MetroFuture: Making a Greater Boston Region
An Initiative of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council
www.metrofuture.org

Special thanks to the MetroFuture Steering Committee and its Task Forces for guiding this work, to the hundreds of organizations that brought people together in order to learn about MetroFuture and their region, and to the thousands of people who offered their vision and time to crafting this plan.

MetroFuture would not have been possible without generous support from foundations and partners, including:
Boston College Citizen Seminars
The Boston Foundation
The Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization
The Boston Society of Architects Civic Initiative
The cities and towns of the MAPC region
Citizens Bank of Massachusetts
The Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust
The Garfield Foundation
The Massachusetts Institute of Technology
The Orton family Foundation
The University of Massachusetts Boston
An anonymous foundation

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The image on the cover is a “word cloud” that depicts the 50 most commonly used words in this document, with the size of the word proportional to its frequency.
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Organizational hierarchy:

**Strategy #1:** Strategy

A. Sub-Strategy

1) Recommendation

1.a Implementation Step
   (Complete text of Implementation Steps not included in this draft)
Strategy #1: Implement Coordinated Plans

A. Increase municipal planning capacity
   1) Ensure each municipality has professional planning staff
   2) Increase capacity of citizen boards through education
   3) Foster informed public participation in planning efforts
   4) Build local capacity to use planning support tools
   5) Provide more general non-contract technical support through MAPC subregions
   6) Support the development of local plans and zoning consistent with MetroFuture

B. Modernize planning and development tools
   7) Modernize the Zoning Enabling Act and Subdivision Control Law
   8) Adopt best practices for permit streamlining
   9) Establish local and regional Transfer of Development Rights programs
  10) Use phased development and rate-of-development controls to manage growth
  11) Formalize development agreements

C. Establish consistency of plans across all levels
   12) Formalize the Commonwealth Sustainable Development Principles and Objectives
   13) Regularly update MetroFuture land use plan and objectives, consistent with state principles/objectives
   14) Assess consistency of municipal plans and actions with MetroFuture objectives
   15) Establish local aid formulas and tax sharing programs that promote plan consistency

D. Coordinate sustainable state policies and programs
   16) Ensure state policies and investments are consistent with the Sustainable Development Principles
   17) Establish mechanisms for state accountability and consistency of Sustainable Development Principles
   18) Target capital funding to proposals consistent with regional plan
   19) Adjust 40B regulations to promote both affordable housing production and plan consistency
   20) Revise MWRA expansion policies to promote sustainable growth
   21) Modify MEPA reviews to encourage sustainable development
   22) Align school building assistance priorities with sustainable development patterns
   23) Incorporate sustainable growth projections in Water Management Act permitting

E. Foster private sector demand for sustainable development
   24) Disseminate information regarding the economic and environmental costs of development alternatives
   25) Foster corporate engagement through sustainability-oriented networking and recognition programs
26) Pursue education and marketing to promote “regional-mindedness”
Strategy # 2: Democratize Information

A. Align data collection and policymaking
   1) Develop regional indicators to measure progress toward MetroFuture goals
   2) Collect Metro Boston’s “Top Ten Most Wanted Data Sets”
   3) Implement a regional research agenda to inform planning and development policy
   4) Ensure Massachusetts is accurately counted in the Decennial Census
   5) Inform US Census efforts through the Population Estimates Program

B. Improve state and local capacity to utilize planning and decision support tools
   6) Expand appropriate use of visualization and decision support technology in the region

C. Support State and Regional Data Intermediaries
   7) Implement Massachusetts Office of Geographic and Environmental Information (MassGIS) Strategic Plan
   8) Establish a Commonwealth Center for Data
   9) Strengthen MAPC’s Data Center and GIS Lab as Metro Boston’s Regional Data Intermediary

D. Build and maintain strong “information infrastructure”
   10) Create the information infrastructure necessary to make data accessible in a timely manner
   11) Use licensing to allow public use of government-created data while protecting agency interests.
Strategy # 3: Strengthen Municipal Finance

