Partnering with Cities and Towns
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Introduction
The Healey-Driscoll Administration strongly believes that statewide growth begins at the local level. A strong partnership between the state and its cities and towns is crucial for the continued success of the Commonwealth. Through the FY24–FY28 Capital Investment Plan (CIP), this Administration reaffirms its commitment to this partnership, investing in capital programs that will benefit municipalities throughout Massachusetts.

Moving Massachusetts Forward
Transportation infrastructure investments made by MassDOT are everywhere, with thousands of miles of municipally owned roadways, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other assets requiring maintenance and improvements. MassDOT has built extensive partnerships with the 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth, providing technical assistance and over $270 million in funding opportunities for local investments each year through grant or reimbursement programs. The most substantial program, Chapter 90, annually offers cities and towns a combined $200 million of reimbursement for local transportation projects to address degraded infrastructure and make new investments. This essential program supports every community in addressing transportation infrastructure needs.

In addition to the Chapter 90 program, MassDOT administers several local competitive grant programs to support targeted community investments. Shared Streets and Complete Streets are two popular programs aimed at opening access to roadways in community centers. They enable improvements to accommodate alternate modes of transportation such as bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit to encourage alternative travel, outdoor recreation, and community gathering points. During the pandemic, the Shared Streets program was instrumental for communities’ ability to expand outdoor dining opportunities and improve other outdoor spaces for gathering with friends, family, and the community. During FY24–FY28, these programs will offer a combined $110 million for projects across the Commonwealth.

Bridges are essential infrastructure often in need of upgrade and improvement. The Municipal Small Bridge program offers $15 million per year specifically for the replacement, preservation, and rehabilitation of municipally owned small bridges. A key feature of this program is that grants are awarded for design and technical assistance, providing municipalities capacity and expertise to carry out more complicated projects, including bridges.

Traffic and congested intersections are an annoyance for all road users, which is a reason MassDOT developed the Local Bottleneck Reduction program to help communities improve traffic flow at intersections or congested corridors through collaborative design and construction funding. Investments targeted by this program can include updating infrastructure like traffic signals to respond to real-time traffic demands, or re-envisioning the structure of intersections. Benefits of these investments extend beyond improved traffic flow by also improving safety for all roadway users. In FY24, this program will offer $6 million of grant opportunities and $25 million over five years.

The Municipal/Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Electric Vehicle (EV) Fleet program targets adoption of electric vehicles by supporting implementation of local charging infrastructure and the purchase of
electric fleet vehicles by municipalities and RTAs. These investments will help provide local areas to charge EVs when traveling or if residents do not have access to a charger at home, as well as providing an avenue for municipalities or RTAs to begin or expand their fleet electrification efforts. This program will provide $4.5 million of investment in FY24, and $25 million through FY28.

The Municipal Pavement Program directs $25 million per year to municipally owned, state-numbered routes with poor pavement conditions to improve their state of repair, as well as to make safety and accessibility enhancements for all modes. This program provides a significant boost to addressing key roadways in need of improvement and expands mobility opportunities for all roadway users. MassDOT engages with municipal staff to ensure projects are meeting the needs and goals of communities throughout the process.

Engaging Local Economies

The Healey-Driscoll Administration is committed to working with local leaders to build vibrant communities, revitalize downtowns, and create economic opportunity for all Massachusetts residents. Strong cities and towns are foundational to maintaining a competitive Massachusetts economy. In FY24, the Executive Office of Economic Development will invest $163.1 million to advance local economic development projects in Commonwealth communities, which includes grant opportunities available through the Community One Stop for Growth application portal. The CIP is a critically important funding source for several of these competitive grant programs, including:

- **MassWorks ($96 million)**: provides the largest and most flexible source of funding to municipalities and other eligible public entities primarily for public infrastructure projects that can leverage private development, create jobs, and generate positive economic development outcomes
- **Revitalizing Underutilized Properties ($16.6 million)**: seeks to improve, rehabilitate, or redevelop vacant or underutilized properties to eliminate blight and support economic development projects
- **Rural and Small Town Development Fund ($5 million)**: provides funding for capital and community planning projects in rural and small towns. This competitive grant program awards funds based on the project’s nexus with transportation, infrastructure, economic development, and community development as well as strategies important to rural and small towns.

Read more in the [Driving Economic Development](#) brief.

