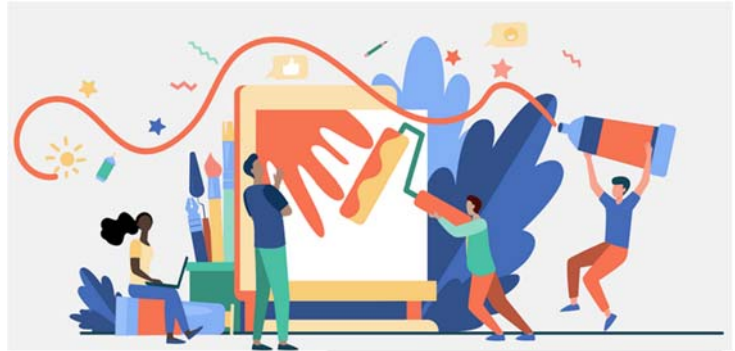


**Executive Director's Report  
Mid-April through Mid-June 2021  
Submitted to the Executive Committee  
June 16, 2021**

**Arts & Culture**

**Creative COVID-19 Public Health Communications**

Over the last three months, MAPC's Arts & Culture and Public Health teams have partnered with nine local artists and designers to produce creative, culturally resonant communications about COVID-19 safety and vaccinations. Artists were identified through a Call for Artists that was released in February and selected with input from a team of public health and public arts advisors. Over \$45,000 in funding has been awarded to produce these public artworks.



On June 22 from 4-5:30pm, MAPC will host a Virtual Gallery Event to unveil the artworks. Join us to celebrate the artists and receive links to the artworks available for digital download and sharing! The pieces include downloadable posters, videos, postcards, public art, comic strips, murals, and other accessible artworks that will be available for public use by health agencies, municipalities, community groups, and the general public. Many of the completed projects will be available in multiple languages. Register here: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Cip34G\\_6QAWcYLx04-36SA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Cip34G_6QAWcYLx04-36SA)

**Creative Placemaking and Heat Resilience**

Staff from Arts & Culture, Public Health, and Clean Energy are developing a guide on creative strategies to mitigate heat and advance resilience in our region. Research includes interviews with nationally-recognized artists and climate experts. The guide centers equity by acknowledging the discriminatory planning practices that have made communities of color highly vulnerable to extreme heat and seeks to encourage interventions that are community based and community led. Publication is estimated to happen in coordination with the heat week in May 2021. Along with the guide, a slide deck will be published on the project website. As part of the Accelerating Climate Resilience July speaking engagement, a speaker has been invited to discuss the role of the artists in addressing heat resilience.

**Cambridge Arts for Health Call for Art**

The Cambridge Arts Council has funded MAPC to create and implement a Call for Art, which seeks artists to develop creative engagement strategies to help implement the city's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The work should be centered around the CHIP's three focus areas: Community and Social Resilience, Healthy Eating and Active Living, and Mental Health. The Call for Art was released on May 18 and closed on June 8. Artists will be selected this month, with an expectation to commence work in September 2021.

## Monthly Open Exchange

The Arts & Culture Department has created a new Open Exchange on the third Wednesday morning of each month. Planners, arts and culture leaders, artists, and others who are interested in the field are invited to attend, share their ideas, interests, and connections. The Open Exchange creates a new learning environment to help build a community of practice around cross-sector arts and culture work across the region. Recent sessions have focused on strategies for managing outdoor cultural programming as the region re-emerges from the pandemic and arts-based projects that invite communities into creative reflection and conversation around healing from injustice. People may [register to attend the session through this link](#).

## Arts & Planning Toolkit Update: Creating Cultural Spaces During the Pandemic

Four new case studies of cultural space organizations are now featured on the [Arts & Planning Toolkit](#). The case studies, which stem from a panel discussion cohosted by MAPC, The Boston Foundation, and the City of Boston, range in purpose from a creative writing center (Grub Street), to a community music workspace (The Record Co.), to a shared commercial kitchen (The Revolving Test Kitchen), to a new black box theater for and by the LGBTQ community (The Theater Offensive). Despite their various purposes, they all leveraged partnerships among the organizations, their city, developers, and other local partners to develop a new physical space during the COVID-19 pandemic. The lessons learned and unique challenges that they faced may be incorporated by planners into future cultural space development. You can view the panel discussion at the link [Bright Spots. Big Questions](#).

## Integrating Art in Our Streets: Shared Streets Case Studies

This spring, MassDOT announced a new round of funding in its Shared Streets and Spaces Program, which provides funding to help communities repurpose street space to accommodate increased walking, biking, dining, and retail. In response to community interest, the Arts & Culture and Transportation Departments produced downloadable case studies of efforts in Melrose, Fall River, and Everett that demonstrate how creative elements can be integrated into projects with Shared Streets funding. These case studies are available on [MAPC's Shared Streets webpage](#) and will soon be available on the forthcoming Arts and Transportation section of the Arts & Planning Toolkit.

