MAPC
METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL
Smart Growth & Regional Collaboration

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015–2020

November 2014

Encourage development and preservation consistent with **SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES.**

Partner with our cities and towns to **PROMOTE REGIONAL COLLABORATION,** enhance **EFFECTIVENESS,** and increase **EFFICIENCY.**

Play a leading role in helping the region to achieve greater **EQUITY.**

Help the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the physical, environmental, and social impacts of **CLIMATE CHANGE** and **NATURAL HAZARDS.**

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Strategic Plan 2015–2020

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)'s strategic plan for the years 2015 through 2020 reaffirms our mission as well as our commitment to the vision outlined in MetroFuture, the regional policy plan for Metropolitan Boston, which was adopted in 2008. The plan clarifies the agency's priorities for the coming five years, details how we will approach our work, and provides an emerging road map for continued success. It acknowledges the depth and breadth of MAPC's work, which must flexibly respond to the changing needs of the region and member cities and towns. The strategic plan allows this work to continue while charting a path for MAPC to focus future activities in a more concerted way on four specific priorities within the broad mission of smart growth and regional collaboration.

MAPC initiated a strategic planning process early in 2014. The agency also undertook an organizational assessment to provide a current snapshot to inform the strategic plan. Both activities were funded by a generous grant from the Barr Foundation, in addition to MAPC resources. MAPC engaged TDC, an organization with significant experience undertaking organizational assessments and strategic planning efforts with mission-driven entities, to facilitate this project. A Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was appointed to oversee this work, including both staff and Executive Committee members.

The research phase included interviews with director-level staff, officers, external stakeholders, and Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) in major metropolitan areas in the United States; focus groups with other MAPC staff; a survey of a larger set of external stakeholders; and discussions at one Council meeting, several Executive Committee meetings, and numerous staff meetings.

The organizational assessment revealed that MAPC has experienced substantial growth in staff and budget, as well as the number and diversity of grants and contracts, since 2010. MAPC also added programs in clean energy and public health. Notably, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded MAPC a $4 million Sustainable Communities Grant in 2011, which helped the agency to expand its planning and policy capacity, build relationships with community partners, and proactively fund projects that furthered MetroFuture.

In order to maintain the momentum of Sustainable Communities after the grant ended in June 2014, MAPC convinced the Governor and Legislature to increase technical assistance funds for RPAs in the state budget, and achieved a significant increase in the assessment cities and towns pay to fund MAPC. Some additional foundation funds have been acquired, although more work remains to be done in this area. With diversified funding sources, strong management, professional administration, and significant staff capacity to ensure program excellence, the agency continues to stand on solid financial ground.

The organizational assessment conducted by TDC with key internal and external stakeholders highlighted a number of important findings. External stakeholders consistently praised MAPC for its strong individual programs and its overall high quality work. Stakeholders also identified staff, organizational culture, and the agency's entrepreneurial nature as key strengths, and flagged MAPC's regional leadership, facilitating abilities, and interdisciplinary work as core competencies.

Both internal and external stakeholders noted, with varying degrees of specificity, that MAPC's management systems have not quite kept up with the rapid growth the agency has experienced over the past decade.

Internal stakeholders suggested continued investment in systems to support the agency's growth, and both sets of stakeholders suggested that now would be a good time to put more effort into issues related to climate change, bolster work to achieve greater equity in Metro Boston, and strengthen how the subregions function. Some external and internal stakeholders also recommended that MAPC clarify its priorities in order to focus its broad mission and planning work.

These findings were shared broadly with the SPC, as well as MAPC's staff and Executive Committee. The strategic priorities and approaches endorsed in this plan have been shaped in response.

The Strategic Plan reasserts MAPC's core mission statement, while adding phrases related to clean energy and public health. This slightly revised mission statement reads as follows:

> The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is a regional planning agency serving the people who live and work in the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston. Our mission is to promote smart growth and regional collaboration. Our regional plan, MetroFuture, guides our work as we engage the public in responsible stewardship of our region's future.
>
> We work toward sound municipal management, sustainable land use, protection of natural resources, efficient and affordable transportation, a diverse housing stock, public safety, economic development, clean energy, healthy communities, an informed public, and equity and opportunity among people of all backgrounds.

The SPC, with feedback and input from the full MAPC staff, the Executive Committee, and the Council, developed a set of four strategic priorities. In determining these priorities, the SPC considered whether a potential priority helped address a key need in the region; whether it helped advance the long-term vision articulated in MetroFuture; and whether it was an issue MAPC was uniquely well suited to address. The four priorities appear below. Section V of the plan contains a detailed explanation of each priority, along with a rationale for its selection.

- Encourage development and preservation consistent with smart growth principles, especially by increasing housing production, promoting innovative transportation solutions, and encouraging mixed-use development near various forms of transit.
- Partner with our cities and towns to promote regional collaboration, enhance effectiveness, and increase efficiency.
- Play a leading role in helping the region to achieve greater equity.

- Help the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the physical, environmental, and social impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

The SPC also identified core approaches that MAPC uses to guide its work, including:

- interdisciplinary practice;
- regional perspective and impact;
- data and research;
- convening;
- partnerships;
- civic engagement;
- innovation and creativity;
- advocacy; and
- achieving results.

Section VI of the plan contains a detailed explanation of each approach.

By December 15, 2014, MAPC will develop specific objectives for each strategic priority, plus indicators to measure progress over time.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is pleased to present the following strategic plan for the years 2015 through 2020. This strategic plan reaffirms MAPC's mission and our commitment to the vision outlined in MetroFuture, the regional policy plan for Metropolitan Boston. The strategic plan clarifies the agency's priorities for the coming five years, details how we will approach our work, and provides an emerging road map for continued success in the future. The thoughtful process behind this document has inspired and challenged MAPC during the course of the planning effort, and will no doubt continue to do so during its implementation. The six-month planning effort has provided a learning opportunity for new as well as veteran MAPC stakeholders and staff members, as we have worked together to craft a path for continued progress in responding to the evolving needs and challenges in Metropolitan Boston.

For more than 50 years, MAPC has served as the regional planning agency serving the people who live and work in the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston. MAPC's work is guided by MetroFuture, which engages the public in responsible stewardship of our region. MetroFuture is a bold but achievable plan "to make a Greater Boston Region" — to better the lives of the people who live and work in Metropolitan Boston. The plan was formally adopted by MAPC in 2008. MetroFuture details six broad goal categories, 65 specific goals, and 13 ambitious and overarching implementation strategies to guide MAPC and our partners' efforts through the year 2030. The process of developing this broad ranging vision for smart growth involved extensive participation from thousands of "plan builders" representing the diversity of MAPC's stakeholders, and has resulted in almost 300 individual projects in regional and local planning, municipal collaboration, and public policy to advance the MetroFuture vision. Roughly two-thirds of these projects are now completed, one-third are still underway, and more are being added all the time.

