

## **North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Work Plan, FY 2020**

Effective October 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

### **Introduction**

This Work Plan outlines NSPC goals for FY 2020 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;
- Promote and seek opportunities for inter-municipal coordination and cooperation;
- 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; and
- Educate participating communities on new and important issues in the planning field.

### **Funding**

NSPC work in FY 2020 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 may designate up to 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. 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**

Alex Koppelman, AICP 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 small-scale technical assistance to participating municipalities; implement subregional projects, and provide regular correspondence regarding MAPC or subregion programs/projects, events, meetings, announcements, or funding opportunities.

The co-chairs for 2019-2020 will be Danielle McKnight, Town Planner, North Reading and Brian Szekely, Town Planner, Winchester. 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.

### **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/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/NSPC-Bylaws\\_Revised\\_November2012.pdf](http://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/NSPC-Bylaws_Revised_November2012.pdf)

### **NSPC Goals and Program, FY 2020**

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

- Timely notification and information on issues of importance
- A role in influencing MAPC policy positions
- 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;
- Identify a member to sit on the MAPC Legislative Committee;
- 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 assessment funds.

## **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 and Council members will work to expand participation in subregional meetings and events by revisiting the list of appointed designees and extending formal invitations to newly appointed members of Planning Boards and Boards of Selectmen.
- 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 MAPC Community Engagement staff 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 subregional coordinator will also work with member municipalities this year to identify needs for specific planning assistance. Once these needs are identified, the coordinator will arrange for MAPC staff with expertise in these topic areas to visit each municipality, meet with key municipal staff, and discuss technical assistance opportunities.

## **Meetings, Workshops, and Forums**

NSPC will aim to offer three meeting types in FY 2020: subregional meetings by topic, workshops, and forums. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings in FY 2020, 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 meetings are open to the general public. Official meeting notices are posted on the MAPC website. Meeting agendas are posted on the NSPC webpage of the MAPC website at [www.mapc.org/nspc](http://www.mapc.org/nspc). Meeting materials will be kept on file at MAPC and posted on the MAPC website.

## NSPC Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meetings will be held from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM on the second Thursday of the month unless circumstances require a change in meeting time, such as holidays or school vacations. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings during the FY 2020 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. We will attempt to hold meetings by municipality in the order in which they appeared in previous years. That order may change if a meeting topic comes up that would be most applicable within one particular community. Refreshments will be provided at all meetings.

The below chart is a draft of ideas for FY2020 meetings. Locations marked with an asterisk are not confirmed.

Date	Time	Topic
September 12, 2019	9:00 – 11:00 AM Reading	Work planning and RPU brainstorming/activity
October 10, 2019	9:00 – 11:00 AM Stoneham	Preparing for the 2020 Decennial Census Workshop
November 14, 2019	9:00 – 11:00 AM Wilmington	MPO Visit
December 12, 2019	9:00 – 11:00 AM Burlington	Affordable Housing Messaging Strategies + Holiday Lunch
February 13, 2020	9:00 – 11:00 AM Woburn	Follow-up from NSPC Transportation Study and Parking Management
March 12, 2020	9:00 – 11:00 AM Winchester	Tactical Urbanism and ‘Quick Wins’ Workshop
April 9, 2020	9:00 – 11:00 AM Wilmington	Legislative Breakfast
May 14, 2020	9:00 – 11:00 AM Reading	Site Visit to 40-R District in Reading
June 11, 2020	9:00 – 11:00 AM North Reading	Stormwater and MS4

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) At least 25 new contacts are added to the subregion mailing list
- 3) 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) A consideration of the impacts the group's decisions have on the advancement of Regional Equity when decisions are made.