



## District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Project Report 2011

Report of project activities of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) funded under the District Local Technical Assistance Program. *Final report of 2011 DLTA projects. 1/23/12*

### LAND USE PROJECTS

#### North Shore Strategic Planning Project

The North Shore Regional Strategic Planning Project is a sustainable economic development and smart growth initiative co-sponsored by MAPC and EOHED, funded primarily by EOHED with support from MAPC's DLTA 2011 funds. The main goal was to update the region's priority development and preservation areas, to help guide state funding to areas where investment would yield the most significant impacts. In addition, the project sought to identify critical regional transportation improvements. The study area included Beverly, Danvers, Hamilton, Ipswich, Salem and Wenham.

The project involved meeting with each of the communities in a public meeting setting to solicit input on priority open space, economic development and regionally significant transportation areas/issues. This was succeeded by two regional follow-up meetings, with Ipswich, Hamilton and Wenham in one group and Danvers, Beverly and Salem in the other, where MAPC presented the results of both the local discussions and also MAPC's screening of the local recommendations for regional significance, and received additional public comments.

#### MetroWest Regional Open Space Connectivity Plan

The MetroWest Regional Open Space Connectivity Plan is a collaborative effort among the MetroWest Regional Collaborative, MAPC, and representatives of the nine member municipalities of the MWRC: Ashland, Holliston, Framingham, Natick, Marlborough, Southborough, Wayland, Wellesley and Weston. Phase I of the project was completed in 2010. The Plan illustrates how the open space and trails in each town can become linked into an interconnected regional network, crossing municipal boundaries and connecting to other trails and open space in the surrounding communities. The plan also identifies unprotected land of potential conservation interest that would enhance the connectivity and conservation value of the existing open space. The majority of this effort was undertaken in 2010 using DLTA 2010 funding; Phase II included incorporation of additional information from the I-495 Regional Strategic Planning effort and was completed in December 2011; this resulted in an updated and annotated MetroWest Regional Open Space Connectivity Plan. MWRC staff will now work with its member municipalities on implementation activities.

### Rockport Downtown Zoning Analysis

MAPC began working with the Town in March 2010 using DLTA funds. The first phase included several components. MAPC reviewed existing conditions in the downtown and developed an analysis of downtown planning issues. In addition, MAPC researched and compared nine different zoning requirements from other communities in Massachusetts to the Town of Rockport's existing zoning. MAPC also conducted an analysis of Zoning Board of Appeals decisions that revealed some of the issues identified above. A final report was issued in December 2010.

Using DLTA funds allocated in 2011, MAPC continued discussions with the Planning Board and consulting planner to clarify issues in the General Zone. MAPC provided guidance on an approach to update the Zoning By-law and presented this approach at Planning Board public forums in March and May 2011. Four key zoning issues were identified by the Planning Board through this process

The final report to the Town in June 2011 represents the key zoning issues and recommendations for revisions to the General Zone. Additional recommendations and a guide to planning next steps are also included. The Rockport Planning Board won Town Meeting approval for amended zoning which incorporated MAPC's final recommendations relative to downtown zoning improvements. The Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association gave the Rockport Comprehensive Planning project an Honorable Mention as part of their annual 2011 Planning Awards Program; MAPC's work under DLTA was an element of this overall plan.

### Wakefield/Melrose/Reading- Main Street Corridor Study

MAPC collaborated with Wakefield, Melrose and Reading to develop a transportation plan for the Main Street Corridor. The plan looks at ways to improve the existing transportation network by reducing automobile traffic while promoting walking, bicycling, commuter rail, and bus transportation. This study also focused on achieving sustainable development and land use objectives such as compact growth and transit oriented development. The Main Street Corridor Plan's goals, recommendations and strategies will improve accessibility, coordinate transportation systems, promote healthy life-style choices, as well as conserve natural resources benefitting the City of Melrose, the Towns of Reading and Wakefield, and the region as a whole.

A forum was held in each community. The feedback received from the community forums was central to developing the Main Street Corridor Plan's goals, recommendations, and strategies. MAPC worked extensively with the planners of the three communities, conducted site visits and referred to existing Master Plans and Open Space Plans in addition to key regional plans and studies.

### Marshfield/Duxbury/Scituate- Climate Change Adaptation Planning

Coastal cities and towns in the Boston region face a unique set of challenges related to the ocean's power, both in normal and in storm conditions. Adding to these challenges is the potential for a rise in sea level and more intense storms as a result of a changing global climate.

