



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
Executive Office of Housing and  
Economic Development

# Community One Stop for Growth

Year One Review and  
Presentation on the FY2023 Round





## Community One Stop: One Year Later

*2021 marked the inaugural year of Community One Stop for Growth, a single application portal and streamlined, collaborative review process for grant programs that support local economic development projects. The initiative was launched by EOHED in partnership with DHCD and MassDevelopment. In this presentation we will discuss the first year of the One Stop and what to expect in the upcoming round.*



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# Brief History of the One Stop

- The concept of the One Stop was first developed by the Baker-Polito Administration in 2019, in direct response to the feedback received that year during the regional listening sessions that led to the state's most recent economic development plan, **Partnerships for Growth**.
- Lieutenant Governor Polito and Secretary Kennealy heard directly and clearly from communities, large and small, about their frustrations with not knowing about, and difficulties in accessing, state funding resources to help them advance their goals for economic growth.
- The feedback led to an internal review and exploration of ways to improve access to various programs and streamline grant processes. **It resulted in the creation of the Community One Stop for Growth**, giving communities a clear and direct path to access certain housing and community development funding programs, which aligned with the Build Vibrant Communities pillar and Accessible Government principle of *Partnerships for Growth*.

**The process reoriented the State from just a passive reviewer of funding requests to an active partner in economic development strategy, priorities, and investment.**

# What is the One Stop?



As noted, the Community One Stop for Growth is a **single application portal** and **collaborative review process** of grant programs that make targeted investments based on a Development Continuum.

It is an EOHED Initiative that coordinates grant programs in partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency. The main elements include:

- The **Expression of Interest**, which is an optional step for applicants to pitch their project ideas and get feedback from program managers before completing a Full Application(s).
- The **Full Application** is a streamlined application form that allows applicants to submit comprehensive project proposals and funding requests that are aligned with the community's goals based on a Development Continuum.
- **Targeted Referrals**, which are made throughout the process, in partnership with the Community Compact Connector. As EOHED and its partner agencies review project ideas and proposals, they also try to identify other state grants and resources that may be appropriate for the applicant to pursue.

# Key Benefits of the One Stop



- **Guidance and Partnerships**, allowing applicants to receive key feedback through optional “Expression of Interest” process before completing a full application, and allowing the State to holistically and directly engage with local leadership.
- **Ability to be considered for more than one grant program simultaneously**, saving time on research and applications to different agencies and programs.
- **Greater accessibility to grant programs for small communities** with limited staff resources, that would otherwise not have the capacity to prepare applications to multiple grant programs during the year.
- **Direct referrals to additional programs** to support applicants’ priorities that did not fit within One Stop.
- **A full view by program staff of community priorities**, allowing the state to understand community vision beyond four corners of a single, discrete application.
- **Collaborative review**, allowing for State funding coordination and enhanced State awareness and support for community development goals.



# Community One Stop for Growth Process Overview



EXPRESSION  
OF INTEREST  
(Optional)

EOI REVIEW &  
FEEDBACK

*Potential  
Referral to  
Other Programs*

FULL APPLICATION  
Core Questions  
Continuum Specific Questions

COLLABORATIVE  
REVIEW

*Potential  
Referral to  
Other Programs*

AWARD  
DECISION

GRANT NOT  
AWARDED

Debrief Meeting  
(Optional)

GRANT  
AWARDED

Community  
Capacity  
Building

Planning &  
Zoning

Site Preparation

Building  
(Vertical)

Infrastructure  
(Horizontal)



# What happened in the FY22 Round – Overview

Expressions of Interest Submitted: **267** – *Outlining 675 projects from 178 communities*

