank You

MassDOT employees working in-person and remotely to deliver our critical safety mission. handle responsibilities during the pandemic: crews continued road work, customer-facing employees adapted to wearing PPE, the workforce participated in virtual internal and external meetings and two managers were temporarily deployed to assist the Commonwealth's COVID-19 Command Center.



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“Future of Work” Update

Many employees currently working remotely will continue to do so at least some of the time.

- Goal: to provide MassDOT teams and employees greater flexibility in when and where they work while continuing to execute MassDOT’s safety and customer service mission. This process will unfold over time as we learn more about needs and as new tools become available to help us all engage, connect and remain productive.
- Doing our part to lead by example in reducing congestion and GHG emissions by minimizing overall workplace commuting travel during peak hours through telework and schedule flexibility.



Shared Streets and Spaces Program

- Since June 2020, the Baker-Polito Administration's Shared Streets and Spaces Municipal Grant Program has awarded \$26 million dollars to 161 municipalities and 4 transit authorities for a total of 232 projects. The average grant award has been \$114,000 and 58% of funded projects are in Environmental Justice Communities.
- The most recent round of MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces Program launched in April 2021 and has an additional emphasis on funding projects that improve safety for all road users through interventions that achieve safer conditions and safer speeds. The next round of grant awards will be announced before the end of this month. The next application period for FY 22 funding will be announced online: www.mass.gov/sharedstreetsandspaces. *(Photos taken in May, Dedham Center.)*



Shared Streets and Spaces – Highlight

Mystic Avenue Municipal Pilot Dedicated Bus Lane

- MassDOT and the cities of Medford and Somerville announced the implementation of a municipal dedicated bus lane pilot between the hours of 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. on Mystic Avenue. Painting and signage along the entire stretch – from Main Street in Medford to Wheatland Street in Somerville – was completed and the dedicated bus lane officially became operational as of today, Monday, June 21.
- In summer 2020, Medford and Somerville were awarded a grant from the Shared Streets and Spaces Program to implement this “quick-build” morning peak hour inbound dedicated bus lane.
- The dedicated bus lane is available to MBTA buses only, (and right turning vehicles). Outside the scheduled hours, the lane is available for all traffic to use or for parking, (in areas that already had designated parking.)



Shared Streets and Spaces – Highlight

- On June 17, the City of Salem held an event to announce the launch of 9 new Bluebikes stations made possible in part with a grant from Shared Streets and Spaces funding.
- The launch of Bluebikes in Salem was funded partially through a \$200,000 Shared Streets and Spaces grant toward the upfront capital costs of the installation. It will enable residents to enjoy access to a safe, healthy and affordable mode of transportation that connects with the Bluebikes system's 10 other municipalities.



Capital Plan

- June 14: Baker-Polito Administration announced its Fiscal Year 2022 Capital Plan, a \$2.655 billion plan that makes substantial investments in critical priorities including housing, transportation, climate resiliency, health and human services, and education to promote economic growth and opportunity.
- Plan maintains flexibility by supporting existing short, medium, and long-term investments, and funding new initiatives that encourage growth and strengthen the Commonwealth's communities amid the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Plan implements Transportation Bond Bill that Governor Baker signed last year..
- MassDOT's Capital Plan created in part with thought to incorporating equity considerations with project investments. For example, MassDOT has a new municipal portal to help track project investments by city and town; portal is a helpful resource when considering how funding is allocated to Environmental Justice Communities.

Capital Plan: Fiscal Year 2022 Highlights

Baker-Polito Administration's combined MassDOT and MBTA capital plan is funded from a variety of state and non-state sources and totals approximately \$4 billion in spending for FY 22.

- \$200 million for the Chapter 90 Program for local road and bridge repairs
- \$10 million for Administration's Municipal Small Bridge Program
- \$10 million for Complete Streets Program
- Funding for programs authorized through the Transportation Bond Bill including the Local Bottleneck Reduction Program, the Municipal Pavement Program, and the Transit Infrastructure Partnership Program
- \$4 million for Shared Streets and Spaces Program which was started in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic to help municipalities and businesses adapt their operations.

Operating Budget Update

- MassDOT overcame Fiscal Year 2021 budget challenges. Savings initiatives, payroll savings and a mild winter resulted in a higher reserve balance which can be used to help balance the budget for Fiscal Year 2022.
- Non-toll operating expenses:
 - In FY 22 there is included a \$9.7 million increase in Employee Compensation and Benefits due to bargaining unit, step, management and fringe costs increases. It is offset partially by decreased prior year one-time bargaining unit reclassification study retros.
 - FY 22 expenses for COVID-19 cleaning will decrease by millions of dollars from FY 21 based on CDC guidance and the lifting of COVID requirements.
- Toll collections: FY 22 budget developed using the “More Severe” assumptions from Stantec which assume a prolonged ramp-up in re-opening, that business and international travel will take somewhat more time to return to normal meaning less traffic to Logan Airport, and the long term or permanent impact of a “new normal” as some people continue working from home and take fewer personal trips.

Transportation Network Company (TNC) Data

On Monday, June 14, the Department of Public Utilities published a report on ride-share use.

