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FY 2027 Massachusetts Transit Connectivity Grant Program Application Instructions

Prepared by the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division

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FY27 Transit Connectivity Request for Applications

Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Transit Connectivity Grant Program for Regional Transit Authorities, funded under Section 1595-6370 of the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Act.

Program Objective:

Under Section 1595-6370 of the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Act, MassDOT has up to \$10 million to award grants to Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) for the creation or altering of routes that advance connectivity between existing public transportation routes, including, but not limited to, RTA routes and MBTA routes. Awards will be made on a competitive basis with funding provided contractually.

Eligible Projects:

Funding will be provided for operating projects that address the criteria outlined below.

- opportunities for increased ridership
- opportunities for increased total mileage covered in a single trip (i.e., coverage)
- opportunities to reach low-income individuals
- geographic equity

Service Dates:

MassDOT can roll this funding from one fiscal year to another. When you apply, please specify what service dates you are applying for. You may apply for more than 12 months of funding.

Application Limits:

RTAs may submit as many applications as they choose. Joint applications are encouraged. Joint applications of multiple RTAs seeking to connect their services, facilitate transfers, or provide coverage for areas between their service areas will receive bonus points.

Project Review and Selection:

All project proposals will be reviewed by a committee including the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division staff and will be selected on a competitive basis. Staff from MassDOT's Rail and Transit Division may contact the applicant if further clarification is needed on the submission. MassDOT reserves the right to negotiate project scope and deliverables prior to finalizing awards. Projects may not be fully funded up to the dollar amount requested in the proposal. MassDOT is not obligated to award the entire \$10 million in response to this solicitation if the total requests that are deemed to meet the goal of the grant program are less than \$10 million. RTAs may submit a joint proposal that implements a pilot program across RTA boundaries or demonstrates joint benefits, and whose implementation can be more cost effectively achieved through a joint effort. Similarly, a single grant may be awarded to multiple RTAs in cases where more than one RTA submits similar proposals, and cost savings or other efficiencies may be realized through implementing the proposals as one project. Grant awards shall be distributed in a geographically equitable manner to the extent possible.

Selection Criteria and Weights:

Scoring will be based on a 50-point scale, with the potential to earn an additional 10 bonus points.

Application Process

Application Timeline

Applications are due on Friday, September 18, 2026

How to Apply

1. Prepare your answers to the questions listed below in the “Application Questions” section.
2. Download the budget Excel sheet from the [grant webpage](#).
3. Fill out the budget Excel sheet.
4. If you would like to submit optional additional attachments, please combine them into one PDF package.
5. When you have prepared your answers to the questions and have the budget finalized, fill out the [online application](#). You will answer the application questions using the online form, and upload your budget, letters of support, and optional attachments through the online form.
6. **New this year:** our online form now has a “**save for later**” button. If you hit save for later, it will generate a URL you can use to get back to your form. This URL is valid for 30 days, so make sure to return to the online form within that period to keep it active. You can save while working on the questions, but once you upload any documents, you will no longer be able to save your work.
7. When you have input the information about your project and uploaded your documents, make sure you see a green checkmark next to each upload. When you do, hit the “submit” button to submit your application.

8. After you submit, you will see a “thank you” screen. You will receive a copy of your responses by email around 15–20 minutes after submitting. If you have any difficulties, contact us at massdottransitgrants@dot.state.ma.us. We will be able to confirm whether we received your submission.
9. Applications are due on Friday, September 18, 2026, but we recommend submitting early.

Application Questions:

Please use the [online application](#) to answer the following questions about your proposed project.

Basic Information

1. Unique name of your proposed project
2. Lead applicant RTA
3. Additional partner RTAs, if applicable
4. Main contact person name
5. Main contact person email
6. Main contact person phone number
7. Proposed dates of service

Service Plan (15 points)

8. Describe your proposed service.
9. What routes or service areas does this proposed service connect?
10. Cities and towns served by your proposed project.
11. Are you proposing fixed-route, microtransit, dial-a-ride, or some other mode? Why is this mode the best choice for your proposed service?
12. What is your plan and schedule for implementation?

Project Need (10 points)

13. How do you know this is a need? Cite any studies such as the Comprehensive Regional Transportation Plans, Coordinated Human

Service Transportation Plans, or others as well as rider surveys or requests from riders and potential riders.

Prioritization (15 points)

14. Increasing ridership: What ridership do you expect on this service and how did you calculate that estimate?
15. Increasing coverage: Will this proposed service increase the area you are able to cover? What is the square mileage of the new area that will be served if this project is funded?
16. Does your project prioritize low-income individuals? Describe how if so, and describe any partnerships with community-based organizations to help reach low-income riders for this service.

Evaluation (5 points)

17. Please describe how you will determine if this pilot is successful and list what measures you will track.

Bonus Points (10 points)

18. Bonus points are available for joint applications submitted between RTAs connecting their service. Bonus points are also available for an RTA looking to connect service with the MBTA, if the applicant takes steps to collaborate with the MBTA, at a minimum by reaching out to Glenn Geiler at ggeiler@mbta.com before submitting the application and sharing a draft scope/abstract and explanation of any role you anticipate for the MBTA. Whether you are collaborating with other RTAs, with the MBTA, or both, please describe your collaboration attempts here.

Budget (5 points)

Please fill out the budget spreadsheet.

Optional attachments

Letters of support and other attachments are optional but encouraged.

Grant Contract Award:

The project funding will be provided contractually and through reimbursements. Funding may be carried beyond the end of the state fiscal year.

Total Amount Available:

Up to \$10 million is available for allocation. There is no minimum or maximum amount that an applicant may apply for. MassDOT may approve projects at less than the amount requested.

Number of Awards:

There is no minimum or maximum number of awards. Projects will be selected on merit based on the weighted selection criteria.

Schedule:

Proposals are due on Friday, September 18, 2026. Please submit your responses and upload your budget through the [online application](#).