Guiding Document 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 its 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.

The purpose of this guide is 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 for departments when putting together a proposal for their MRS Grant Application. 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
- **Fund Disbursement:** Reimbursement grant, contingent upon receipt and subject to the availability of federal funds appropriated from NHTSA.
- **Award Amounts:** $25,000 to $65,000 depending on Funding Level
- **Types of Programs:** Traffic Enforcement; Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety; and Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities
  - Projects must be data-driven, use proven countermeasures, and have a goal of reducing motor vehicle crashes, fatalities, injuries, and associated economic losses
- **Project Period:** Approximately one year based on federal fiscal calendar (October 1st – September 30th)

III. Applicant Information and Department Overview

Before applying, applicants must identify the following information and appropriate staff who will be responsible for fulfilling the roles for the agency:

- **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.
- **Authorizing Official Contact** – This is the individual who has final signature authority on grants/contracts at the applicant agency. Usually, it is the Town Manager/Mayor, Chief of Police, or another Senior Executive.
- **Grant Point of Contact** – This is the individual at the applicant agency who will serve as the primary contact for day-to-day activities and whom OGR may contact regarding program management and submission of grant reporting.

- **Fiscal Point of Contact** – This is the individual at the implementing agency who will be listed on the Standard Contract Form and responsible for the accounting and fiscal management of the grant.
- **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).

Department Overview:

This should be a clear and concise summary/description of the department's current capacity and commitment to addressing road safety. Detail how the requested grant funds will augment existing efforts to reduce roadway crashes, injuries, and fatalities or increase the department's ability to address areas of concern. Include whether the department previously received MRS grant(s) and how the funding furthered efforts to address traffic safety, as well as any overall impact the grant had on the community.

Helpful Hint:

➢ Be sure to include information that describes your service area, agency/staffing, demographics, etc.

IV.   Problem Identification, Data, and Roadway Safety Trends

This section is a critical part of the application as it should identify safety challenges the community is facing as well as major factors that may contribute to the fatal and serious injury crash levels within the community.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the MassDOT: Crash Data Portal "IMPACT," Internal Departmental Data, "OGR Crash by Town Report ('20-'24)," and their own assessments to identify road safety trends. These trends should be used to identify which priority areas and elements to focus on within the 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 2019-2021 based on Equivalent Property Damage Only (EPDO)"

- This window will provide a list of the top three (3) crash locations within the selected community. **Consider these locations when planning enforcement efforts.**
  4. The "2019-2021 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

Applicants should also 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 ('20-'24)"** to provide applicants with data over a five-year period for years 2020 through 2024 (**Note**: totals are based upon available statewide data as of 3/1/2025). This document provides totals for all crashes by town and further breaks down these crashes by type, what percentage that crash type accounts for, and the average for each crash type per year based on the five-year totals (2020-2024).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to refer to the document when creating grant goals/objectives as well as determining what types of crashes may be most common within their community. For example, there may be a high percentage of crashes involving older drivers 65+. The applicant may 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 the following points when completing this section of the application:

- Reference the crash, citation, and/or 5-year average data that has been compiled for your community – are there any noticeable trends?
- Consider locations that may be more susceptible to crashes or are otherwise known as high-risk areas – are there specific Days of the Week or Times of Day that may benefit from targeted enforcement patrols in these areas?
- 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 provide at least one (1) goal and two (2) supporting measurable objectives in their application. This is an important tool that will assist departments with the planning, implementation, and evaluation of their grant-funded program. Please refer to Pages 5-6 of the AGF for more information and examples.

Helpful Hints:

➢ Consider what Program Elements you will be applying for, as these will also help you develop the program's goal(s)/objectives – be sure to consider multiple elements when putting together objectives.

➢ Objectives should be the specific actions that a department will take to help accomplish its identified goal(s).

➢ Follow the "SMART" when creating goals/objectives that are **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Achievable**, **Relevant**, and **Time-bound**

➢ Refer to the example below that takes a vague goal and makes it SMART

S.M.A.R.T.	Helpful Hints for creating SMART Goals…
Specific	• Clearly define the problem; avoid broad or generic statements. • Focus on a precise traffic safety issue you seek to improve (Fatal Crashes, Serious Injuries, or perhaps a specific behavior Speeding, Distracted Driving, etc.)
Measurable	• Quantify the goal(s) / objective(s) to track the progress. • What will serve as a benchmark against to measure progress and track improvement? • Consider using a 5-year or 3-year average data set in your goal setting.
Achievable	• Is the activity achievable? A goal that is too high will be unattainable, while a goal that is too low may be enough of a challenge. • Consider what can be reasonably accomplished within the project period.
Relevant	• Refer to the data / trends, align goals/objectives to this priority area. • Do the goals/objectives address the local traffic safety concerns and data within the community.
Time-bound	• Set a clear time frame, it can be short or long-term. • Consider aligning this with the calendar year or a specific Enforcement Campaign Period.
❌ **"Improve Pedestrian Safety"**	
✅ **"Reduce traffic-related pedestrian fatalities by 4 from the 2020-2024 calendar year average of 23 by end of calendar year 2026."**	

VI.   Program Elements

Program elements and objectives are closely related and will assist departments with accomplishing their identified goal(s). A department may apply for any combination of the following elements to best address the specific needs of their community.

