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January 25, 2024

To: Select Board Members
From: Nicholas Milano, Town Administrator
Re: State Funding and the MBTA Communities Act

Over the past several months, we have received requests for information regarding state funding that may be at risk for noncompliance with the MBTA Communities Act. Please find below some information regarding grant programs and the MBTA Communities Act.

Grant Programs Referenced in the Statute and the Guidelines

I have enclosed a summary (Attachment A: MBTA Communities Grant Programs) of the grant funding received from the Town through the grant programs identified in the MBTA Communities Act and in the Guidelines established by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (“HLC”) as well as information about the potential funding available through these programs that will be impacted if the Town is noncompliant with the MBTA Communities Act.

Secretary Augustus’ January 9, 2024, letter to the Town states that “compliance is a prerequisite to receive MassWorks, HousingWorks, or Housing Choice Grants. Secretary Augustus also states that for the additional grant programs outlined in HLC’s Guidelines, “...an application by a non-compliant community is unlikely to be selected for funding absent extraordinary circumstances.”

Other State Grants

In addition to the grants identified in the MBTA Communities Act and the Guidelines, there are other state grant funds received by the Town that are discretionary in nature and may be at risk if the Town is not in compliance with the MBTA Communities Act. The state provides many opportunities for cities and towns to apply for grants through various state departments, such as the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Executive Office of Administration and Finance.

These grant programs require applications from cities and towns and, typically, applications are evaluated and scored on criteria established by the grant program. Since these grant programs are discretionary, it can be anticipated that the Governor’s Administration may use its discretion to direct grant programs to align with the Administration’s policy goals, such as housing.

I have enclosed a list of grants (Attachment B – Grants Received by the Town of Milton) received by the Town in recent years through such discretionary, competitive grant applications. We are proud of our track record at securing grant funding. Since the beginning of Fiscal Year 2021, the Town has received more than \$1.7 million in grant funding that comes through discretionary and competitive grant programs funding projects such as, safer streets, school improvements, and a new website.

On Thursday, January 25, 2024, the Seaport Economic Council announced that Milton was awarded \$140,800 to design improvements to the seawall at Milton Landing and a new dock. During the grant announcements, the Lieutenant Governor stated that the grant awards are contingent upon MBTA Communities Act compliance.

This is a strong indication that receiving other competitive, discretionary grants, even those not explicitly referenced in HLC's Guidelines, will be subject to compliance with the MBTA Communities Act.

Other Funding Sources

Major transportation improvement projects in Massachusetts are funded through the Transportation Improvement Program. For Milton, the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization ("MPO") is responsible for evaluating transportation projects for potential federal funding and inclusion on the Transportation Improvement Program.

The Town has been informed by the MPO that one of the evaluation criteria for potential projects is compliance with MBTA Communities: noncompliance is a 5-point penalty. Previous TIP projects include the East Milton Deck (construction bid price: \$6.8 million), current TIP projects include the intersection improvements at Adams and Squantum (estimated construction cost: \$2.2 million) streets and the state's intersection improvement project at Randolph Ave and Chickatawbut Road (\$9.1 million).

Future projects on the TIP include the following:

- \$19.4 million for Roadway Reconstruction on Route 138 from Royall Street to Dollar Lane programmed for 2027.
- \$4.8 million for Intersection Improvements at Route 138 and Bradlee Road, programmed for 2027.

While the Town does receive annual funding for roads and sidewalks through the "Chapter 90" Program (approx. \$626,000 annually), the TIP is the main source of funding for large transportation project in the Town, whether designed is funded by the Town, such as with the East Milton Deck and the intersection improvements at Squantum and Adams Streets, or designed by the state.