A. Modernize municipal governance structures and practices
   1) Implement best practices for municipal charters and governance structures
   2) Improve the effectiveness of Town Meeting form of government
   3) Review the Commonwealth’s home rule structure and revise as necessary
   4) Use the internet to enhance transparency and civic participation
   5) Resolve remaining vestiges of county government

B. Control municipalities’ fixed costs: health care, pensions, debt
   6) Control municipal health care costs through participation in group plans and Medicare
   7) Safeguard and restore basic personnel management powers
   8) Reform underperforming municipal pension programs
   9) Reform public employee pension system to eliminate exceptions, loopholes, and unfunded liabilities

C. Enable more cost-effective service delivery
   10) Increase the use of municipal performance monitoring and benchmarking to improve service delivery
   11) Use dispute avoidance and resolution systems to control costs on municipal capital projects
   12) Increase the use of enterprise funds for fee-based municipal utilities
   13) Increase use of senior citizen volunteers for municipal functions
   14) Facilitate the creation of new municipal electric utilities

D. Ensure that state assistance to local government is sufficient and predictable
   15) Stabilize local aid and revisit local aid formulas
   16) Maintain the state income tax rate at current levels

E. Provide cities and towns with flexibility to raise local revenues.
   17) Increase participation in the Community Preservation Act and ensure consistent state match
   18) Increase the diversity of local revenue sources
   19) Enable widespread use of Impact Fees
   20) Adjust Proposition 2 ½

F. Reduce the burden of education funding
   21) Develop a “school cost insurance” program for all growth consistent with the regional plan
   22) Seek opportunities to create new regional school districts or consolidation of administrative functions
Strategy #4: Build Regional Collaboration

A. Strengthen MAPC as a regional resource
   1) Strengthen the technical assistance capacity of regional planning agencies
   2) Modernize enabling statutes for Regional Planning Agencies

B. Support regional collaboration, purchasing, and service delivery
   3) Establish regional collaboration as a priority for all Commonwealth policies and programs
   4) Increase joint procurement and service delivery through MAPC
   5) Strengthen incentives to foster inter-municipal collaboration
   6) Deliver regional public health services
   7) Consider municipal mergers to increase efficiency and enhance the quality of services

C. Work together to make a safer region
   8) Regionalize emergency dispatch
   9) Increase the use of mutual aid and mutual assistance agreements
   10) Collaborate on emergency planning efforts and implementation of emergency preparedness, hazard mitigation, and climate change adaptation recommendations

D. Plan together for regional development
   11) Establish advisory review process for border developments
   12) Develop and implement inter-municipal dispute resolution systems
   13) Increase intermunicipal park/greenway/trail planning
   14) Pursue regional housing production and preservation efforts

E. Share costs and benefits of development
   15) Create tax-sharing districts for major developments
   16) Establish a metropolitan tax sharing program
Strategy # 5: Enable Compact Growth

A. Plan for compact growth to serve community needs
   1) Support district plans for compact growth
   2) Use visualization and decision support tools to engage the public in district planning
   3) Develop capital plans for compact growth areas
   4) Broaden use of Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning Districts

B. Ensure good design and access
   5) Facilitate widespread adoption of form-based codes
   6) Adopt innovative parking strategies
   7) Increase the availability of car-sharing services
   8) Maintain historic resource inventories and plans
   9) Provide financial support for historic preservation and restoration
  10) Facilitate adaptive reuse and preservation
  11) Promote the use of New Urbanism and Traditional Neighborhood Development

C. Encourage market response to district plans
   12) Adopt best practices for permit streamlining
   13) Expand regional support for marketing compact growth sites
   14) Apply split tax rate to land/buildings to promote redevelopment
   15) Increase the use of Tax Increment Financing
   16) Increase the use of District Improvement Financing
   17) Enable widespread application of Impact Fees

