



North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Subregional Priority Mapping Project Scope of Work¹

Introduction

A key goal of planning is to shape land use by managing development and preserving the character of a community. Regional planning goals are not always integrated into local level planning, and vice versa. The NSPC subregional priority mapping project is a regional planning effort that will use mapping to highlight land use goals and strategies for the region. The project aims to:

- Establish community-based priorities and strategies
- Integrate municipal priorities into regional and state development and preservation strategies
- Guide public investments in light of the priorities of the subregion

The subregional priority mapping process also provides an opportunity to promote dialogue about land use issues that transcend municipal boundaries. Local perspectives are key to identifying areas where growth and development should be emphasized (priority development areas) as well as areas that should be preserved to protect natural resources and the character of each city and town (priority preservation areas). Meetings and conversations with municipal staff and stakeholders, in addition to a large, subregional forum, provide the foundation for identifying these subregional priority areas. Through the process, regionally significant transportation investments and regionally significant infrastructure investments are also identified.

Through the identification of subregional priority development areas (PDAs), priority preservation areas (PPAs), significant transportation investments (STIs), and significant infrastructure investments (SIs), data emerging from the project can also help NSPC municipalities to:

- 1) identify housing opportunities that will allow for reuse of existing structures and construction of new structures to provide market rate and affordable housing units;
- 2) provide for sustainable growth patterns that encourage mixed-use, work and home environments that promote public transit and create livable, vital communities;
- 3) identify opportunities that maximize transportation choices, promote public transportation and minimize the construction of new infrastructure;
- 4) promote healthy environments by creating policies that minimize greenhouse gas production, promote work/home environments within reasonable proximity to transit and commercial areas and encourage environmental equity.

Please view the last page of this scope for MAPC's definitions of the terms referenced above.

Project Connection to MetroFuture

The project advances several goals outlined in the MetroFuture Regional Plan². Relevant MetroFuture goals include:

¹ This scope was prepared by MAPC on behalf of the North Suburban Planning Council.

² MetroFuture is a bold and achievable plan to build a sustainable and equitable future for the people who live and work in Metropolitan Boston between now and 2030. The cities and towns of Greater Boston officially adopted the MetroFuture Plan in December, 2008. The planning process preceding adoption had three primary products: a smart growth plan for the region; detailed strategies to make that plan a reality; and a constituency to advocate for

- #1. Population and job growth will be concentrated in developed areas already served by infrastructure, with slower growth in less developed areas where infrastructure is more limited.
- #2. Most new growth will occur through reuse of previously developed land and buildings.
- #4. In suburban municipalities, most new growth will occur near town and village centers.
- #10. Growth in the region will be guided by informed, inclusive, and proactive planning.
- #65. A robust network of protected open spaces, farms, parks, and greenways will provide wildlife habitat, ecological benefits, recreational opportunities, and scenic beauty.

Project Context

An overview of NSPC subregion characteristics is in this PowerPoint presentation that was prepared for and presented to the subregion in January 2012:

ftp://ftp.mapc.org/subregions/NSPC/CensusTrendsbySubregion-NSPC_1.11.2012.pdf

Project Work Plan

The project is funded through three sources: Sustainable Communities Subregion (SusCom) funding, Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program.

Timeframe	Tasks
February - March 2012	<p>Task 1: Finalize participants, scope, and budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope and budget development, conversations with NSPC communities, outreach to confirm site visit attendees
April - June 2012	<p>Task 2: Site visits to up to municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation: preliminary base maps for each municipality by Data Services and NSPC coordinator review; maps inclusive of parcel and assessor's data and GIS data layers (transit, roads/corridors, water, trails, land use development status, open space, BioMap2) • Preparation: review of current municipal provisions, reviews of relevant documents, e.g., open space plans, master plans • Five meetings - two-three MAPC staff (NSPC coordinator, Data Services staff, planning staff)
June – July 2012	<p>Task 3. Presentation of preliminary maps to Planning Boards and Boards of Selectmen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation: finalizing municipal maps with PDA, PPA, STI, and SII data by Data Services and NSPC coordinator review • Preparation and presentation of municipal PDAs and PPA at five joint PB and BOS meetings - two-three MAPC staff (NSPC coordinator and Data Services staff, planning staff)
July – October 2012	<p>Task 4: Site visits to remaining participating municipalities*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation: preliminary base maps for each municipality by Data Services and NSPC coordinator review; maps inclusive of parcel and assessor's data and GIS data layers (transit, roads/corridors, water, trails, land use development status, open space, BioMap2) • Preparation: review of current municipal provisions, reviews of relevant documents, e.g., open space plans, master plans • Four meetings - two-three MAPC staff (NSPC coordinator, Data Services staff, planning staff)
October -- December 2012	<p>Task 5. Presentation of preliminary maps to Planning Boards and Boards of Selectmen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation: finalizing municipal maps with PDA, PPA, STI, and SII data • Preparation and presentation for meetings in four communities - two-three MAPC staff (NSPC coordinator and Data Services staff, planning staff)

adoption of these strategies. MetroFuture was developed through a highly collaborative and participant-driven process that engaged a wide variety of regional stakeholders.