Attachment A - MBTA Communities Grant Programs

MassWorks

- Milton Awards
 - o \$1,000,0000 for Eliot Street improvements (2012)
- Average 2023 award: \$1,745,098

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning and Project Grants, EOEEA

- Milton Awards
 - o \$29,374 MVP Action Plan (2019)
 - o \$32,000 MVP Action Grant (FY23) [Phase 1 of regional project led by NepRWA and Town of Dedham]
 - o \$50,000 MVP Action Grant (FY24) [Phase 2 of regional project led by NepRWA and Town of Dedham]
- Average FY23 Action Grant award: \$360,858

Community Planning Grants, EOHLIC

- Milton Awards
 - o \$50,000 for MBTA Communities technical assistance (2023)
 - o \$30,000 for additional MBTA Communities technical assistance (2023)
- Average FY24 award: \$77,906

Massachusetts Downtown Initiative, EOED

- Milton Awards
 - o \$60,000 for Local Rapid Recovery Plan in East Milton (2021)
- Average FY23 Technical Assistance Award: \$25,000

Land Use Planning Grants, EOEEA

- Milton Awards
 - o \$40,000 for East Milton Mixed Use Overlay Zoning (2022)
- Average FY23 award: \$46,831

HousingWorks

- Average 2023 award: \$2,235,253

Housing Choice Grant Program

- Average FY24 award: \$139,117

Urban Agenda, EOED

- Average FY23 award: \$85,625

Brownfields Redevelopment Fund, MassDevelopment

- Maximum site assessment award: \$250,000
- Maximum remediation award: \$750,000

Site Readiness Program, MassDevelopment

- Typical award range: \$50,000 to \$500,000

Underutilized Properties Program, MassDevelopment

- Typical award range: \$50,000 to \$1,000,000

Collaborative Workspace Program, MassDevelopment

- Maximum planning grant: \$15,000
- Maximum fit-out grant: \$100,000

Commonwealth Places Programs, MassDevelopment

- Typical planning grant range: \$2,500 to \$15,000
- Typical implementation grant range: \$5,000 to \$50,000

Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Grants, EOEEA

- Maximum grant award: \$500,000

Rural and Small Town Development Fund, EOED

- Milton not eligible

Real Estate Services Technical Assistance, MassDevelopment

Attachment B - Grants Received by the Town of Milton

State Agency	Description	Amount	Fiscal Year	Department
Dept Elementary & Secondary Education	Safe & Supportive Schools	50,000	2024	Schools
Dept of Conservation & Recreation	Planting of shade trees	25,000	2023	DPW
Dept of Conservation & Recreation	Mass Trails program - Neponset Greenway / Bridge feasibility	64,800	2023	Planning
Dept of Environmental Protection	Collicott/Cunningham Stormwater BMP project	158,500	2023	DPW
Exec Office for Admin & Finance	HVAC system improvements in schools	50,000	2022	Schools
Exec Office for Admin & Finance	Community Compact IT Grant - Town website	61,000	2023	IT
Exec Office for Admin & Finance	Community Compact - Traffic and public works safety improvements	50,000	2023	DPW
Exec Office for Admin & Finance	Community Compact - Development of long-term sustainable plan to mitigate climate change	50,000	2023	Planning
Exec Office for Admin & Finance	Planning Assistance - MBTA Communities Zoning	30,000	2023	Planning
Exec Office of Energy & Envir. Affairs	Planning Assistance - East Milton overlay zoning	40,000	2022	Planning
Exec Office of Econ. Devel.	Seaport Economic Council - Neponset River maintenance dredging project	75,000	2023	Planning
Exec Office of Housing and Livable Communities	Local Rapid Recovery Planning Grant	60,000	2021	Planning
Exec Office of Housing and Livable Communities	Planning Assistance - MBTA Communities Zoning	50,000	2023	Planning
Exec Office of Public Safety & Security	Safer Schools	50,000	2024	Schools
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Municipal Small Bridge Program - Eliot Street Culvert Design (Pine Tree Brook)	322,028	2023	DPW
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Complete Streets program - Pierce Intersection Improvements Phase 2	277,558	2022	DPW
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Complete Streets program - Pierce Intersection Improvements Phase 1	120,075	2021	DPW
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Shared Spaces Program - Brook Road Road Diet	58,000	2021	DPW
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Shared Spaces Grant/Bike Racks	4,674	2021	Planning
Seaport Economic Council	Milton Landing Seawall & Marina Engineering	140,800	2024	Planning
		Total	1,737,435	
Grants Applications by the Town of Milton - No Announcement Yet				
State Agency	Description	Amount	Fiscal Year	Department
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Shared Streets and Spaces program - Warren Ave Traffic Calming	239,100	Applied in 2024	DPW