



Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Jamey Tesler, Acting MassDOT Secretary & CEO
Meredith Slesinger, MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator



To: MassDOT Board
From: Meredith Slesinger, Rail and Transit Administrator
Re: Current Activities
Date: July 21, 2021

TRANSIT

FY22-23 RTA State Contract Assistance MOUs-Update

After negotiations with the 15 Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) on the SFY22-23 Biennial Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the 15 RTAs, the Rail & Transit Division (RTD) and the RTAs have agreed on final language. To date, MassDOT has 14 fully executed MOU's in place. The MOU's are required by the Legislature in the annual state budget language. They include performance metrics in the ridership, customer service, asset management and financial performance categories, as well as submission of information on financial planning, capital planning and budget adherence.

FY22 State Budget Update-RTA State Contract Assistance

The state legislature submitted the FY22 State Budget to the Governor for signature. Included in the budget was \$94 million in state contract assistance for the RTAs. This funding level was an increase of \$3.5 million over the Governor's budget recommendation of \$90.5 million which allocated \$87 million as state contract assistance and \$3.5 million for discretionary grants. The legislature chose not to fund discretionary performance grants for the RTA's and instead opted to replace the \$3.5 million as formula-based state contract assistance. The Governor returned the section for amendment to be consistent with his previous recommendations.

FY22 Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP)

The FY22 CTGP application process closed on June 25, 2021. There were 56 applications by 39 unique organizations for a total of \$10,913,787 requested. Twenty-four were operating and mobility management applications totaling \$1,592,258 and 32 were for 137 vehicles totaling \$9,321,529. The review committee has begun evaluating all CTGP applications submitted and expects to have a slate of recommended selections by September.

MARTap Helping Hands Mini Grants

The Massachusetts Rural Transit Assistance Program (MARTap) [Helping Hands Mini Grant](#) assists Councils on Aging and non-profit transportation providers to improve the delivery of transportation services in rural and small urban areas. Each year, MARTap has roughly \$20,000 in technical assistance funds to fund the mini grant. Applicants can apply for a \$1,000 maximum

award, with a 10% local match, for small capital purchases directly related to the agency's transportation program. Typical requests include computer hardware/software, scanners, printers, van tires, vehicle accessories/safety equipment, and marketing and promotional materials. The past two grant rounds have also allowed applicants to apply for COVID-19 related costs, such as PPE, disinfectants, and driver barriers. The application process closed on June 14, 2021. MARTap received 33 applications, totaling in \$30,275 in requests. On June 30, 2021, MARTap announced that all 33 applications would be at least partially awarded. Awardees have until July 31, 2021 to submit reimbursement requests.

Agency	Award Amount	Award Description
Adams Council on Aging	\$555.00	4 studded tires, marketing flyers
Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA)	\$558.00	6 panel baseball hats with BRTA logo (150)
Bernardston Senior Center & Council on Aging	\$729.00	Printer and ink
Beverly Council on Aging & Senior Center	\$180.00	Advertisement for Transportation Coordinator with CDL License
Billerica Council on Aging	\$726.00	4 van tires, QuickBooks for Transportation Department
Blackstone Council on Aging	\$224.00	2 wheelchairs
Brimfield Council on Aging	\$376.00	4 van tires
Cameron Senior Center	\$672.00	2 hands free Bluetooth receiver for GPS, 3 headsets
Cheshire Council on Aging	\$720.00	10.9-inch iPad Air with Wi-Fi
Clinton Senior Center	\$693.00	1,000 magnetic logo calendars with tear off notepad
Eastham Senior Center (Council on Aging)	\$900.00	5 transport wheelchairs
Friends of the Millbury Seniors, Inc.	\$562.00	4 van tires
GAAMHA Inc.	\$1,000.00	Facebook advertisement and postcard magnets
Georgetown Council on Aging	\$573.00	4 van tires
Grafton Senior Center	\$523.00	2 tires, 1 handheld vacuum, 2 belt cutters, 2 color ink packages, 2 black ink packages
Hilltown Community Development Corp. (CDC)	\$635.00	Laptop

