



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

**Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)**  
**Final Report for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Activities**  
**2015**  
**3-14-16**

During 2015, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) undertook a total of 31 projects for communities under the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. These projects fell into the broad categories of 1) Planning ahead for Housing, Economic Development and Preservation and 2) Regional Collaboration in Service Delivery and Procurement.

For the projects which either were completed or had significant progress over 2015, a project report will soon be available through the web link on the MAPC web site. For additional information on any project, please contact the staff members listed in the project reports or the appropriate department directors:

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The DLTA program is described on the MAPC web site, and includes reports of past DLTA projects: [http://www.mapc.org/DLTA\\_Reports](http://www.mapc.org/DLTA_Reports).

The total amount of funding budgeted during 2015 for DLTA expenditures (including both the state funding and the required MAPC 10% match) was \$606,680. MAPC expended a total of \$608,056 on the program in 2015, exceeding the target budget by approximately \$1,376, or .2%. In addition, MAPC used other funds (municipal funds, Unified Planning Work Program, DHCD PATH funds, etc.) to significantly extend the scopes of these projects beyond what could be funded solely by the DLTA program (these additional funds are not included in the MAPC DLTA totals below).

**LAND USE PLANNING ACTIVITIES**

**M1080.002 - Woburn Master Plan Supplement - \$50,038**

The City of Woburn has been working with MAPC to update its 2005 master plan with the 2015 Plan for Progress. The project also involved updating the City's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and its Open Space and Recreation Plan, both of which have been completed. Beginning with a Visioning Forum held in December, 2014 and followed by two additional public meetings focused on housing and economic development (January, 2015) and land use, transportation and hazard mitigation (March, 2015), as well as hosting a Downtown Economic Development meeting in May, the MAPC planning team presented its

draft recommendations to the City at another public meeting in September. MAPC submitted the draft Master Plan document to the city in January 2016.

**M1080.005 - Foxborough Rte 1 Corridor Analysis - \$8,960**

The goal of the Foxborough Route 1 Corridor was to determine the type of development that can be supported by the market along Route 1, to identify where there are key development opportunities and to develop strategies for the Town to attract desired development throughout the corridor. The study includes a market assessment of office, retail, and residential uses. It also includes a build out analysis to give the Town a sense of what kind of development could occur along the corridor within the current zoning ordinance and existing environmental constraints. MAPC staff conducted an overall assessment of development opportunities and constraints as well as a review of national development practices near major NFL football stadiums. The project involved two public meetings (one of which was hosted through the concurrent Master Plan process) and one final presentation to the Town Administrator, Planning Board, and Board of Selectmen. MAPC staff also collected feedback from stakeholders along the corridor throughout the project through one-on-one interviews. Recommendations were drafted based on the results of the analysis and feedback from Route 1 stakeholders. This project also received significant financial support from the South Coast Rail Technical Assistance program.

**M1080.007 - Braintree TOD Study - \$17,455**

The purpose of the Braintree Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Study is to develop a vision for the corridor in the vicinity of the Braintree MBTA Red Line station. The area is viewed by the Town of Braintree as having much potential, but there is no consensus for what could be developed. The project involves extensive community outreach; developing land use scenarios, including multi-family housing and mixed use; and analyzing the impacts of these uses. These analyses will inform the vision and the zoning recommendations to achieve the vision. DLTA funds supplement federal Unified Planning Work Program funds, and funding from property owners and the Town of Braintree. To date, a public forum and three steering committee meetings have been held. Existing conditions have been reviewed and a transportation assessment completed, Scenario modeling will be underway shortly, with the final products expected in late spring, 2016.

**M1080.015 - Boston - Fairmount - Indigo Line - \$7,802**

MAPC continued working with the Boston Redevelopment Authority on the visioning and planning of three new station areas as a part of the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative. MAPC provided overall regional planning expertise with particular emphasis on facilitation and public outreach for the Four Corners/Geneva Station Area. During the past year MAPC provided assistance with monthly community meetings and the culminating Open House outdoor meeting in September.

The Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative was a three-year BRA study begun in February 2012 by the City of Boston. The planning initiative looked at short and long term strategies for

improving capital investment, public realm improvements and job access along the 9.2 mile Fairmount Indigo commuter rail line, which links South Station to Readville, crossing through Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park. The initiative is the BRA's largest planning study to date and will impact 132,000 residents who live within a half-mile of the commuter rail line. The study identified corridor wide opportunities for commercial and residential development, transit access, public realm enhancements, and community building initiatives. This study will lay the groundwork for new opportunities to improve resident quality of life.

**M1080.016 - Chelsea Silver Line Study - \$50,274**

The City of Chelsea has been working with MAPC to develop a Chelsea Silver Line Corridor TOD (Transit Oriented Development) Action Plan, which is examining policies and strategies for facilitating equitable transit-oriented development in the neighborhoods surrounding the forthcoming Chelsea Silver Line bus route and shared-use path. The Action Plan builds on several components of work, including a residential and retail market analysis, a managing neighborhood change analysis, and a health impact assessment. The city and MAPC convened a TOD Advisory Group to oversee the planning process, which has met four times over the course of the project. The City and the MAPC project team have worked together to hold two community-wide public forums and a series of focus groups that have engaged over 100 residents to date. MAPC is presently working with City staff to finalize a draft of the Action Plan and anticipates releasing the final draft for public comment in early 2016. The City and MAPC will also commence work on recommended zoning changes identified in the Action Plan using Planning Ahead Towards Housing (PATH) resources from the Commonwealth.

**M1080.017 - Reading EDA & Housing Visualizations - \$19,197**

The Town of Reading has been working with MAPC to develop a Reading Strategic Economic Development Action Plan, which articulates an economic development vision for the Town of Reading and a seven-year action plan for advancing economic development in four priority redevelopment areas (PDAs) in Reading. The Action Plan builds on several components of work, including a residential and retail market analysis, scenarios modeling of redevelopment potential, and conceptual urban design work of redevelopment potential. The Plan also builds upon work performed through the North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Priority Mapping Project report, which was completed in January 2014 and identified locally and regionally significant PDAs in the NSPC subregion. The Town and the MAPC project team worked together to hold three town-wide public forums that engaged over 100 residents. MAPC is integrating feedback from the public comment period and from town staff and will release the final Action Plan report in January 2016. In addition to DLTA, this project was made possible with funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development Priority Development Fund and FY15 and FY16 resources from the Town of Reading.

**M1080.018 - WestMetro Home Consortium - \$12,166**

In the first two quarters of 2015, MAPC was awarded a contract from the West Metro HOME Consortium via the City of Newton to create a five-year Regional Fair Housing Plan (RFHP) for thirteen municipalities. The award was augmented by DLTA funds. The RFHP identified impediments to fair housing in each municipality and across the region, provided fair housing data and information about rules and regulations related to fair housing, and created goals and strategies with an action plan for each member municipality and the region to affirmatively further fair housing. Recommendations ranged from increasing public awareness and education around fair housing choice to providing trainings to the private sector, a key stakeholder in the process of advancing fair housing choice. Many recommendations focused on strengthening each member community and the region to adopt local and regional policies, including ADA Transition plans, Language Assistance Plans, and amending zoning laws to encourage affordable housing development. The plan went through a 30-day review period, was reviewed and adopted by the City of Newton Board of Alderman land use committee in May, and approved by HUD in July. The plan was viewed as a model RFHP for other consortia and HUD program participants throughout the U.S. who will need to comply the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Final Rule.

**M1080.019 - MAGIC: Food System Project enhancement - \$40,151**

MAPC led a team engaged by the Massachusetts Food Policy Council (FPC) to draft a food system plan, providing “a general framework for goals and objectives that will improve Massachusetts’ agricultural economy, enhance the resiliency of the Commonwealth’s food system, and improve the nutritional health of the State’s population.” Through more than 100 meetings – from public forums with 100+ attendees, to individual interviews with key stakeholders – the planning process engaged more than 1,500 people involved in the State’s food system. Consumers, farmers, policymakers, advocates, fishermen, processors, and others all contributed to the planning process. The result was a set of actions that focus on how to support the people, government agencies, organizations, businesses, institutions, and activities that make up Massachusetts’ food system, with an eye toward making that system more resilient, more responsive to the needs of all residents of the Commonwealth, and better able to engage with the broader systems that shape what the State’s residents consume. The Plan was accepted by the FPC on December 10, and the legislature, state agencies, and private food system stakeholders are already taking steps to implement many of the action items. The Plan is available for review at [www.mafoodplan.org](http://www.mafoodplan.org). The DLTA augment to the funding available for the Food Plan was requested by the MAGIC subregion as a follow up to the MAGIC Agricultural Project previously funded under the Sustainable Communities federal grant received by MAPC.

