



# Applicant Guide for Municipal Road Safety Grants

## I. Introduction

The Office of Grants and Research (OGR) is the State Administering Agency for traffic safety grants awarded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Using these federal funds, OGR awards subgrants to eligible police departments under the Municipal Road Safety (MRS) Grant Program to assist in its efforts to reduce roadway crashes, injuries, fatalities, and associated economic losses in Massachusetts.

This guide is designed to help municipal police departments navigate the Availability of Grant Funds (AGF) and the application process. The following information is only meant to be a supplemental resource, and applicants are strongly encouraged to review the entire AGF to ensure their proposal adhere to the rules and requirements of the program.

## II. Eligibility and Program Highlights

- **Eligible Applicants:** Only Massachusetts municipal police departments are eligible to apply.
- **Fund Disbursement:** Cost-reimbursement grant.
- **Maximum Award Amount:** varies from \$25,000 - \$65,000; amounts are the maximum you may request. A department may apply for less than the maximum but may not exceed it.
- **Eligible Activities:** Data-driven, evidence-based traffic safety projects including Overtime Traffic Enforcement; Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety; and Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities.
- **Award Selection:** This is a competitive grant program; applications are read and scored by a minimum of three peer reviewers. Award amounts are based on score, reviewer feedback, geographic diversity, and the department's past performance (e.g., spending, reporting, and progress).
- **Performance Period:** Approximately one year based on federal fiscal calendar (November 1<sup>st</sup> – September 15<sup>th</sup>).

### Helpful Tips Before Beginning Your Municipal Road Safety Grant Application

- **Review Your Crash Data:** Projects must be grounded in local crash data. Before you begin, identify what challenges or trends exist within your community by reviewing the following:
  - [MassDOT IMPACT Crash Portal](#): See Section IV for more information
  - OGR Crash by Town Report ('21-'25): Available on the MRS Grant Program page
  - Internal Departmental Data: Refer to your incident or records management system to supplement internal citation and crash data.

- **Identify Three Roadway Safety Trends:** Using your data above, identify at least three distinct trends affecting your community. Consider the following:
  - Who in your community is affected (age group, pedestrians, cyclists, etc.)
  - Where it occurs (specific intersection, corridor, or area)
  - When it occurs (day of week, time of day, season)
  - What the data shows (crash counts, citation data, injury rates)
- **Choose Your Program Elements:** Select the elements that best match how you plan to address your identified challenges and trends. You may apply for one or more of the following elements:
  - **Element I:** Overtime Traffic Enforcement (impaired, distracted, speed, occupant protection) and/or Traffic Equipment (must pair with at least 30 enforcement hours)
  - **Element II:** Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement and/or Safety Items
  - **Element III:** Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities
- **Confirm Your Tier Level:** Review and identify your Tier Level (1 through 4) using the Municipal Road Safety - Department Funding Levels document. This is the maximum amount that you may request. A department may apply for less than the maximum but may not exceed it.

### III. Applicant Information and Department Overview

- **Applicant Name** – This is the organization/agency name with which OGR will enter into an agreement with to provide grant funding.
- **Applicant Address** – This should be the agency address or official mailing address where the agency is registered. This address will be listed on contracting documents.
- **Fiscal Address** – This should be the “legal address” for what will be listed on contracting documents. Generally, this is the City or Town’s legal address and is on file with the statewide accounting system (MMARS).
- **Authorizing Official Contact** – This is the individual who has final signature authority on grants/contracts at the applicant agency (typically, this will be the Town Manager, Mayor, Chief of Police).
- **Grant Point of Contact** – The primary day-to-day contact for whom OGR may contact regarding program management and grant reporting.
- **Fiscal Point of Contact** – The individual responsible for the accounting and fiscal management of the grant.

**Note:** Applicants must identify at least two different individuals across the Authorizing Official, Grant Contact, and Fiscal Contact roles. The same person may not fill all three roles.

