



MEMORANDUM

To: MAPC Council Representatives and Other Local Officials
From: Marc D. Draisen, Executive Director
Subject: Call for Project Concepts
Date: February 18, 2021

I am writing today to invite you to submit project concepts for work to be undertaken by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) for the benefit of your municipality through our Technical Assistance Program (TAP). Through this Call for Project Concepts, we are soliciting ideas for projects that will commence in the winter/spring of 2021.

Overall Eligibility

TAP can fund a diverse range of projects. **Municipalities can submit concepts for individual community-specific projects and for multi-community projects.** Eligible projects cover a wide variety of topics, including but not limited to: housing and economic development; regionalization and shared services; municipal effectiveness and efficiency, including municipal IT; public engagement in planning and municipal governance; public safety; public health; climate change (mitigation or adaptation); clean energy; fair housing; equitable transit-oriented development (E-TOD); bicycle/pedestrian mobility; environmental and resource protection; creative community placemaking; and arts and culture planning (with a preference for projects that serve two or more communities).

However, projects that promote regional collaboration and serve multiple communities, advance racial equity in the region, and/or promote COVID recovery will receive preference.

More about Preferred Projects

Multi-community impact: While a municipality may suggest a project limited to that one city or town, MAPC will prefer projects that serve multiple communities, an entire subregion, or similar communities in different parts of the region. Projects that serve a single municipality, but which could serve as an important model for other communities, will also be given preference.

Advancing racial equity: As part of the priority to advance racial equity, MAPC will support projects that will implement the recommendations from the *State of Equity for Metro Boston Policy Agenda* (see <https://equityagenda.mapc.org/>). MAPC is particularly interested in working on projects that break down barriers to equity on issues such as housing, economic mobility, public health, public safety, and the integration of marginalized populations into municipal planning and decision-making.

COVID recovery: Examples of projects that address COVID recovery include providing technical assistance for economic revitalization in sectors hard-hit by the COVID pandemic, assisting woman and minority-owned businesses, as well as small businesses, preventing housing eviction and displacement, virtual citizen engagement, municipal IT support, and making “safe streets” initiatives adopted during the pandemic permanent.

Consistency with MetroFuture and MetroCommon 2050

Projects should be consistent with the goals and objectives of MetroFuture, the current regional land use and policy plan for Metro Boston (see <https://www.mapc.org/get-involved/metrofuture-our-regional-plan/>). As you may be aware, MAPC is in the process of updating MetroFuture with a new regional plan, Metro Common 2050. We encourage applicants to consider developing projects that advance the provisional goals of MetroCommon, which can be found at <https://metrocommon-2050.gitbook.io/metrocommon-2050-goals/>.

Advancing Commonwealth Priorities

Additionally, MAPC shares with the Commonwealth a particular objective of assisting communities seeking to participate in the new Housing Choices program recently passed by the Legislature and signed by Governor Baker. For further information about Housing Choices, see <https://www.mass.gov/housingchoice>.

We are also eager to apply TAP funds to complement funds from other state programs that advance smart growth objectives, including Community Compact, Chapter 40R Smart Growth Overlay Districts, Complete Streets, and Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Planning Assistance Grants. MAPC can assist municipalities in preparing applications for these grant programs.

Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations

Municipalities are the only eligible applicants for this program, and proposals for technical assistance must be signed by the CEO of the municipality.

However, cities and towns are strongly encouraged to partner with community and constituency-based organizations, such as Community Development Corporations (CDCs), faith-based organizations, chambers of commerce and other small business associations, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), arts and cultural groups, etc. Please indicate any such partnerships in your submission.

Submit a Short Project Concept

Guidance on what to include in your project concept is provided below. After you submit a concept, we will work with you to determine a scope of work, an appropriate budget, funding sources to support the work, and a timetable for completion of the project. Just come up with the best concepts you can in accordance with the guidelines in this memo, and we will try to fund as many projects as possible through our technical assistance resources or by working with you to apply to state grant programs.

Applying for Assistance

Please submit a short (it does not need to be more than two pages) project concept on municipal letterhead to TAP Manager Ralph Willmer at rwillmer@mapc.org. Please include the following:

1. Lead Municipality and Lead Contact for Submittal: Designate a lead contact for the submittal. In the event that this is a multi-municipal proposal, indicate the lead municipality for the submittal and whether firm commitments have been secured from participating municipalities.