**M1080.021 - Saugus Sustainable Development Zoning Mapping - \$5,452**

2015 DLTA funds were used to develop parcel maps for the entire U.S. Route 1 corridor in Saugus, some 300 individual parcels. The parcel maps were necessary in order to rezone the corridor for redevelopment, including allowing a mix of uses and multi-family housing.

This project continued the work initiated with 2014 DLTA funds for community outreach and analysis to develop a vision for the area. MAPC worked with the town to update parcel information and create the maps so that the boundaries for the proposed zoning district could be determined. On May 4, 2015, the Saugus Town Meeting voted to create the Business Highway Sustainable Development Zoning District, providing opportunities for smarter growth along this corridor.

**M1080.023 - Marlborough Southwest Quadrant Analysis - \$4,529**

MAPC undertook a zoning analysis of the Southwestern quadrant of the city, an area predominantly zoned for Industrial, Light Industrial and Business uses. The MAPC analysis indicated that the goal of developing significant additional growth in the Southwest Quadrant appears to be more than achievable without any changes to current zoning. MAPC provided a series of recommendations designed to meet the city's goals while encouraging smarter growth and protecting environmental quality. Recommendations include a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program to shift density to preserve habitats and to make development more efficient and appropriately located, removal of disincentives for large tract development, allowing for mixed use development including housing and retail in specific locations within the Southwest Quadrant, utilizing Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning as an option, use of parking garages to lower development footprints, and removal of disincentives for redevelopment of existing developed properties.

**M1080.024 - Framingham Southeast Neighborhood - \$39,318**

MAPC is providing DLTA technical assistance to the Town of Framingham for a short-term neighborhood action plan to improve existing residential/business/environmental conditions for an Environmental Justice neighborhood. The plan also aims to attract more affordable and market rate housing, businesses and services, once investment and regulatory actions have been taken to improve conditions. MAPC has conducted extensive community outreach with various stakeholders, and held two well-received community workshops with interpretation services. The first workshop included a visual preference poll with mapping and discussion exercises. MAPC also conducted a physical buildout scenario with additional visual preference polling at the last community workshop. Two summary memos of the workshops findings have been drafted and submitted to the Town. MAPC is presently drafting the action plan report, and will be meeting with the Town staff to discuss the format and content of the last public meeting. The last meeting will present the final draft of the plan for public discussion. MAPC anticipates conducting the meeting in late spring 2016.

**M1080.026 - North Reading 2020 Route 28 Economic Development Strategic Plan  
\$18,007**

MAPC is providing DLTA technical assistance to the Town of North Reading for a short-term economic development strategic plan. The study area is a commercial corridor along Route 28 (Main Street) and the purpose is to promote economic development for a cluster of underutilized parcels. To date, MAPC staff has conducted a retail/housing/office market analysis for the study area to help inform the demand for such land uses town-wide as well

as specifically within the smaller study area. MAPC met with the Advisory Committee of stakeholders and presented the findings of the market analysis as well as discussed the infrastructure constraints and environmental features that will affect how much of the market demand the Town can reasonably attract to the study area. MAPC also conducted a physical buildout analysis to assess existing land use and dimensional regulations, and to develop recommended zoning amendments and Town infrastructure investments. MAPC hosted a community workshop in early 2016 to present the market and buildout analyses, and ask participants to discuss what decisions and actions need to happen to attract investment. MAPC anticipates a final public meeting and report completion in late spring 2016.

**M1080.027 - Ashland Comprehensive Plan support - \$23,400**

MAPC worked with the Town of Ashland to continue work on their Comprehensive Plan. This phase focused on revamping the comprehensive plan committee, working more closely with town planning staff and department heads, and revising the scope of work to reflect three products: a Land Use Element, Housing Production Plan, and Community Vision and Goals. The Community Vision and Goals are completed. The Land Use Element is in progress. The Housing Production Plan (HPP) was completed and adopted by the town in December. The HPP is being submitted to DHCD for approval in January 2016.