While MetroFuture provides a long-term plan for the region as a whole, MAPC still needs a strategic plan to govern its organizational priorities and operations over the near term. Our last strategic plan update covered the years 2010 through 2015, but as we neared the end of the current strategic plan, MAPC's leaders determined that a planning effort more comprehensive and ambitious than the last one was needed to guide the agency's work through the year 2020. Internally, the organization has grown in size and scope. MAPC has extended our work beyond traditional regional planning efforts into the realms of clean energy and public health. Major federal grants — Sustainable Communities (to implement MetroFuture), Community Transformation (public health), and Homeland Security (public safety) — have added new planning projects and policy campaigns, broadening not only our topical reach, but also our partnerships with new stakeholders. The staff and operating budget have grown significantly since the last planning effort. Externally, the city of Boston has a new mayor for the first time in two decades, and the state will have a new governor when 2015 begins. At the federal level, budget pressures in areas such as

transportation and housing appear likely to continue, and the commitment to addressing the impacts of climate change is uneven at best.

In addition, MAPC determined that a renewed strategic planning effort provided an appropriate moment to pause and determine our priorities for the coming five years, in the context of MetroFuture. MAPC is now almost seven years into the implementation of MetroFuture, and while MetroFuture remains compelling and relevant, this strategic plan through 2020 provides a framework within which to review and update MetroFuture to keep it current and looking forward.

This strategic plan acknowledges the depth and breadth of MAPC's work, which must flexibly respond to the changing needs of the region and our member cities and towns. The strategic plan allows this broad work to continue while charting a path for MAPC to focus future activities in a more concerted way on four specific priorities within the broad mission of smart growth and regional collaboration.

The MAPC Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), with help from its partners on the staff, Executive Committee and Council, have worked diligently to review the issues before MAPC, assess the evolving operating environment, and articulate a practical strategic plan that will allow the agency to position itself for continued sustainability, efficacy, and relevance, while remaining true to our mission and the vision articulated in MetroFuture. We invite our partners and stakeholders to join us in moving forward to accomplish the important work ahead.

II. THE ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING PROCESS

In response to the opportunities and challenges detailed above, MAPC initiated a strategic planning process early in 2014. MAPC further decided to undertake an organizational assessment to provide a current snapshot of the agency that would help to inform the strategic plan. The assessment was intended to provide a solid base from which MAPC could shape our future plans and strategy. The effort was generously funded by The Barr Foundation, supplemented by other MAPC resources.

Following a competitive selection process, MAPC engaged Technical Development Corporation (TDC), an organization with significant experience undertaking organizational assessments and strategic planning efforts with mission-driven entities, to facilitate this project. Based in Boston from the time of its founding in 1968, TDC brought familiarity with many of the key public, non-profit, private and philanthropic stakeholders in the Metropolitan Boston region to this effort.

Tasks undertaken to support the development of the organizational assessment and strategic plan included:

- Review of background materials;
- 10 in-person interviews with Director-level staff, the Deputy Director, and the Executive Director;
- 5 in-person and phone interviews with current MAPC Officers and the Past President;
- 7 on-site focus groups with 50 MAPC staff members;
- 25 external interviews with key stakeholders from municipalities, state government, the non-profit sector, and private funders;
- A survey of 315 external stakeholders from municipalities, business partners, state and federal officials, and organizational partners from the private and nonprofit sector (44 responses received); and,
- Interviews with 7 other Regional Planning Agencies across the nation.

In addition, strategic planning discussions were held at the May 2013 Council meeting and at three Executive Committee meetings, as well as at numerous MAPC staff meetings. The SPC met eight times from April through October.

The planning process benefited tremendously from the passion, commitment, and expertise of the SPC members (listed below), as well as the insight and talents of MAPC's Executive Committee, and Council members.

Strategic Planning Committee Members

Staff

Barry Keppard, Chairman
Public Health

Joel Barrera
Deputy Director

Manisha Bewtra
Land Use Planning

Rebecca Davis
Government Affairs/Energy

Marc Draisen
Executive Director

Eric Halvorsen
Transportation

Chris Kuschel
Transportation/Public Health

Amy Reilly
Municipal Collaboration

Holly St. Clair
Data Services

Emily Torres-Cullinane
Regional Plan Implementation

Steve Winter
Land Use Planning

Sheila Wynter
Finance

Executive Committee

Lynn Duncan
MAPC President
City of Salem

Keith Bergman
MAPC Vice President
Town of Littleton

Michelle Ciccolo
MAPC Past President
Town of Hudson

Joan Meschino
Town of Hull

Richard Walker
Gubernatorial Appointee

III. MAPC TODAY

Governance, Structure, and Statutory Role

MAPC was established in 1963. It was set up as an independent district in 1971, under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40B, Sections 24-29, which is the statute that authorizes MAPC and directs the agency to develop comprehensive regional plans for the Metropolitan Boston region. MAPC is one of 13 regional planning agencies in Massachusetts, and collaborates closely with those agencies through the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies.

More recently, regional planning agencies like MAPC were designated as the technical assistance centers for their member communities (Chapter 205 of the Acts of 2006) and as the primary transportation planning agencies for projects of regional significance (Chapter 25 of the Acts of 2009). Additionally, MAPC currently serves as vice-chair of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization, which programs federal transportation dollars in Metro Boston. The US Economic Development Administration (EDA) also designates MAPC as the Economic Development District for Metro Boston. In this capacity, MAPC completes the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region, and assists applicants for EDA funds.

MAPC is governed by a Council made up of 101 municipal government appointees, 21 gubernatorial appointees, and 13 officials from state, regional, and City of Boston agencies. Once a year, MAPC conducts an election among its Council members to choose an Executive Committee, which meets monthly, and a set of Officers: a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Executive Committee is balanced among city members, town members, gubernatorial appointees, and agency representatives (five of each); the Officers are selected from the entire membership. This balanced panel of seriously-minded regionalists provides an important forum to seek consensus on controversial issues facing the Metro Boston region.

The MAPC service area is large and diverse, comprising 22 cities and 79 towns. This region, with a population of 3.2 million people (or 48% of the state population, according to the July 1, 2013 US Census Annual Population Estimates) encompasses the city of Boston, inner core communities, regional urban centers, maturing suburbs, developing suburbs, and semi-rural communities. To respond efficiently to the region's diverse needs, MAPC has divided our service area into eight subregions, with one MAPC staff person assigned to assist each subregional group.[1]

Current Situation

Since MAPC's last strategic planning effort in 2010, our organization has continued to experience substantial growth. By encouraging staff to pursue new project opportunities — especially with

[1] The MetroWest Regional Collaborative is one of the eight subregions, but it has its own independent board, which hires two staff people. MAPC serves as the fiduciary agent for the Collaborative, and we work very closely together.

municipalities and federal or state agencies — we have dramatically increased our grants, contracts, and earned revenue. To accomplish the new work, staff has grown from 45 employees to 80. In addition, we have developed new programs in Clean Energy and Public Health, and grown both our planning and municipal collaboration staff.

