

OLD COLONY JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC)

Meeting Minutes of the Old Colony Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Held Virtually Via Zoom February 1, 2024 at 12:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Abington	John Stone	MassDOT	Raissah Kouame
Abington	Bruce Hughes	MassDOT District 5	Barbara Lachance
Abington	Kevin Cogan	Safe Routes to School	Colleen Pekrul
Avon	Richard Jordan	BETA Group	Dan McCormack
Bridgewater	Greg Tansey	Howard Stein Hudson	Steve Findlen
Bridgewater	Julianna Curry	Tighe & Bond	Greg Lucas
Brockton	Chike Odunukwe	McMahon Associates	Phil Viveiros
Brockton	Celia Canavan	OCPC	Mary Waldron
Easton	Greg Swan	OCPC	Charles Kilmer
Kingston	Valerie Massard	OCPC	Bill McNulty
Pembroke	Rebecca Coletta	OCPC	Guoqiang Li
Plymouth	James Downey	OCPC	Kyle Mowatt
Whitman	Noreen O'Toole	OCPC	Paul Umamo
Whitman	Dan Salvucci	OCPC	Shawn Bailey
BAT	Michael Lambert	OCPC	Ray Guarino
BAT	Kelly Forrester		

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Noreen O'Toole called the meeting to order at 12:02 P.M. and then read the Meeting Accessibility Statement and the Title VI Notice of Protection Statement. Bill McNulty then conducted the roll call.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

3. Minutes of January 4, 2024 Meeting

Chairperson O'Toole asked if there is a motion to approve the January 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made by Dan Salvucci and seconded by Greg Swan to approve the Meeting Minutes from January 4, 2024.

The Old Colony JTC voted unanimously via roll call to approve the January 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

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4. Communications

Shawn Bailey reviewed the contents of the communications staff report. Included were letters of correspondence, as well as notices of workshops and conferences. They are as follows:

- Save The Date – Old Colony MPO Meeting – February 20, 2024
- Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program – Division of Ecological Restoration (DER), Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game
- Federal Funds and Infrastructure Office
- 2024 MassDOT Transportation Innovation Conference – April 30 – May 1, 2024 – DCU Center, Worcester
- Ray Guarino Retirement Party – March 7, 2024 at 1:00 PM at OCPC

Charles Kilmer announced that Ray Guarino will continue working at OCPC in a part-time position after March 8, 2024.

5. Reports

A. Brockton Area Regional Transit Authority (BAT)

Michael Lambert reported on the following items:

- BAT has exceeded pre-Covid ridership for the first time since the pandemic ended. This is due in part to the combination of fare-free service along with expanded weekend and evening service.
- Free fares will continue to run through May, 2024
- Governor Healey released her Administration's budget last week. It includes both increased funding that allowed for weekend and evening service and has additional funding sources to continue the fare free program for an additional 6 months next year.
- Rockland Micro-Transit service continues to show strong results. BAT has applied for a grant to expand the micro-transit service to other communities.
- Progress towards electrification continues. The first five electric buses are due to arrive late May or early June, with three plans in place to provide charging for those buses.
- BAT went out to bid for landscape master planning for the BAT Campus (Administration Building, BAT Centre, Parking Garage). It is BAT's goal to invest in appearance, establish gateways to community, and increase safety for pedestrians.

B. Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA)

There was no update from GATRA at this time.

C. South Coast Rail Project

Shawn Bailey reported on the following:

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In January 2024, work conducted involved fencing installation in six communities; track work between Elm Street and Copicut Road in Assonet; daytime traffic signal testing and adjustment work in Middleborough, New Bedford, and Taunton; construction of a pedestrian bridge over Route 18 in New Bedford; return of Mass Coastal Railroad daytime freight operations on the New Bedford Main and New Bedford Secondary lines; daytime signal adjustment work at one intersection in New Bedford; daytime brush cutting tree trimming along the railroad right-of-way in eight communities; daytime traffic signal work on Route 105 and/or Route 28 near the new Middleborough Station; and signal system installation and testing in seven communities.

Additional work done included daytime construction at station sites, layover sites, and along the right-of-way from Middleborough to New Bedford as well as from Berkley to Fall River. There was also transportation of soil by truck to designated project sites.

6. Old Business

A. FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Implementation

▪ Amendment 2 – Public Review and Comment Period

Bill McNulty provided an overview of Amendment 2.

On January 16, 2024, the Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) released FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Draft Amendment 2 to a 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period.

