

North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Work Plan, FY 2016

Effective July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Introduction

This Work Plan outlines NSPC goals for FY 2016 and a schedule of meeting topics and activities the Subregional Coordinator will undertake to improve NSPC's effectiveness.

NSPC is composed of eight towns and one city that have formed a voluntary association to facilitate cooperative regional planning. The goals of NSPC are to:

- Facilitate communication between communities through the participation of local officials involved with planning issues, in concert with MAPC representatives; and
- Assist participating communities in setting an agenda for action on planning topics including issues of growth management and land use, and other planning issues which, if thoughtfully addressed, will allow the region to retain its character and its desirability as a place to live and work.

Funding

NSPC work in FY 2016 is funded through two sources: funds from the Metropolitan Planning Organization to implement the annual Unified Planning Work Program and the annual assessment collected from its member municipalities.

Membership and Voting

NSPC is composed of the following municipalities: **Burlington, Lynnfield, North Reading, Reading, Stoneham, Wakefield, Wilmington, Winchester, and Woburn**. According to NSPC bylaws, each of the nine member municipalities is to designate three representatives to NSPC:

- One shall be a member of the Board of Selectmen (or City Council in the case of a city) or a designee appointed by the Board of Selectmen or City Council.
- One shall be a member of the Planning Board or a designee appointed by the Planning Board.
- One shall be the municipality's representative to the MAPC Council or the MAPC Council Alternate.

NSPC representatives are strongly encouraged to attend all meetings. If a decision at a meeting requires a vote, each community has one vote. A quorum consists of NSPC representatives from a majority of the communities including the Subregional Coordinator (6/10).

Subregion Participation

Identifying a diverse range of individuals and groups that can enrich the NSPC network through participation in subregional meetings, programs, and projects continues to be a priority. Assistance from the MAPC Executive Committee and NSPC members will be sought to identify these groups. The NSPC representatives from each community are responsible for assisting in outreach and helping to identify individuals within their own community who might want to attend NSPC meetings, forums, and workshops when the meeting topic is applicable. NSPC representatives may want to invite participation from municipal planners, public works and engineering departments, public health, public safety, municipal boards and committees, chief elected officials, nonprofits, citizens, businesses, and additional Selectmen and Planning Board members who are not

official NSPC representatives. Each member municipality is also encouraged to bring more than one representative to major forums and workshops. Meeting notices will be emailed to press contacts and legislators, and occasionally, will be announced with press releases. The Subregional Coordinator will, from time to time, invite the participation of nearby regional planning agencies or subregions regarding meeting topics or subregion projects involving bordering communities.

Leadership and Staff

Amanda Chisholm serves in the role of NSPC Subregional Coordinator. The Coordinator shall schedule meetings; prepare agendas; organize forums and workshops; maintain the contact list outlined in Article III, Section 4; manage the subregion budget; provide technical assistance to participating municipalities; and implement subregional projects, and provide regular correspondence regarding MAPC or subregion programs/projects, events, meetings, announcements, or funding opportunities.

The co-chairs for 2015-2016 are Kristin Kassner, Planning Director for the Town of Burlington, and Danielle McKnight, Town Planner for the Town of North Reading. The co-chairs shall share the following responsibilities: assist the Subregional Coordinator with the preparation of meeting agendas; facilitation of meetings; appointment of all sub-committees; ensuring that the Subregional Coordinator carries out Council directives; and representing the Council before other local, regional, or state agencies or organizations. The subregion has one designee to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): Tina Cassidy, Planner Director for the City of Woburn, is NSPC's designee to the MPO.

NSPC Bylaws

The NSPC Bylaws, which include additional details regarding the purpose of the subregion, officers, and elections, are available on the NSPC website at-
http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/NSPC%20Bylaws_Revised_November2012.pdf

NSPC Goals and Program, FY 2016

NSPC will continue to serve as a forum providing members with:

- Timely notification and information on issues of importance
- A critical role in influencing regional transportation policy
- A strong, united voice on issues of concern to communities
- A forum for exchange of information between municipal officials

In particular, NSPC will continue to:

- Monitor and comment on the Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP);
- Ensure NSPC community representation at the MPO and participate in RTAC;
- Collaboratively identify, recommend, and/or pursue studies or project opportunities involving multiple communities in the subregion;
- Work with the MAPC legislative team and the NSPC representative to the Legislative Committee to advance key legislative priorities

The NSPC Subregional Coordinator, in collaboration with the co-chairs and the membership, will engage in the following activities that are made possible by funding received from the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and special project funds from the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program.