The Scituate, Marshfield and Duxbury Coastal Hazards Adaptation Study assessed general changes in coastal hazard impacts that could occur due to climate change, primarily the impacts from sea level rise and changes in storm intensity and frequency. The project explored current and potential future coastal vulnerabilities, identified a range of possible adaptation options and provided information about resources that could support local actions and strategies. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) conducted the project in partnership with the Towns of Scituate, Marshfield and Duxbury and with support from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM). This DLTA project was also instrumental in a successful application by these three communities for a \$30,000 grant from the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment under the New England Municipal Coastal Resilience Initiative to follow up on the MAPC project.

### South West Advisory Planning (SWAP) Model Parking Bylaw (Bellingham, Medway, Hopkinton and Sherborn)

The SWAP Parking Bylaw Project developed a series of draft regulations that can be adapted by individual communities to update existing parking requirements. The draft language can be modified by the Town Planner and Planning Board to suit a specific community, and presented to Town Meeting for incorporation into town zoning bylaws. The goal was to provide communities with information and tools to make informed decisions about parking so that the demand and supply are balanced and appropriate.

The draft regulations are organized into three topic areas, and include 12 parking strategies selected by Town Planners and others working with MAPC. The three topic areas are:

- Parking for Alternative Vehicles
- Managing the Parking Demand
- Managing the Environmental Impacts of Parking

Subsequent to the delivery of this report to the SWAP communities, MAPC has begun implementation work with one community to assist in writing updated zoning regulations for consideration by town meeting in spring 2012.

### Walk Winthrop

Walk Winthrop was developed as a broad concept for a series of walking routes throughout the Town of Winthrop connecting businesses, recreation points, beaches, and other points of interest. MAPC was brought in to help develop an implementation plan and refine the concept to one that can be completed in short order. MAPC worked with Winthrop to develop a route system of 3 routes throughout town, including one major route, the Ocean Route, which would be incorporated into the proposed regional greenway system.

The Ocean Route is proposed as the signature walking route that serves as the extension of the East Boston Greenway through Belle Isle Marsh to the beaches of Winthrop, ending at Deer Island. The route follows existing trails and walks along three beaches, as well as connected low traffic streets. The trail system will provide economic development to the town with increased tourism, and support for the new ferry service to Boston.

In addition to the WalkWinthrop greenway system, the implementation plan recommends steps forward for the proposed Hubway bike share program, bicycle accommodation on town streets, and a “safe routes to schools” program. In all, the plan forms a comprehensive approach to active transportation for residents seeking active healthy lives, and brings new people into the town providing economic development through sustainable travel.

### Sudbury

MAPC is working with the Town of Sudbury to develop options for land use controls along a two mile portion of Route 20 in anticipation of the installation of sewers. Prior to installing a sewer system to serve almost 1 million sq. ft. of commercial development along the Old Boston Post Road (Route 20), the town of Sudbury wants to explore land use control options along the corridor. The objectives include providing opportunities for mixed use development, redevelopment to discourage sprawl, attracting development consistent with Town character and controlling overdevelopment.

Tasks completed include a very successful community forum on October 26, 2011 that identified preferred types and designs of development for Route 20, a review of existing regulations, and identification of concepts to be included in revised zoning. This project will continue into 2012 with the drafting of revised zoning and presentations to the Planning Board and Director of Planning and Community Development.

## ENERGY PROJECTS

MAPC's energy-related DLTA projects have elements of both land use and municipal services. Because of this, and also to highlight the importance of this new class of projects, these energy related DLTA projects are listed here as a separate heading outside of Land Use or Municipal Services.

### Regional ESCO

The purpose of this project was to facilitate a regional procurement of a single professional Energy Services Company (ESCO) to provide comprehensive energy efficiency services under an Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) for the following 14 municipalities in the MAPC region: Ashland, Arlington, Chelsea, Everett, Framingham, Gloucester, Melrose, Norwell, Rockport, Sharon, Sherborn, Sudbury, Topsfield and Wayland.

A key element of the success of this ESCO procurement was the joint procurement; each individual municipality would likely have been too small to successfully procure an ESCO agreement on their own.

Following a thorough RFQ process, on December 13, 2011 MAPC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with a Framingham based company, Ameresco. Ameresco will design, purchase, install, operate and maintain energy systems so that municipalities and school districts can purchase energy and water saving improvements for public facilities where the basis for payments is the performance level guaranteed in the contract.

### Sharon

DLTA funding was used to provide the Town of Sharon with assistance to develop a community-wide baseline and strategic energy plan, with the understanding that implementation assistance would also be provided on an ongoing basis with projects as needed.

MAPC staff met with Sharon town staff and Energy Committee members to collect data for the community energy baseline and to obtain a better understanding of the town's past energy work. MAPC staffed a table at the August 4 "Square Jam" along with Mass Energy Consumers Alliance, and collected information on Sharon resident interest in energy efficiency and clean energy. A final meeting in November identified an interest by the town and Energy Committee for case studies on clean energy activities being carried out in the community that could be produced for a local cable television show and support future engagement efforts.

