

Maximize Existing Corridors to Minimize Impacts and Reduce Costs

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Maximizing use of existing corridors will be key to achieving clean energy mandates

- Achieving the Commonwealth's clean mandates will require new onshore transmission infrastructure
- Utilities already prioritize existing transmission ROWs when developing projects
- Scale of clean energy development will also require creation of new transmission corridors
- Acquisition of new "greenfield" rights-of-way is more likely to increase environmental and community impacts and may not be feasible in heavily-developed areas
- To minimize environmental and community impacts and reduce costs, use of existing corridors and sites should be maximized.
- Other linear corridors (railroads, highways, etc.) could be leveraged more, as appropriate, to host transmission infrastructure, better minimizing community impacts

Policies to encourage use of existing corridors deserve further consideration

- At the Federal level, Federal Highway Administration recently issued guidance encouraging “alternative uses” for highway corridors, including for electric transmission (“State DOTs Leveraging Alternative Uses of the Highway ROW Guidance,” April 2021)
- State agencies own or control access to land and corridors across the Commonwealth that may be appropriate for transmission infrastructure
 - For example: MassDOT, MBTA, DCR, MWRA, and Massport
- Clean Energy Transmission Working Group could recommend measures and policies to increase capacity of agencies to identify appropriate sites and plan for hosting transmission infrastructure
 - Could include new policies, resources and staffing, etc.
 - Potential to also meet agencies needs for electrification, improved reliability, etc