**360** Full Applications submitted, from 177 communities - **Total Requests: \$303,270,166**

**196** Projects awarded a grant, in 122 communities - **Total Awarded: \$88,687,510**

**32** of the awards were made to first time grant recipients of the One Stop's established programs.

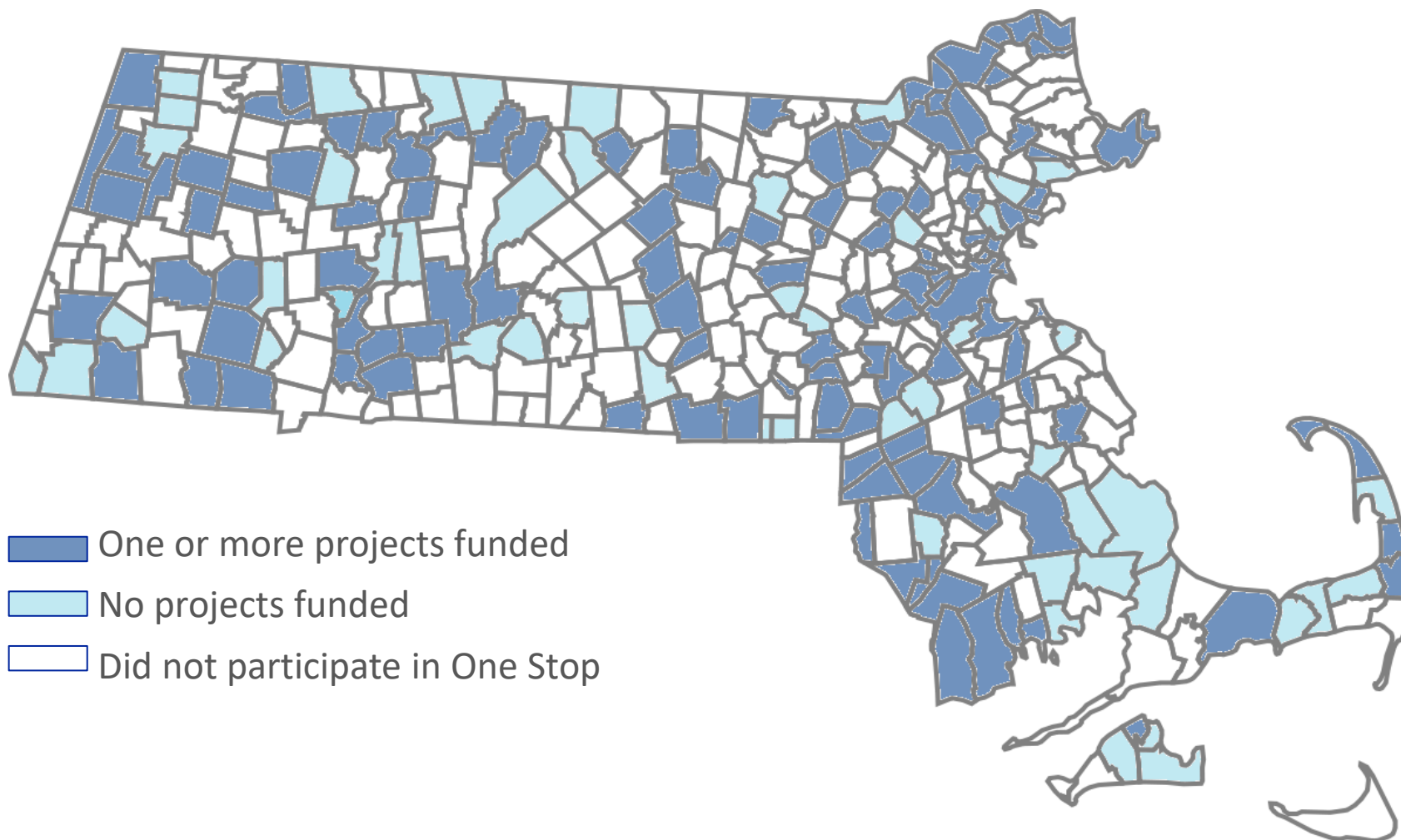
**48** awards made to projects that were initially rejected by one program but then reviewed and funded by another program through the collaborative review process.

- **Example:** 65 Planning & Zoning applications were initially reviewed by the Community Planning Grants Program; however, the program was only able to fund 16 projects. Urban Agenda, Housing Choice, and Rural & Small Town reviewed the remaining applications and were able to fund 32 additional projects.



# What happened in the FY22 Round – Coverage

The One Stop received 360 applications, representing projects in 177 communities across the Commonwealth. Awards were granted for 196 projects, representing 122 Massachusetts communities.