2. Project Description and Context: Provide a 1-3 paragraph description of the project. Provide an overview of project context, including geographic location and relevant previous and current planning efforts, e.g., plans, reports or studies.
3. Project Need and Alignment with Local, Regional, and State Goals: Describe the community need(s) the project will address, and its alignment with local, regional and/or state goals. You can learn more about the overall priorities for the TAP and each funding source at <https://www.mapc.org/about-mapc/funding-opportunities/>.
4. Project Deliverable(s) and Outcomes: Identify the specific products expected from the project, e.g., master plan, community or corridor plan, draft or adopted bylaw or ordinance, inter-municipal agreement, streamlined permitting procedures, collective purchasing agreement, etc. Also, identify the anticipated outcomes and changes in the municipality and/or region that you expect will be achieved.
5. Community Engagement: Explain how local officials, community groups, businesses and/or institutions will be involved in the planning process, as appropriate, and how the project will promote equity in the MAPC region and involve groups that are historically under-represented in planning processes, e.g., low-income individuals, racial/ethnic minorities, youth, seniors, recent immigrants, small business owners, people with disabilities, etc. Also, mention any community or constituency-based organizations that might be involved in this project.
6. Project Timeline: Outline the anticipated project timeline and associated project milestones, e.g., must be completed in time for close of a Town Meeting warrant.
7. Municipal Commitment: Describe the municipal commitment to the project. Indicate the support of the mayor, city manager, or town manager/administrator and municipal boards, committees, and/or commissions. For single-municipality and multi-municipal project concepts, detail each municipality's commitment to move ahead with the project in a timely fashion, e.g., will establish a multi-municipal project advisory committee to move the project along.
8. Municipal Contribution: Define any in-kind and/or financial contribution by the municipality to the project, e.g., X hours of municipal planner staff time or Planning Board volunteer time to assist in analysis; X dollars towards direct costs, such as meeting space rental (post-COVID), or translation and interpretation. Note that a cash match is not a requirement, but may help MAPC to prepare a broader scope of work, or may assist in stretching our TAP dollars so more projects can be funded.
9. Signature: The submittal must be signed by the mayor, city manager, or town manager/administrator. In the case of a multi-community project, the lead municipality's representative will sign the approved scope of work after the project has been accepted. For multi-municipal project concepts, it is ideal—but not required—to verify support from the mayor, city manager or town manager/administrator in each participating municipality in the form of a signature on the submittal by all participating municipalities.

Funding Sources

The MAPC TAP is funded through various sources, including:

- District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA), which originates from funds appropriated by the Legislature and Governor;
- Planning for MetroFuture Technical Assistance (PMTA), which originates from municipal assessments that all MAPC municipalities contribute to cover MAPC's regional activities; and
- Grants from private foundations.

MAPC actively fundraises to expand our technical assistance budget by seeking funds from philanthropic sources. This year, the Barr Foundation has provided generous support to assist in

several topical areas, such as arts and culture, E-TOD, and climate mitigation and adaptation. We also leverage funds from state-administered grant programs, including significant resources from the Commonwealth Community Compact (CCC) Program, the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), MassHousing, and Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA).

If you are considering a project that might address one or more of the Best Practices in the Commonwealth Community Compact (CCC) Program, you should either contact MAPC or check out the CCC website at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/community-compact-cabinet>. This could provide an opportunity to leverage additional funding for the project, which in many cases cannot be fully funded by any one source.

Decision-Making Timeline

Although there is no specific deadline for the submission of project concepts, MAPC strongly encourages that proposals be submitted by **March 19, 2021**. Proposals submitted after that date will be considered if technical assistance funding is still available. MAPC will acknowledge receipt of proposed project concepts within two business days. MAPC anticipates beginning the review of submitted applications beginning in March on a rolling basis. For proposals submitted by March 19th, it will be MAPC's goal to announce decisions starting in early April. To check on the status of your submittal, contact TAP Manager Ralph Willmer at 617.933.0734 or rwillmer@mapc.org.

Discuss a Project Concept with MAPC Staff

Please feel free to contact any member of the MAPC staff with whom you have worked on a project in the past or any of the program staff listed below to discuss a potential project.

Departments and Divisions

- Arts and Culture Director Jenn Erickson: 617.933.0759, jerickson@mapc.org
- Clean Energy Director Cameron Peterson: 617.933.0791, cpeterson@mapc.org
- Data Services Director Tim Reardon: 617.933.0718, treardon@mapc.org
- Economic Development Chief Betsy Cowan Neptune: 617.933.0746, bcowan@mapc.org
- Environment Director Martin Pillsbury: 617.933.0747, mpillsbury@mapc.org
- Housing and Neighborhood Development Chief Karina Oliver-Milchman: 617.933.0738, kmilchman@mapc.org
- Land Use Director Mark Racicot: 617.933.0752, mracicot@mapc.org or Principal Planner and TAP Manager Ralph Willmer: 617-933-0734, rwillmer@mapc.org
- Municipal Collaboration Director Mark Fine: 617.933.0789, mfine@mapc.org
- Public Health Director Barry Keppard: 617.933.0750, bkeppard@mapc.org
- Strategic Initiatives Co-Director Emily Torres-Cullinane, 617.933.0735, etorres@mapc.org
- Transportation Director Eric Bourassa: 617.933.0740, ebourassa@mapc.org

Subregional Coordinators

- Inner Core Committee (ICC) Coordinator Karina Milchman, 617.933.0738, kmilchman@mapc.org
- Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) Coordinator Julie Curti, 617.933.0716, jcurti@mapc.org
- MetroWest Regional Collaborative (MWRC) Coordinator Leah Robins, 617.933.0710, lrobins@mapc.org

- North Shore Task Force (NSTF) Coordinator Christian Brandt, 617.933.0796, cbrandt@mapc.org
- North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Coordinator Alex Koppelman, 617.933.0779, akoppelman@mapc.org
- South Shore Coalition (SSC) Coordinator Betsy Cowan, 617.933.0746, bcowan@mapc.org
- Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP) Coordinator Kasia Hart, 617.933.0745, khart@mapc.org
- Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC) Coordinator Josh Eichen, 617.933.0722, jeichen@mapc.org