D. Remove Barriers to Development
   18) Support revitalization of contaminated “brownfields”
   19) Support the use of shared septic systems and small wastewater treatment facilities

E. Increase Vitality of Existing Centers
   20) Increase use of Business Improvement Districts
   21) Facilitate use of Main Street or similar programs
Strategy # 6: Improve City Life and School Quality

A. Ensure high quality educational opportunities in urban communities
   1) Build teacher and school capacity through trainings and partnerships
   2) Modernize school administration and intervention strategies
   3) Support students and engage their parents and communities
   4) Increase school choice in underperforming districts

B. Improve urban public safety
   5) Support proven youth violence prevention programs
   6) Increase community policing efforts
   7) Increase the analytical use of crime statistics
   8) Expand prisoner re-entry programs to reduce recidivism

C. Foster sustainable neighborhood redevelopment
   9) Support neighborhood redevelopment initiatives of Community Development Corporations
   10) Return foreclosed, vacant, and abandoned properties to productive use
   11) Prevent displacement of existing urban residents

D. Improve urban services, maintenance, and accessibility
   12) Increase the use of municipal performance monitoring and benchmarking to improve service delivery
   13) Increase bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accessibility and safety

E. Foster urban vitality: arts, culture, shops, and services
   14) Strengthen downtown and neighborhood business districts
   15) Support arts and culture to build community and civic engagement
   16) Support arts districts through public policy

F. Improve urban parks and the urban environment
   17) Coordinate urban park planning, development, administration and regional connections
   18) Leverage partnerships and private funding to improve maintenance of urban parks
   19) Increase the urban tree canopy
   20) Expand urban farms and community gardens
   21) Protect and restore urban wilds, waterways, and urban ecology
Strategy # 7: Protect Natural Landscapes

A. Plan for land preservation on a state and regional basis
   1) Develop statewide plans for land conservation
   2) Bring strategic and regional perspectives to local open space planning
   3) Establish stronger “No Net Loss” policies for natural land resources
   4) Exclude valuable natural resource lands from areas identified as priority
development areas or focus areas for growth

B. Increase funding for priority land acquisition
   5) Develop open space funding sources through use of a regional “Greenfield Fee”
   6) The Commonwealth should provide adequate funding for open space
   7) Increase local capacity for open space acquisition

C. Support private sector conservation initiatives
   8) Establish and expand conservation tax credit programs
   9) Expand the use of Conservation Restrictions and Agricultural Preservation
Restrictions
  10) Increase participation in the Chapter 61 programs
  11) Increase estate planning assistance to farmers and owners of natural resource lands

D. Create a new generation of farmers through training, technical assistance
and access to capital
   12) Increase training opportunities and internships for new farmers
   13) Provide more training and technical assistance to immigrants and refugees who
wish to begin farming
   14) Increase financing options for local farmers
   15) Provide greater security and longer lease lengths for farmers leasing publicly-
owned farmland

E. Build a stronger market for local agricultural products
   16) Create and strengthen marketing programs for local food
   17) Expand school and institutional purchasing programs.
   18) Standardize labeling or verification programs for “local foods”
   19) Create more infrastructure to support processing and distribution of local
produce.
   20) Establish a Boston Public Market to provide a year-round venue for local food
products

F. Remove regulatory and labor-related barriers to agricultural
expansion/diversification
   21) Revise local zoning to support diversified agricultural operations
   22) Increase the role of agricultural commissions in protecting and promoting
agricultural activity
23) Increase the use and effectiveness of “Right to Farm” bylaws that protect farmers
24) Coordinate social and transportation services to link workers with farm employment

G. Adopt sustainable land use controls in natural landscape areas
25) Eliminate “Approval not Required” (ANR) process for land subdivision
26) Adopt true large lot zoning
27) Implement environmentally-friendly roadway standards
28) Protect scenic roads through development controls and sensitive design

H. Increase the use and impact of Open Space Residential Design
29) Permit Open Space Residential Design “as of right” and require its use in sensitive resource areas
30) Improve design of Open Space Residential Developments
Strategy # 8: Expand Access to Housing

