CAPE COD
COMMISSION

DRAFT SCOPE OF WORK

Construction Disruption Assistance Strategy

Introduction

Cape Cod is in the midst of planning for and implementing significant local infrastructure projects, including implementation of wastewater infrastructure investments to protect water quality and enable economic opportunity. Over the past 10 plus years, most municipalities have been entrenched in the planning, design, and funding and financing of these large-scale projects. Today, municipalities are moving into the construction phase. Despite efforts to effectively communicate construction schedules and provide detours, signage and other resources, disruptions to business operations have resulted in economic hardships that were not fully anticipated during the planning phase. Many of these impacts are felt by the region's small business community, which serve as the backbone of the Cape Cod economy and can be more vulnerable to economic disruption.

This project proposes conducting research and developing strategies to support municipalities and the local business community during these and other significant construction projects. Implementation of wastewater infrastructure will impact most communities on Cape Cod, as will other significant transportation projects, including replacement of the Canal Bridges. While critical, the region must identify and commit to strategies that will reduce economic disruption and ensure a thriving business community during and post construction.

Task 1: Needs Assessment

To understand the existing and anticipated needs of the business community, Commission staff will conduct a business survey and several interviews. Commission staff will meet with municipal staff and local officials engaged in communications and outreach around wastewater implementation projects to understand communication needs and feedback from the business community to date. Commission staff will conduct a survey of local businesses in areas that have, or are currently, undergoing wastewater infrastructure construction. Following the survey, staff will interview willing business owners to better understand business impacts, identify needs, and, to the extent feasible, estimate lost revenue as compared to verified historical business performance. Survey and interview questions will elicit feedback on a broad range of needs or potential opportunities/gaps to fill, including monetary needs, marketing support, alternative sales opportunities, and others.

DELIVERABLES

- Summary of stakeholder input
- Financial impact and business capital needs assessment
- Gap analysis identifying the types of support missing or overburdened business segments

Task 2: Research

Commission staff will research construction disruption assistance programs that provide business support in Massachusetts and across the country. Research will include monetary and non-monetary support programs, and seek to identify funding sources, program administration and support requirements, target beneficiaries, and level of support available, among other key program features. Staff may conduct interviews with program administrators, as needed.

Commission staff will research other existing available federal, state, and regional programs that provide business assistance. Research will include opportunities available through state entities, such as MassDevelopment, as well as resources or support that may be available through regional entities, such as Coastal Community Capital and Community Development Partnership, who often provide business support.

Research will identify programs and resources municipalities and businesses can access today, as well as models for new programs that could potentially be implemented on Cape Cod.

DELIVERABLES

- Summary of construction disruption assistance programs researched and those that could be transferrable to Cape Cod
- Summary of existing available resources and support, including the types of support provided, eligible applicants, and eligible use of funds or services

Task 3: Potential Strategies and Recommendations

Commission staff will outline potential short- and long-term strategies for supporting municipalities and businesses and reducing economic disruption during construction. Staff will identify opportunities to leverage existing programs and resources. Staff will also offer approaches to new programs, including program administration and funding sources to both pilot and potentially scale new programs to meet needs.

Commission staff will articulate recommended next steps by building on research phase findings, for both taking advantage of existing programs and creating new programs. Staff will collaborate with municipal partners, community-based organizations and the business community through

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meetings, workshops and focus groups, as needed, to get feedback and prioritize the recommendations. Commission staff will coordinate with state agency partners to inform and strengthen recommendations, ensuring proposed solutions are practical, consistent, and aligned with existing state initiatives.

DELIVERABLES

- Best practices and models for minimizing and mitigating local business impacts during phased construction projects
- Resource guide for businesses and municipalities summarizing available programs, including a matrix of solution type, eligibility, funding levels and sources
- Communications toolkit for municipalities to notify and support local businesses during construction phases
- Best practices and models for independent business actions available to mitigate financial stress during construction
- Recommendations for appropriate financial instruments to meet capital needs

Estimated Timeline

4-6 months

Estimated Budget

$45,000-$55,000

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