MAPC is supported by base funding from a statutory municipal assessment and core federal transportation planning contracts. The District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program, funded through legislative appropriation and managed by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), provides core support for our technical assistance to cities and towns. In addition, MAPC has developed diverse revenue streams that include long-term contracts to coordinate federal homeland security grants, partnerships with state agencies like the Department of Public Health, earned revenue through innovative collective procurement programs, and significant investments from the philanthropic community.

Notably, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded MAPC a $4 million Sustainable Communities Grant in 2011, which helped the agency to expand its planning and policy capacity, build relationships with community partners, and proactively fund projects that furthered MetroFuture.

The Sustainable Communities Grant was a 3-year grant, which ended in June 2014. Rather than grow and shrink based on one large federal grant, MAPC has been actively pursuing a strategy to fund the more robust agency capacity that we built with the help of Sustainable Communities. That strategy to diversify revenue has resulted in major victories: Many more state agencies and local governments are now using their own funds to contract with MAPC for direct planning services, demonstrating how much they value our work. MAPC now receives an additional $310,000 for DLTA projects, based on an increase in the statewide appropriation over the past two years. In September, 2014, MAPC's municipal representatives voted to increase their direct contributions to MAPC by more than $550,000, which is a permanent, structural addition to the agency's finances. Foundations, led by the Barr Foundation, have also decided to invest in MAPC as an agent of change for the region, and expanded philanthropic support will continue to be a critical piece of our financial strategy moving forward.

The FY 2015 budget includes an annual revenue budget of more than $12.8 million, which includes both operating and pass-through funds.[2] MAPC's FY15 operating budget is $6.2 million, excluding pass through monies. With diversified funding sources, strong management, professional administration, and significant capacity at the staff level to ensure continued program excellence, the agency continues to stand on solid financial ground. Nevertheless, MAPC is cognizant that

[2] At MAPC, pass-through funds are funds that are managed by MAPC, but which pass through the agency to third-party recipients, mainly cities and towns. They are not considered part of MAPC's operating budget.

changing political climates, both at the state and federal level, could make contracts and grants vulnerable to further cuts in the coming fiscal years. We therefore hope to build our operating reserve to protect the agency from unexpected funding losses or other revenue stream interruptions.

MAPC Today — Internal and External Perspectives

As part of the strategic planning process, MAPC underwent an organizational assessment, which was conducted by TDC. Stakeholders discussed the agency's strengths, areas for improvement, and the trends that will most likely affect MAPC's work in the coming five years. A summary of TDC's key findings follows.

Strengths

Conversations with stakeholders confirmed that MAPC continues to operate from a position of strength. External stakeholders consistently praised MAPC for its strong individual program areas and for its overall high quality work; several stakeholders identified MAPC as an exemplary organization. Stakeholders also identified staff, organizational culture, and the agency's entrepreneurial nature as key strengths, and flagged MAPC's regional leadership, facilitating abilities, and interdisciplinary work as core competencies of the agency.

External stakeholders highlighted that MAPC's talented staff contribute in large part to the agency's success. MAPC staff, for their part, recognizes the skill and dedication of their fellow staff members, saying that the agency is staffed by forward-thinking people who truly believe in the value of the work they do. Both internal and external stakeholders highlighted MAPC's strong leadership, noting that the Executive Director and Deputy Director have a strong desire to see the organization grow and are committed to supporting their staff.

MAPC staff praised the agency and its leadership for cultivating a great work environment: the agency cares about staff development and cultivation; staff feel listened to and respected; the office culture is congenial and friendly; and the combination of MAPC's convenient downtown location and its flexibility makes it easy for staff to manage schedules.

Most importantly, staff noted, the agency feels nimble, agile, and flexible. Staff members are excited to work at an agency that operates at the intersection of the public, private, and non-profit sectors; that values pioneering thinking and allows staff to pursue innovative projects and funding opportunities; and that actively seeks to expand beyond the traditional areas of transportation, land use and environmental planning. External stakeholders echoed these opinions, praising the agency for responding to challenges outside the customary core work of regional planning agencies.

Stakeholders identified regional thinking, convening and facilitating, and interdisciplinary work as MAPC's core competencies. Both internal and external stakeholders applauded MAPC's commitment

to regionalization, and recognized the role MAPC plays as a thought leader in the region. Internal stakeholders saw their agency as leading by example in maintaining a regional approach and encouraging proactive regional thinking rather than reactive local action. External stakeholders noted that MAPC combines on-the-ground knowledge of local government with big picture regional thinking; this combination allows the agency to promote ongoing discussion of regional trends in local communities. Furthermore, MAPC is well-positioned to continue to remind municipalities that their decisions have regional implications. The agency also serves as a trusted resource and an effective advocate for the region, thanks to the agency's strong and diverse staff, data capacity, and innovative thinking.

Similarly, internal and external stakeholders agreed that MAPC is uniquely well-suited to continue to convene and facilitate discussion throughout the region. MAPC's staff noted that the agency's hybrid nature allows it to build connections across sectors and unite diverse groups of municipal and non-municipal actors.

External stakeholders lauded MAPC for its ability to catalyze conversations among a wide variety of stakeholders about smart growth and regional thinking. MAPC's relationships extend beyond cities and towns, and the Sustainable Communities grant further diversified the agency's partnerships and connections across the Metropolitan Boston region. External stakeholders noted that MAPC is the only agency that can pull these actors together and facilitate critical discussions.

Interdisciplinary work was identified as an emerging core competency for MAPC: staff and external stakeholders noted that MAPC is increasingly doing silo-busting, cross-program work, and are enthusiastic about the continuation of this work. MAPC staff noted that the agency's collegial, friendly nature encourages collaboration and innovation, and that staff expertise and capacity make it increasingly easy to take on more comprehensive, interdisciplinary projects. Staff is encouraged to work across departments on projects and to connect to each other's work. As a result, the agency is poised to expand its portfolio of interdisciplinary projects throughout the region, working with cities and towns as well as new partners from the non-profit and business sectors.

External stakeholders suggested that MAPC, with its ever-growing understanding of regional trends across disciplines and its tremendous staff expertise, is also well-positioned to encourage municipalities to do the same. Most local governments still operate in a more traditional, siloed way, even if they might aspire to work across municipal departments and to collaborate with their neighbors. By thinking and acting in a more integrated way, MAPC can serve as an example for its member municipalities.