## Medfield Creative Placemaking

On June 7, the Cultural Alliance of Medfield (CAM) held a reception with the artist Cedric Douglas to celebrate a new, 125' mural that has been installed at the former Medfield State Hospital campus. Funding provided by MAPC supported the production of the mural. News of the mural has been picked up by [The Boston Globe](#), [WBUR the ARTery](#), and other local news outlets, and the visibility will help CAM raise funds to convert the former chapel and infirmary into a regional cultural center. <https://photos.app.goo.gl/Q8AQBoVsM3BTKXab6>

## Arts & Culture in MetroCommon Policy

Over the last few months, Arts & Culture staff have been researching and developing a slate of cultural policy recommendations as part of MetroCommon2050. In January, staff embarked on a series of one-on-one conversations with artists, educators, advocates, and planners in Massachusetts to help shape these recommendations. On April 15, Arts & Culture staff helped facilitate a focus group to discuss the agency's draft recommendations with a group of municipal staff, planners, funders, and artists, who shared feedback and insights to help strengthen the recommendations. Since then, Arts & Culture staff have incorporated this feedback into their recommendations and engaged in further

conversations with stakeholders in the cultural sector. As the agency finalizes MetroCommon, Arts & Culture staff are exploring opportunities to implement these recommendations through projects and advocacy efforts with our partners in the sector.

### **Lynnstallation**



On June 8, five artists were chosen to present their concepts for the “Lynnstallation,” a piece of public art to be installed by the commuter rail station entrance at Mt. Vernon and Exchange Street. Yetti Frenkel’s “Star-fish,” Fitzhugh Karol’s “Jumbo T-Jax,” Beth Nybeck’s “The In Between,” Orlosky Studio’s “Laces of Lynn,” and The Urban Conga’s “Periscope,” will be presented for public review and input to inform the final selection. Artist presentations will take place on Thursday, June 24 at 5 PM. [Register here.](#) Learn more about the artistic concepts at the Lynn in Common Lynnstallation web page: <https://lynnincommon.com/lynnstallation>.

### **Clean Energy**

#### **Brownfields to Brightfields (B2B) Workshop**

On May 20, MAPC and Groundwork USA hosted a virtual “Brownfields to Brightfields: Unlocking Solar Energy and Equitable Community Development” workshop, attended by over 70 people. A recording of the workshop is available [here](#). Workshop speakers and presenters shared models and real-world examples of B2B projects that advance equity and community benefits, introduced Groundwork USA and MAPC’s newly created [mapping tool](#) for identifying potential B2B sites in Massachusetts, and laid the groundwork for future B2B project partnerships.

Over the past year, with support from the EPA Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization, Groundwork USA and MAPC engaged in extensive research – including 14 stakeholder interviews with municipal staff, state and federal agencies, community organizations, and renewable energy developers – to better understand the opportunities and challenges surrounding B2B projects.

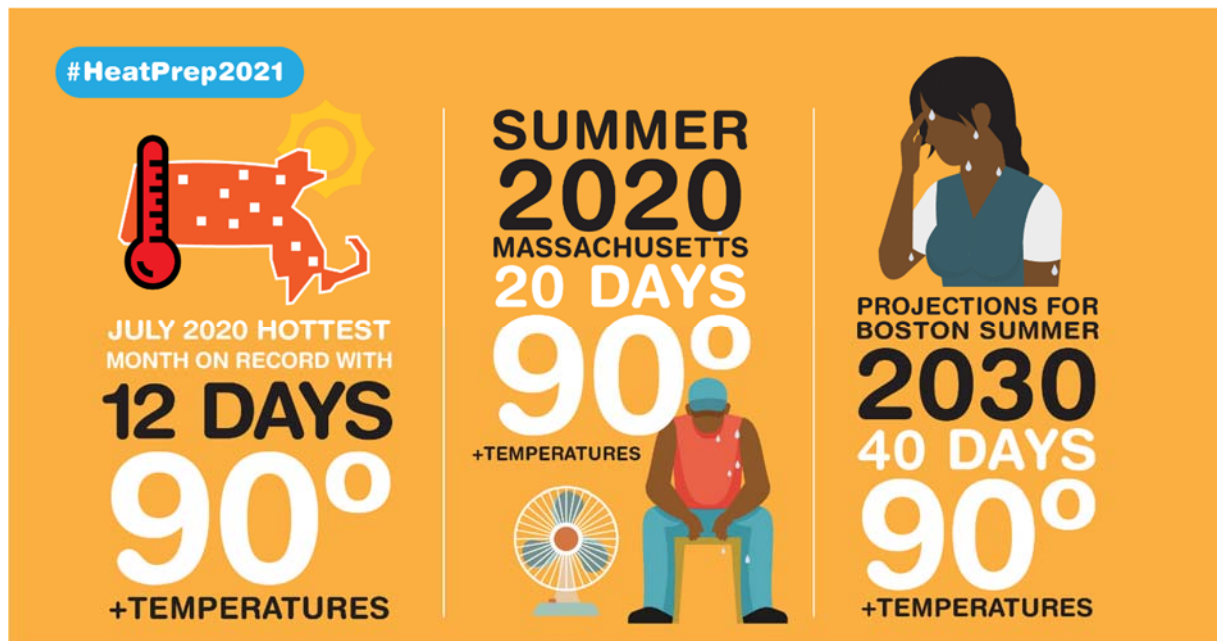
#### **Heat Preparedness Week**

On May 24, MAPC launched the inaugural [Heat Preparedness Week](#). To mark the start of summer, the Clean Energy Department collaborated with Public Health, Communications, and Environment to line