A. Develop coordinated regional and local plans for diverse housing production
   1) Prepare regional housing production plans
   2) Prepare municipal Housing Production Plans that reflect MetroFuture growth targets
   3) Guide housing efforts through a “Regional Housing Advisory Committee”

B. Increase affordable housing production in appropriate locations
   4) Increase state funding for affordable housing development
   5) Develop a Regional Housing Fund
   6) Form municipal Affordable Housing Trusts
   7) Recognize and support the nonprofit housing development sector
   8) Increase production of “scattered site” affordable housing development
   9) Encourage adoption of Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Districts

C. Diversify overall housing supply and affordability
   10) Use “inclusionary zoning” as a tool to increase affordable housing production
    11) Increase production of accessory apartments
    12) Implement permitting best practices that streamline housing production

D. Connect residents to housing opportunities
   13) Develop employer-assisted housing options and programs
   14) Increase support for Housing Consumer Education Centers
   15) Prevent foreclosures
   16) Provide comprehensive, regional responses to homelessness

E. Ensure Fair and Accessible Housing
   17) Develop a Regional Fair Housing Compact program
   18) Implement a fair housing impact review process
   19) Determine the impact of local preference policies
   20) Publicize and enforce federal and state anti-discrimination laws
   21) Increase housing accessibility and adaptability
   22) Increase the application of universal design principles

F. Preserve, maintain, and upgrade existing affordable housing stock
   23) Support and expand housing rehabilitation activities
   24) Monitor deed restrictions to preserve affordability of units; preserve expiring use units or mitigate their loss
   25) Modernize public housing
Strategy # 9: Support Healthy Families

A. Link health and planning
   1) Strengthen coordination between health and planning boards/agencies
   2) Incorporate public health into municipal master plans.
   3) Expand programs designed to foster walking and biking to school
   4) Adopt and implement Hazard Mitigation Plans

B. Broaden universal early education and care
   5) Expand the network of high quality early education centers
   6) Provide professional development opportunities for early childhood caregivers
   7) Improve nutrition and physical activity opportunities in regulated child-care sites

C. Improve access to after-school and out-of-school programs
   8) Create public-private partnerships to provide resources for out-of-school programs
   9) Streamline access to funding for after-school and out-of-school programs

D. Use school-based programs to help children establish healthy lifestyles
   10) Continuously assess school wellness and health policies
   11) Disseminate and implement updated health and physical education framework and curricula
   12) Establish standards for healthy snacks and beverages in schools
   13) Invest in professional staff and facilities for fresh food preparation
   14) Expand farm to school programs
   15) Create “Edible Schoolyards” and associated programming

E. Ensure access to healthy food
   16) Establish a Food Policy Council
   17) Use financing and regulatory tools to bring supermarkets and healthy food outlets to underserved areas
   18) Expand offerings of existing markets
   19) Expand participation in the WIC program

F. Reduce exposure to environmental contaminants
   20) Expand the use of healthy building techniques
   21) Improve indoor air quality in schools
   22) Reduce pesticide use
   23) Increase lead-based paint abatement programs
   24) Expand tobacco cessation programs

G. Ensure equitable access to quality health care
   25) Increase asthma treatment and prevention programs
26) Ensure that health insurance is universal and affordable.
27) Create a state Center for the Elimination of Health Disparities
28) Ensure linguistically accessible and culturally appropriate health care

**H. Coordinate policies to create an elder-friendly region**

29) Collect data to ensure that older adults are being well served by state and local service providers
30) Coordinate transportation planning and service provision to the Commonwealth’s elderly population.
31) Provide housing options attractive to older adults
Strategy  # 10: Invest in a Skilled Workforce

A. Increase capacity and sustainability of public higher education
   1) Address the revenue gap for public colleges and universities
   2) Coordinate and support capital investments at public colleges and universities
   3) Support non-credit continuing education, workforce development, graduate courses, and ESOL programs
   4) Reform and modernize administrative procedures in the community college system
   5) Reform DCAM procedures to make it easier for institutions to occupy & improve rental spaces

