

Old Colony Planning Council



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April 14, 2016

Mr. Francis Gay, Administrator
Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA)
10 Oak Street, 2nd Floor
Taunton, MA. 02780

RE: Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA)'s Application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's FY 2016 TIGER Discretionary Grants

Dear Mr. Gay.

The Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC) supports the Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA)'s application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's FY 2016 TIGER Discretionary Grants for the Plymouth Multimodal Transportation Center in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The proposed Multimodal Transportation Center offers multiple transportation and economic benefits to the Town of Plymouth and the surrounding region and will provide enhanced transit access, connectivity, and parking to support economic development.

Improved Local and Regional Mobility

- The project is a true intermodal center located within a 10-minute walk of the Plymouth Main Street business district along with historic sites and the Plymouth harbor and waterfront. Residents, visitors and tourists may utilize a range of transportation modes housed at the proposed Multimodal Transportation Center including GATRA bus service, a seasonal shuttle, parking, pedestrian connections, bicycle accommodations, taxi and pedi-cab services.
- The project is expected to enhance pedestrian connections between the historic waterfront and the business and cultural venues along Court Street / Main Street. Two new public spaces are created as part of this project as well as an enclosed area for a local bicycle sharing program or bicycle rental facility.
- The project would enhance potential future water transportation connections from Plymouth Harbor. The Town of Plymouth's 2006 Water Transportation Study highlighted the potential of regional commuter ferry services from Plymouth Harbor to Boston. Water transportation is being further considered as part of planning efforts for Plymouth 400 and Massachusetts 400 events.

Improved Parking

- Additional parking spaces are provided to meet well-documented seasonal shortages, transit use and ferry services.

Economic

- The project will support Ladders of Opportunity by investing in infrastructure that improves access to jobs, services, medical care and education while saving time, money and environmental impacts through transportation choice and mode shift. Residents of the project area have median incomes substantially lower than both the Town of Plymouth as a whole and Massachusetts. Residents of the project area are also more dependent on transit to commute to work than the Town of Plymouth as a whole.
- The project provides for mixed-use development including an expanded visitor center and unique leasable spaces along Water Street. Not only does this buffer the scale and industrial quality of structured parking from the historic Plymouth waterfront, but helps to stitch together the urban and economic ambitions of the project into a single identity that will enhance the growth, development and character of the Plymouth waterfront.
- The project provides access to jobs along the Plymouth waterfront and downtown area, as well as to employment and service centers served by GATRA routes.

Tourism

- The project provides increased year round viability for Memorial Hall due to additional adjacent parking and transportation connections provided by the Plymouth Multimodal Transportation Center.
- The proposed Multimodal Transportation Center will provide enhanced regional access to historic sites located within a short walking distance, along with major annual events the downtown and waterfront area hosts including the Independence Day (July), Downtown Plymouth Waterfront Festival (August) and Thanksgiving Celebration (November).
- The proposed Multimodal Transportation Center would also serve as a critical transportation component for Plymouth 400 and Massachusetts 400, the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the European settlers to Massachusetts, to be celebrated in 2020.

Environmental

- Centralizing parking in the downtown with strong transit connections reduces vehicle miles travelled, and therefore, reduced emissions as well as supporting tourism and economic opportunity in Plymouth.
- The Plymouth Multimodal Transportation Center will include innovative technology for parking and transit, and can pursue LEED certification due to community connectivity, provisions for alternative transportation, storm-water design, low emitting materials and construction waste management and recycling.

This project is consistent with both the Old Colony Metropolitan Planning Organization's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Old Colony Planning Council's Regional Policy Plan (RPP). Therefore, we pledge to continue working with GATRA, the Town of Plymouth and MassDOT in order to make this important project a reality.

To that end, the Old Colony Planning Council extends its complete support for this project and encourages a favorable review. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 508-583-1833 Extension 202.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pasquale Ciaramella". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P'.

Pasquale Ciaramella, Executive Director