- Traffic Enforcement
- Pedestrian & Bicyclist Safety
- Community Awareness, Outreach, and Educational Activities

In your application, detail what your planned activity is for each Traffic Enforcement Campaign that you are seeking to participate in. Briefly describe the efforts you hope to accomplish in the

space provided within the application. To add campaigns, click the "Add Campaign" button. There are a total of six (6) Traffic Enforcement campaigns and six (6) Pedestrian and Bicyclist Enforcement Campaigns.

Helpful Hints:

➢ Consider applying for Program Elements that are relevant to your Problem Identification, Data, and Trends.

➢ Review NHTSA's Countermeasures That Work: 11th Edition to identify potential activities.

Please refer to the following narrative examples when putting together your proposals:

Traffic <u>Enforcement</u> Narrative Example:

From December 1st – December 31st we will participate in the Winter Impaired Driving Campaign. Our data shows that OUI arrests and alcohol-related crashes have increased 20% over the last 3 years with most of these incidents occurring between Friday and Sunday evenings in a 5-mile radius of the local college (located between Main Street and School Street). We will participate in 40 hours of targeted enforcement efforts during this month dedicated to targeting the areas of Main Street and School Street from Thursday-Sunday evenings.

Traffic <u>Equipment</u> Narrative Example:

Our department currently has four (4) preliminary breath test devices, one (1) was purchased in 2015 with the other three (3) being purchased in 2024 with MRS grant funds. The oldest unit is malfunctioning and is no longer used. In the past year, we've arrested 20 drivers of suspected OUI which is a 10% increase from the previous year. Our department respectfully requests one (1) additional PBT device that will be dedicated for use during Winter and Summer Impaired Driving enforcement patrols to assist our department's ability to conduct OUI patrols/investigations in a timely and proper manner.

Example When Not Requesting Items:

Portable Speed Radar and/or Message Trailers:

Current Inventory *	Requested *
N/A	0
Quantity and approximate age	*Quantity of items requested*

Justification *

N/A

Pedestrian and Bicyclist <u>Enforcement</u> Narrative Example:

During November 1st – November 30th, our department will participate in the Pedestrian and Bicyclist Campaign. Data shows that between 2020-2024 there have been 284 pedestrian involved crashes and 82 bicyclist involved crashes. A significant number 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 directed enforcement and crosswalk decoy operations within these areas during these hours.

Pedestrian and Bicycle <u>Safety Items</u> Narrative Example

Over the last 5 years, our town has averaged 40 pedestrian and/or bicyclist involved crashes per year. We are requesting grant funds to purchase 30 bicycle helmets and 250 reflective armbands. Our department will host educational events during each Ped/Bike Mobilization, including tabling events to promote awareness and engage the public about best practices regarding visibility, traffic laws, and other safety tips. The reflective arm bands will be distributed during various educational programs 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.

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

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 to fulfill community requests for CPS checks.

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

Our town averages 74.6 crashes a year involving a young driver under 21, per 2020-2024 data. We would like to use a portion of our grant funding to work with a local Nonprofit Organization to conduct safety presentations for high school students. The focus would be on educating students on the importance of responsible driving habits such as not texting and driving, obeying speed limits, and wearing their seat belts.

VII.   Timeline

Timelines should provide a brief overview of the entire grant project period and align with any identified Traffic Enforcement and Pedestrian and Bicyclist Enforcement Campaigns. The timeline should also match information entered in the budget workbook.

Helpful Hints:

➢ All elements and activities should be mentioned in the timeline, including the purchase and distribution of equipment/safety items.
➢ Be aware of the March 31st deadline for your programs to complete any equipment/safety item purchases.

VIII. 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. This should not be a copy-and-pasted list of the budget item list from your Budget Excel Worksheet.

Helpful Hints:

➢ A budget narrative is <u>not</u> a copy-paste of what is listed in the Budget Excel Worksheet.

➢ The amount of funding requested in your application should match the <u>exact</u> 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 2025-2026 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, <u>and</u> 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.

Sample Budgets for Selecting One, Two, or Three Program Elements:

➢ Choosing One (1) Element:
In this example, 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.

Department A Budget:

Cost Categories	Budget
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
Total	**$65,000.00**

➢ Choosing Two (2) Elements:
In this example, 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.

Department B Budget:

Cost Categories	Budget

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
Total	**$30,000.00**

➢ Choosing Three (3) Elements:

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

Department C Budget:

Cost Categories	Budget
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
Total	**$55,000.00**