MAPC's technical assistance focused on four main tasks:

1. Preliminary stakeholder meetings to identify past energy work;
2. Collecting information to produce a Sharon Energy Baseline Report;
3. Developing case studies of clean energy projects in the Sharon community;
4. Creating final recommendations to move forward on select projects.

### Sudbury

MAPC's 2011 Regional Energy Manager DLTA project provided a range of energy-related technical assistance to the Town of Sudbury. When MAPC began working with Sudbury, the Town had already completed several energy planning tasks that were prerequisites for their recently-earned Green Communities designation. These tasks included developing an energy baseline, creating an energy reduction plan, and adopting policies conducive to renewable energy development. Given this completed work, MAPC focused its technical assistance on four tasks:

1. A meeting with town stakeholders to discuss Sudbury's involvement in two other 2011 MAPC DLTA projects and to determine next steps for the town's future energy work;
2. Assisting the Building Inspector and the Energy and Sustainability Green Ribbon Committee with MassEnergy Insight, an energy management tool for municipal buildings;
3. Researching the potential for wind power development in Sudbury.
4. Identifying best practices for residential energy efficiency outreach programs.

### Landfill Assessment Project

The purpose of this project was to facilitate a regional procurement of preliminary site evaluation services to determine the viability of renewable energy development at underutilized sites within the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) region.

Conducting preliminary site assessments helps prevent suboptimal allocation of resources towards sites with "fatal flaws" that preclude them from supporting renewable energy generation. By participating in a group study, the communities in this project gained the advantage of a peer group of communities engaging in similar activities, which can be leveraged beyond the scope of a preliminary evaluation to sharing knowledge and maintaining momentum as projects move forward.

MAPC and the participating communities identified seven sites for evaluation. Meridian Associates conducted the site evaluations which were summarized in a final report that was distributed to participating communities by MAPC on December 1, 2011.

For the final task, MAPC hosted a Clean Energy Forum on Renewable Energy on Landfills and Large Municipal Sites. The forum featured the final presentation from Meridian Associates, as well as a presentation by Mayor Michael Tautznik of the City of Easthampton, whose community had recently completed construction of a 2.2 MW ground-based solar PV project on their municipal landfill. The report by Meridian Associates found that all of the communities have the potential to develop solar projects that could generate a total of 11,784 MWh per year and one community had the potential to develop a wind power project that could generate 3,231 MWh per year.

## REGIONALIZATION

### North Suffolk Shared Public Health Concerns Report – Chelsea/Revere/Winthrop

In the spring of 2011, public health was identified by municipal chief executives as a service area which presented opportunities for collaborative service provision. Over the course of the fall and winter of 2011, MAPC staff compiled data from various publicly available sources and held input sessions with stakeholders to gauge which public health issues are most apparent from the data, which issues most concern stakeholders, and which issues are prime for regional collaborative efforts. The report documents the results of preliminary research into public health concerns in the North Suffolk region, and shares perspectives on possible next steps by the participant communities in developing strategies to effectively collaborate on these issues.

### Ashland/ Hopkinton Fire Study III

The Ashland/Hopkinton Fire Study Phase III will provide a model that will allow the merging of two separate Fire Departments into one regional fire department that will serve the Towns of Ashland and Hopkinton.

Phase III of the study examined each town's operating and capital budget, collective bargaining agreements, and updated fleet and equipment inventories. The report uses the staffing levels produced in the Phase II report by MAPC's consultant Chief Powers to provide a personnel budget for the new regional department. The Phase III report provides an in depth examination of the individual collective bargaining agreements that will allow the town managers a clear view of issues that will be involved in the drafting of the new collective bargaining agreement.

### Central Essex EMS project (Georgetown, Ipswich, Rowley and Topsfield)

This project produced an RFP which will allow the four towns to investigate the possibility of entering into a contract with a private vendor, in conjunction with the existing public EMS services, to provide ambulance services through a regional service zone plan. The Topsfield Fire Chief has continued to lead this effort. The working group decided that through the RFP process, the private vendors responding to the RFP would be responsible for the design of the Regional Service Zone plan. This was a change in the original plan which was to have the working group design the regional service zone plan and have vendors tailor their response to the RFP. The group felt that this would allow more latitude on the part of the private vendors to design an efficient model. The town of Topsfield will be responsible for the RFP process.

### Revere-Winthrop Consolidated 911 Dispatch

In 2008, Somerville, on behalf of the Metro Mayors Coalition, was awarded a grant through the State 911 Department to support a feasibility study exploring Regional Enhanced 911 services through the possible creation of a Regional Emergency Communications Center (RECC) or other Regional Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP). Among the dozen original communities engaged

with the feasibility study, Chelsea, Revere and Winthrop eventually requested the hired consultant to look specifically at the feasibility of a three community consolidated dispatch.