B. Broaden access to public higher education
   6) Reduce financial barriers to attending public institutions of higher education
   7) Expand distance learning programs and alternative delivery models for public higher education
   8) Locate new public higher education facilities in smart growth locations and improve transit access to public higher education

C. Coordinate and align public higher education curriculum
   9) Establish formal coordination between public higher education curriculum and workforce development needs
   10) Facilitate the creation of new programs in high-demand fields at state and community colleges
   11) Strengthen coordination within the community college system

D. Adopt new strategies to improve student performance, graduation rates, and employment outcomes
   12) Implement comprehensive measurement and assessment systems for community colleges
   13) Increase coaching, counseling, and mentoring
   14) Facilitate transfers across the entire public higher education system
   15) Align secondary and post-secondary curriculum

E. Remove barriers to labor force participation
   16) Reform the Criminal Offender Records Information (CORI) system

F. Position immigrants as key assets to the region’s economy
   17) Expand funding for the adult basic education, including English for Speakers of Other Languages
   18) Evaluate and adopt innovative service delivery models for Adult Basic Education and English language classes
   19) Reform visa and green card systems to support immigrant entrepreneurs and skilled workers
20) Develop a better understanding of immigrants and economic development to inform public policy

G. Support older workers and lifelong productivity
   21) Develop flexible approaches to part-time work and phased retirement
   22) Re-tool workforce development programs to meet the needs of older workers
   23) Support financial literacy so workers are prepared for retirement
   24) Re-Tool Councils on Aging

H. Support Individual Asset Building and Financial Literacy
   25) Bring unbanked individuals into the mainstream banking sector
   26) Encourage asset building and provide incentives to save
Strategy # 11: Focus Economic Growth

A. Create jobs in MetroFuture-consistent locations
   1) Target economic incentive programs and technical assistance to locations consistent with the MetroFuture land use plan
   2) Increase employment density in appropriate suburban job centers
   3) Streamline approvals through community involvement, expedited permitting, and pre-permitting
   4) Bring a Smart Growth perspective to economic development marketing

B. Capitalize on existing medical and educational institutions
   5) Create formal alliances to support higher education/civic collaboration
   6) Support research programs and public/private collaboration at public post-secondary universities
   7) Support coordination of creative economy initiatives

C. Support small businesses and entrepreneurs
   8) Develop economic development plans that support small businesses
   9) Facilitate access to capital for small businesses
  10) Expand access to appropriate technical assistance, business services, and training
  11) Support unconventional work locations: home offices, live/work spaces, and business incubators
  12) Provide financial services that operate smoothly in a transnational milieu
Strategy # 12: Expand Coordinated Transportation

A. Integrate land use and transportation planning
   1) Implement a comprehensive corridor planning process
   2) Strengthen Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) evaluation criteria
   3) Improve data modeling and analysis to support transportation decision-making
   4) Ensure that the MPO structure promotes accountability and diversity of opinion
   5) Conduct regional transportation and land use planning as an integrated, regionally-controlled activity
   6) Build local capacity to integrate land use and transportation planning
   7) Reform federal and state legislative earmarking systems

B. Prioritize transit and transportation alternatives
   8) Invest in projects that expand and add capacity to the existing transit system
   9) Establish “first mile/last mile” services around commuter rail stations
  10) Improve the transit experience through high quality stations, stops, and customer service
  11) Create dedicated lane capacity for transit and alternative modes
  12) Incorporate “complete street” best practices in roadway development and design efforts
  13) Stabilize and coordinate funding sources for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and programs
  14) Maintain and manage bicycle and pedestrian facilities and traffic as full-fledged transportation linkages
  15) Preserve and fully utilize existing rights of way
  16) Provide pay-as-you-drive insurance

