

Rail & Transit Report

Meredith Slesinger | Rail & Transit Administrator

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TRANSIT UPDATE

- **FY23 RTA Fare Free Initiative-** MassDOT sent an award notice to the 15 Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) approving their joint grant application through the MassDOT Fare Free Pilot Program as provided for under Section 1595-6370 of the Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Act. The **Try Transit** initiative will provide \$2,500,000 in funding for the RTAs to implement free fixed route and ADA paratransit services for the 2022 holiday season (approximately the last week of November through the end of December).
- **Section 5311(f) Intercity Bus Program** – The solicitation for applications for the FFY23-FFY24 award cycle closed on Friday, October 28th. Three applications were received for this round of the biennial application. Award announcements expected in December.
- Administrator Slesinger will be presenting at the VIA Microtransit Conference in Salem, MA on 11/17/22

RAIL UPDATE

- Monitoring potential work stoppage by Class 1 freight railroads which could either begin December 4th or December 9th. While passenger service on the Northeast Corridor won't be affected, Amtrak is developing an operating plan to stop service for long distance and state-supported routes.
- MassDOT Rail continues to monitor assets to account for impacts due to climate change and will make design and construction changes to mitigate risk.
- Over \$3 million in IRAP awards were made to 7 businesses across the Commonwealth. Contracts for some these awards are in place and purchase of materials and equipment has started.
- MassDOT Rail continues to work with CSX on their implementation plans since the merger with Pan Am Railways went into effect June 1st.
- The Berkshire Line capital projects continue with bridge replacements and installation of continuous welded rail until the cold weather is upon us.
- Capital work continues in the eastern part of the state with improvements to 18 grade crossings. Eight crossings have been completed to date and will continue in the Spring.