up a stellar series of events and resources to help communities throughout our region to prepare for and mitigate the extreme heat and exacerbated impacts on vulnerable communities.

The week kicked off with a virtual public forum ["From Snow Days to Heat Waves: Climate Impacts on Heat and Health in the Boston Area"](#). MAPC co-hosted the event with Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) and Museum of Science, Boston. The event included speakers from across government, non-profits, and academic institutions.

Throughout Heat Prep Week, MAPC focused on a different theme each day, including our [peak demand notification program](#) and [extreme heat resources](#), and a comprehensive [social media toolkit](#) was sent out to partners to disseminate far and wide. Press coverage included an [op-ed in Commonwealth Magazine](#) co-authored by Rebecca Davis (MAPC) and Melanie Gárate (MyWRA).



### Ride for Hire Electrification Working Group Policy Recommendations

In May, MAPC's Clean Energy and Transportation Departments finalized the policy brief that resulted from the Ride for Hire Electrification Working Group. In the fall of 2020, EOEEA invited MAPC to serve as the primary facilitator and convener of the Working Group to develop policy and incentive recommendations to accelerate electrification of the ride-for-hire industry, which includes transportation network companies (TNCs), taxi, and livery.

The Working Group convened five times virtually from October 2020 to April 2021 and included representation from the TNCs, taxi and livery industries, utilities, state agencies, environmental groups, and the private sector. Strong and near consensus support was reached for all 14 of the final policy proposals, which focus on vehicle incentives, charging infrastructure, dedicated funding sources, and education and driver incentives. The final policy brief will be available [here](#) later this month.

## **Data Services**

### **Race and Ethnicity in Long-Range Forecasting**

At the end of May the MAPC Research team completed a paper titled *Demographic Forecasting by Race and Ethnicity: 'Segregation Scenarios' and Environmental Justice Analyses*. This report, funded by the Consortium for Scenario Planning at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, examined the state of practice for creating forecasts by race and ethnicity across the country. The report also analyzed discussions from two focus groups with practitioners and academics, which examined the technical, political, and ethical complexities of conducting these forecasts and scenarios. The report ended with a modeling exercise, which tested how different methods of forecasting race and ethnicity would affect delineation of Environmental Justice communities in future years. The project uses the literature review, stakeholder engagement, and modeling exercise to create a framework for developing racially-explicit small-area forecasts, which are necessary for conducting Environmental Justice analyses.

### **CommonWealth Builder Baseline Analysis**

MassHousing contracted with Data Services in late 2020 to prepare a baseline analysis on housing availability for middle-income households across Massachusetts to support MassHousing's new CommonWealth Builder program. The CommonWealth Builder program is a \$60 million fund intended to spur the construction of for-sale homes affordable to households with moderate incomes, particularly in Gateway Cities. It will provide subsidies of up to \$150,000 per unit, up to a maximum of \$5 million per development, for new middle-income-restricted homes in Gateway Cities, the City of Boston, or Qualified Census Tracts.

MAPC's analysis showed that of the more than 400,000 home sale transactions between 2000 and 2019, only 24 percent would have been affordable to a low-moderate income household at 70 percent of the state median income and 57 percent would have been affordable to a high-moderate income household at 120 percent of the state median income. We found that middle-income housing attainability is greater in Gateway cities (with the exception of those in the MAPC region) and, more generally, in Central/Western MA. By contrast, middle-income home purchase opportunities are rare or non-existent in most Eastern Massachusetts suburban municipalities and the Cape and Islands. Affordable transactions tended to be sales of pre-existing stock, with very few new construction sales generally, and even fewer that were affordable. According to our analysis, latent demand for middle-income housing tends to be highest in Regional Urban Centers where there are large middle-income populations and relatively few middle-income homeowners.

In places like Metro Boston's Inner Core, where there is intense competition for home sales, new attainable supply and financial supports are critical to increasing homeownership among middle-income households. In other areas of the state where there is less competition, there may be other barriers to homeownership. We looked into the demographic characteristics of existing middle-income homeowners to understand where there are gaps that MassHousing may be able to address through their programs. We found the largest gaps across dimensions of race, age, presence of children, and English language proficiency. Surprisingly, we found little difference in homeownership rates across educational attainment of middle-income households.