# Applicant Feedback

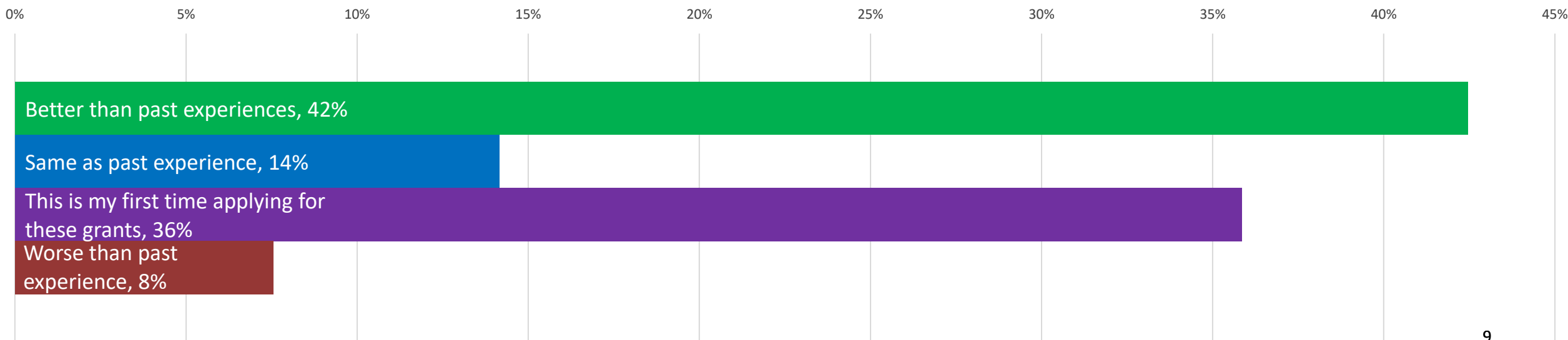


Following the close of the FY22 Round, a survey was sent to all 576 One Stop users, including the main contacts for any organization that submitted an EOI and/or Full Application(s). The feedback from the 212 respondents was positive: asked to rate their overall experience on a scale of 0 to 10, they gave a median score of 8.

## The most common statements of support included:

- Having a single portal and more efficient process to apply for grants
- The technology was easy to use
- Appreciation of the EOI feedback
- The support of the One Stop Team

*“The **Development Continuum** was a really helpful framework to understand how to plan and fund large-scale multi-step/year projects. Now there is a clearer understanding of how programs can be linked.”*



# What's New in FY23?



Applicants that participated in the post-round survey also shared information about challenges they faced. Based on that feedback, several areas of improvement were identified to further streamline the application process:

- **Additional Grant Opportunities:** The FY23 Round of the One Stop will include three additional grant programs offered through MassDevelopment: Collaborative Workspace Program, Real Estate Services Technical Assistance, and Commonwealth Places. There will also be an expanded list of referral programs.
- **Improvements to the Expression of Interest:** The Expression of Interest (EOI) form has been revised to eliminate questions that were deemed unnecessary or too general for effective feedback. Other changes include:
  - The form was reduced to two sections: one for applicant information and the other for the project proposals.
  - Sections 1 of the EOI and the Full Application are identical, allowing for an easier transfer of data.
  - The EOI process was launched on December 15, 2021, about 5 weeks earlier than the last round. This adjustment allows more time for the Commonwealth to work with and provide feedback to applicants.
- **Improvements to the Full Application:** The most significant changes were made to the Full Application, which was updated to improve the applicant experience as well as to incorporate the three new grant programs. This includes consolidation of sections, reduction of redundant questions, and better integration of questions across categories.

# FY23 Improvements: Full Application



## 1. Removal of Predevelopment & Permitting as a stand-alone category in the Continuum

- Ambiguity in the language of this section caused confusion among applicants, resulting in duplication of grant requests and/or errors in the shared application function between programs.
- The Solution: Eliminate the stand-alone category and relocate the relevant questions to each of the corresponding categories that offer funding for this activity – Site Preparation, Building, or Infrastructure.

## 2. Housing Choice and Rural/Small Town:

- Housing Choice and Rural/Small Town eligible applicants will now be built into the corresponding Continuum Sections. Only eligible applicants that propose budgets within the limits of the Housing Choice and Rural funding limits will be considered by the programs.

## 3. Consolidation of the Core Sections of the Full Application

- The general goals section was removed as it was not critical in the evaluation of applications.
- Former Sections 3 and 4 were consolidated into one Project Information section.

## 4. Removal of Redundant Questions

- Each section of the Full Application was reviewed and compared to eliminate redundant questions.