Outreach

NSPC strives to be a forum that is representative of and accountable to the municipalities we serve. While our core membership is municipal staff and volunteers serving on municipal boards and on the MAPC Council, the subregion is also committed to ensuring the participation of individuals who live and work in the subregion who are representative of the region's diversity in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, ability, professional background and other characteristics.

- 1.1 *Expanding subregion designees.* The Coordinator will work to expand membership in the subregion by revisiting the list of appointed designees and extending formal invitations to newly appointed members of Planning Boards and Boards of Selectmen. When Planning Board and Board of Selectmen members are unable to attend meetings, the Coordinator will recommend or work with the local boards to identify a community designee whom they may designate to participate in the Council in the place of their participation.
- 1.2 *Outreach and engagement in the subregion.* The NSPC mailing list will continue to be broadened to include non-municipal representatives from non-profit, business, environmental, housing, education, and other community groups. To accomplish this, the Coordinator will work with an MAPC Community Liaison to engage and maintain existing relationships as well as conduct targeted outreach to new contacts before each meeting, forum, or workshop to increase overall meeting attendance. The Coordinator will also draw on the resources of the Data Services department to better understand the demographics and other data points about the subregion. The Coordinator will also schedule site visits to each municipality over the course of the year to meet with municipal membership and network with new contacts in the subregion.

Meetings, Workshops, and Forums

NSPC will aim to offer three meeting types in FY 2016: subregional meetings by topic, workshops, and forums. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings in FY 2016, which will create more time between meetings to enable the Coordinator to develop strong programs that attract a broader audience.

- 2.1 *Topical meetings.* NSPC will continue to offer topical meetings on transportation, zoning, and other ongoing topics of importance.
- 2.2 *Special workshops or forums.* NSPC will offer at least one professional development workshop that will build the skills of our membership. NSPC will also hold at least one evening forum that may be cosponsored with another entity that aims to attract a new audience of volunteers who may serve on municipal boards and other interested individuals who can only attend night meetings.

Technical Assistance

- 3.1 *General technical assistance.* The Coordinator will offer small-scale technical assistance on an as-needed basis to member municipalities on topics related to MetroFuture goals and objectives. Support may include data collection and analysis, assistance with proposal writing, and collaborative project development. The Coordinator will prioritize assistance for projects that advance subregional development and preservation priorities identified through the NSPC Priority Mapping Project. The Coordinator will also aim to connect member municipalities with funding and technical assistance programs administered by MAPC and work with communities to develop and/or undertake projects that may be funded through a combination of MAPC and municipal resources.

Meeting Structure

All NSPC meeting are open to the general public. Official meeting notices are posted on the MAPC website at www.mapc.org/publicmeetings at least a week in advance of each meeting. Meeting agendas are posted on

the NSPC webpage of the MAPC website at www.mapc.org/nspc at least two weeks in advance of each meeting. Meeting summaries will be kept on file at MAPC and made available upon request.

NSPC Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meetings will be held from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM on the second Wednesday of the month unless circumstances require a change in meeting time. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings during the FY 2016 year. No meetings will be held during the months of January, July, and August unless a time-sensitive matter arises that requires a meeting of the membership. Meetings that are scheduled outside of the normal meeting time are noted with an asterisk (*). Meetings will continue to rotate between the communities, allowing each an opportunity to host a meeting. Refreshments will be provided at all meetings.

The below chart is the beginning of a schedule for FY2016 meetings. Other ideas that were brainstormed at the June meeting for potential meeting topics include the below. We should continue to brainstorm meeting ideas at the September subregional meeting.

