



# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

MAPC | Promoting Smart Growth & Regional Planning

The Government Affairs team works to promote smart growth goals at the local, regional, state, and federal levels.

MAPC actively promotes its legislative agenda by working with members of the Legislature on a number of key initiatives. MAPC's priorities come from a variety of policy areas, with a focus on sustainable development initiatives and municipal relief measures to help cities and towns continue to provide quality services with efficiency.

The team works in collaboration with the MAPC Legislative Committee to develop action items and to advocate on behalf of the members of our regional community. The Committee includes municipal leaders from cities and towns in the MAPC region as well as members of advocacy organizations we work with closely.

- Recent Legislative Accomplishments**
- 2013-2014 Legislative & Budget Accomplishments
  - 2015-2016 Legislative & Budget Accomplishments

**Questions?**  
For more information about MAPC's legislative and budget priorities or the MAPC Legislative Committee, contact Government Affairs Manager Lizzi Weyant at 617-933-0703 or eweyant@mapc.org.

**JUMP TO MAPC'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**  
The Government Affairs team monitors legislative action on Beacon Hill on a daily basis and advocates for key bills and budget items that will affect those living and working in the MAPC region. .

**READ ABOUT MAPC'S BUDGET PRIORITIES**  
Teaser blurb about Budget Priorities.

**VISIT THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**  
Teaser blurb about committee.

**LEARN ABOUT COALITIONS**  
The Government Affairs team collaborates with, provides policy analysis support to, and coordinates advocacy efforts for several influential groups across the state and nation.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES TRANSPORTATION

MAPC supports increased investment in our transportation system with a funding solution that serves all users, modes, and communities across Massachusetts. MAPC continues to advocate for measures that would increase funding for transportation, including but not limited to the following bills:

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BALLOT INITIATIVES

**Bills filed by Senator Eric Lesser (S.1551) and Representative Chris Walsh (H.1640)**

Across much of the U.S., regional ballot initiatives are regularly used to finance transportation investments. These initiatives have high rates of passage – usually between 70 and 80% – and can be a key mechanism to fund both operations and capital projects for transportation. This legislation would enable a municipality, or a group of municipalities, to have the option to raise additional local revenue for transportation projects via ballot initiatives, giving voters a direct role in the process.

### TRANSPORTATION VALUE CAPTURE

**Bill filed by Representative William Straus (H.1893)**

MAPC will continue to work with Rep. Straus (D-Mattapoisett), House Chairman of the Joint Committee on Transportation corridors for transit, roadway, and transit oriented development.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### ZONING REFORM

**Bills filed by Senator Harriette Chandler (S.81), and Representative Stephen Kulik and Sarah Peake (H.2420)**

These streamlined zoning reform bills allow new zoning techniques for municipalities, provide more certainty to land owners and developers, and authorize strong financial and regulatory incentives for creating walkable, vibrant centers, housing development, and protecting open space. Master planning requirements are modernized by giving communities the ability to tailor planning to local circumstances including linking public health and planning. The bills also grant cities and towns the option to substitute a minor subdivision process for Approval Not Required (ANR) developments, which are a primary driver of inefficient, low-density growth.

### COMMUNITY PRESERVATION REVENUE

**Bills filed by Senator Cynthia Stone Creen (S.1504), Representative Stephen Kulik (H.2615), and Representative Kevin Honan (H.2615)**

Nearly half the cities and towns in Massachusetts rely on critical local aid from the Statewide CPA Trust Fund. The foundation of CPA is the promise of a strong state-local partnership for funding the program. With increasing numbers of communities adopting CPA, this partnership is now in jeopardy. However, because there was no budget surplus in Fiscal 2016, the CPA Trust Fund distribution fell to a record low of 20%. In order to sustain CPA for the benefits of all communities, legislation increasing the program's dedicated funding component – recording fees at the state's Registries of Deeds – must be passed. Our goal is provide a minimum 50% base match to all 172 CPA cities and towns.