## Department Overview:

This should be a clear and concise summary of the department's current capacity and commitment to addressing road safety. Responses should cover:

- A brief description of your service area, agency/staffing, demographics, etc.
- Overview of department's current traffic safety capacity (e.g., Does the department have a dedicated Traffic Division? Do officers regularly conduct traffic enforcement during routine patrol?)
- Identifies if the department has previously received MRS funding within the last three (3) years
  - If yes, describes the impact of prior MRS funding within department and community

## IV. Problem Identification, Data, and Roadway Safety Trends

This section is a critical part of the application as it should identify your community's traffic safety challenges. Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize the following resources as well as their own assessments to identify which road safety trends, priority areas, and elements to focus on within their grant proposal.

### A. [MassDOT: Crash Data Portal](#)

- Review the report provided through [MassDOT: Crash Data Portal](#) and complete the "Crash Category" table within the application that highlights available statewide data relevant to your community.
- This data is available by navigating to: IMPACT Home (linked above) → Reports → Standardized Reports → Grant Application – Crashes at a Glance → and entering the specific **Year(s)** and **Town Name**
- IMPACT's dashboards provide a wide range of crash-related analytics, including identification of high-risk areas to help determine where a department may want to conduct their enforcement efforts. This feature can be found by following these steps:
  1. Navigate to [Statewide Crashes by Severity and Year](#)
  2. Select "Filter by Town," and select your respective **City/Town Name**
  3. Locate the window/tab titled "**Top 5% Town Intersection Crash Locations within each Town based on Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)**"
    - This window will list the top three (3) crash locations within the selected community. **Consider these locations when planning enforcement efforts.**
  4. The "**Top 5% Crash Clusters by Town**" map will also display color-coded crash clusters and their locations for specific types of crashes involving Motor Vehicles, Pedestrians, and Bicyclists.

## **B. Internal Departmental Data**

Utilize internal incident management and/or record management systems to provide additional information to help inform and identify priority areas for planned enforcement and/or other activities.

## **C. 5-Year Average Crash Report**

OGR has created a supporting document titled **OGR Crash by Town Report ('21-'25)** to provide departments with select crash data over a five-year period between 2021 through 2025 (**Note:** This data is based upon available preliminary statewide data as of the AGF posting date). This report further breaks down crashes by type, what percentage that crash type accounts for within the community, and the average for each crash type per year based on the five-year totals (2021-2025).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the document when identifying grant goals/objectives as well as determining what types of crashes may be most common within their community. For example, if your community has a high percentage of crashes involving older drivers 65+. Your department should identify goals and objectives focused on education and/or awareness activities geared toward reducing crashes within that specific age group.

## **D. Roadway Safety Trends:**

Applicants must identify three (3) trends within their community; consider identifying the following information when completing this section:

- Who in your community is affected (age group, pedestrians, cyclists, etc.)
- Where it occurs (specific intersection, corridor, or area)
- When it occurs (day of week, time of day, season)
- What the data shows (crash counts, citation data, injury rates)

Incorporate feedback from partners such as transportation officials, emergency response agencies, and community organizations – are there any traffic safety concerns that are commonly noted by the community?

## **V. Goals and Measurable Objectives**

Departments must identify at least one (1) goal per **Program Element** and/or **Priority Area** they apply for, with each goal supported by two (2) or three (3) objectives (e.g., a department applying for all three elements should have no less than three goals and six to nine objectives in total.)

Objectives must identify the specific activity proposed and connect to a program element and/or priority area (i.e., enforcement, community event, officer training).

Objectives must be measurable (i.e., including a number, quantity, or rate that can be tracked and reported). Objectives must also have a timeline (i.e., by June 2027, by September 2027, etc.).

Each identified goal should logically connect to crash data, trends, and/or priority areas identified.

**Note:** Departments only applying for Element I – Traffic Enforcement should have more than one goal addressing more than one Priority Area (i.e., enforcement activity addressing Impaired Driving and Speeding).

## Goal Types

**Outcome-Based Goals** (recommended for high crash-volume departments): This type of goal should set a numeric reduction target from either a 3- or 5-year average.