**M1080.028 - Bellingham HPP & NECC Area Study support - \$6,682**

The Town of Bellingham contracted with MAPC to update its Housing Production Plan (HPP) and to analyze potential future land use alternatives for the New England Country Club (NECC) site. DLTA funds supplemented the MA DHCD Priority Development Fund grant the Town received. The Housing Production Plan was updated, and MA DHCD approved the Update effective September 22, 2015. The 323 acre NECC property includes an 18-hole golf course and surrounding open space. The owners approached the Town because they wished to develop the site, and the Town was interested in exploring whether the golf course might be retained while also providing housing opportunities. MAPC performed a build-out analysis to understand the number of units that might be built using four scenarios utilizing the existing zoning regulations. The project also included an environment evaluation, aided by a series of maps that included soils, wetlands, endangered species, and other environmental resources. The final recommendations were informed by the work underway to update the Housing Production Plan, in particular the needs assessment. This assessment verified that additional housing in Bellingham was necessary, particularly smaller units to accommodate smaller households/seniors looking to downsize and more diverse styles of housing, including more multifamily and rental housing. MAPC attended a site visit and two working group meetings. The project was presented at a public meeting of the Board of Selectmen on June 1, 2015, at which time the BOS voted to establish a study committee to further pursue MAPC's recommendations, including creating a new zone that would allow a variety of housing types.

**M1080.029 - Littleton Open Space and Recreation Plan assistance - \$5,221**

MAPC is assisting the Town of Littleton complete its Open Space and Recreation Plan update. MAPC completed the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Handicapped Accessibility Self-Evaluations for Littleton's conservation and recreation resources, and drafted the required series of maps. One public forum has been held, with a second to be scheduled in early 2016 to review the Goals and Objectives element and the Seven Year Action Plan map. The Town of Littleton is also contributing funding to this project.

**M1080.030 - Stoughton Business Guide - \$5,865**

The Town of Stoughton requested MAPC's assistance, using DLTA funds, to develop a Business Guide. The purposes of the Guide are to provide detailed descriptions of the requirements and processes to start and operate a business in the Town of Stoughton and to serve as a marketing tool to encourage businesses to locate/expand in the Town. MAPC has attended two meetings with Town officials, prepared maps and updated census information, as well as provided samples of permitting flowcharts and timelines. It is anticipated that the Business Guide will be completed in early 2016.

**M1080.031 - Boxborough Master Plan - \$8,488**

MAPC used a combination of Town funding, DLTA, and PMTA to complete Boxborough2030, the Master Plan for the Town of Boxborough. The DLTA and PMTA supplements helped MAPC to hold additional meetings with the Master Plan Update Committee at the request of the Town. Between October 2014 and January 2016, the Master Plan Update Committee met thirteen times. A public project kickoff and visioning forum was held in November 2014 at Boxborough Town Hall and was attended by approximately 100 participants. Following this public forum, in December 2015, the town adopted a vision statement for Boxborough as a "rural, engaged community for all." MAPC used this vision, feedback collected through community surveys and interviews with local businesses, and other input from the public to guide research on various plan topics and to identify community aspirations, goals, strategies, and actions. *Boxborough2030* was featured at a booth at the Town's annual Fifer's Day Festival in June 2016, when activities related to the plan received over 150 responses. The entire Master Plan is available as a website at <http://www.boxborough-ma.gov/boxborough2030>. Two documents are available for download and in print: a magazine-style summary of the plan and the plan's recommendations. The plan was approved by the Boxborough Board of Selectmen and Planning Board in early 2016.

**M1080.032 Arlington Housing Production Plan assistance - \$3,727**

MAPC and JM Goldson were awarded a contract to complete the Town of Arlington's HPP in October 2015. MAPC augmented this award with DLTA funding.

MAPC completed a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment and an Analysis of Development Constraints, held three brainstorming sessions with an advisory committee formed by the Town to assist with plan development, and facilitated a focus group interview session with realtors, brokers, and builders to discuss the local real estate market. MAPC

and JM Goldson have been working on developing materials and designing the public forums for the plan, which will continue into 2016.