- A first-ever NSPC legislative breakfast.
- Marketing Your Community for Economic Development
- Suburban Mobility Workshop & Potential Future Study
- The Sharing Economy from a Regulatory Perspective
- Aging in Place

Date	Time	Topic
September 9, 2015	9:00 – 11:00 am	Community Engagement Workshop Emily Torres-Cullinane, MAPC Community Engagement Manager, will discuss best practices in Community Engagement and present the MAPC Community Engagement Guide. We will also hear from Rachel Meredith-Warren, RE Development Consultant and active citizen representative of the Stoneham Square Action Plan Advisory Committee (SSAPAC), on Stoneham’s recent efforts to implement their downtown plan.
October 15, 2015	9:00 – 11:30 AM	Joint Housing Forum with North Shore Task Force Jenny Raitt, Assistant Director of Land Use Planning & Chief Housing Planner, will lead this forum on housing needs, issues, and demographics within the NSPC/NSTF subregions. We will also hear from developers/planners engaged in housing work throughout the subregions.
November 2015 TBD	9:00 – 11:00 AM	Long Range Transportation Plan Eric Bourassa, Director of Transportation, will discuss the final Long Range Transportation plan and the development of TIP and UPWP. He will be looking for feedback from NSPC.
December 9, 2015 (Subject to Change)	9:00 – 11:00 AM	Suburban Mobility Study Eric Halvorsen, Assistant Director of Transportation, will present on mobility studies that have been done in other suburban MAPC subregions. We will have discussion on whether NSPC would also potentially be interested in

Date	Time	Topic
		<i>pursuing a similar project and applying for PMTA or DLTA funding to support this.</i>
<i>February 10, 2016 (Subject to Change)</i>	<i>6:30 – 9:00 PM</i>	Community Branding & Marketing Your Community For Economic Development <i>A discussion of techniques that NSPC communities can utilize to brand their communities and attract desired economic development. Speaker TBD.</i>
<i>March 9, 2016 (Subject to Change)</i>	<i>9:00 – 11:00 AM</i>	Landline <i>Landline is MAPC’s vision to connect our greenways and trails into a seamless network. The plan has been developed in coordination with the Landline Coalition, a group of 40 volunteers representing a number of local agencies and advocacy groups. MAPC planners will present on this vision and how NSPC can help to play a role in it’s implementation.</i>
<i>April 13, 2016 (Subject to Change)</i>	<i>9:00 – 11:00 AM</i>	NSPC Legislative Breakfast <i>NSPC will host state legislators and discuss key legislative priorities for the subregion.</i>
<i>May 11, 2016 (Subject to Change)</i>	<i>9:00 – 11:00 AM</i>	UPWP/TIP Follow Up Meeting <i>NSPC will host transportation staff to have a follow up discussion on UPWP/TIP.</i>
<i>June 8, 2016 (Subject to Change)</i>	<i>9:00 – 11:00 AM</i>	Cultural Districts & Other Downtown Revitalization Techniques <i>NSPC will hear about the Town of Reading’s recent Cultural District Designation Exploration Study and the newly completed Economic Development Plan for the town’s four priority development areas. We will also tour the PDA’s to get a better sense of the opportunities and challenges at each.</i>

Note: Meeting dates, times, and topics are subject to change.

In addition to the topics outlined above, each meeting will strive to include the following content:

- Community Exchange: opportunity to share notable municipal achievements or updates
- Legislative update (quarterly): update on legal precedents pertaining to land use and updates on state legislation of note and information regarding advocacy for NSPC or MAPC legislative priorities
- Funding opportunities of interest

Project Objectives

The NSPC Coordinator has identified the following Process Benchmarks and Policy Outcomes in order to track progress and outcomes.

Process Benchmarks

- 1) Engagement with a diversity of new contacts that reflect the economic, social and sectoral (e.g., public and private) characteristics of the NSPC subregion
- 2) An improved set of collaboration measures that can be replicated to engage public and private sector stakeholders in the identification of priority areas
- 3) At least 25 new contacts are added to the subregion mailing list
- 4) At least 15 individuals from the subregion attend each special workshop or forum

Policy Outcomes

- 1) Increased collaboration of municipal, non-municipal and regional partners in the North Suburban subregion for smart growth planning projects.
- 2) A coalition of representatives that support funding, activities and legislative changes that advance implementation of MetroFuture.
- 3) Foundation for the advancement of Regional Equity as a model for prosperity in the North Suburban subregion