Timeframe	Tasks
December 2012 – January 2013	Task 6. MAPC review of regional significance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of municipal PPAs, PDAs, STI, SII identified: identification and mapping of regionally significant growth centers -- NSPC coordinator, Data Services staff • Review of municipal PPAs, PDAs, STI, SII identified: identification and mapping of regionally significant growth centers -- Transportation staff • Subregional maps
February 2013	Task 7. NSPC members dialogue on regional priorities: PDAs, PPAs, STIs, and SII <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation and presentation: NSPC coordinator, Data Services staff • Preparation and presentation: Transportation staff
March 2013	Task 8. One subregion forum inviting public input on subregional priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach plan with all participating municipalities • Preparation and presentation: NSPC coordinator, Data Services staff • Preparation and presentation: Transportation staff
May – June 2013	Task 9. Final report and subregion maps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafts and revisions

* If communities do not opt into the full process, which involves participation in two meetings, MAPC will draw on data from open space plans, master plans, and other available documents and data to compile information that will inform the identification of subregional priority areas for development and preservation

Project Objectives

Process Benchmarks

- Total of 7-9 data collection meetings with participating municipalities that will include planners and other municipal staff who can help identify/confirm local priority areas, including: staff from economic development, housing, conservation and open space, recreation, and public works and participants from voluntary open space groups, if appropriate
- Total of 7-9 meetings that bring together both Planning Board and Board of Selectmen members in participating municipalities to verify local priorities identified
- Minimum of 50 people attend the regional forum
- Diversity of participants in the regional forum will reflect the diversity of the North Suburban subregion
- Final deliverables prepared by May 2013

Policy Outcomes

- Identified priority development and priority preservation areas guide and inform future land use decisions at the local and regional levels
- Identified priority areas provide a direction for public investments that conserve the qualities of the corridor

Definitions of Terms

Priority Development Areas (PDA)

- Locations potentially capable of supporting additional development or redevelopment, but that may first require additional investments in infrastructure.
- May be a single use or mixed-use: a combination of retail, commercial, office, or housing.
- Can range in size from a single lot to many acres.
- May include adaptive reuse of existing buildings to preserve sense of place.
- Generally characterized by good access, available infrastructure (primarily water and sewer), and an absence of environmental constraints.
- Areas have undergone extensive area-wide or neighborhood planning processes and may have detailed recommendations for future actions.
- Areas designated under state programs such as Chapter 43D (expedited permitting), Chapter 40R (smart growth zones) or Economic Opportunity Areas can be examples of PDAs.

Priority Preservation Areas (PPA)

- Deserve special protection due to significant environmental factors and/or natural features, such as endangered species habitats, large blocks of high quality intact habitat (BioMap2), areas critical to water supply, scenic vistas, areas important to a cultural landscape, or areas of historical significance.
- Are not currently permanently protected (e.g., via conservation restriction, municipal or state conservation land, land trust ownership, etc.).
- In general, existing parks or new park facilities would not fall within this category.
- May be critical to linking open space and also trails within a community across municipal boundaries that are part of a larger, regional network.

Significant Transportation Investments (STIs)

- Transportation projects that have the potential to increase efficiency and enhance interconnectivity for facilities which serve regional transportation needs.
- May be a project in a town or within a town's subregion.
- In most cases, these potential projects address major roadways as well as transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities that either individually or collectively serves regional travel needs.
- May include improvements for commercial airports and intermodal freight facilities that are key to the regional economy.
- Locally identified projects, along with projects from other statewide and regional planning documents, will be evaluated to develop an initial set of Regionally Significant Transportation Investments (RSTIs).

Other Significant Infrastructure Investments (SIIs)

- Are infrastructure projects that have the potential to increase efficiency and capacity and enhance development potential for facilities/sites which serve regional needs.
- May be a project in a town or within a town's subregion.
- In most cases, these potential projects address water, sewer/wastewater, stormwater, and may include new infrastructure upgrades/increase in capacity to existing infrastructure that either individually or collectively serve regional needs.
- Locally identified projects, along with projects from other statewide and regional planning documents, will be evaluated to develop an initial set of Regionally Significant Infrastructure Investments (RSIIs).