**Process-Based Goals** (recommended for lower crash-volume departments and/or newer MRS applicants): This type of goal has a focus on activities to be completed.

**Measurable Objectives** should be the specific actions that your department will take to help accomplish the proposed goal(s). Typically, objectives should answer the following:

- **What** is the planned activity (e.g., enforcement hours, educational events, trainings)
  - **How** will the activity be measured? Does the activity have a numerical target to track progress (e.g., number of enforcement hours, participants reached, events held, officers trained, etc.)
  - **When** will the activity be completed, include a specific deadline (e.g., "by June 2027")
- Follow the “SMART” framework when creating goals/objectives to ensure they are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound**.

### Example of an Outcome-Based Goal and Supporting Objectives

**Outcome-Based Goal:** Reduce the [X]-year average of alcohol-related serious injury and fatal crashes by [X] from the [year – year] calendar year average of [X] crashes by September 2027.

**Objective 1:** Conduct [X] overtime enforcement hours during the Winter and Summer Impaired Driving Campaigns in areas with high incidence of impaired driving-related crashes and arrests. At least 50% of enforcement efforts will be conducted during weekend nighttime hours aligning with the Thursday – Monday timeframe.

**Objective 2:** Train/retrain [X] officers in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) by July 2027 to strengthen our department’s capacity to identify impaired drivers and conduct enforcement during the Summer Impaired Driving Campaign.

**Objective 3:** Deliver [X] impaired driving education/outreach events by June 2027 with a focus on reaching young drivers. At least one presentation will be delivered to [**High School / College**] students and include a Simulated Impaired Driving Experience activity for young drivers.

### Example of a Process-Based Goal and Supporting Objectives

**Process-based Goal:** Establish a targeted pedestrian safety enforcement and education program with a focus on reducing pedestrian-related crashes involving residents age 55+.

**Objective 1:** Conduct [X] overtime enforcement hours across [X] Pedestrian/Bicyclist campaigns by September 2027, efforts will target locations that have high incidences of speeding and pedestrian/bicyclist-related crashes.

**Objective 2:** Distribute [X] pedestrian safety reflective strips/bands to residents age 55+ through [X] community outreach events by May 2027, pairing each distribution with education on safe crossing practices and the Vulnerable Road Users Law.

**Objective 3:** Deliver at least [X] community outreach events in partnership with the Council on Aging. Events will be publicized and held in conjunction with the Pedestrian/Bicyclist enforcement efforts. Residents will be educated on safe crossing practices and provided with reflective strips/bands to improve nighttime visibility reaching an estimated [# of participants].

## VI. Program Elements

For each element you apply for, ensure that it's supported by your **Problem Identification, Data, and Roadway Safety Trends**. Your community's traffic safety challenges should relate to your planned grant activity and detail where and when it will be done and justify why it's being done. Scoring for this section is pro-rated based on the elements being selected.

A department may apply for any combination of the following elements:

- **Element I:** Overtime Traffic Enforcement (Impaired, Distracted, Click It or Ticket, Speed) and/or Traffic Equipment (must pair with at least 30 enforcement hours)
- **Element II:** Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement and/or Safety Items
- **Element III:** Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities

### A. Element 1:

In your application, you will be required to identify and select which Traffic Enforcement Campaigns you are seeking to participate in – there are a total of six (6) campaigns. (Winter Impaired, Distracted, Click It or Ticket, June Speed, July Speed, and Summer Impaired)

Next, you will be asked to briefly describe your **Enforcement Plan** for each selected campaign period. Your efforts and activity should directly correspond to one or more crash trends or priority areas identified. These efforts should expand upon your **Measurable Objectives** and detail the actions that your department will take to help accomplish the proposed goal(s) - specifically, tie-in your data and identify any corridors, intersections, or areas that are identified through your problem identification.

If requesting traffic equipment, you must ensure the equipment is permissible and directly connected to a planned enforcement activity (e.g., relates to one or more crash trends or priority

areas identified). Please provide additional details regarding the current inventory of relevant existing equipment, including the quantity, age, and condition of each item. Additionally, please describe how this equipment will be used to support your proposed grant activities.