Areas of Improvement

Both internal and external stakeholders noted, with varying degrees of specificity, that MAPC's management systems have not quite kept up with the rapid growth the agency has experienced

over the past decade. Internal stakeholders suggested continued investment in systems to support the agency's growth, and both sets of stakeholders suggested that now would be a good time to bolster equity efforts and strengthen how the subregions function. Some external and internal stakeholders also recommended that MAPC clarify its priorities in order to focus its broad mission and planning work.

The agency's leadership has already begun to invest in systems to reduce MAPC's growing pains, and staff acknowledged that these investments have made a positive difference and should be continued. Systems enhancements in finance, technology, and human resources have been planned or are in progress, and the agency is committed to boosting its knowledge management and internal communication systems within the constraints of available resources. Staff also encouraged the agency to keep developing structures to support MAPC's entrepreneurial practice and hybrid nature, including clarifying roles on project teams (which often cross departments boundaries), providing increased support and time to pursue funding for innovative projects, funding and implementing project management training, and continuing to expand support for professional development.

Staff also noted that, while the agency is developing a strong interdisciplinary practice, a framework and systems for this practice have not yet been fully articulated. Staff suggested that MAPC aim for fewer, larger projects that are more comprehensive in scope and more likely to allow for interdisciplinary or regional collaboration. External stakeholders similarly encouraged the agency to increase its capacity for interdisciplinary work.

Stakeholders praised MAPC for its commitment to equity, particularly its recent push to combat issues of inequity in the Metropolitan Boston region. MAPC's Regional Indicators Report on equity ("The State of Equity in Metro Boston," December, 2011), its more recent companion ("The State of Equity Policy Agenda," July, 2014), and the "Fair Housing and Equity Assessment," (May, 2014) all represent important contributions to the understanding of inequity in Metro Boston. Both internal and external stakeholders praised MAPC's commitment to equity, but they also encouraged the agency to continue to think about how it can address equity more effectively and weave it more thoroughly into MAPC's work. Internal stakeholders noted that the agency's external equity work was matched by a commitment to resolving internal equity issues: they praised the agency for its commitment to staff diversity, and suggested that this work can and should continue.

How best to leverage MAPC's work in the eight geographic subregions is a challenge for the future, according to some stakeholders. Stakeholders noted that some subregions function well while others seem to need improvements. MAPC staff is addressing this issue, thinking about core roles for subregions to play and developing a structure that enables the subregions to play these roles while maintaining the individual character of each subregion. The hope is that by establishing a consistent

but flexible role for the subregions to play, and by making explicit the roles and expectations of the subregional council and their staff coordinators, MAPC will be able to leverage the subregions as an incubator for ideas, a focal point for municipal collaboration, and a site for key regional dialogue. Bringing new stakeholders into subregional conversations and expanding the diversity of the subregional councils to reflect better the makeup of the region remain important objectives for the future.

Numerous external and internal stakeholders suggested that MAPC needs to prioritize. While they appreciate MAPC's broad and ambitious mission, and felt strongly that none of MAPC's program areas should be eliminated, many said the agency's many constituent parts obscure to some extent a clear and compelling image of MAPC as a whole. As a result, it is difficult to know exactly what MAPC does and where it has impact. External stakeholders also wondered how *MetroFuture*, with its broad and ambitious long-term vision, will continue to get translated into on-the-ground results. Stakeholders suggested that selecting priorities and focusing MAPC's work would strengthen the agency's functioning and dramatically increase the agency's impact.

These findings were shared broadly with the SPC, as well as MAPC's staff and Executive Committee. The strategic priorities and approaches endorsed in this plan have been shaped in response.

IV. MISSION

This strategic plan reaffirms MAPC's commitment to MetroFuture and our existing mission:

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is a regional planning agency serving the people who live and work in the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston. Our mission is to promote smart growth and regional collaboration. Our regional plan, MetroFuture, guides our work as we engage the public in responsible stewardship of our region's future.

We work toward sound municipal management, sustainable land use, protection of natural resources, efficient and affordable transportation, a diverse housing stock, public safety, economic development, clean energy, healthy communities, an informed public, and equity and opportunity among people of all backgrounds.

V. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2015-2020

The core challenge for the strategic planning process was responding to the need for prioritization highlighted by stakeholders in the organizational assessment process. The SPC, with feedback and input from the full MAPC staff, the Executive Committee, and the Council, developed a set of strategic priorities. In determining these priorities, the SPC considered whether a potential priority helped address a key need in the region; whether it helped advance the long-term vision for the region articulated in *MetroFuture*; and whether it was an issue MAPC was uniquely well suited to address.

The SPC began with a list of 10 prospective priorities. It winnowed this list to six, and then, with input from MAPC's directors and managers, further reduced the number to four. These four priorities were presented to the Executive Committee on September 17, 2014, where they were discussed and, with minor edits, approved as the four strategic priorities for MAPC's work in 2015-2020.

Each priority is presented below, followed by a three-part rationale for each one. Please note: the priorities are listed A-D for identification purposes only. No priority order is intended; we view all the priorities as equally important. Also, in the sections entitled "Relationship to *MetroFuture*," we decided for conciseness not to include a lengthy list of *MetroFuture* goals in each section. However, this list is available in the Appendix.

Following the adoption of this plan, the agency will develop more detailed objectives for each of the priorities, and indicators to measure MAPC's success in these areas.

Priority A: Encourage development and preservation consistent with smart growth principles.

MAPC believes the best way for the region — and its individual municipalities — to grow is to concentrate development in areas where people, jobs and infrastructure already exist, while preserving natural resources, open space, and critical habitats. This work often involves mixed-use development in village centers, suburban downtowns, and urban neighborhoods, while complementing or even strengthening the historic character of these varied communities. Since no two communities are the same, a flexible, interdisciplinary approach is important.

Over the next five years, we will focus on enhancing three elements of our smart growth work:

- expanding the supply of housing that the region needs to grow economically, with an emphasis on multi-family housing, smaller single-family homes, and homes that are affordable to a wide range of incomes;
- promoting innovative transportation strategies, including congestion mitigation, shared and appropriately priced parking, streets that work for all users, and transit solutions for both cities and suburbs; and
- encouraging both residential and economic development that is oriented to take advantage of its proximity to current and planned subway and light rail stops, commuter rail stations, and key bus stops.

We will continue to work toward state and federal policies that encourage smart growth and discourage sprawl, while helping our cities and towns to obtain funding to improve or add the infrastructure that is needed to support smart growth.