### **Data Requests**

Between April and June, Data Services answered and catalogued 23 data requests. About a third of these requests were initiated by MAPC staff; the other 15 were initiated directly by stakeholders representing governments, news media, academic or research institutions, and other organizations.



The most-requested information type for this period was again housing data. Requests included data and analysis on the likely impact of the expiration of eviction moratorium on eviction filings, data and maps on the racial homeownership gap, and documentation on MassBuilds and information about how MAPC incorporates MassBuilds data into housing projections.

### **Land Use Projections for Dorchester Bay City Study**

Over the last two months, Data Services staff have met repeatedly with colleagues at CTPS, MassDOT, and the project consultant VHB to review and update land use projections for future development in the neighborhoods surrounding the Dorchester Bay City redevelopment project (Bayside Expo Center and adjacent properties). New data from the MassBuilds development pipeline database was leveraged to improve MAPC forecasts of housing and employment growth originally created for the last LRTP. These new forecasts have been passed on to modeling staff at CTPS, who will use them as inputs for the Build and No-Build alternative runs of the regional travel model. This marks the first time MAPC staff were so closely involved in the discussions and decisions on creating these updated land use forecasts with MassDOT and the developer's consultant team and has hopefully paves the way for similar levels of collaboration on future projects.

### **Boston Area Research Initiative Conference**

MAPC was once again well-represented at the 2021 BARI Conference, which took place over four consecutive Fridays in April and May. Sarah Philbrick presented research on post-COVID housing instability and evictions; Conor Gately discussed MAPC's work on inequities in exposure to roadway air pollution; and Chris Kuschel gave a preview of MAPC's forthcoming report on "Retrofitting Suburbia." Hundreds of public employees, researchers, and community members attended the conference, which provides an excellent venue for sharing our work. MAPC received multiple shout-outs throughout the conference, most notably during the closing plenary session with four Boston mayoral candidates. During that session, multiple candidates stressed the need for regional approaches and named MAPC as an important research and data asset.

## ***Environment***

### **Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMPs)**

MAPC held a virtual Public Listening Session for the Woburn HMP on June 3. Participants provided photos and mapping that highlighted flooding and drainage concerns and advocated for adopting water conservation requirements.

MAPC also kicked off HMPs for Lynn and Nahant. The first HMP Local Team meetings for Lynn took place on May 6, and for Nahant on June 10.

MAPC facilitated the final public meeting on the draft Saugus Hazard Mitigation Plan 2021 Update hosted by the Saugus Planning Board on June 3. This combined MVP and Hazard Mitigation project is one of several MAPC projects that began pre-pandemic, and had to transition to remote team meetings, public presentations, online surveys, and listening sessions over the last year in order to complete the project. The project is on track to be completed and submitted to MEMA and EEA by June 30, the contract deadline for the Saugus MVP grant.

MAPC facilitated final working meetings of the Topsfield MVP/HMP Core Team on May 20 and the Carlisle MVP/HMP Core Team on May 26. MAPC is preparing for the final public meetings in these towns on June 24 and June 16 respectively.

MAPC facilitated a remote Public Listening Session for the Dover MVP project on May 4. A Qualtrics survey was also posted online to allow residents to review and comment on the plan for several weeks after the listening session.

### **Accelerating Climate Resiliency Grant**

Contract agreements are underway for the third round of grants under the ACR program, funded by the Barr Foundation. Awards will be one year in duration and up to \$50,000 per awardee.

MAPC facilitated an introductory workshop for the Resilience Community of Practice (RCOP) for the FY21 Winter grantees on May 25, bringing together grantees working on projects funded by the third round of ACR grants. The next RCOP workshop will take place on June 24, which will include grantees from both the second and third round of ACR grants (as well as a couple presentations from first round grantees). The focus for this workshop will be community engagement lessons and best practices.

MAPC also hosted the second event of the Speaker Series, which is available free of charge to the public and occurs every other month. This event took place on May 25 and featured a conversation with Jacqueline Patterson, Director of the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program. Ms. Patterson highlighted her current work and shared thoughts on how to address climate change while also advancing a just transition to a clean, cooperative, and resilient economy.

### **MEPA Project Review**

The projects listed below for the region were filed with the MEPA office and were ranked by MAPC for the level of review. The MAPC review categories are defined as follows:

- A Major regional project to be reviewed by the Officers and/or Executive Committee
- B Regional project to be reviewed by staff and approved by Executive Director
- C Local or regional project to be tracked by MAPC; no MEPA review needed

Summary of MEPA Projects recently reviewed and ranked by MAPC:

MEPA #	PROJECT	COMMUNITY	MEPA STATUS	MAPC RANKING
16024	Riverside Station Redevelopment	NEWTON	SDEIR	B
16027	411 Waverley Oaks Road Wetland Remediation	WALTHAM	Single EIR	C
16250	244-284 A Street	BOSTON	Draft EIR	C
16018	16, 18, & 20R Franklin Street	SALEM	Single EIR	C
16365	Strongwater Crossing Subdivision	SALEM	NPC	C
16385	Meadowbrook Commons and Coolidge Crossing	SHERBORN	ENF	C
16387	Boston Children's Hospital Weymouth	WEYMOUTH	ENF	C
16391	Proposed Convenience Store with Gas Station and Warehouse	WRENTHAM	ENF	C
16369	Stormwater Improvements Along Route 1 and Interstate 95	CANTON, NORWOOD	ENF	C

16371	Merrymount Park Pedestrian Boardwalk Project	QUINCY	ENF	C
16372	Hanover Weymouth	WEYMOUTH	ENF	C
16377	28 Fitchburg	SOMERVILLE	ENF	C
16382	Cedar Edge and Cedar Crossing	WALPOLE	ENF	C

## ***Government Affairs***

### **FY22 Budget**

Both branches have passed their version of the budget, which is currently before a six-member Conference Committee to hammer out differences between the two bills. The House budget would fund DLTA at \$3 million, representing level-funding from the FY21 budget. The Senate declined to fund DLTA. The House funded Shannon at \$11.3 million and the Senate funded Shannon at \$12.3 million.

MAPC has advocated for increased funding for our local public health systems. We are hoping the Conference Committee accepts Senate funding of \$13 million to provide critical resources for our communities.

We are also watching a handful of provisions around transportation. We will encourage the Conference Committee to adopt a Senate provision that would increase our TNC fees and update our TNC data collection provisions. We will also encourage them to adopt House language that will increase base funding for Regional Transit Authorities.

### **Extending Emergency Provisions**

In mid-May, Governor Baker announced that the Commonwealth's state of emergency would end on June 15. The expiration of the state of emergency declaration has profound impact on many of the ways that cities and towns have been operating since the pandemic began. The Legislature is considering many bills that would allow for some of the provisions enacted under the state of emergency to continue. MAPC has weighed in to urge the Legislature to extend many of these provisions, and in some instances, to consider long-term or permanent changes to our laws that would make it easier for cities and towns to meet their residents' needs.

In particular, we have urged the Legislature to enact permanent changes that would allow for remote participation for public meetings. We also support remote Town Meetings, and we urged the Legislature, as we have since the start of the pandemic, to expand this provision to open Town Meeting rather than simply representative Town Meetings.

We also urged the Legislature to continue some of the provisions that have helped to maintain economic activity during the pandemic, such outdoor table service.

Our research has shown that recovery remains unequal, and many of the people who were most deeply impacted by the pandemic have not yet secured a foothold on their own economic recovery. The Legislature enacted two important emergency tenant protection provisions that we hope they will continue at least until the end of this year. The first provision provides tenants with more information about their rights and available resources when they receive a "notice to quit." The second provision requires a court to continue a case when a tenant has a pending rental assistance application.



So far, we have weighed in with the several committees that are considering these bills, including the Joint Committee on State Administration and Oversight, the Municipalities Committee, Senate Ways and Means, and members of Leadership. We are following this issue very closely.

[Ed. Note: On Wednesday morning, the Governor signed the bill the Legislature passed late yesterday resolving some but not all of the issues related to extending orders and procedures from the Emergency Declaration. We will provide further information as it becomes available.]

## ***Land Use***

### **Zoning**

#### Norfolk Town Center

After three years of effort, with many twists and turns, Town Meeting on May 8 approved a series of zoning changes to an already established mixed-use town center district. The changes increase the allowable density, improve the shared parking provision, add references to design guidelines crafted for the district, increase the building height (a few feet for flexibility, no increase in stories), clean up inconsistencies and remove unused portions of the bylaw, increase required bike parking, refine the allowed uses to better fit with the vision of a mixed-use town center (prohibiting auto-oriented uses, adding a few uses that could occupy non-residential ground floor space), increase affordable housing requirements, and redefine the subdistrict boundaries. The changes should advance Norfolk's goal of encouraging mixed-use development in the town center.

#### Hingham Harbor and Downtown Sustainable Vision Plan

MAPC has been working with Hingham and the stakeholders in the Hingham Harbor and Downtown area over the past ten months to define a district vision, goals, and strategies to improve the downtown and harborfront area. The sustainable vision plan defines a district-wide vision, goals, and strategies to draw these two subareas together as one complementary district that leverages the assets of a compact, walkable, and historic downtown with the scenic and recreational benefits of access to the harbor. In addition, goals and strategies look to strengthen the economic vitality, coastal resilience, and sustainability of future investments in the district. The Sustainable Vision Plan has been drafted based on the stakeholder discussions that occurred over six meetings and has recently completed a public comment period.

### **Master Plans**

#### Wakefield Vision 2030

MAPC held a second public open house workshop for the Wakefield Vision 2030 process on April 28. With approximately 55 virtual attendees, the participatory workshop was paired with a 3-week long community survey to gather input for determining community consensus goals. The second survey in April/May resulted in 254 responses (in addition to the first survey's 490 responses in March).