Municipal and Local Climate Partnership

A key aspect of achieving the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s climate objectives is collaboration with municipal and local partners. The FY24–FY28 CIP includes $75.8 million for climate-focused municipal grants and local awards, allowing communities to achieve mutually desirable outcomes including land conservation, park creation, and facilities restoration. Key investments include:

- **MVP Planning and Action Grants ($23.7 million)**: To provide technical assistance planning and implementation grants to cities and towns for community-led climate change vulnerability assessments.
- **Community Investment Grant Programs ($21 million)**: Supports a portfolio of municipal grant programs, including Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC), Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND), Gateway City Parks, and Municipal Drinking Water Protection.
• **Inland Dams and Seawalls ($12 million):** Supports the rebuilding and removal of failing infrastructure not covered by other state programs, ensuring dams, levees, and coastal protection structures function as intended throughout the Commonwealth.

• **MassTrails Grants to Municipalities ($10 million):** Supports longer-distance regional networks of multi-use pathways across the Commonwealth, fills in gaps to existing networks, and seeks to overcome current barriers to connectivity.

Read more about the Administration’s climate investments in the [Fully Committing to Our Climate Goals](#) brief.

**Investing in an Interconnected Commonwealth**

Ensuring that all municipalities have the necessary technological infrastructure is critical for growth throughout Massachusetts. No city, town, or population should be left behind as we continue towards an ever-interconnected economy. With an intentional focus on digital equity, the Healey-Driscoll Administration intends to make sure all families, regardless of income or geography, can easily access work, education, and healthcare. In addition to leveraging $275 million in federal ARPA and IIJA funding in a collaborative plan between the Executive Office of Economic Development and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative to advance broadband equity across the Commonwealth, the FY24–FY28 CIP provides almost $74 million in local support for investments in technology through capital programs, including:

- **Broadband Last Mile ($2.1 million):** This funding supports the remaining state share of investments in broadband infrastructure for the “Last Mile” towns in western and central Massachusetts that were previously underserved.
- **Broadband Middle Mile ($12.9 million):** Supporting ongoing maintenance of network that stretches across 120+ cities and towns in central and western MA.
- **Municipal Fiber Grant Program ($34 million):** Providing grants to municipalities to connect remote municipal assets for the purpose of improving municipal operations and/or improving disaster recovery and resiliency within municipal government.
- **Community Compact Information Technology Grants ($24.8 million):** Driving transformation and innovation at the local level through investments in technology.

**Leveraging our Libraries**

Libraries continue to evolve, providing people in cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth with key resources to meet their academic, career, and personal goals. While they have always been a critical repository of knowledge and information in the form of books, libraries have embraced the growth in technology in modern times and are just as important as ever. Beyond the ability to access thousands of books, the libraries of today provide computers, internet access, meeting spaces, and many other services that citizens rely on. The Healey-Driscoll Administration is committed to supporting local libraries, providing $134 million in Library Construction Grants in the FY24 CIP to support the renovation and expansion of libraries in municipalities across the Commonwealth. These grants have supported and continue to support construction projects in 33 municipalities over the past 7 years, and through the FY24 CIP, this Administration will continue funding these projects.

**Spotlight on the Commonwealth’s Culture**

Massachusetts is home to a wide array of historical and cultural sites. The richness of the Commonwealth’s history and culture not only strengthens our economy, playing a crucial role in the
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growth of local tourism and creating thousands of jobs, but is also a large part of our identity. Through the FY24–FY28 CIP, the Healey-Driscoll Administration is committing $50 million to Cultural Facilities Fund Grants. In collaboration with the Massachusetts Cultural Council and MassDevelopment, these major improvement grants are awarded to nonprofit, municipal, and higher education institutions to fund planning, acquisition, rehabilitation, and construction for cultural facilities. This is in addition to $10 million that this Administration has proposed in supplemental operating funds this year.

Additionally, the FY24 CIP includes $7.75 million for Historical Preservation Grants to preserve historical properties, landscapes, and cultural resources listed in the State Register of Historic Places. More than 260 municipalities have received Historical Preservation Grants, including 19 municipalities in FY22 alone.

**Keeping our Communities Safe**

The FY24 CIP is focused on maintaining and modernizing the Commonwealth’s public safety equipment and infrastructure and assisting Massachusetts cities and towns in providing critical gear and equipment for local law enforcement, fire service personnel, and other first responders. The FY24 plan supports maintenance funding for public safety vehicles, equipment, and communications infrastructure and continues to invest in body worn camera grant programs that support safety and transparency for municipal first responders.