### SURPLUS LAND

**Bill filed by Representative Jeffrey Sanchez (H.1710)**

MAPC continues to work with a diverse coalition of allies on passage of a comprehensive package of surplus land reforms that encourage smart growth development, give municipalities a meaningful role throughout the disposition process, and allow the Commonwealth to meet critical housing, economic development, and environmental priorities. This reform offers significant advantages over the current system, including the creation of a Surplus Land Coordination Committee; a professional smart growth review for significant parcels; consistent timeframes for disposition of parcels; a right of first refusal for municipalities to purchase surplus parcels; and directed funding to the Smart Growth Housing Trust Fund.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES CLEAN ENERGY

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### TRANSPARENCY OF MUNICIPAL ENERGY DATA

**Bills filed by Senator Jason Lewis (S.1858) and Representative Paul Brodeur (H.3386)**

As cities and towns across Massachusetts examine ways to reduce their energy consumption, it has become increasingly important for them to have access to accurate and timely energy usage data from utilities. Having access to this data allows municipalities to begin setting community-wide usage reduction goals based on real numbers and provides a baseline to which future usage can be compared. While utilities have provided this data on a case-by-case basis in the past, the process for gaining access to the data has often been confusing, time-intensive, and unpredictable. Creating a clear, simple, predictable system that allows municipalities to request this information and receive it in a consistent manner and a timely fashion would be beneficial to municipalities across Massachusetts.

### MICROGRIDS

**Bills filed by Senator Joseph Boncore (S.1825) and Representative Mark Cusack (H.2687)**

This legislation would allow property owners to finance microgrids and other resiliency measures under the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy statute that passed last legislative session. Microgrids have been utilized in several other states to increase reliability and ensure buildings remain powered during grid outages. We will also explore whether there are ways to extend this concept to residential buildings.

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES WE ARE ALSO WORKING ON

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### AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES.

We recognize the transformative benefits that autonomous vehicles can have for Massachusetts' economy, environment, and quality of life – as well as the challenges that could result from disruption to existing forms of mobility. The deployment of autonomous vehicles holds the potential to positively transform the transportation network. Moreover, legislation and policies should be consistent with federal guidelines and strive for continuity across state lines and should advance the goals outlined in our regional plan, MetroFuture: Making a Greater Boston Region.

### FEDERAL POLICY

In order for MAPC to continue to provide meaningful and impactful assistance to its 101 cities and towns, it is important to monitor Congressional legislation as well as the Executive branch's policies; increase the amount of time and resources focused on federal issues; engage and build relationships with regional planning agencies, councils of government, and metropolitan planning organizations from other states; and advocate for federal funding at MAPC.

### FOOD POLICY

In recent years, MAPC has taken a lead role in state and community food system planning. In support of a targeted approach to improving food options and economic development in underserved communities, MAPC advocates for the release of state funding for the implementation of the Massachusetts Food Trust. As a leader in the field, MAPC is poised to advance impactful food policy in Massachusetts.

### SANCTUARY CITIES

MAPC closely follows federal actions that could impact our cities and towns. We are particularly concerned about those policies that could undermine equity and inclusion in our region, limit the appropriate discretion of local officials, or cut funding for critical programs. Ensuring our region remains welcoming to all residents, regardless of where they came from or the circumstances of their arrival, is important to the long-term economic and social well-being of Metro Boston.

### REGULATING SHORT-TERM RENTALS

MAPC supports a statewide approach to regulating short-term rental units such as Airbnb, VRBO, and HomeAway. We believe that any legislation to regulate and tax temporary or transient rental services should allow flexibility for cities and towns in crafting local policies.

### CLIMATE POLICY

MAPC is working on both climate change adaptation and mitigation. [Read more in our Climate section.](#)

## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES STATE BUDGET

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### DISTRICT LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (DLTA)

District Local Technical Assistance, or "DLTA" funds, are state grants distributed among the state's 13 Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) – including MAPC – to provide cities and towns with money and technical staff to work on projects related to regional collaboration, economic development, zoning, and protecting the environment. Past DLTA grants have funded projects in disciplines as diverse as public health, fire safety, emergency dispatch, special education, emergency medical services, and disaster planning.