The Wakefield Vision 2030 process is an aspirational community visioning-for-planning process to gather ideas on how to shape the town's future in terms of areas for growth, preservation and enhancement; as well as to establish common ground ideas and shared values for future decision making. The visioning process covers 12 topics from housing and open space to expanding the cultural landscape. The 15-member advisory committee and the municipal team vetted questions for all three community surveys. Each public workshop event covers four different topics, and is paired with its own set of survey questions after each workshop. In addition to other methods, outreach has included paid

Facebook-for-Business advertisements to ensure screentime on people's devices and computers. The presentation slides and meeting recording can be viewed [here](#) and [here](#), respectively.

**TONIGHT'S VISIONING TOPICS**

**THE PUBLIC REALM**  
EXPANDING THE CULTURAL & HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

INFORMATIONAL SLIDES – 5-10 MINUTES  
SMALL BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS – 20-25 MINUTES

**ENHANCING PUBLIC FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE**

INFORMATIONAL SLIDES – 5-10 MINUTES  
SMALL BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS – 20-25 MINUTES

**ADAPTING TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

INFORMATIONAL SLIDES – 5-10 MINUTES  
SMALL BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS – 10-15 MINUTES

**ENHANCING BUSINESS / ACTIVITY DISTRICTS & OPPORTUNITIES: PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER**

INFORMATIONAL SLIDES – 5-10 MINUTES  
SMALL BREAKOUT GROUP DISCUSSIONS – 30-35 MINUTES

wakefield.ma.us/vision-2030 3

### Wrentham

More than 550 residents responded to an online survey on the Master Plan Housing and Economic Development goals and potential strategies to meet those goals. Among other things, the survey revealed considerable concern from the community regarding Affordable Housing. Based on the survey findings, MAPC staff updated and expanded the goals and strategies and shared a full draft with various town committees, board members, and staff for their suggestions. The Master Plan Steering Committee met to review the feedback and engaged in productive debate about the final wording of the Goals to reflect the survey findings, feedback from community leaders, and town needs based on the existing conditions assessment. In particular, the goal related to Affordable Housing was edited down to focus on staying above the 10% threshold, rather than meeting local and regional housing needs. The Master Plan Steering Committee worked hard to seek consensus and to include language that would enable the Master Plan to move forward with widespread town support, while preserving implementation strategies that will address housing needs for lower- and middle-income households. The next step is to release a fully formatted version for at least two weeks of public review.

In addition to the community's concern about Affordable Housing, community leaders have voiced concern about referencing race and diversity in the context of planning for housing. In particular, the Steering Committee's first draft of the Housing goals supported greater Affordable Housing options to promote diversity. However, including language about socioeconomic diversity in the Housing goals met considerable political pushback and has since been removed.

It has been a struggle for staff to address comments made by participants in the process that dismiss, and in fact discourage, discussion of racial diversity in the plan. Senior staff have assisted project staff to address these issues as part of an ongoing attempt to support staff in challenging public processes at a time of highly polarized perspectives.

## Dedham

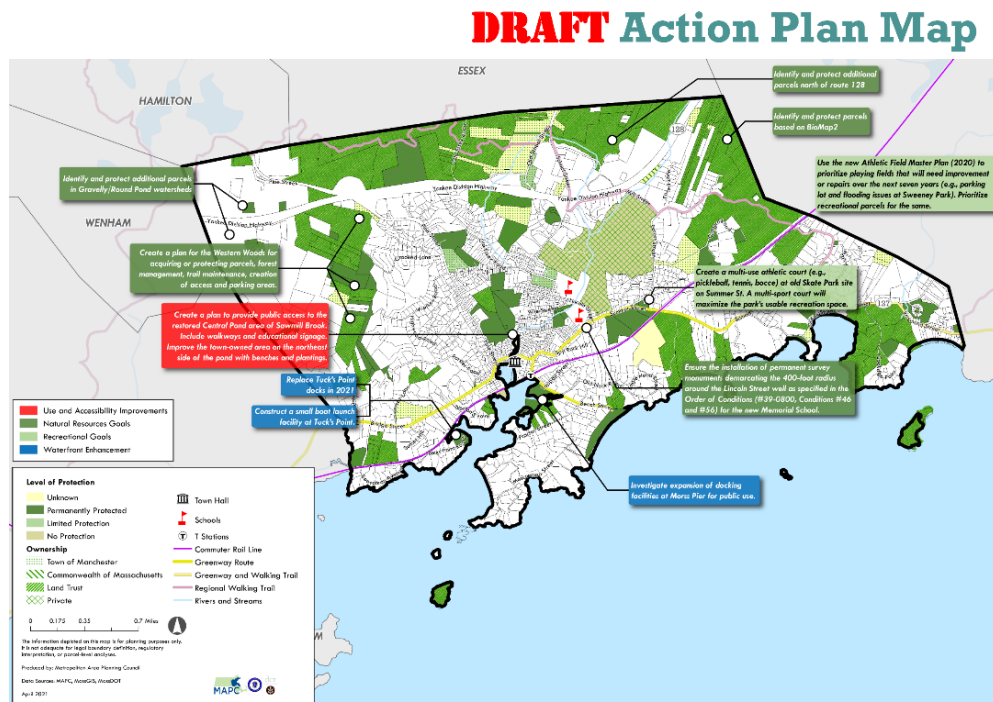
The Designing Dedham 2030 Master Plan process has reached a critical milestone establishing goals within each of the master plan topics. The Master Plan Committee has voted to support draft goals across eight plan topics including land use and zoning, transportation and connectivity, economic development, housing, public health and livability, natural, cultural, and historic resources, community facilities and services, and governance. The established goals will organize and define the strategies and actions of the master plan. The goals were developed through a series of ten Master Plan Committee meetings, and three Virtual Community Open Houses.