**M1080.033 Wellesley Route 9 Enhancement Study and Plan - Phase 1 - \$5,765**

The overall goal of the Route 9 Enhancement Study and Plan is to analyze existing conditions along the Route 9 corridor in Wellesley from the Natick Town Line to the Newton Town Line and make recommendations for improvements in advance of a pending MassDOT roadway resurfacing project. Comprised of two phases, the Route 9 Enhancement Study and Plan is a partnership with MAPC, the MetroWest Regional Collaborative, and the Town of Wellesley.

Phase 1, the inventory and assessment phase, included two Stakeholder Group meetings, a Public Forum held in November 2015, and two reports - *Inventory and Assessment of Existing Conditions* and *Identification of Issues and Opportunities*. A wide range of sources including recently completed studies prepared for the Town of Wellesley, fieldwork, Stakeholder feedback, the Public Forum, and an on-line survey informed both reports. Based on the work conducted as part of Phase 1, during 2016 Phase 2 will identify the Town's goals and recommendations for the roadway, address issues, and capitalize on opportunities.

**M1080.001 Land Use Project Supervision and Overall DLTA project Management, Reporting and Supervision - \$47,065**

Funds in this project code were used to prepare project solicitation letters, review municipal project proposals, meet with staff and Executive Director to discuss projects, reply to all project solicitations, manage budgets, complete reports to DHCD, and most significantly, to supervise all Land Use related DLTA projects.



## **MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND COLLABORATION ACTIVITIES**

### **M1080.003 - Cambridge Emergency Preparedness - \$24,407**

MAPC and the City of Cambridge Community Development Department (CDD) partnered in February 2015 to develop post-emergency business continuity and emergency preparedness strategies for small businesses in Cambridge. Through this work, MAPC and the Cambridge CDD held a series of 5 workshops for small business owners outlining the steps they can take to prepare their business for an emergency and recover quickly after one occurs. These workshops also served to launch the Cambridge CDD Business Emergency Preparedness Website to the public - [camb.ma/bizeprep](http://camb.ma/bizeprep). This site is a resource for businesses that showcases MAPC's best practice research on small business emergency preparedness efforts nationwide. These resources will help businesses prepare for emergencies and make recovery plans to enable them to survive with minimal loss and/or disruption of productivity following an event.

As a key next step to help facilitate preparedness planning in the Cambridge business community, MAPC recommended that the City establish an economic recovery team. The Cambridge Economic Recovery Team's goal would be to prepare and assist businesses in the City of Cambridge to survive disruption, whether through a small localized incident or large scale emergency. The team would work to ensure that the critical services local business offer community members are available soon after an emergency.

### **M1080.004 - Reading 2020 Municipal Services - \$13,530**

The Town of Reading asked MAPC to assist with its 2020 strategic planning efforts. As part of those efforts, the Town was exploring how it could continue to provide residents with high-quality public services in the face of challenging financial circumstances by thinking creatively about how service delivery could be more efficient and less costly. MAPC worked with Town officials to develop a services inventory with all of its Department heads. The inventory examined which services offered by the Town were core (mission critical) and which were discretionary. It then collated ideas from across Town government for how services could be delivered more effectively by the Town, in partnership with private bodies, other communities, or whether certain services should be discontinued. The inventory was then presented to the Board of Selectmen by MAPC staff. Town leaders were asked to determine any further work MAPC could support as part of the 2020 initiative and they chose to have MAPC work with the Elder Services Department to survey Town residents on the needs of its aging residents. MAPC authored the survey and Town officials disseminated it. Ultimately 378 responses were given. MAPC then provided Elder Services Department leaders with an analysis of the results, which will be considered as part of the Town's budget and staff planning.

### **M1080.006 - Essex County Paramedicine - \$20,156**

In early 2015 the Essex County Fire Chiefs Association (ECFCA) approached MAPC with a request for help in examining the emerging field of Mobile Integrated Health (MIH), the

provisions of out-of-hospital health care services, and what role fire-department-based EMS may be able to take in it, with the ultimate goals of improving health outcomes in their communities and providing an additional funding source for fire-department-based EMS programs. Working with the ECFCA, MAPC conducted research on the current state of MIH in the Commonwealth and reviewed the two paramedicine MIH pilot programs in Massachusetts as well as the major MIH programs nationwide. MAPC then facilitated a number of meetings with the ECFCA to present the research and discuss how a regional fire-department-based paramedicine program could work, conducted a survey of member departments' capabilities and service load, and engaged with the Department of Public Health (DPH), which is currently considering new regulations in this emerging field. MAPC has collated this information into a final report and has recommended steps for the ECFCA to pursue while DPH finalizes the new regulations.