**Traffic Enforcement Narrative Example**

**Enforcement Plan:** Our data shows that alcohol-related crashes have increased by 10 over the last 3 years with most of these incidents occurring between Friday and Sunday evenings located along the corridor of Main Street. We plan to conduct 100 hours of targeted enforcement efforts during the Winter Impaired and Summer Impaired Enforcement Campaigns (50 hours each month) with patrols targeting Main Street as well as adjacent streets. At least 50% of these patrols (50 hours total) will be scheduled during the evening hours of Thursday-Sunday.

**Traffic Equipment Narrative Example**

**Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) Instruments:** Our department currently has five (5) preliminary breath test devices; four (4) of these units are regularly assigned to routine patrols conducting enforcement. The additional unit is available for use during targeted or specialized enforcement activity; the condition of this unit has worsened since being purchased in 2015 and is no longer able to be calibrated. Our department respectfully requests one (1) additional PBT device to replace this existing unit that will be dedicated for use during our planned Winter and Summer Impaired Driving overtime enforcement patrols to ensure the officer(s) working these shifts can conduct patrols/investigations during the grant year.

**Note:** For any Traffic Equipment not being requested, select “no”.

**B. Element 2:**

In your application, you will be required to identify and select which Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Enforcement Campaigns you are seeking to participate in – there are a total of six (6) campaigns (November, January, February, March, May, and August – September).

Briefly describe your **Enforcement Plan** for each selected campaign period. Specific enforcement strategies should be described (i.e., crosswalk decoy operations, vulnerable road users law enforcement). These efforts should expand upon your **Measurable Objectives** and detail the actions that your department will take to help accomplish the proposed goal(s) – specifically, tie-in your data and identify any corridors, intersections, or areas that are identified through your problem identification.

If requesting safety items, ensure they are permissible, relevant, and tied to an identified at-risk population or priority area identified. Items must be accompanied by a distribution plan that details the (1) planned activity, (2) target population, (3) when and where it will take place, and (4) educational component accompanying the distribution of the items.

**Pedestrian and Bicyclist Enforcement Narrative Example:**

**Enforcement Plan:** Our department will participate in all six (6) Pedestrian and Bicyclist Campaigns. Data shows that between 2021-2025 there have been 284 pedestrian-involved crashes and 82 bicyclist-involved crashes. A significant number (40%) of these crashes occurred in the busy intersection of Lowell Rd. and North Ave. during commuting hours of 7:00am-9:00am and 3:00pm-6:00pm. Officers will conduct 60 hours of enforcement through a combination of targeted enforcement and crosswalk decoy operations within these areas during these hours.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Items Narrative Example**

Over the last 5 years, our town has averaged 73 pedestrian- and/or bicyclist-involved crashes per year. We are requesting grant funds to purchase 30 bicycle helmets and 250 reflective armbands that will be distributed during (4) four educational events that we plan to host between March - May. The events will promote awareness and deliver best practices regarding visibility, traffic laws, and other safety tips. The reflective arm bands will be distributed during the events while the helmets will be distributed during after-school bike safety programs in conjunction with local elementary schools aimed at promoting helmet use and education

**C. Element 3:**

This element provides the most flexibility for applicants to request Community Awareness / Outreach Activities as well as Officer Training opportunities. In the section provided, you will be asked to identify each proposed activity you plan to conduct – ensure that each activity has a clear rationale to a traffic safety problem, trend, or priority area. At the very least, your narrative should detail the (1) planned activity, (2) when and where it will take place, (3) who will be involved (if partners or other agencies are involved), and (4) the target population.

**For Officer Training:** Each planned activity/training should be relevant to one or more of the identified priority areas, enforcement activities, and/or trends. Applicants are expected to detail how it will strengthen department capacity to address those challenges.

**Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities Narrative Example 1:**

Our department will host (4) pedestrian and bicyclist safety classes. This priority area is of particular concern (our town averages 73 crashes per year that involve a pedestrian and/or bicyclist). Funding will support overtime costs related to staffing three (3) officers hosting two (2) pedestrian safety classes at our local Senior Center by June 2027. The classes will deliver best practices regarding safe crossing, improving visibility, and other safety tips. Reflective arm bands will be distributed as part of the program to improve nighttime visibility. Additionally, two (2) bicycle safety programs will be held (a Bike Rodeo and a Helmet-fitting station during our department's annual open house) with a focus on educating the public regarding safe riding behaviors, improving helmet use, and rules of the road. Helmets will be purchased and distributed to residents and children during the program with a primary focus on ensuring underserved residents have access to a proper fitting helmet.

### **Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities Narrative Example 2:**

Our department no longer has a certified Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST) on staff. We would like to send 2 officers to be certified as CPSTs and be available to fulfill community requests for CPS checks and attend community events to promote awareness and educate residents on how to properly install car seats. Funding will support overtime costs related to hosting CPS inspection events at least once a month throughout the grant year.

### **Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities Narrative Example 3:**

According to our data, our town averages 74.6 crashes a year involving a young driver under 21. We plan to use a portion of our grant funding to work with a local nonprofit organization to deliver four (4) safety presentations to high school students that address various priority areas (Impaired Driving, Distracted Driving, Occupant Protection). These events will align with seasonal high school events like Homecoming, Prom season, and Graduation – the events will educate students on the importance of responsible driving habits such as not texting and driving, obeying speed limits, and wearing their seat belts.

## **VII. Budget**

A budget narrative should explain or further justify the proposed costs by line item or category as provided in the budget worksheet. Proper budget narratives should briefly describe the activity and explain how the associated costs relate to and/or support program implementation.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- A budget narrative is not a copy-paste of what is listed in the Budget Excel Worksheet.
- The amount of funding requested in your application should match the exact total in the Budget Excel Worksheet. Be sure to double-check the totals prior to submission.
- Include appropriate detail within your Budget Worksheet, for “Officer Training” – indicate what type of proposed training your department is requesting. For example, “ARIDE Training: 3 Officers will participate in an MPTC sponsored ARIDE Course during the grant year. Officers will be scheduled to attend the sixteen (16) hour course during OT shifts (3 officers x 16 hours = 48 hours x OT Rate).
- If requesting traffic equipment items, departments must also request funds to complete thirty (30) overtime traffic enforcement hours,
- The total cost of the equipment item(s) cannot exceed 50% of the traffic enforcement budget total. Requests for traffic equipment items may not be approved if these requirements are not met.

**Budget Examples for Selecting One, Two, or Three Program Elements**

**Choosing One (1) Element:**

Department A falls within Tier 1 and has requested \$65,000 to supporting a proposal carrying out only traffic enforcement activity under Element I: Traffic Enforcement.

<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Traffic Enforcement	\$65,000.00
Traffic Safety Equipment	N/A
Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement	N/A
Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities	N/A
Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety Items	N/A
Fringe Benefit Costs	N/A
Indirect Costs	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$65,000.00</b>

**Choosing Two (2) Elements:**

Department B is within Tier 3 and may apply for a total award amount of \$35,000. Department B is requesting a total of \$30,000 between Element I: Traffic Enforcement & Traffic Equipment, and Element II: Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement.

<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Traffic Enforcement	\$15,000.00
Traffic Safety Equipment	\$5,000.00
Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement	\$10,000.00
Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities	N/A
Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety Items	N/A
Fringe Benefit Costs	N/A
Indirect Costs	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$30,000.00</b>

**Choosing Three (3) Elements:**

Department C requesting \$55,000 out of a maximum of \$65,000 since they fall within Tier 1. requesting activity under Element I: Traffic Enforcement & Traffic Equipment, Element II: Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement & Items, and Element III: Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities.

<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Traffic Enforcement	\$35,000.00
Traffic Safety Equipment	\$5,000.00
Pedestrian & Bicyclist Enforcement	N/A
Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities	\$12,500.00
Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety Items	\$2,500.00
Fringe Benefit Costs	N/A
Indirect Costs	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$55,000.00</b>