

FY 2026 Industrial Rail Access Program (IRAP)

Presenters

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John Weston, Rail Program Specialist, MassDOT

Agenda

- Program Overview
- Program Goals
- Eligible Applicants
- Eligible Projects
- Ineligible Project Activities
- Application Requirements
- Application Evaluations
- Compliance/Applicant Responsibility
- Reimbursement Process



Request for Applications

FY2026 INDUSTRIAL RAIL ACCESS PROGRAM (IRAP)

Funded by the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Administered by
MassDOT Rail and Transit Division

Monica Tibbitts-Nutt
MassDOT Secretary & CEO

ISSUE DATE: April 22, 2025

APPLICATIONS DUE: May 22, 2025 @ 5:00 p.m.

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO: MassDOTIRAPProgram@dot.state.ma.us

INQUIRIES: James Eng, Deputy Rail Administrator James.Eng@dot.state.ma.us (857) 368-8963
Carlos A. Velasquez, Asst. Project Manager Carlos.A.Velasquez@dot.state.ma.us (857) 368-8918
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Program Overview

Competitive grant program created by the Massachusetts State Legislature in 2012.

Industrial Rail Access Program provides grants to support capital improvements focused on increasing or improving access to freight rail transportation in Massachusetts.

Amount allocated for FY 2026: \$3 million annual budget to support the execution of IRAP projects. Number of awards each year depends on schedule of existing and proposed projects.

Program Purpose / Goals

The purpose of the program is to provide funding for capital improvements that:

- Increase access to rail freight service, and
- Preserve or stimulate economic development through the generation of new or expanded rail service.

Project Public Benefits

A Project must be of public benefit, in the public interest, and for a public purpose, and any benefit to private entities or individuals shall be indirect and incidental and not the principal purpose of the Project.

Primary public benefits include:

- ***Increased freight rail shipment volumes,***
- ***Reduced roadway congestion contributions,***
- ***Job retention or creation,***

Eligible Applicants

- Host municipalities and their economic development corporations,
- Freight railroads operating in the Commonwealth, and
- Rail shippers/receivers engaged in commercial ventures in the Commonwealth

Note: Property owners/developers that are not engaged in freight rail shipping/receiving are not eligible.

Eligible Project Activities

Examples of Eligible Projects

- Establishing / reestablishing rail sidings to active or proposed railroad shippers/receivers
- Construction/rehabilitation of industrial park (multiple-user) rail sidings
- Expansion of on-site track capacity to enable increased freight rail shipments
- Facility improvements that directly support establishing or expanding freight rail receiving / shipping capacity

Ineligible Project Activities

Examples of Ineligible Project Activities:

- Operating costs/expenses
- Maintenance / deferred maintenance activities
- Projects without a demonstrated clear and sustained public benefit
- Projects without independent utility (requires completion of associated project to realize the public benefits)
- **Projects with less than 20-year useful life**

All projects that include procured engineered services must be completed with a MA Professional Engineer

Application Requirements

Application Requirements

- Project Description
- Project Readiness - 9 identified attributes of readiness in application
- **Project Public Benefits** – grantees required to provide supporting documentation within 2-year of completion
- Project Schedule – if project is more than 1 year – detail required on what is anticipated after July 1, 2027.
- Project Budget - MassDOT will provide a maximum of 60% of project costs. The MassDOT IRAP share may not exceed \$700,000.
- Project Maps/Plans
- Railroad Service Commitment Letter

Grant Management Requirements

- Administrative and management capacity
- All Grantees must conduct and document an open and competitive procurement process
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) Supplier Diversity Office's website:
<https://www.diversitycertification.mass.gov/BusinessDirectory/BusinessDirectorySearch.aspx>
- Carefully review the Commonwealth Terms and Conditions
- Safety:

Projects which are located on an active railroad right of way will be required to comply with the operating railroad's safety requirements, including submission of a project safety plan and as appropriate 49 CFR Part 214 Roadway Worker Protection (RWP), Part 219 Control of Alcohol and Drug Use, Part 243 Training, Qualifications, and Oversight for Safety-Related Railroad Employees, and other applicable FRA regulations to ensure the contractor abides by FRA regulations.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Enhancement:** Improves Massachusetts freight rail transportation and aligns with state policies.
- **Project Readiness:** Advanced design, permits, and agreements in place, ensuring schedule adherence.
- **Public Benefits:** Increases rail volumes, improves air quality and boosts freight movement.
- **Community Focus:** Addresses needs and disparities in affected communities.
- **Economic Impact:** Promotes industry retention and economic growth with verifiable benefits.
- **Stakeholder Support:** Strong backing from the host railroad, local officials, and community entities.
- **Funding Efficiency:** Reasonable budget with strong private sector funding exceeding the 40% minimum.

Compliance and Applicant Responsibility

- New in FY2026: Applications must be complete, truthful, and accurate.
- Any **material misrepresentation** or **misuse of funds**—even if corrected later—may result in:
 - Disallowed costs
 - Termination of award
 - Multi-year ineligibility from IRAP
- MassDOT reserves the right to request clarifications or deny applications based on compliance concerns.
- Applicants must **maintain documentation** for all claims made in the application and for all reimbursed expenses.

Contracting and Reimbursement Requirements

- **Reimbursement-based funding:** Grantees must pay costs upfront and submit invoices for reimbursement.
- **Contracting with MassDOT** requires the following forms (to be submitted *after* award):
 - Commonwealth Terms and Conditions
 - Contractor Authorized Signatory Listing (CASL)
 - W-9
 - EFT sign-up form
- Grantees must use **open and competitive procurement** and include **DBEs** where applicable.
- **Invoicing & Reporting:**
 - Must follow MassDOT's format
 - Include detailed backup for all expenses
 - Must show progress against approved schedule and budget

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Questions?

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