Year after year, DLTA project requests exceed the amount of funds available from the state. This year, MAPC received requests for double the amount of funding. DLTA was funded at just \$2.8 million in the last four budgets, beginning in Fiscal 2014. This year, we are requesting that DLTA be level-funded at \$2.8 million to allow the MAPC and other RPAs to continue providing a wide range of services that member municipalities require. [Read more in our DLTA Fact sheet.](#)

### JR. COMMUNITY SAFETY

**Senator Charles E. Shannon, Jr. Community Safety Initiative (Shannon Grant)**

Since 2006, the Commonwealth has used this grant program to fund regional strategies to combat youth violence, gang violence, and substance abuse. By regional we mean that groups of municipalities work together on anti-violence strategies, and by multi-disciplinary we mean that all departments in law enforcement and prevention work together to achieve a common goal. It is this emphasis on a regional, multi-disciplinary approach that sets Shannon Grants apart from other efforts to fund local law enforcement or prevention programs. From a high of \$13 million, the program was reduced to \$4.5 million during the recession. After steadily increasing to \$8.25 million, the program was only funded at \$6 million last year. We are requesting an increase to \$10 million in FY2018. [Fact sheet.](#)

# coalitions

The Government Affairs team collaborates with several influential groups across the state and nation to provide policy analysis and coordinate advocacy campaigns.

### The Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA)

is a coalition of the 13 Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) throughout the Commonwealth, including MAPC, that aims to strengthen regionalization and municipal collaboration throughout Massachusetts. MARPA meets monthly at MAPC's Boston offices and hosts an annual conference at varying locations around the state. For more information, contact a member of MAPC's Government Affairs staff.



### The Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance (MSGA)

promotes healthy and diverse communities, protects critical environmental resources and working landscapes, advocates for housing and transportation choices, and supports equitable community development and urban reinvestment. MAPC is a member of MSGA. [For more, visit ma-smartgrowth.org.](#)



### Transportation for Massachusetts (T4MA)

is a diverse coalition of organizations working together to create safe, convenient, and affordable transportation for everyone. T4MA, of which MAPC is a member, advocates for transportation funds to be spent fairly and responsibly, for transportation decisions that are transparent and accountable, and to ensure that our transportation network has sufficient resources to meet tomorrow's needs all throughout the Commonwealth. [For more, visit www.t4ma.org.](#)



### The Metropolitan Mayors Coalition (MMC)

is a group of cities in towns in the urban core of Metro Boston whose leaders gather to exchange information and create solutions for common problems. The municipal officials in this group represent more than 1.4 million constituents, and represent Boston, Braintree, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Melrose, Cambridge, Newton, Quincy, Revere, Somerville and Winthrop. MAPC facilitates and staff the work of the MMC.

### The North Shore Coalition

is a voluntary forum where municipal leaders share information and solutions to common problems particular to the North Shore region. The municipal officials in this group represent nearly 400,000 residents from Beverly, Danvers, Essex, Gloucester, Hamilton, Ipswich, Lynn, Manchester-by-the-sea, Marblehead, Middleton, Nahant, Peabody, Rockport, Salem, Saugus, Swampscott, Topsfield, and Wenhams.

### The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)

provides advocacy, education, research, and training for the nation's regional development organizations. The association and its members promote regional strategies, partnerships, and solutions to strengthen the local economies and quality of life across America's local communities. [For more, visit nado.org.](#)



### Transportation for America (T4A)

is an alliance of elected, business and civic leaders from communities across the country, united to ensure that states and the federal government step up to invest in smart, homegrown, locally-driven transportation solutions. These are the investments that hold the key to our future economic prosperity. [For more, visit t4america.org.](#)



### The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC)

operates as the national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues. NARC's member organizations are composed of multiple local governments that work together to serve American communities large and small and urban and rural. [For more, visit narc.org.](#)



### Smart Growth America

advocates for people who want to live and work in great neighborhoods. Smart Growth America believes smart growth solutions support thriving businesses and jobs, provide more options for how people get around and make it more affordable to live near work and the grocery store. Smart Growth America works with communities to fight sprawl and save money. [For more, visit smartgrowthamerica.org.](#)



## legislative committee

MAPC's Legislative Committee meets monthly to discuss current and emerging policy priorities at MAPC. Membership is made up of a list of names coming soon.

[>> LEARN MORE](#)

### 2017 MEETING SCHEDULE

All meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., at MAPC's offices, 60 Temple Place in Boston.

May 10	September 13
June 14	October 11
July 12	November 8
August 9	December 13

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