Amendment 2 includes the following changes:

FFY 2024 - Transit

- BROCKTON AREA TRANSIT (BAT) ROCKLAND MICROTRANSIT SERVICE
 - Adding Project
 - State Fiscal Year 2024 Community Transit Grant Mobility Assistance Program
 - Total Project Cost is \$322,500

- BROCKTON AREA TRANSIT (BAT) BEYOND BROCKTON ADA CORRIDOR – AVON AND STOUGHTON
 - Adding Project
 - State Fiscal Year 2024 Community Transit Grant Mobility Assistance Program
 - Award Amount: \$50,000
 - Total Project Cost with Match is \$100,000

- TOWN OF BRIDGWATER – BRIDGEWATER CARES TRANSIT
 - Adding Project

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- State Fiscal Year 2024 Community Transit Grant Mobility Assistance Program
- Total Project Cost is \$288,658

- OLD COLONY PLANNING COUNCIL – AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA) ELDER, DISABLED, AND CAREGIVER VOLUNTEER & ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION
 - Adding Project
 - State Fiscal Year 2024 Community Transit Grant Mobility Assistance Program
 - Award Amount is \$30,000
 - Total Project Cost with Match is \$60,000

- SOUTH SHORE COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL – TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM OPERATING ASSISTANCE
 - Adding Project
 - State Fiscal Year 2024 Community Transit Grant Mobility Assistance Program
 - Total Project Cost is \$150,000

Chairperson O’Toole asked if these projects added in come with the money attached. Bill McNulty stated that these projects are all fully funded. The match for these projects are both state and federal, and local in the case of AAA.

Chairperson O’Toole asked if there is a motion to approve Amendment 2. A motion was made by Michael Lambert and seconded by Dan Salvucci.

The Old Colony JTC voted unanimously via roll call to approve Amendment 2.

7. New Business

A. **Old Colony FFY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development – Timeline and Key Dates**

Bill McNulty discussed the timeline and key dates for the FFY 2025-2029 TIP Development.

Date	Progress / Milestone
Underway	Review of Project Statuses Consultation with Project Proponents and MassDOT
February 6-7, 2024	TIP Readiness Days
March 19, 2024	Old Colony MPO Reviews Scenarios and Potentially Selects Preferred Set of Projects
April 16, 2024	Old Colony MPO Reviews Draft FFY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Potentially Releases to 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period

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May 21, 2024	Old Colony MPO Results of 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period, and Potentially Endorses Old Colony FFY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program
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B. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)

- ***Increases in Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Regional Targets***
- ***Discretionary Grant Funding Opportunities for Municipalities***

Bill McNulty discussed how the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law affected the TIP.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law ultimately resulted in substantial increases in regional TIP targets across the Commonwealth, including the Old Colony MPO. Following the enactment of the BIL, the region received a 17 percent increase over the life of the TIP in the FFY 2023-2027 TIP compared to the FFY 2022-2026 TIP, and when combined with state funded projects an increase in funding of 83 percent over the previous TIP.

In addition to increases in funding through the Transportation Improvement Program, the BIL also funded dozens of discretionary grant programs.

Paul Umano then discussed some of the major Discretionary Grants:

Advanced Transportation Technologies & Innovative Mobility Deployment (ATTAIN)- Directed through the Federal Highway administration (FHWA), ATTAIN provides eligible applicants the ability to deploy, install and operate advance transportation technologies that will improve safety, mobility, efficiency, system performance, intermodal connectivity, and infrastructure return on investment.

Award: \$12 million Due

Date: 2/2/24

Bridge Investment Program (BIP)- The goals of the Bridge Investment Program are to assist municipalities with bridge replacement, rehabilitation, preservation, and protection projects with total eligible costs not greater than \$100 million. These projects will seek to improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the movement of people and freight over bridges; improve the condition of bridges in the United States by reducing (a) the number of bridges and the total person miles traveled over bridges, that are in poor condition or fair condition and at risk of falling into poor condition over the next 3 years, (b) the number of bridges and total person miles traveled over bridges that do not meet the current geometric design standards.

Award: No Maximum

Grant Type: Planning or Bridge Project Grants

Due Date: Planning Grants (2/19/24); Bridge Project Grants (3/19/24)

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Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant (CFI)- Goals of the CFI program is to accelerate electrification and alternative fuel transportation systems that are convenient, affordable, reliable, equitable, accessible, and safe. This program is on a path to a nationwide network of at least 500,000 EV chargers by 2030 and improve networks for vehicles using hydrogen, propane, and natural gas.