- This is the fourth year that the DPU has published this information.
- In 2020, TNCs provided about 35 million rides that started in Massachusetts. This is a 62% drop statewide from the 91.1 million rides started in 2019. The greatest decrease in a single municipality was seen in Boston, which had 30 million fewer rides start within the city compared to 2019.
- Although 2020 saw a significant impact on rideshare companies, the industry's importance is still demonstrated in these numbers, especially in areas where other transit resources may be less available.
- Overall, in 2020, rides traveled longer distances, lasted longer, and moved faster compared to rides in 2019. The average ride in Massachusetts lasted 15.5 minutes and traveled 5.3 miles at 20.5 miles per hour.
- TNCs are assessed a \$0.20/per-ride fee annually. The rideshare companies have been assessed \$7 million based on their 2020 rides; \$3.5 million of that will be proportionally distributed to cities and town based on how many rides started within each community. Funds are used to address the impact of the rideshare industry on each community, with project reports required to be filed with and approved by the DPU annually.

Vermont and Valley Flyer Pilot

Service re-starting in July

Greenfield-Northampton-Holyoke-Springfield

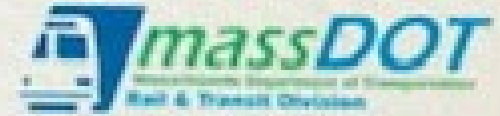
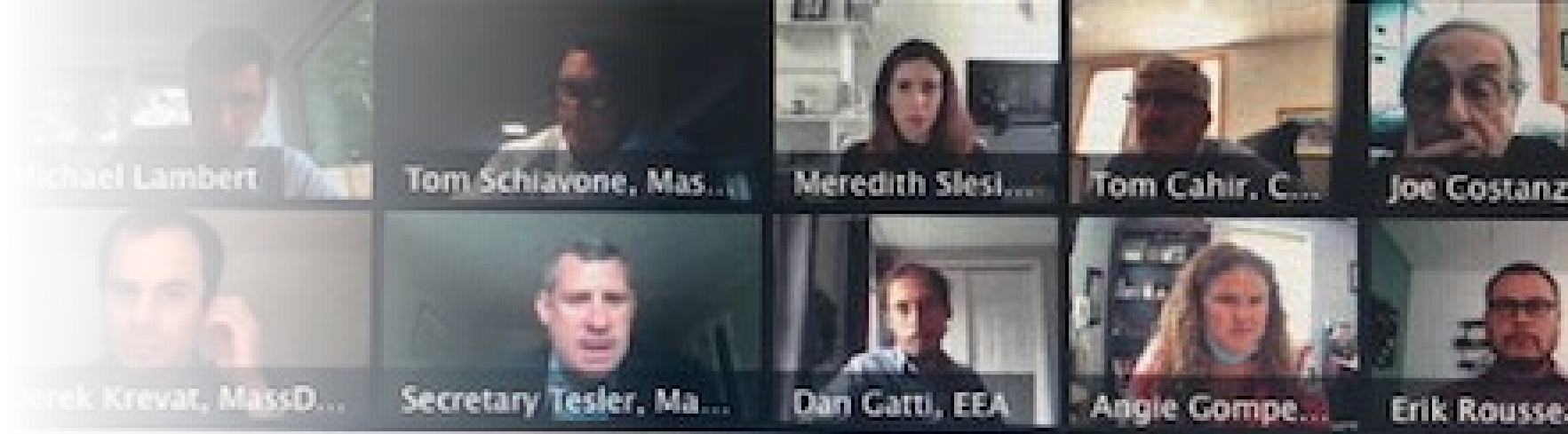
- Vermont train service will resume between Washington, DC and St. Albans, VT on Monday, July 19. MassDOT partially funds service in partnership with Vermont, Connecticut and Amtrak.
- Second Valley Flyer roundtrip will be restored on Monday, July 26 along with additional trains from New Haven to Springfield.



Tickets available NOW on www.amtrak.com

RTA Council Virtual Meeting

- June 15: virtual public meeting was held with representatives of the 15 Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs).
- MassDOT expressed appreciation to the RTAs for their partnership during the pandemic to pivot to offering trips that met the needs of the public. During the pandemic, best practices were shared and MassDOT and RTA managers learned and were challenged to offer essential trips.
- MassDOT offered RTAs tools and resources for service planning, including what is offered through geoDOT which is on the public website: [Maps, Data and Reports | Mass.gov](#)



RTA Council Meeting

Tuesday, June 15, 2021

GoToWebinar

Pony Truss Trail Improvement Project: Newton



June 17 event to celebrate completion of improvement project along the banks of the Charles River and near the MBTA Riverside Station off of Rt. 128/I-95.

- Project included regrading the trail, constructing an 80-foot boardwalk along the riverbank, and installing granite stairs over the Runaway Brook outflow. In addition, native shrubs were planted to enhance the quality of the surrounding ecosystem.
- The project was completed by the Riverside Greenway Working Group and the Newton Conservators and was funded through a \$91,000 grant from the Baker-Polito Administration's MassTrails Program, as well as a matching grant of approximately \$16,600 from the Solomon Foundation.

Falcon Box On Gillis Bridge

MassDOT collaborated with MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program for banding of 2 male peregrine falcon chicks from a nesting box on the Gillis Bridge in Newburyport.

- Biologists can track their movements and lifespan. In addition to the Gillis Bridge, MassDOT and MassWildlife monitor 9 other falcon nesting box locations statewide.
- Nest box program benefits the hatching of birds and transportation infrastructure, as bridges are a favorite roosting habitat for pigeons. The birds' guano accumulates on bridge surfaces, increasing oxidation rates of steel, creating rust, resulting in increased maintenance needs. Fortunately, peregrine falcons excel at hunting pigeons. State biologists and engineers have seen reduced pigeon populations at bridges with nesting falcons.