**M1080.011 - SWAP Collaborative for Procurement/Services - \$15,361**

MAPC was asked to work with five communities (Millis, Medfield, Sherborn, Walpole and Norfolk) to explore opportunities for shared contracting and equipment usage. Ultimately only Millis, Medfield and Sherborn actively participated in the project due to staff and Selectmen turnover. MAPC helped the communities determine a list of services areas they would be interested in jointly procuring. Through interviews with Town officials and department heads, MAPC then helped the communities decide which area they would like to jointly procure. The three communities agreed to look at Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning services as the area to prioritize for collective procurement. MAPC developed the bid document and issued the procurement, receiving two bids. Medfield ultimately decided not to participate in the bid but the other two communities are now working with the bid winner to agree a contract. MAPC also asked communities to share their vehicle lists with each other to consider areas of overlap and equipment needs. These lists were collated and presented to Town officials for their consideration.

**M1080.012 - North Suffolk Shared Health Services - \$18,492**

The Chief Executives from Revere, Chelsea and Winthrop sought MAPC's support in developing a regionalized approach to public health service provision. The Chief Executives had determined that resources individually were insufficient to fully staff and offer the type of robust public health response desired in the three communities. Collaboration was seen as the best means of enhancing their public health services. After initial meetings and activity in the Spring, MAPC worked to develop recommendations for the creation of a Collaborative that would work to improve health outcomes through shared programs and services for the residents of the three communities. The recommended model, endorsed by the Chief Executives, was to use an Inter-Municipal Agreement to formally create the North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative, which would be staffed by a public health professional reporting to a Board with representatives from each community.

**M1080.013 - Metro Mayors 911 Regional Emergency Communications Center Oversight - \$25,086**

Funds for this project were used to continue previous effort by the communities of Chelsea, Everett, Medford, Melrose, and Somerville to develop a Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC). Project activities included project management, consultant oversight, and the development of an inter-municipal agreement (IMA) by MAPC to create the RECC. Stakeholder meetings were held throughout the year and individual presentations were made to each community to explain the financial impacts of creating the RECC. During this process the cities of Chelsea and Everett decided to withdraw from the project, necessitating further refinement of the RECC's anticipated staffing levels and finances. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that after the next stakeholder meeting in Medford, the remaining communities of Medford, Melrose, and Somerville will sign the IMA to create a three city RECC in the spring of 2016.

**M1080.014 - Sherborn & SWAP & MetroWest Animal Control - \$12,543**

The Town of Sherborn and five of its neighboring communities (Framingham, Holliston, Natick, Hopkinton and Ashland) asked MAPC to explore opportunities for sharing animal control services and facilities. Working with the police Chiefs and Town managers from the six communities, MAPC first explored shared animal control models across the state and developed draft facility licensing and mutual aid agreements that could be used to formalize cross-municipal animal control support arrangements. Town managers then asked MAPC to develop options for a full six-town animal control district. MAPC analyzed staffing, equipment and budget needs across the communities and presented Town leaders with options for a district that would save money for all the communities while ensuring sufficient staff coverage. MAPC also surveyed and met with animal control staff to develop the analysis. These options were presented to the chiefs and managers and further refinements were made based on feedback received. MAPC concluded the project by surveying Town managers as to whether they wanted to agree to a district option.

**M1080.020 - Ashland-Hopkinton Fire Services continuation - \$5,625**

MAPC provided technical assistance to the Towns of Ashland and Hopkinton to bring the fire services merger to vote at the Towns' Spring Town Meetings. Assistance included project management, meeting facilitation for the fire services merger working group, development of the fire services public presentation, and coordination of the public presentations. In response to tentative feedback from the public presentations, both Towns decided to pass over voting on the merger of the two fire services at their Spring Town Meetings.