C. Establish stable and sufficient financing for all modes
   17) Increase statewide transportation revenue generation
   18) Stabilize and strengthen finances of the MBTA and regional Transit authorities
   19) Implement tolling strategies to reduce congestion and raise revenue
   20) Eliminate agency-level inefficiencies and redundancy
   21) Increase local and regional revenue generation for transportation
   22) Maintain fares as a significant source of revenue for the MBTA and regional transit authorities

D. Promote an efficient and transparent project delivery system
   23) Adopt a realistic and financially constrained regional and state Transportation Improvement Programs
   24) Utilize public-private partnerships and other alternative project delivery methods where appropriate
   25) Increase transportation agency capacity to design and construct high-quality projects
26) Implement dispute avoidance and resolution systems for transportation projects
27) Implement comprehensive transportation performance analysis and reporting

E. Establish a comprehensive maintenance program for safety and future cost savings
   28) Develop a comprehensive asset management/life-cycle cost system
   29) Reduce the backlog of structurally deficient bridges
   30) EOTPW should address the inherent disincentive in the current agency budget process

F. Improve the competitiveness of rail freight
   31) Conduct statewide freight priority needs assessment
   32) Establish double-stacking priority
Strategy # 13: Conserve Natural Resources

A. Plan for sustainability
   1) Coordinate state and regional efforts
   2) Incorporate sustainability practices into municipal planning and operations
   3) Pursue regional collaboration for energy services and technical assistance

B. Conserve Energy
   4) Implement stronger energy efficiency and green building standards
   5) Promote distributed generation and combined heat & power at compact growth locations
   6) Give consumers more information about energy use, cost, and efficiency
   7) Create new funding mechanisms for energy efficiency improvements
   8) Increase efficiency of transportation system

C. Promote the use of renewable resources
   9) Reduce regulatory and financial barriers to local renewable energy production
   10) Increase market demand for renewable energy

D. Manage water demand through education, pricing, technical assistance, and regulation
   11) Increase public awareness regarding water conservation
   12) Adopt water pricing structures as a primary mechanism to manage water demand
   13) Use full cost pricing and use water revenues to fund conservation programs
   14) Increase the use of low-water landscaping
   15) Provide technical assistance to residents and businesses
   16) Establish and enforce standards and restrictions for outdoor irrigation systems
   17) Establish comprehensive programs to directly regulate water usage during peak periods
   18) Increase incentives for installing water-efficient products

E. Implement water/wastewater/stormwater utility “best practices” across the region
   19) Conduct integrated water management planning
   20) Reduce inflow and infiltration
   21) Water utilities should conduct comprehensive water system audits and assessments on a regular basis
   22) Conduct frequent systemwide leak detection and prevent water theft
   23) Ensure compliance with pressure reduction regulations
   24) Establish fee-based stormwater utilities

F. Expand the use of reclaimed water and alternative supplies
   25) Establish state policies supportive of water reuse
26) Provide technical assistance and training to promote water reuse
27) Require evaluation of water reuse opportunities as a condition of water service for large developments
28) Encourage water reuse in state-funded construction projects
29) Increase the use of rainwater harvesting

G. **Use technical analysis to support more flexible regulatory mechanisms for water withdrawal**
   30) Conduct hydrologic analysis to assess environmentally sustainable yield of water supplies
   31) Implement water banking programs
   32) Provide more transparent access to statistical data collected through water permitting

H. **Promote local treatment and recharge of stormwater and wastewater**
   33) Establish land use controls and stormwater regulation to promote stormwater best practices and Low Impact Development
   34) Expand septic system management programs
   35) Favor decentralized wastewater solutions and strictly condition access to sewer extensions

I. **Protect the quality of water supplies through source controls and land use planning**
   36) Adopt and update water resource protection zoning
   37) Strengthen local regulation of hazardous materials

J. **Increase waste reduction and recycling**
   38) Strengthen incentives for recycling and composting
   39) Increase waste diversion infrastructure at the generator, local, and regional levels