*Award: \$15 million (maximum award) Deadline:
TBA FY24*

Multimodal Discretionary Grant Program (MDGP)- The MDGP contains three grant programs: the National Infrastructure Project Assistance grants program (Mega), the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects grants program (INFRA), and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program. These funding opportunities are awarded on a competitive basis for surface transportation infrastructure projects—including highway and bridge, intercity passenger rail, railway-highway grade crossing or separation, wildlife crossing, public transportation, marine highway, freight projects, or groups of projects with national significance.

*Award Max: None
Deadline: TBA FY2024-2025*

Chairperson O'Toole asked if this information is being forwarded to towns as far as they're eligible and the programs being offered. Paul Umano stated that OCPC is working on a marketing piece, so communities are aware of deadlines and all the grants available. Mary Waldron stated that the information will be sent to Council Members, OCPC Board, Town Managers, Planners, Economic Development, DPW, Etc.

Chairperson O'Toole asked if a community needs help can they apply under District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA). Mary Waldron stated that there are two levels: DLTA is from the state and for planning purposes. There are additional funds from DLTA Plus which are dedicated specifically for federal funds. There is also technical assistance on the transportation side at OCPC.

National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant- This program provides competitive grants for the replacement, removal, and repair of culverts and weirs that would meaningfully restore fish passage for anadromous fish and may include infrastructure to facilitate fish passage around or over the weir.

*Award: \$100,000-\$2,000,000
Deadline: TBA FY24*

Rebecca Coletta asked if there's any hope that the BIL will be extended past 2026. Charles Kilmer stated that he's heard that Congress is already working on the re-authorization of the BIL. The question comes down to what it will look like and how much funding it will provide. The hope is that they will continue the historic investments and it will only be increasing.

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Rebecca Coletta followed up by asking if all that money would be used up in the five-year period. Charles Kilmer stated that is yet to be determined. The success of each discretionary program will be looked at: how much was spent, how many applied, how much needs to be put in other programs. The funds will be re-allocated to other programs.

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost Saving Transportation

(PROTECT)- The purpose of the PROTECT program is to plan for and strengthen surface transportation to be more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural hazards. Funded projects address the climate crisis by improving the resilience of surface transportation systems, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity rail.

*Award: No maximum limit (all tracts) Deadline:
TBA FY204-2025*

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)- A discretionary grant program awarded for surface transportation infrastructure projects that will improve safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, economic competitiveness, and opportunity.

*Award: \$25 million (maximum award)
Deadline: February 28, 2024 (FY24); January 13, 2025 (FY25); January 13, 2026 (FY26)*

Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program- Funding is provided for highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving safety and mobility of people and goods. Eligible projects include a grade separation or closure, including through the use of a bridge, embankment, or tunnel; track relocation; improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, or signs; other means to improve safety if related to the mobility of people and goods at highway-grade crossings; and the planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project type.

*Award: TBA
Deadline TBA, February 2024*

Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN)- This program seeks to advance community centered transportation connection projects with a priority for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities to improve access to daily needs such as jobs, education, and healthcare. Grant funding for planning and capital construction will address infrastructure barriers, restore community connectivity, and improve people's lives. Improvements to walkability, safety, and affordable transportation access, while remediating or mitigating negative impacts on the human or natural environment.

*Award: \$5 million for capital construction; \$2M for community planning Deadline:
TBA FY24*

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Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)- Awarded on a competitive basis, SS4A supports planning infrastructure, behavioral, operational initiatives to prevent death and series injuries on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation, motorists, and commercial vehicle operators. There are three program tracts Planning Grants, Demonstration Grants, and Implementation Grants. Before an applicant can apply for an implementation grant, they must have an approved Safety Action Plan.

Award: \$10 million maximum (Planning and Demonstration Grants); \$25 million maximum (Implementation Award)

Deadline: Expected release FY24, February 2024

Bill McNulty stated that regarding SS4A, communities don't have to develop their own action plan. Through the regional action plan, your community will be covered.

Chike Odunukwe asked if there are any Grants for infrastructure planning regarding drainage and stormwater. Paul Umano stated that he doesn't believe there are any programs specifically for that but will look into it.

Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Technology (SMART)- This program seeks to conduct demonstration projects focused on advanced smart city or community technologies and systems to improve transportation efficiency and safety. Applicants under the Stage 1: Planning and Prototyping Grants focus on pilot projects that focus on using technology interventions to solve real-world challenges and build data and technology capacity and expertise in the public sector. Stage 2 implementation projects should result in a scaled-up demonstration of the concept, integrating it with an existing transportation system, and refining the concept such that it could be replicated by others.

Award: Stage 1- Planning and Prototyping Grants (\$2 million) Deadline: Stage 1 & 2 expected release Summer 2024

Thriving Communities Technical Assistance- This program is designed to provide technical assistance, planning, and capacity building support to advance a pipeline of transportation and community revitalization activities that increase mobility, reduce pollution from transportation sources, expand affordable housing options, improve health outcomes, facilitate efficient land use, preserve or expand jobs, and enhance connections to health care, education, and food security to benefit disadvantaged populations and communities. Technical assistance provides direct individualized planning and capacity building support including assistance with grant applications, project scoping, planning, and pre-development activities. Additionally, DOT officials will provide for project development, funding and financing, and project delivery.

Award: Technical Assistance Deadline: TBA FY24

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Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) (Formula Funding)- EECBG funding is designed to assist states, local governments, and Tribes in implementing strategies to reduce energy use, fossil fuel emissions, and to improve energy efficiency. Cities and towns through a formula allocation can apply for funding either as a grant or through a voucher. The Department of Energy has suggested selecting a voucher if a municipality, state, or tribe received an amount. \$200,000 or below to reduce the administrative burden on the entity.

OCPC Region Allocation by Community

[IJA \(40552\) EECBG Program Attachment 1a. Local Govt. Allocations FINAL.pdf \(energy.gov\)](#)

City/Town	Formula Allocation
Brockton	\$151,670
Plymouth	\$121,930

8. Other Business and Public Comment

A. Community Local Technical Assistance Studies

Bill McNulty reported on the following items:

Old Colony Planning Council completed a Road Safety Audit of the Pine Street corridor in Stoughton. The Final Report for the Audit has been distributed to the Town, MassDOT, and the Federal Highway Administration.

Project Status Updates

Bridgewater

- Traffic Counts on Multiple Roadways
Data collection planned for early 2024.

Duxbury / Kingston

- Traffic Study of Landing Road / Loring Street / Parks Street Corridor
Data collection planned for May 2024.

Plympton

- Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion Zone Study for Multiple Roadways
Data collection planned for Spring 2024.

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C. Staff Reviews on ENFs, EIRs, and NPCs

Kyle Mowatt summarized the Environmental Notification Forms (ENFs), Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs), Notices of Project Changes (NPCs), and Certificates for projects within the OCPC region that are undergoing Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office review.

Submitting Comments to MEPA

The Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) accepts written comments on projects currently under MEPA review. Comments may be submitted electronically, by mail, via fax, or by hand delivery. Comments submitted to MEPA are public records and should be sent to the following address:

Secretary Kathleen Theoharides
EEA, Attn: MEPA Office
[Analyst Name], EEA No. _____
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

New Projects

None

Certificates

EEA #16758 – Plymouth Wastewater Treatment Facility Treated Effluent Discharge – Plymouth
Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF)

The certificate states that this project **requires an Environmental Impact Report.**

EEA #16773 – Proposed ABC Recycling Facility
Environmental Notification Form

The Certificate states that this project **does not require an EIR.**

EEA #16775 – Lakeside Road Residential Project
Environmental Notification Form

The Certificate states that this project **does not require an EIR.**

EEA #16692 – Plymouth Municipal Airport
Draft Environmental Impact Report

The Certificate states that this project **adequately and properly complies with MEPA.**

Public Notices

None

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D. Regional Concerns and Local Community Transportation Issues

Bruce Hughes asked what the status is for the traffic circle at Chestnut Street and Hancock Street in Abington. John Stone stated that the project is approaching 75% design.

Bruce Hughes stated that the MBTA Housing was discussed at the last Planning Boarding meeting. It was discussed if the town will amend the Abington zoning by-laws by adding a new district. It was put together by the Town Planner, Liz Shea and Assistant Town Planner Kevin Cogan.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Mowatt

Kyle Mowatt

Senior Transportation Planner

List of Documents for February 1, 2024 Old Colony JTC Meeting

- Minutes of the January 4, 2024 Old Colony JTC Meeting
- Staff Report for February 1, 2024, Old Colony JTC Meeting Agenda Items
- Presentation on BIL Discretionary Grant Funding Opportunities for Municipalities