

Your Town

search GO

< Back to front page

Text size

ALLSTON BRIGHTON, FENWAY-KENMORE, QUINCY

\$6.1m US grants for Commonwealth Ave. upgrade, 11 other state road projects

Posted by Matt Rocheleau August 17, 2011 05:18 PM

Print | Comments ()

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

A plan to make upgrades along 1.5-mile stretch of Commonwealth Avenue between Packard's Corner and Kenmore Square was one of a dozen state transportation projects that have received a combined \$6.1-million in federal grant funding, officials announced Wednesday.

The state's transportation department received \$1 million – the second-largest of the 12 grants awarded to Massachusetts – to pay for resurfacing a section of Commonwealth Avenue, primarily between Alcorn Street and Kenmore Square. The funding will also go toward reconstructing sidewalks, upgrading traffic signals and making other safety improvements along that stretch of roadway, also known as Route 20.

State transportation spokesman Michael Versekes said the upgrades to that portion of the thoroughfare are part of a larger, ongoing project that began in 2008 to upgrade the entire 5.5 miles of Commonwealth Avenue within Boston's city limits, running from Brighton eastward through Allston, the Fenway-Kenmore area and the Back Bay before the road ends where it meets Arlington Street.

Richard A. Davey, the MBTA's general manager [who will take over as secretary](#) of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation in two weeks, called the funding for the project "another significant piece" to the overall, \$12-million effort to upgrade the length of Commonwealth Avenue in the city.

"We're excited about this project, not only as the MBTA's GM, but also in my role as [transportation] secretary" he said by phone Wednesday evening. "It's good news for the City of Boston, the T as well as pedestrians and drivers."

Davey said the work will make "much-needed" improvements to pedestrian facilities and make the road's streetscape compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards. He said work will also include making signs and signals clearer to drivers about when they can legally and safely cross, particularly when making left-hand turns over, the MBTA Green Line B branch tracks that run down the center of the roadway which features two traffic lanes in each direction.

The 12 Massachusetts projects received Federal Highway Administration grants through a competitive process that began in June and attracted more than 1,800 applications nationwide.

"For Massachusetts to be awarded 12 [grants], I think was great," said Davey.

ADVERTISEMENT

ALLSTON-BRIGHTON REAL ESTATE

86
Homes for sale

160
Rentals available

6
Open houses this week

0
New listings this week

ADVERTISEMENT



Waiting for Twitter to feed in the latest...

[Follow other Boston.com Tweets](#) | [What is Twitter?](#)

"I think the geographic diversity was great as well with funding for projects from the Berkshires to Quincy and Nantasket," as well as the islands off Cape Cod. "I think we had strong applications and also strong advocacy from our Congressional leaders."

Each state, along with Puerto Rico and Washington D.C. applied for grants, with requests totaling nearly \$13 billion, or more than 30 times the available \$417.3 million funding that was awarded. All of the states and Washington D.C. received some funding. Puerto Rico received none.

Massachusetts' total ranked 25th nationally and second in New England. Connecticut received \$15.7 million – two-and-half times the Bay State's award.

Through 14 grant programs, the discretionary funding will support projects across the country to maintain roads and bridges and improve roadway safety.

"Transportation investments like these will create jobs and improve the quality of life for Massachusetts residents as well as strengthen the state's economy," U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said in a press release Wednesday. "The demand from the states for these funds shows just how critical the need is for infrastructure investment."

"At a time when states are facing serious budgetary constraints, these grants will help fill a critical need," added Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez. "Investments like these are immediate and long-lasting, and will help create jobs."

Massachusetts projects receiving grants include:

- Modifications to Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority vessels to end dumping of waste into coastal waters - \$1.27 million
- Development of "Mile of Mills" Riverwalk along the Lowell Canalway in Lowell - \$1 million
- Road resurfacing, sidewalk reconstruction, traffic signal upgrades and other safety improvements on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston - \$1 million
- Design and engineering for Burgin Parkway Access Bridge and intersection improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists in Quincy - \$978,300
- Improvements to the Pemberton Pier Commuter Terminal to provide a winterized waiting area, and improved loading/ unloading facilities in Nantasket Beach - \$555,000
- Replacement of the structurally deficient Northampton Street bridge over the Manhan River in Easthampton - \$300,000
- Design of shared-use path near Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway in Stockbridge - \$293,200
- Installation of informational signs along 85-mile Essex Coastal Scenic Byway - \$220,000
- Planning for hiking trails and other access improvements for Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway - \$162,690
- Construction of access road from Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway to Appalachian Trail and Blanche Barlow Acres/Goose Pond recreational area, Lee - \$136,080
- Training funds to assist disadvantaged business firms in competing for highway contracts - \$130,950
- Development of Corridor Management Plan for Connecticut River Byway - \$130,345
- Total for Massachusetts - \$6,176,565

A complete state-by-state list of this year's grant recipients is available [here](#).

E-mail Matt Rocheleau at mjrochele@gmail.com.



◀ Previous
entry

Next entry ▶