Medfield Council on Aging	\$356.00	3 wheelchairs
Merrimac Council on Aging	\$553.00	4 van tires
Nahant Council on Aging	\$800.00	Website upgrades
Northbridge Council on Aging	\$611.00	3 tablets, 2 screen protectors, 3 Bluetooth wireless keyboards, 1 mobile hotspot device
Northern Essex Elder Transport, Inc.	\$824.00	Volunteer Driver Recruitment brochures & hand sanitizer with logo
Orleans Council on Aging	\$630.00	4 van tires
River Mills Senior Center	\$293.00	Safety barriers/dividers for 5 vehicles
Salisbury Council on Aging	\$274.00	Replacement of 4 deteriorated desk phones
Saugus Council on Aging	\$254.00	2 GPS devices
SCM Community Transportation Corp.	\$583.00	4 van tires
SeniorCare Inc.	\$207.00	Large car magnets for volunteer driver vehicles, ambassadors, advisory board members, staff
Soldier On, Inc.	\$824.00	Onboard computer tablet
South Hadley Council on Aging	\$1,000.00	Radio communication system with connection to two mini vans
Town of Randolph	\$394.00	4 van tires
Town of Sheffield Senior Center/ Council on Aging	\$1,000.00	Lenovo all-in-one computer/touchscreen
Town of Shrewsbury Council on Aging	\$500.00	12,000 transportation request forms
Westport Council on Aging	\$784.00	4 van tires, battery for van
TOTAL	\$19,513.00	

RTA Administrator Changes

The Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MRTA) and the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA) will have new administrators in place by August 1st. MRTA Administrator Mohammed Khan has retired and will be replaced by Deputy Administrator Bruno Fisher who has been named Acting Administrator while the MRTA board advertises for a replacement. MVRTA Administrator Joe Costanzo will retire on July 31st and the MVRTA has awarded the position to Noah Berger who currently serves as CCRTA's Deputy Administrator.

RAIL

NEC Commission NEC Connect 2035 Plan

On July 14, the Northeast Corridor Commission released a \$117 billion, [15-year investment plan](#) (C35). The state governments of the Northeast (including MassDOT and MBTA) the federal government, eight commuter rail agencies, and Amtrak worked together through the NEC Commission to develop a detailed and efficient sequencing of infrastructure investments covering 150 projects and capital renewal efforts along the corridor. C35 is the first multi-year plan for the NEC with a detailed, credible delivery blueprint. That means a specific sequencing of construction that, with adequate funding and an expanded pool of skilled labor, can be built over 15 years with limited service disruptions for customers.

If implemented, the plan would result in travel time savings of nearly 30 minutes for Acela riders between New York and Washington and New York and Boston and travel time savings valued at nearly \$140 million annually for intercity and commuter passengers.

While none of the Northeast Corridor's 15 major backlog projects (e.g., Portal Bridge in New Jersey, the Baltimore & Potomac Tunnels in Maryland) are located in the Commonwealth, intercity and commuter service in Massachusetts would benefit from the greater reliability that would result from these investments.

Industrial Rail Access Program

The latest round of the Industrial Rail Access Program (IRAP) solicitation was posted on May 20, 2021 with a June 17, 2021 application deadline. Fourteen applications were submitted and are under review with selections expected later this summer.

Intercity Passenger Rail Service

The Vermonter service north of New York resumed on July 19. The Valley Flyer will resume on July 26. MassDOT continues to work with Amtrak, Connecticut, Vermont, and other partners to promote and market the service.

Sale of Pan Am Railways

MassDOT RTD continues to monitor the acquisition of Pan Am Railways by CSX. The Commonwealth filed to participate in the proceedings and is continuing conversations with CSX to address issues related to the sale. The Surface Transportation Board has been receiving comment letters from various state and federal officials, among other stakeholders.

Construction Activities

- Hyannis Yard's track work is complete and is accepting the Cape Flyer train traffic. Entrance to the yard is scheduled to be relocated in conjunction with the Route 28 highway project. The project is substantially complete with punch list work remaining and should be closed out this month. Completion of the relocated entrance by the Highway Division will close out the project.
- A bridge in Norton will be replaced on the Middleboro Subdivision. Bids have been received and have been reviewed. Award will be made in August to the low bidder for \$5,764,960.00.
- Approximately 17 miles of continuous welded rail has been installed on the Framingham Secondary Line. This will help the MBTA Foxboro Pilot Service and is partly funded by the MBTA. Punch list work is ongoing and will continue with expected completion by the end of August
- DUE TO THE HEAVY RAINFALL, ALL BRIDGES AND CULVERTS HAVE BEEN INSPECTED TO MITIGATE RISK OF STRUCTURAL FAILURE.