Similar to Wrentham, the Dedham process has involved disturbing statements regarding race. Project planners have responded by encouraging further direct conversations about race in the master plan in ways that advance the goals of bringing together parties with differing views to build understanding and empathy and giving space for underrepresented voices to be heard.

## Open Space and Recreation Plans (OSRP)

Work on the Manchester OSRP is nearing completion. In May, MAPC and the town hosted a virtual forum and open house to collect feedback on the draft Seven Year Action Plan. The OSRP draft has been forwarded to the state Division of Conservation Services for review and posted on the town's website for public comment. In the next few weeks, MAPC staff and the OSRP Steering Committee will work to address comments from DCS and the public, as well as to present the plan and collect support letters from the many Boards and Committees that have been involved in the planning process.

Similarly, Gloucester and Nahant also hosted recent on-line open houses for their OSRPs. Both communities will be launching OSRP surveys in the coming month to solicit community feedback on park and open space priorities as well as recreational preferences and programming.



## Grant Proposals

MAPC has worked with a number of communities to file grant applications to obtain state funds to allow the municipalities to undertake a variety of Planning Studies.

### Proposals for EEA Planning Grants

- Canton: Review and update downtown Canton mixed-use zoning bylaw and design review guidelines.
- Stoughton: Undertake a study of the Route 27 commercial corridor in southeastern Stoughton and make recommendations to improve the economic viability of the area as well as establishment of mixed-use (residential and commercial) subareas in appropriate locations.
- Norfolk: Lead a robust public process to review alternative re-use options for the Southwood Hospital site, including implementation of the Housing Production Plan recommendations related to using this site to address affordable and market rate housing needs for the town.

### Proposals for EOHED One Stop Community Planning Grants

- Wakefield: Follow up ongoing visioning process by undertaking a full master plan.
- Wrentham: Follow up ongoing phase 1 master plan with second phase to complete the remaining comprehensive plan elements.
- Lexington: Undertake initial analysis, public process, and bylaw development to examine a possible 40R district on Massachusetts Avenue in east Lexington.
- Southborough: Complete an economic development plan and prepare recommendations for zoning changes for underutilized parcels along Route 9.

## Housing

### Ashland for All

Ashland's local boards voted unanimously to adopt the updated 2021 Ashland Housing Production Plan (HPP) on May 19. The plan was approved by DHCD on June 3. MAPC assisted the town with drafting its last HPP in 2015 and worked with town staff and the HPP Steering Committee to update the plan over the last 7 months. The HPP update includes new recommendations, including priority strategies the town can implement over the next five years and a detailed parcel analysis that identifies approximately 50 sites where mixed-income and Affordable Housing development will be encouraged through planning and policy.

The HPP update marks the completion of the first phase of Ashland for All. The project team is currently producing a "story map" with the HPP update recommendations and information about the next phase of the project. Moving forward, MAPC is working to draft a town-wide inclusionary housing bylaw and will be engaging the public and local development community as a part of that process.

### Arlington Fair Housing Action Plan

MAPC, working with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the Town of Arlington, recently released the Arlington Fair Housing Action Plan for public comment, which runs through June 25. This document analyzes the fair housing impacts of Arlington's housing market, housing stock, local policies and governance, fair housing enforcement, and more through granular quantitative and qualitative research. In response, the plan then recommends eight broad strategies and 41 specific actions the town can take to combat discrimination and promote fair housing choice. The plan will undergo one more round of edits in response to public comments before a final draft is released.



### TRIC/SWAP Shared Housing Services Office (SHSO)

At a TRIC and SWAP joint subregional meeting in April, MAPC staff presented the findings from its research regarding Share Housing Services Offices' (SHSO) best practices. Following this meeting, MAPC met individually with staff and committees from interested towns to discuss whether and how an SHSO might benefit their community. In early June, nine towns interested in participating in the future SHSO completed a municipal needs assessment, which MAPC will use to analyze capacity and identify overlapping needs. This summer, after municipalities have confirmed their participation, work will begin to develop a new SHSO.