In September of 2010, the three communities received a report from the firm RCC Consultants, Inc. which concluded that Revere's public safety facility (the new Police Headquarters located along Revere Beach Parkway) was adequate to house a consolidated dispatch for the three communities with certain work space expansions and operational changes.

In early 2011, the three communities received District Local Technical Assistance funding to enable MAPC to assist in procurement of a project management firm to guide the communities into a consolidated dispatch. Soon after the receipt of the grant, Chelsea withdrew from the project. The DLTA funds supported the 30B Compliant Procurement Process which led to the contracting of a project manager for the Revere-Winthrop Consolidated Dispatch.

#### Metro Mayors E911

Based on the results of previous MAPC work, nine Metro Boston area municipalities committed to moving forward with the implementation of a new consolidated Public Service Answering Point (PSAP). MAPC convened local leaders from the nine communities – Belmont, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Revere, Somerville, and Winthrop – and facilitated discussions that led to the submittal of second grant application to the State 911 grant program in early May 2011.

MAPC organized several meetings of municipal officials and assisted in negotiations with key personnel, including fire and police chiefs from the participating communities. The group was awarded a \$75,000 grant in late September 2011. The funds received will be used to hire a consultant to create a comprehensive implementation plan to consolidate emergency response services in the metropolitan Boston area. This plan would build on the work already done by RCC (the consultant hired to complete the feasibility study) and provide the participating municipalities with a detailed process for creating one consolidated PSAP.

MAPC staff has met with the Metro Mayors Coalition and identified a team of municipal leadership and public safety officials who will work together over the next few months to finalize the RFP, select a consultant and continue with the implementation of one consolidated PSAP.

#### Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) Regionalization Best Practices

In order to assist municipal officials and local leaders who are considering sharing municipal services, the thirteen regional planning agencies (RPAs) have been working together to create a compendium of essential regionalization information, from the relevant legal issues to consider to a series of best practices for creating and implementing a project. By organizing such information into one comprehensive resource, MARPA will create an accessible, "one-stop shop" of regionalization information. Accomplishments include:

- Extensive data collection on examples of shared services projects that resulted in a draft best practices guide.

- Issuance of an RFP and selection of a consultant to design, develop and launch a website.
- The final guide is approximately 75% complete. Although the format for the guide has been finalized, graphics and other design issues still need to be resolved. Key stakeholders have been identified and will be asked to contribute short quotes to the report. MARPA anticipates that the final guide will be complete and ready to print in February 2012.
- Preliminary meetings have taken place with regard to the outreach and media component of the project. Outreach activities and deliverables will include: a formal launch at the State House, press releases, use of social media, MARPA-organized forums throughout the Commonwealth, and the printing of related promotional materials. The formal launch of the final guide and website will take place in the spring of 2012. The timing of other outreach activities and the distribution of materials will revolve around the formal launch of the guide and website.

Regional Housing Services Office: (Sudbury/Bedford/Concord/Lexington/Lincoln and Weston)

This project builds upon MAPC's 2009 DLTA research for MetroWest communities relating to opportunities for potential models for shared services for affordable housing administration, and upon MAPC's 2010 DLTA project, in which MAPC performed a Housing Services Assessment of municipal time and funding expended on affordable housing by the communities of Concord, Lincoln, Bedford, Lexington, Weston, and Sudbury; worked with town managers from these communities to analyze results, identify overlapping services/ issues and develop and gain consensus on services; researched various models for the communities; prepared a financial model; and drafted an IMA (Inter-Municipal Agreement) for the five towns to contract with the Town of Sudbury for services. The Town of Sudbury developed a service model and accompanying suite of services. Local housing officials confirmed the model and services at a November meeting. MAPC with the Town of Sudbury made presentations to state housing officials. MassHousing and Massachusetts Housing Partnership each provided letters supporting the shared services model.

All towns confirmed a timeline for action and implementation of the Inter-municipal Agreement. MAPC staff accompanied Sudbury officials to a Lexington Board of Selectmen meeting where the draft IMA was unanimously approved. The Regional Housing Services Office and accompanying Regional Housing Services Fund launched on July 1, 2011.

In the 2011 DLTA project, MAPC assisted with implementation activities as the Regional Housing Services Office began work on regional housing services administration. The ensuing activities included additional implementation planning for each participating community. Additionally, MAPC staff was present for Regional Housing Services Office meetings from August through December 2011. Staff presented the model to the Lieutenant Governor at a special roundtable and then at the statewide regionalization conference. Finally, the towns participating in the RHSO and MAPC will be given the Kenneth Pickard Innovation Award at the Annual Massachusetts Municipal Association conference in January 2012.