Rationale

Regional Need: MAPC's mission is to encourage smart growth and regional collaboration, and it therefore should be no surprise that encouraging development and preservation consistent with smart growth principles is one of our strategic priorities. In order for the region and all of its residents to continue to thrive, municipal actors and their partners must carefully select where and how to grow. Smart growth planning decisions, if consistently applied across the region, can help to spur economic growth, improve public health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, so it is critical that MAPC assist member municipalities, state agencies, and other allies to think intelligently about housing production and preservation, innovative ways to improve mobility, and increased density near transit. While smart growth is a broad term, covering a wide array of land use options, MAPC has decided that these three efforts are most critical to the continued economic growth and quality of life in the region, and most closely linked to MAPC's core strengths.

Relationship to MetroFuture: MetroFuture includes 65 goals which envision a very different region in 2030 than the one we had when the plan was adopted in 2008. A majority of these goals relate to smart growth, and many of those relate specifically to three sub-areas we have chosen to focus on in Strategic Priority A. These goals include, for example, several regarding the design, affordability, and diversity of housing to meet the region's needs, along with other goals focused on expanding the availability and use of transit, bicycling, and walking. The goals include a clear commitment to mixed-use development in transit-oriented communities. By redoubling MAPC's efforts in these topic areas — through both local planning and policy advocacy — we will be able

to move the region closer to achieving the more sustainable pattern of development envisioned in *MetroFuture*.

MAPC's Unique Capacity to Respond: While MAPC has chosen to focus our smart growth efforts on housing, transportation strategies, and transit-oriented development over the coming five years, smart growth development and preservation is of necessity an interdisciplinary exercise. MAPC is uniquely well-suited to encourage this kind of interdisciplinary planning, due in large part to MAPC's strengths across program areas. The breadth of our current work and staff expertise will encourage holistic smart growth planning across the region, and MAPC has the strong relationships to encourage cities and towns to break down silos within their own communities and think about smart growth development and preservation in a broader way.

MAPC has already worked with 52 of the cities and towns in our region to map priority areas for development and preservation. We have recently boosted our staff capacity in housing by adding a third housing planner, partly in response to the increased demand for Housing Production Plans, residential zoning bylaws, and other housing studies. We have expanded our internal focus on Complete Streets and innovative approaches to parking, and we have completed plans for increased development near transit in both urban and suburban communities. MAPC's day-long summit on value capture techniques emphasizes our new focus on financing smart growth development, and of course, we continue to provide compelling statistics and analysis about the demographics and market pressures driving development in the Metro Boston region. Finally, we are well-positioned to connect cities and towns to each other, thus facilitating regional solutions and sharing best practices.

Priority B: Partner with our cities and towns to promote regional collaboration, enhance effectiveness, and increase efficiency.

As municipalities grapple with more sophisticated service demands within constrained fiscal realities, MAPC is uniquely situated to promote regional collaborations that address shared municipal challenges and to promote best practices for more efficient and effective local governance.

In the last ten years, MAPC has increasingly played a role in helping municipalities to become more efficient, effective, and innovative: we played a lead role in reforming the municipal health insurance marketplace, brought together mayors and managers to build a portfolio of successful regional collaborations, and built the policy infrastructure to encourage collaboration among cities and towns.

Over the next five years, MAPC will build on those efforts to produce financial and service improvements in local governance, and to advocate for state policies and funding that promote regional collaboration. Examples of this work include:

- continuing to build a successful practice area focused on shared services and other forms of collaboration among municipalities;
- using our procurement capacity to promote cost-saving group purchasing, especially in areas that advance *MetroFuture* goals and our strategic priorities, such as our upcoming statewide procurement of sophisticated parking metering systems; and
- helping municipalities to adopt innovative strategies to deliver services, especially in areas of core emphasis for MAPC, such as regional transportation coordination, environmental stewardship, collaborating to meet housing needs, and advancing public safety and public health.

Rationale

Regional Need: As political landscapes shift on the local, state, and federal level, and funding for municipalities becomes increasingly constrained, local governments must seek efficient and effective ways to operate. Increasingly, regional cooperation can fuel innovative and efficient local operations: by combining services, pooling resources, and thinking collaboratively, municipalities can improve the quality of local services despite a more constrained financial world. More efficient and effective operations also break down barriers to business location and retention, and make communities more attractive to new working families.

Furthermore, most municipal officials now recognize that they have a critical role to play in preparing their communities for the new market realities and demographic changes of the 21st century. As enlightened municipal officials embrace the development of a diversified tax base and vibrant mix of uses, they realize that cooperation with neighbors is essential to success. Attracting jobs, meeting housing demands, and preserving environmental resources require a collaborative approach to planning, permitting, and marketing — no community is an island.

Relationship to MetroFuture: Throughout MetroFuture, a vision emerges of progressive and well-managed municipalities that demonstrate their effectiveness, efficiency, and collaboration. These attributes are reflected not only in the *MetroFuture* goals, but also in many of the implementation strategies focused on improved municipal management. Some of these recommendations require only local action, while others require changes in state policy. While much progress has been made on both fronts since the adoption of *MetroFuture*, a lot of important work remains.

We also believe that improved collaboration, efficiency, and effectiveness on the local level are critical to advancing other MetroFuture goals. MAPC does most of our work on a municipal level, and municipalities will necessarily drive much of the change in the region over the coming years, so MetroFuture's success depends on the financial viability of cities and towns and their capacity to effect change.

MAPC's Unique Capacity to Respond: MAPC already has a significant track record in helping municipalities to collaborate, share services, and become more effective and efficient. We convene mayors, managers, and other local officials on a regular basis to confront joint problems together. We are recognized advocates for municipal reform, especially after the passage of municipal health insurance reform, in which MAPC played a key role. We have worked with dozens of municipalities on projects such as merging emergency dispatch departments, consolidating public health services, and developing an award-winning regional housing office. MAPC's Procurement Division has helped cities and towns to save millions of dollars and hundreds of hours by creating joint specifications and purchasing goods and services together. Finally, our public safety work brings together multiple professional disciplines to create a safer region.

Priority C: Play a leading role in helping the region to achieve greater equity.

In December, 2011, MAPC released "The State of Equity in Metro Boston," providing compelling detail on inequality across many dimensions, including several that relate directly to the built and natural environment, such as housing, transportation, public health, and contaminated environments. In response to these findings, the Executive Committee recently adopted "The State of Equity in Metro Boston Policy Agenda," a detailed list of policies to advance equity throughout the region. This agenda recognizes that, although MAPC can contribute to advancing equity, we certainly cannot do it all on our own. It is critical that we continue to build and sustain relationships with organizations that work directly to increase the self-sufficiency of vulnerable populations. We also have a unique opportunity to help these organizations and populations to participate directly in municipal and state planning processes.