# One Stop Programs



## Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

- ✓ Mass Works Infrastructure Program
- ✓ Urban Agenda Grant Program

## Department of Housing and Community Development

- ✓ Community Planning Grant Program
- ✓ Rural and Small Town Development Fund
- ✓ Housing Choice Community Grant Program
- ✓ Massachusetts Downtown Initiative

## MassDevelopment

- ✓ Brownfields
- ✓ Site Readiness Program
- ✓ Underutilized Properties Program
- ✓ Collaborative Workspaces (New)
- ✓ Commonwealth Places (New)
- ✓ Real Estate Services (New)



**COMMUNITY  
ONE STOP  
FOR GROWTH**

[mass.gov/onestop](https://mass.gov/onestop)

# One Stop Process: Full Application



## **Project Core Information** (*Sections 1 – 2*)

- Applicant Information
- Project Overview
- Project Outcomes
- Site Information (if applicable)

## **Development Continuum Category Questions** (*Sections 3 – 7*)

- Project Scope
- Project Budget
- Other Specific Funding-Type Questions

## **Housing Choice General Questions** (*Section 8*)

## **Certification of Application Submission Authorization** (*Section 9*)

## **Supporting Attachments** (*Section 10*)

### **REMINDER**

Applicants are able to submit multiple projects for consideration, but must submit **one application per project.**

For each project, applicants will fill out a single Core Information Section. Based on responses to the types of funding sought for the project, applicants will be offered additional question sections as applicable. The combination of Core and Additional Questions constitutes a single application, provided the entire application references a single project with a single project location.

The number of project applications submitted is not limited, but it is recommended that communities prioritize their requests.

# Highlight: MDFA Programs in the One Stop



## Brownfields Program

Focus: To finance the environmental assessment and remediation of municipally-owned or controlled sites without an identified developer

Funding Activities:

- Environmental assessments
- Remediation



## Site Readiness Program

Focus: To increase the Commonwealth's inventory of large, well-located, project-ready sites and to accelerate private sector investment in industrial and commercial projects

Funding Activities:

- Site preparation: market studies, concept plans, site acquisition, demolition
- Predevelopment and permitting: engineering documents, pro-forma development



## Underutilized Properties Program

Focus: To fund projects that will redevelop vacant or underutilized properties to eliminate blight, increase housing production, support economic development projects, increase accessibility

Funding Activities:

- Predevelopment work: architectural and engineering documents, building assessments
- Capital improvements essential to occupancy of building: HVAC, roof, building stabilization, TI





# FY23 Improvements: MDFA Programs Added



## Collaborative Workspace Program

Focus: To accelerate the pace of new business formation, job creation, and entrepreneurial activity in communities, by supporting infrastructure that fuels community-based innovation.

### Funding Activities:

- Seed Grants for predevelopment and feasibility work performed by third party consultants
- Fit-out Grants for improvements to owned or leased buildings and equipment purchases



## Commonwealth Places

Focus: To advance locally driven placemaking in downtown and neighborhood commercial districts in eligible communities

### Funding Activities:

- Seed grants to fund inclusive community engagement, visioning, and local capacity building that support future placemaking efforts
- Implementation Grants to fund the implementation of locally led placemaking projects



## Real Estate Services Technical Assistance

Focus: To provide technical assistance to address site-specific and/or district-wide economic development challenges through creative solutions and clear, implementable action steps


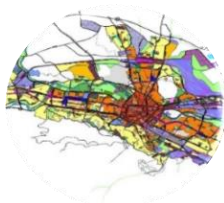



### Funding Activities:

- Surplus Property Reuse and/or Activation Assistance
- Local District Management Technical Assistance



