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Representative Smola Announces Application Window for Small Bridge Repair Funding to Open Mid-Month

BOSTON – Representative Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means), is pleased to announce that municipalities will likely be able to apply by mid-month for bridge repair funding through a program established this year by the governor and Legislature, the Department of Transportation told lawmakers in a new report that also included the proposed project selection criteria.

On July 31, the Legislature created a new \$50 million grant program proposed by Gov. Charlie Baker to help cities and towns repair some of the 1,300 municipally-owned bridges of no more than 20-feet in length by offering reimbursement of up to \$500,000 from MassDOT. MassDOT said it will award grants three times per fiscal year, beginning with an application period expected to open "in mid-September" and close by Halloween.

"I am very happy to hear that these funds will be available to Massachusetts communities this year," said Representative Smola. "The bridges that are eligible for this program often go unnoticed but they are critical to local businesses and everyday activities."

MassDOT plans to visit each of the state's six highway districts to discuss the application process with local officials before the Oct. 31 application deadline. Grant funding will be awarded to small bridge repair projects -- improvements that do not qualify for federal aid and that can be burdensome for small towns -- based on financial and structural need, according to MassDOT. The [project selection criteria](#) proposed by MassDOT would require a municipality to "show a demonstrated fiscal need for the project," and details preservation projects that would also be eligible for funding. Those projects include: cleaning and painting structural steel, rehabilitation of concrete piers or abutments,

repairing stone or masonry arches, replacing timber piles and patching the concrete bridge deck.

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