Over the next five years, MAPC will weave efforts to address equity into our projects regarding the built and natural environments, and into our advocacy for statutory, regulatory, and fiscal reform. Examples of such efforts include:

- encouraging the development and preservation of housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income families, serves the needs of people with disabilities, and advances the goals of fair housing throughout the region;
- working to make changes in the built environment, and related public policies, to improve health outcomes among lower-income households, racial and ethnic minorities, and other vulnerable populations;
- pursuing development that enables low and moderate-income residents to enjoy the benefits of improved transit and revitalized communities, while minimizing displacement;
- expanding transit, walking, and biking options for low-income and working class populations; and
- working with allied organizations and elected officials to achieve the objectives of The State of Equity Policy Agenda.

Rationale

Regional Need: In order for the Metropolitan Boston region to thrive, each of its residents must be provided the necessary opportunities and resources to contribute to the growth and well-being of the region. In fact, scholars are finding that regions that are more equitable and integrated are better able to sustain economic growth than regions that are less equitable and more segregated.[3]

Currently, lower-income communities, immigrants, and other vulnerable populations continue to subsist in Metro Boston. These populations face constrained opportunities for advancement, and are often threatened by displacement and segregation. Deep inequalities exist throughout the region, and many gaps are only growing wider. Often, these inequities are directly or indirectly related to the built environment (e.g., the asthma impacts of second-hand smoke in multi-family buildings); disruptions in the natural environment (e.g., living near contaminated brownfields); or a lack of economic services (e.g., "food deserts"). Several stakeholders identified equity and social justice as key priority areas for MAPC to address over the coming five years, signifying both a regional awareness and a desire to address the issue.

Relationship to MetroFuture: Throughout MetroFuture, many goals seek to address the deep and persistent inequities across the region. These goals are wide-ranging, envisioning a region where

[3] Benner, C. and Pastor, M., "Brother, Can You Spare Some Time? Sustaining Prosperity and Social Inclusion in America's Metropolitan Regions," *Urban Studies*, 0042098014549127, 2014.

disparities in income, educational attainment, health, and employment will decline as greater opportunities open up to a wider range of residents. MAPC will work over the coming five years to help the region to make strides in reducing these disparities, consistent not only with *MetroFuture*, but also with the State of Equity Policy Agenda.

MAPC's Unique Capacity to Respond: Most of MAPC's work revolves around the natural and built environment. "The State of Equity in Metro Boston" demonstrated that many elements of inequality in our region stem from this environment, including contamination of urban neighborhoods, lack of affordable housing, long commute times on public transit, and less-than-adequate school facilities. Our regional equity indicators provide a frame for monitoring the state of equity. MAPC can disseminate this data to partners in the public and private sectors, helping to bring equity issues to the forefront and encourage regional action. MAPC also has provided active support on a number of critical social issues, especially when those issues have an indirect (but important) impact on our goal of creating stronger urban neighborhoods. These issues include anti-drug and gang programs, evacuation planning, school enrollment and assignment analysis, and the minimum wage and sick time campaigns.

In all of these areas, MAPC can contribute to the conversation about equity — as well the design and enactment of policies to redress inequity — through our strong capacity for partnership, facilitation, data analysis, and advocacy. We can bring together diverse stakeholders with a range of views, and we can serve as a catalyst for positive change by encouraging municipalities, businesses, institutions, non-profits, and community-based organizations to focus on equity issues.

Priority D: Help the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the physical, environmental, and social impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. MAPC will continue to help municipalities to reduce their carbon footprint, to increase energy efficiency, to install renewable energy infrastructure, and to help their residents and businesses to do the same.

Later this fall, MAPC will release our Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (RCCAS), based on solid data and research. This plan will guide our work, including working with municipalities to implement best practices to prepare for and respond to climate-related hazards; helping all levels of government to make our infrastructure more resilient; and confronting the impacts of climate change and natural disasters on vulnerable populations. Over the next six months, MAPC will develop specific action steps to carry out these strategies.

Going forward, MAPC will also redouble our efforts to advocate for public policies and spending on the state and federal level to help Metro Boston to address climate change and natural hazards.

Rationale

Regional Need: While MAPC has long worked to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through its energy and smart growth programs, the addition of climate change adaptation represents a more recent focus for the agency. While the effects of climate change sometimes seem to appear slowly over time, they may also make disastrous storms more frequent and severe. Super Storm Sandy's effect on the New York-New Jersey region provides just one example, and it is likely the devastation of this storm was exacerbated by impacts of climate change such as sea level rise. The Metropolitan Boston region, with its many seaside communities, is no less at risk. Furthermore, the effects of climate change extend well beyond the coast, as evidenced by river flooding, extended periods of drought, heat islands in the inner city, and the expanding range of parasites and pathogens. Some populations, such small children, hospital and nursing patients, seniors living alone, and people with mental and physical disabilities will have specialized evacuation and care needs in the event of climate-related disasters.

Overall, therefore, critical that the region not only continue to reduce its contribution to greenhouse gas levels, but also begin planning ways to adapt to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. Stakeholders consistently identified climate change both as a trend that will impact MAPC's work and a necessary priority area for the agency over the coming years.

Relationship to MetroFuture: Mitigating the effects of climate change is represented in several *MetroFuture* goals, including Goal #56, which directly calls upon the region to "be a national leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions," and others that relate to reductions in overall energy use and an increase in renewable energy sources. Adaptation is less well represented in the MetroFuture goals, in part because that issue has become more visible since MAPC adopted its regional plan in

2008. The RCCAS, in fact, includes recommendations to add climate-related implementation strategies to the plan. By prioritizing climate change — *both mitigation and adaptation* — over the coming five years, MAPC has a chance to refresh MetroFuture, updating the long-range plan to reflect new realities and opportunities, and to expand our practice and technical assistance accordingly.

MAPC's Unique Capacity to Respond: Though some elements of this priority are a newer area of emphasis for MAPC, the agency is uniquely well-suited to undertake this critical work. After all, the impacts of climate change are not felt purely on the local level; rather, they transcend municipal boundaries, affecting several communities at a time as watersheds are taxed, sea levels rise, and disasters strike. MAPC can respond to climate change on this regional level, linking the work of individual municipalities and state agencies to create a seamless, regional approach. Also, since most smaller municipalities have little or no staff focused on energy, disaster preparedness, or climate change, MAPC can serve as a key partner as individual towns seek to prepare for the future. Furthermore, MAPC has existing staff knowledge and capacity to address climate change on different fronts, be it creating clean energy solutions to lower a city's carbon footprint or examining the impacts of climate change on public health. We have developed working relationships with public safety staff and first responders, which can contribute to our ability to help the region to prepare for and respond to climate-induced disasters. MAPC's data and research skills will be invaluable for monitoring and tracking the effects of climate change on the region, and the agency can arm a wide variety of allies with information that will be critical for responding to this pressing and high-visibility issue. On the policy front, MAPC already serves on several state and federal boards and commissions related to climate change, and we have been actively engaged with the issue in the Legislature and with executive departments.