# Development Continuum: Funding Activities

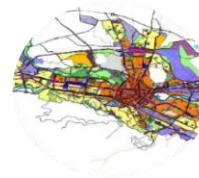


<b>Preparing for Growth</b> Grants to support activities and initial steps by community-based actors to attract and guide private investment in a community.			<b>Catalyzing Specific Projects</b> Grants to support private, commercial, industrial, and residential investment projects that further the community vision	
 <p><b>Community Capacity Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Assistance for Improving a Downtown or Commercial Center</li> <li>• Business Improvement District (BID) Implementation (NEW)</li> <li>• Early-Stage Strategy Development</li> <li>• Strategy Implementation by an Existing Cross-Sector Consortium or Coalition</li> <li>• Placemaking efforts (NEW)</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Planning &amp; Zoning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master Plan</li> <li>• Urban Renewal Plan</li> <li>• Land Use Plan</li> <li>• Downtown Plan</li> <li>• Parking Management Plan</li> <li>• Housing Production Plans</li> <li>• Market Feasibility Studies</li> <li>• Zoning Review &amp; Updates</li> <li>• Zoning to comply with the MBTA Communities section of c40A section 3A (NEW)</li> <li>• District Improvement Financing (DIF) Plan (NEW)</li> <li>• Municipal Surplus Property Disposition Plan (NEW)</li> <li>• Other Strategic Plans</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Site Preparation</b></p> <p><b>Site Predevelopment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Due Diligence</li> <li>• Site Master Planning</li> <li>• Market Study</li> <li>• Civil Engineering</li> <li>• Pre-Permitting/Permitting</li> <li>• Brownfields Site Assessment</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demolition</li> <li>• Site Acquisition, related tasks</li> <li>• Construction of site related upgrades</li> <li>• Brownfields Remediation</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Buildings (Vertical)</b></p> <p><b>Building Predevelopment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Condition Study</li> <li>• Development Feasibility Studies</li> <li>• Code Compliance Studies</li> <li>• Architectural or Engineering Plans</li> <li>• Collaborative Workspace Feasibility Studies (NEW)</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Code Compliance</li> <li>• Fire/Life Safety Code Compliance</li> <li>• Accessibility Improvements</li> <li>• Building Shell Repair</li> <li>• Building Stabilization</li> <li>• HVAC Improvements or Renovations</li> <li>• Interior Demolition or Remediation</li> <li>• Collaborative Workspace Fit-Out or Equipment (NEW)</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Infrastructure (Horizontal)</b></p> <p><b>Infrastructure Predevelopment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design / Engineering Documents</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roadway / Streetscape Improvements</li> <li>• Bridge / Culvert Repair or Replacement</li> <li>• Water / Sewer Infrastructure</li> <li>• Public Utility Project (Gas, Electric, etc.)</li> </ul>

# FY23 Development Continuum: Applicant Eligibility



**Community  
Capacity  
Building**



**Planning &  
Zoning**



**Site  
Preparation**



**Buildings  
(vertical)**



**Infrastructure  
(horizontal)**

<b>Public Entity</b>					
<b>Municipal</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Public Housing Authority</b>					
<b>Redevelopment Authority or Similar Quasi-Governmental Agency</b>					
<b>Water or Sewer District</b>					
<b>Other Public</b>					
<b>Non-Public Entity</b>					
<b>Community Development Corporation</b>	✓		✓	✓	
<b>Not-For-Profit</b>	✓		✓	✓	
<b>For-Profit</b>				✓	

# One Stop Timeline



DEC

- **Expression of Interest and Guidance (December – March)** – The EOI, which will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis through March 18, 2022, is an opportunity for any interested organization to submit their priority project ideas for review and feedback by the participating state agencies. The feedback is intended to help prospective applicants understand how their project(s) fits in the Development Continuum, and ultimately to decide if they want to proceed with a Full Application(s).
- **Full Application (January – June)** – The Full Application is the official form for submitting all funding requests. Applicants will be able to start drafting their Full Application as soon as the portal is opened in January. However, application(s) will only be accepted during the submission period: May 2, 2022 – June 3, 2022.
- **Review and Evaluation (July – September)** – All complete and eligible Full Applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed and evaluated by the corresponding program managers at each state agency. The One Stop team will also conduct joint application reviews across agencies. Based on the program's criteria, each program will prepare its list of applications recommended for funding, to be further reviewed and approved by agency and Secretariat leadership.
- **Notification of Grant Decisions and Referrals (October/November)** – Once final recommendation have been approved, applicants will be notified of grant decisions in writing, and announcement events will be scheduled. Some projects may be referred to other grant programs aligned with the One Stop. Applicants not awarded will have the opportunity to request a debrief about the evaluation of their application(s).

NOV

# Thank you



For the most up to date information about the One Stop and links to all the program guidelines, please visit [www.mass.gov/onestop](http://www.mass.gov/onestop).

For information on MBTA Community requirements and compliance, visit [www.mass.gov/mbtacomunities](http://www.mass.gov/mbtacomunities).

Please email your questions to [onestop@mass.gov](mailto:onestop@mass.gov).

Thank you for your participation.