

Frequently Asked Questions - Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant Program

Application FAQs

1. We are a municipality interested in applying. What is our next step?

Review the project guidelines and eligibility requirements. If your project is eligible, complete an application on our [How to Apply](#) webpage.

(<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/how-to-apply-shared-streets-and-spaces-grant-program>)

2. Who can apply for this grant?

Only municipalities and public transit authorities may apply. Unfortunately, non-profits, private businesses, restaurants, and quasi-public agencies are not eligible to apply.

3. Can engineering and design services for eligible projects be funded, or is funding only for construction?

Although reasonable design costs – in appropriate proportion to the overall costs of the project – can be covered by a Shared Winter Streets and Spaces grant, we urge applicants to take advantage of the free Technical Assistance that is part of the program. Making use of this Assistance will maximize the grant funds available for on-the-ground implementation. Contact information for [Technical Assistance](#) (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/technical-assistance-shared-streets-and-spaces-grant-program>) providers can be found on the Shared Streets and Spaces program website.

4. Can this grant be retroactively applied to the costs of work already done, or will it only be used for projects moving forward?

Project costs incurred prior to the issuance date of a Notice to Proceed given under this program will not be considered eligible expenses.

5. Can municipalities submit more than one application?

Municipalities may submit up to two distinct applications. A single application can contain multiple sub-projects, however, provided the different pieces make sense as a thematic whole. Municipalities may sign on to the applications of other municipalities as supporters without limit.

6. Can a municipality receive more than one grant?

No. Each municipality may only receive one grant across all four rounds.

7. Can this grant be used for purchasing seats, tables, benches, planters, jersey barriers, and other similar materials?

Yes.

8. We are a municipality working with private property owners to implement a Shared Winter Streets and Spaces project. Our intention is to enter a long-term lease agreement with the owners. Is a lease agreement for public use of the private property sufficient for us to apply for these shared streets and spaces funds?

Yes. However, please note that projects located on private property that are not open to general public use are not eligible under this grant program.

9. Is this program eligible for improvements on state-owned right of way?

MassDOT will consider the inclusion of roadways owned or controlled by MassDOT or by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Applicants are required to attach an access permit when applying to the Shared Streets & Spaces grant program. Nothing about this program will change the control or ownership of any municipal roadway.

10. Will this grant cover costs for an evaluation of the project?

Yes. MassDOT will administer interim and final close-out forms to funded municipalities. Those forms will primarily ask for qualitative assessments of how the project was implemented and its benefits, as well as spending information. If municipalities want to perform their own evaluation, those costs would need to be included in the budget for the grant and be covered by the grant (or funded separately by the municipality).

11. Can work to implement projects under this program be performed by municipal Public Works personnel or other municipal staff (as opposed to requiring an outside contractor)?

Yes, work can be implemented or performed by municipal personnel.

12. How will the grant award be administered? Is it a reimbursement program like Chapter 90 or a direct funding award?

Grant awards are not paid through reimbursement. MassDOT will administer funds through a direct, lump sum payment which will be electronically transferred at the project outset.

Implementation FAQs

1. My town has received a Shared Winter Streets & Spaces grant. What is our next step?

Once a municipality receives an award letter from MassDOT, project implementation can proceed. Any allowable project costs, per your application, can be accrued after the date on your award letter. Unlike the Chapter 90 program, Shared Streets & Spaces grants are paid in full at the project outset and are not paid through reimbursement. Grant funds will be transferred directly to the same account used for Chapter 90 reimbursements within two weeks after the award letter is sent. If you experience a delay beyond two weeks, please email sharedstreets@dot.state.ma.us.

2. Do I need to use my town's existing suppliers and contractors for the Shared Winter Streets & Spaces project? Or can I source my own materials through alternative suppliers?

A municipality may source approved materials and labor through existing or alternative suppliers or contractors. All standard bidding and procurement rules should be followed.

3. Does MassDOT have a list of approved suppliers and contractors that I can consult?

MassDOT has not prepared a specific list of approved vendors and does not require materials to be purchased from a specific supplier or work to be conducted by a specific contractor. If you would like assistance with purchasing materials for your project, please contact Alison Felix, Senior Transportation Planner at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, at afelix@mapc.org. Alison can assist municipalities located outside the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region and may be able to negotiate a better price.

4. Part of my approved grant budget was allocated to a specific item, but then was not spent in full. Can my town reallocate this money to another item related to the project?

Yes, provided the purchase is in service of your approved project, and fits within the overall goals of the Shared Winter Streets and Spaces program. For instance, you may find that you have underspent an approved budget item allocated to paint and have overspent an approved budget item allocated to benches. In this case, you may reallocate the unused funds within your existing, approved budget. Grant monies may not be allocated to different projects or different uses outside the approved grant under any circumstances. If you have any questions about whether your funding can be reallocated to a different, approved budget item within your project, please contact sharedstreets@dot.state.ma.us.

5. One of the elements of my approved Shared Winter Streets & Spaces project was not able to be implemented. Can I submit a revised proposal to MassDOT to propose a new use of these funds?

Unfortunately, no. All monies not expended under these contracts, agreements, or transactions shall be credited to the account of the department from which they were advanced (in this case, MassDOT). Please contact sharedstreets@dot.state.ma.us if you are unable to complete your Shared Winter Streets & Spaces project and we will work with you to find a way to credit the unspent grant money.

6. What are the reporting requirements for this grant?

Award recipients will be required to submit information regarding project progress periodically after funding is distributed. After project completion, MassDOT will provide municipalities with a close-out form to report final project details, including spending details, lessons learned, the process of implementation, whether the project met anticipated goals, whether it was widely used, whether there were any safety concerns, public and business feedback received, and whether the project will be made permanent. Photographs of the project will also be requested. This form will be distributed in the Spring of 2021 and should be submitted to MassDOT by June 30, 2021. In addition, MassDOT may work with municipalities directly to evaluate particular successes or lessons from the projects.

7. I underestimated the price of certain items in my application budget, and the new quotes I have received exceed the total grant amount my municipality was awarded by MassDOT. Can MassDOT approve any additional funding for my Shared Winter Streets and Spaces project?

Unfortunately, no. MassDOT is unable to provide top-up funding for projects that have gone over budget. If, however, you receive a quote for a particular item that exceeds the amount initially budgeted in your application, which does not bring your total project budget above what was awarded by MassDOT, that is okay. We expect there to be some reallocation of funds within project budgets. Please refer to question five above for more information.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council may also be able to help your municipality – regardless of whether you are in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region – secure a more competitive, discounted price for certain project materials, however. Please contact Alison Felix at afelix@mapc.org for more information.

8. I received Technical Assistance from one of the partners working with MassDOT on the Shared Winter Streets and Spaces program. Can I allocate a portion of my project budget to hire the Technical Assistance provider as a contractor for project implementation?

Unfortunately, no.

9. I have received a Shared Winter Streets & Spaces grant and have additional questions about how to proceed. Is there someone I can talk to?

Yes! Please email sharedstreets@dot.state.ma.us and we will arrange a time to speak with you. If your question is specifically in relation to procurement, please contact Alison Felix at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council at afelix@mapc.org.