VI. GUIDING APPROACHES TO MAPC'S WORK

MAPC's mission is to pursue smart growth and regional collaboration, as exemplified both in *MetroFuture* and in our strategic priorities as articulated above. As we seek to accomplish these priorities and the various goals and objectives of *MetroFuture*, we are always cognizant of the fact that most regional objectives are accomplished through local action — one village, one town, one neighborhood, or one city at a time. That is why most of MAPC's work focuses on technical assistance and other forms of support to local governments and other community stakeholders. Our planning work includes an emphasis on actionable items — immediate, short-term, and long-term - that improve the region and its communities. We also pursue regional change through public policy advocacy, data analysis, civic engagement, group purchasing, researching and adapting best practices, and developing tool kits and model bylaws.

As the SPC worked to develop priority areas for MAPC to focus on in the coming five years, the committee also identified core approaches through which MAPC can actually accomplish these priorities, i.e., key ways for MAPC to conduct our work. These nine approaches, detailed below, represent key core or emerging strengths of the agency and will help guide how MAPC carries out our priorities, selects and completes projects, and operates as a whole.

Interdisciplinary Practice

The challenges we face in Greater Boston increasingly cross topical lines. It is often true that a transportation project will have housing implications, a housing development will affect water supply, and an environmental regulation will influence economic development. However, most municipal and state agencies are still organized into topical silos. Fortunately, MAPC's staff represents a variety of professional disciplines and practice areas, and we try to capitalize on this diversity by responding to complex realities in a holistic manner. The best solutions to the region's challenges are nuanced and integrated. To that end, whenever possible, MAPC responds to project ideas by recommending an interdisciplinary approach, and we seek to identify projects and other opportunities that encourage and benefit from work that crosses topical boundaries. Usually, that involves the assignment of staff from multiple disciplines, and often it involves engaging allies, outside experts, residents and stakeholders with expertise in varying subjects.

Regional Perspective and Impact

MAPC members and staff strive to serve as thoughtful stewards of the region, providing leadership and creative thinking across municipal boundaries. MAPC selects new planning projects that have regional significance by prioritizing efforts that involve multiple cities and towns, have relevance beyond a single municipality, and/or create a model for other municipalities in the region.

Data & Research

MAPC believes that complex decision-making processes benefit from accurate data, rigorous analysis, and quantitative tools that help stakeholders compare the choices that lay before them. We seek to infuse every project with credible information that serves to inform participants, challenge assumptions, and illuminate the trade-offs inherent in almost every public policy decision. We strive to stay abreast of state-of-the-art tools and technology, while working to ensure that our data products are accessible, understandable, and useful to our constituents. We value our role as a trusted data provider and data intermediary in the region. We place special emphasis on disseminating accessible information, which can help to empower diverse communities throughout Metro Boston.

Convening

MAPC facilitates discussion throughout the region, bringing stakeholders together to learn from their peers and experts, to meet shared challenges, and to leverage new opportunities. MAPC creates venues through which diverse groups of local and regional thinkers and actors can come together to connect, to collaborate, and to resolve differences. The agency continues to seek new ways to bring together state and municipal leaders, residents, and experts from the planning world and beyond.

Partnerships

MAPC has formed diverse and meaningful partnerships across the region with private, non-profit, public, and institutional stakeholders. More importantly, we encourage these stakeholders to partner with each other. The agency facilitates partnerships among municipalities, and partnerships between municipalities and other stakeholders, based on our goal of helping people to view commonly-experienced local issues through a shared regional perspective. Our hope is that linkages forged around a single issue might help partners to address future challenges together.

Civic Engagement

MAPC is committed to connecting with, involving, educating, and training community residents, giving them a greater role in the decisions that shape their lives. Civic engagement is at the core of the agency's mission, and MAPC seeks to organize our work to enable the region's residents, including those not traditionally engaged in public processes, to participate in projects and to contribute to the growth and strength of the region at large.

Innovation and Creativity

MAPC seeks projects that use new methods, evidence-based strategies, and cutting-edge thinking. As the region changes, so too must the agency modify our approaches to working in the region. MAPC actively pursues opportunities for staying ahead of the curve and integrating innovative

strategies that improve the quality of local and regional planning, collaborative approaches to problem-solving, and project and policy implementation.

Advocacy

MAPC is a trusted source of information and analysis for state and local officials and policymakers. Our public policy advocacy focuses on issues of regional or statewide importance that promote smart growth and regional collaboration. Successful implementation of *MetroFuture* requires advocacy to change laws, regulations, policies, distribution of resources, and other public decisions that will advance the agency's mission. In conducting this work, we seek to bridge gaps between municipalities and other stakeholders, and to serve as a strong voice for people who live and work in Metro Boston.

Achieving Results

MAPC is a planning agency that is committed to achieving results on the ground. By identifying projects in which MAPC can be involved from planning to implementation, and conducting our planning work in a manner that sets the stage for on the ground change, MAPC maximizes our impact in the region. Enacting plans can be a challenge given home rule powers and local political contexts, but MAPC can be a key partner to help shepherd projects to completion. The agency believes that cities and towns are the building blocks of our region and that smart local decisions and actions will provide a pathway to the region envisioned in MetroFuture.

VII. ARTICULATING OBJECTIVES AND MEASURING PROGRESS

This strategic plan reflects the vision and the collective thinking of MAPC's Strategic Planning Committee, as well as our partners on the staff, Executive Committee and Council. Along with MetroFuture, this plan provides a roadmap to guide decision making and the communication of our priorities over the next five years. As we move forward with the implementation of this plan, it will be important to ensure that mechanisms are in place to evaluate MAPC's progress in each of the four strategic priorities.

By December 15, 2014, MAPC will develop more details about how we will implement each of the four strategic priorities, specific objectives we will pursue, and indicators to measure progress over time. To assist in this endeavor, the Executive Director will appoint four small committees — one for each of the strategic priorities. The committees will be inter-departmental, to make sure that varying perspectives are at the table.

In pursuing their work, the committees will consider the goals, objectives, and indicators already included in the *MetroFuture* plan and the Regional Indicator Reports we have completed to date (see more below regarding Regional Indicator Reports). For example, in the case of equity (Strategic Priority C), MetroFuture is already replete will goals and objectives to achieve a more equitable region, and "The State of Equity in Metro Boston" added a very specific set of indicators to measure progress over time.

However, most of these objectives and indicators measure progress *in the region, not at MAPC*. So, it will be necessary for each committee to develop specific objectives and indicators that relate to tasks actually undertaken by MAPC in our attempt to advance each strategic priority. For example, in regard to climate change (Strategic Priority D), a *regional* objective might be to expand the overall portfolio of renewable energy facilities in Metro Boston between now and 2030, but *MAPC's* objective in this strategic plan might be to install solar energy systems on 20 municipal buildings and 10 landfills over the course of the next 5 years. Each objective will be measured by a different set of indicators.