**M1080.022 - Essex Strategic Plan - \$13,211**

The Town of Essex asked MAPC for support in developing a Strategic Plan which would establish priorities for the Town's government over the next five years. Through a series of seven workshops with a committee of Town board and commission members, the Essex Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), a Plan with nine strategic goals and 35 action steps was developed and published for public comment. The nine goals agreed by the SPC were

to: renew and finance critical Town infrastructure by building a new public safety facility, replacing the Memorial School in Manchester and renovating the Essex Elementary School, replacing old water system components and maintaining the Town's ten-year-old sewer system; increase participation in Town government; maintain and develop a strong business community; increase the amount of protected land in Essex; improve the health of and access to Essex's rivers and lakes; expand the range of recreational opportunities and assets, particularly for young people; develop and deliver a fiscally responsible school budget consistent with multi-year forecasts; maintain the viability of the Town's call Fire Service; and meet the housing needs of all Essex residents. The SPC will stay constituted to oversee implementation of the Strategic Plan's action steps and track overall progress on the Plan's goals.

## **ENERGY PLANNING, EFFICIENCY AND COLLABORATION ACTIVITIES**

### **M1080.008 - Regional Solar Initiative Continuation - \$36,437**

The purpose of the Regional Solar Initiative is to facilitate the regional procurement of solar energy management services (EMS) for multiple municipal sites in the MAPC region. In 2012, MAPC issued an RFQ under M.G.L. Ch. 25A §11i for solar EMS on behalf of 17 interested communities. Broadway Electrical Company, Inc. was selected. In 2014, MAPC learned that Broadway intended to wind down its operations. The selection committee ultimately voted to move forward with the 2nd most highly qualified respondent to the original RFQ, BlueWave Capital LLC. Throughout 2015, MAPC has worked with BlueWave to facilitate multiple meetings with all interested municipalities. For all interested parties with viable sites, BlueWave has continued a rigorous evaluation of potential solar sites, design, pricing, permitting, interconnection, letters of intent, and contract terms, as prescribed in the terms and conditions of the MOU between MAPC and BlueWave. MAPC has also continued to negotiate the final pieces of a template Net Metering Credit Purchase Agreement (NMCPA) and comparable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) as well as a Letter of Intent (LOI), and to ensure that the goal of the program to support a spectrum of municipalities to implement solar projects regardless of their scale and scope is upheld. MAPC further monitors the progress of each project and the overall initiative weekly during check-in conference calls, and provides additional support to all MAPC communities through policy advocacy, technical assistance, and informational webinars. Lastly, MAPC has taken many steps to research and design the next municipal solar procurement.

### **M1080.009 - Regional Methane Leak Reduction - \$17,641**

In February 2015, the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) released data about the location, age, and severity of each leak in the natural gas distribution system that existed in the previous year. MAPC began working with municipalities to determine how to utilize the data to accelerate the rate of repair of leaks and replacement of leak-prone pipes. In spring, MAPC met with DPU to discuss concerns about the format of the data. Additionally in spring, MAPC applied for a grant from the Department of Transportation's Pipeline Safety and Hazardous Materials Administration to collect data to improve our understanding of the extent and risk of gas leaks and to identify policies that municipalities can use to accelerate repair and replacement. MAPC was awarded the grant, which will fund third-party leak surveys and research on municipal planning and coordination practices in 2016. Finally, MAPC organized a workshop to educate municipal officials and concerned citizens about the natural gas leaks issue. National Grid, State Senator Eldridge, DPW Commissioner of the City of Cambridge, and a Boston University researcher presented at the workshop, with over 50 individuals attending from across the region.

### **M1080.010 - LED Streetlight Retro-Fits - \$26,003**

In the beginning of 2015, MAPC completed a regional procurement for a turnkey LED streetlight retrofit provider ("EMS 4") for 5 municipalities, the Cities of Lowell and Malden and the Towns of Hopkinton, Millis, and Sudbury. These five municipalities have with roughly

10,000 streetlights. In the fall of 2015, MAPC launched a regional procurement for an LED streetlight retrofit designer and project manager (“Designer 03”) on behalf of six municipalities, the Cities of Everett and Leominster and the Towns of Andover, Warren, Watertown and Wayland. These six municipalities have a total of 10,000 streetlights. The City of Boston joined this procurement after it had been issued, which added 67,000 streetlights. Boston will only use the designer to perform a GIS inventory assessment of their streetlights, and it will handle design, product procurement, and installation on its own. The Designer 03 procurement refined a pilot procurement strategy MAPC had managed for the City of Brockton in the summer of 2015, and MAPC believes it will provide lower costs than the traditional turnkey approach.