



Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary & CEO
Astrid Glynn, MassDOT Rail & Transit Administrator



To: MassDOT Board
From: Astrid Glynn, Rail and Transit Administrator
Re: Update on Recent Activities
Date: May 16, 2019

Rail:

Greenfield Pilot: Work continued in preparation for the Greenfield Pilot. The Pilot will provide twice daily round trip service between Greenfield, Northampton, Holyoke, Springfield and New Haven with connecting service to New York City. Preparations include work on track, signals and bridges, as well as completion of Springfield Union Station's Platform C. The schedule requires that certain FRA conditions be met with respect to the previously issued exemption from positive train control and there have been very helpful discussions with FRA to that end. The major contractor at Springfield and Amtrak have agreed to a joint schedule that is expected to allow the Pilot Service to start late in the summer.

BUILD Grant: Staff is working with the New England Central Railroad (NECR) to establish the agreements by which MassDOT and NECR will implement the Federal BUILD grant that was awarded to MassDOT to increase the weight capacity of the NECR line in Western Massachusetts.

Cape Flyer Preparation: Construction activities are being completed on the Cohasset Narrows Bridge in preparation for the Cape Flyer service between Boston and Hyannis this Summer.

Surplus Materials: Surplus rail materials have been offered to MA railroads for use in MA pursuant to MGL CH. 161 Section 8. These materials are surplus when MassDOT upgrades a line – for instance from freight to passenger use. The material tends to have more utility than scrap value and it is often useful to freight railroads. Awards will only be made to railroads that are ready, willing, and able to use the material in Massachusetts.

Transit:

Workforce Transportation Program: Starting the outreach process for MassDOT's new Workforce Transportation grant program, MassDOT had the first of 8 Listening Sessions with stakeholders on May 17th at The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority facility in Framingham. The listening session was sponsored by the 495 Partnership and the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority and was well attended. These Listening sessions will help inform MassDOT as it crafts the application that will be used in this new competitive grant program. Other Listening Sessions will be hosted by the Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council, the Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association(TMA) , the South Shore Chamber of Commerce, the Seaport TMA and the 128 Business Council, the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP): The Community Transit Grant Program is MassDOT's annual competitive grant program to improve transportation opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities. Typical recipients are Councils on Aging, non-profits, and Regional Transit Authorities.

MassDOT has started delivering Community Transit Grant vehicles that were awarded to successful applicants of the FY19 CTGP round. To date, MassDOT has delivered 21 of the 144 vehicles that were awarded last October and that were then manufactured for the grantees. All vehicles will be delivered to successful sub-recipients by June 30.

MassDOT has also kicked off the next round of the Community Transit Grant Program with training sessions for interested applicants. The first of five training sessions was held on May 13 in Boston. Training sessions will also be provided in New Bedford, Springfield, Lowell, and Worcester.

Federal "Lo/No" Grant Application: On behalf of three Regional Transit Authorities and the Steamship Authority MassDOT submitted an application for a Federal grant that would fund electric buses and chargers.

New Federal Safety Rule Implementation: MassDOT Transit will soon be selecting a consultant team under the General Consulting "on-call" Contract to support our division in complying with the FTA's Public Transportation Safety Program final rule. MassDOT is the agency responsible for developing safety plans for 11 of the 15 RTAs, however, RTAs may opt-out and develop their own plans. As part of this work, MassDOT will identify any RTAs opting out, and will develop FTA-compliant safety plans for the rest.