In January 2015, we will begin to craft our FY 2016 budget, along with our annual work plan. Every department and division will be asked to consider how they can assist the agency in accomplishing the four strategic priorities, in accordance with the specific objectives developed through the process described above. We view the budget and work plan not only as exercises for fiscal management, but also as a way of laying out a clear plan for priority activities over the coming year. FY2016 will be the first full fiscal year under the new strategic plan, so it will be especially important to make sure that the annual work plan is not simply a slightly revised extension of the prior year's plan, but rather a new document focused explicitly on accomplishing our strategic priorities.

As background to this effort to measure progress over time, it is useful to note that MAPC already uses several tools to measure progress toward achieving MetroFuture goals. First, MAPC publishes a project inventory twice per year that links MAPC's projects to MetroFuture goals and analyzes the geographic and topical distribution of these projects. In addition, we have recently used an equity filter to understand the impact of our projects on equity in the region. We intend to use these processes going forward to catalogue our projects into our strategic priority categories and hold ourselves accountable for the commitments we are making.

In addition, MAPC has launched a series of Regional Indicators Reports which are linked to MetroFuture goals, establishing a baseline for the region's performance in meeting these goals. Indicators reports are completed in the general topics areas of equity and prosperity, and two others are currently underway covering sustainable growth patterns and transportation. These reports can help MAPC and the region at large to measure progress (or lack of progress) based on a series of measurements that can be repeated over time. As such, they will be helpful not only in measuring the achievement of MetroFuture goals, but also in charting the agency's progress in achieving our strategic priorities.

Finally, MAPC has also recently conducted an internal evaluation of projects undertaken during the course of the Sustainable Communities program. MAPC undertook a post-project review that addressed project management, project outcomes, potential follow-on work, and lessons learned that might improve the quality of MAPC's work. The process of using internal and external on-line evaluation surveys followed by discussions with clients and stakeholders demonstrates MAPC's commitment to measuring our impact as well as learning from past undertakings, and provides a platform from which to analyze our progress in advancing our strategic priorities.

The experience gained through all of these efforts will help MAPC to design objectives and indicators for each strategic priority, and to measure progress over time — not only in regard to the specific activities MAPC will undertake to implement each priority, but also in regard to overall progress of the region toward achieving MetroFuture goals. These efforts will also allow us to learn from our experiences and to refine our practices over time.

IX. APPENDIX

Strategic Priorities and MetroFuture Goals

In the rationale that accompanies each Strategic Priority (Section V), we explain in broad strokes how the priority is related to the MetroFuture regional plan. The purpose of this appendix is to describe this connection with greater specificity.

MetroFuture, which was adopted in 2008, established a transformative yet achievable vision for what the residents of Metro Boston wanted their region to look like in 2030. That vision is defined by 65 specific goals across 6 broad, cross-cutting topic areas: Sustainable Growth Patterns, Housing Choices, Community Vitality, Prosperity, Getting Around, and Energy, Air, Water, and Wildlife. For each of the Strategic Priorities, we have selected from among the 65 goals those which we feel the priority could advance significantly. In some cases, the link is obvious. For example, if we promote regional collaboration, communities will work together to plan for growth and share resources. In other cases, the link is less direct. For example, concentrating smart growth development in areas already served by infrastructure will encourage the average person to drive fewer miles every day, although this effect will take place only gradually.

The list of goals is quite large for Priorities A and C, but much shorter for B and D. This is because, in some topic areas, the MetroFuture goals are few and broad, whereas in other areas the goals are more numerous and specific. In some cases, such as municipal collaboration, although the number of goals may be short, there are many specific steps listed in the Implementation Strategies, which is a separate section of the MetroFuture plan. The length of the list of goals bears not relationship to the importance of the priority, or to the amount of time and effort MAPC will devote to its implementation.

MetroFuture goals related to each Strategic Priority:

Priority A: Encourage development and preservation consistent with smart growth principles

- An increasing share of housing in each municipality will be affordable to working families and fixed income seniors.
- Low-income households will be able to find affordable, adequate, conveniently located housing, in suburbs as well as cities, and they will be able to avoid displacement.
- Urban neighborhoods will boast more appealing housing options for young professionals and their families.
- More people will use transit for work and personal service.
- Most people will choose to walk or bike for short trips.

- Commuters will have more options to avoid congestion.
- The average person will drive fewer miles every day.
- Population and job growth will be concentrated in municipalities already well served by infrastructure, with slower growth in less developed areas where infrastructure is more limited.
- Most new houses and jobs will be near train stops and bus routes, and new growth will be designed to promote transit use.
- Regional transportation planning will be linked with sustainable land use planning.
- Growth in the region will be guided by informed, inclusive, and proactive planning.

Priority B: Partner with our cities and towns to promote regional collaboration, enhance effectiveness, and increase efficiency

- Communities will work together to plan for growth and share resources.
- Municipalities will operate efficiently and will have adequate funding with less reliance on the property tax

Priority C: Play a leading role in helping the region to achieve greater equity

- The region's residents – including youth, seniors, and immigrants – will be well-informed and engaged in civic life and community planning.
- More minority and immigrant workers have the opportunities to advance on the career ladder, acquire assets, and build wealth.
- More workers will participate in the labor force, earning a living wage through secure employment.
- Fewer of the region's residents will live in poverty.
- Children and youth will have access to a strong system of early education programs, after-school programs, teen centers, and youth organizations.
- Public schools will provide a high-quality education for all students, not only in the fundamentals, but also in areas like health education, physical education, art, music, civics, and science.
- More students will graduate from high school and go on to college or career training opportunities.
- All neighborhoods will have adequate access to safe and well-maintained parks, community gardens, and appropriate play spaces for children and youth.
- There will be less regional segregation as all municipalities increasingly reflect Metro Boston's growing diversity.
- Low-income households will be able to find affordable, adequate, conveniently located housing, in suburbs as well as cities, and they will be able to avoid displacement.
- Homelessness will be effectively eliminated from the region.
- Urban and minority residents will not be disproportionately exposed to pollutants and poor air quality.

- Residents in all communities and of all incomes will have access to affordable, healthy food.
- All communities will be safe, including areas currently afflicted by high rates of violent crime.
- People with disabilities will find it easier to get around the region.

Priority D: Help the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the physical, environmental, and social impacts of climate change and natural hazards.

- The region will be prepared for and resilient to natural disasters and climate change.
- The region will be a national leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- The region will use progressively less energy for electricity, heating, cooling, and transportation.
- The region will produce more renewable energy and will obtain more of its energy for renewable resources.

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