### Intergenerational Home-Sharing

MAPC completed phase I of its research on intergenerational home-sharing, the practice of third-party agencies connecting older adults with an extra bedroom to younger adults looking for housing. MAPC partnered with the cities of Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville to study the practice and the potential for inter-municipal home-sharing collaborations. To do this, MAPC interviewed home-sharing practitioners across the country and crafted one of the nation's first systematic estimate of the supply of homes that could support home-sharing service. MAPC looks forward to a potential second phase of research, which would continue its qualitative study of national home-sharing practices, estimate the demand of home-sharing guests in the region, and interview prospective local partners who could help launch a regional home-sharing program.

## **Economic Development**



### Regional Immigrant Entrepreneur Storytelling Project

In response to challenges of both COVID-19 and social barriers that existed prior to the pandemic, this project focuses on stories of resilient Asian immigrant entrepreneurs. Earlier this year, the Economic Development and Arts & Culture teams hosted a film premiere and panel discussion to share the videos and findings of the project. A broad audience attended both events, including local artists, business owners, municipal staff, State Senator John Kennan and State Representative Tackey Chan. The final report is now available:

[https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FINAL-Regional-Immigrant-Storytelling\\_English.pdf](https://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FINAL-Regional-Immigrant-Storytelling_English.pdf)

Economic Development Planner II Jennifer Kaplan completed the final report for this project, in partnership with Arts & Culture. The report includes an analysis of Asian immigrant entrepreneurs in Greater Boston as well as policy recommendations to increase support for Asian immigrant entrepreneurs,

particularly as incidents of anti-Asian racism continue to rise. The team is now preparing for a second phase of the project to be launched later this summer. View the full report [online](#).

The project has generated press and speaking engagements from a half-dozen organizations within and outside of Massachusetts. It also helped spark a series of coordination conversations with other organizations in the region including Public Radio Exchange (PRX), MassDevelopment, and the Barr



Foundation to explore additional ways that immigrant experiences and needs in Massachusetts can be amplified through storytelling.

#### Regional Recovery Work

The Economic Development team has prioritized working with communities to help them best leverage ARPA funding. Currently, the team is working with a group of approximately 20 municipalities to explore pooling some of the municipal ARPA resources to create a regional program to support businesses owned by people of color and women. The Economic Development team is also exploring the development of a similar regional initiative to help communities leverage ARPA funding to invest in broadband infrastructure in their communities and in the region.

#### Digital Access

In addition to that work mentioned above, Senior Planner Josh Eichen, in partnership with the Digital Services team, has expanded this new area of practice through a successful application for \$550,000 in funding from the Mass Broadband Initiative (MBI) to expand WiFi access in the Gateway Cities of Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Quincy and Revere. MAPC will provide planning and procurement assistance to the communities to facilitate the purchase and installation of needed equipment. The project complements the digital access plans currently underway in Chelsea, Everett and Revere.

#### Local Rapid Recovery Plans

MAPC hosted community meetings in each of the five communities we are assisting as they participate in DHCD's Local Rapid Recovery Plan program (Braintree, Framingham, Hudson, Lynn, and Revere). During each community meeting, staff presented key findings from the diagnostic portion of the project and solicited input on potential recommendations to revitalize the business districts. In several communities, the meetings were interpreted into preferred languages, and media outlets provided great coverage of the event. The project team has now begun developing policy recommendations, which will be completed by the end of August.

#### Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation Strategic Plan

As part of the Economic Development team's work to advance economic recovery and resilience, Josh Eichen led the successful completion of a strategic plan for the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, a CDC in Boston. The plan used a community resilience framework developed by the Economic Development team and leveraged the expertise of MAPC staff from Public Health, Housing, Strategic Initiatives, and Community Engagement. The plan provides the organization with a comprehensive assessment of the community's needs and opportunities post-COVID and will form the basis of the organization's operational plan for the next three years.

### ***Municipal Collaboration***

#### **Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC)**

MAPC has been working with hospitals and local public health departments in the region to complete any remaining purchases before the end of the fiscal year. Simultaneously, we have crafted budgets and developed scopes of work for contractors the upcoming fiscal year.

MAPC and the Region 3 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units are partnering to conduct an Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) Mobilization/Demobilization drill on June 24, using HMCC's recently procured mobile vaccination equipment. HMCC staff collaborated with local public health officials to procure equipment that can be used by municipalities to support local mobile immunization clinics. The HMCC procured two 15x30' Drive Thru Tents, which will allow municipalities to conduct outdoor vaccination clinics, while allowing residents to receive a vaccine from their vehicle. Along with the tents, the region

procured generators, lights, heaters, storage containers, and a trailer to transport the equipment to vaccination sites.

Over the past two months, MAPC, in conjunction with NERAC and NorthEast EMS, have worked to finalize a regional PPE cache for stakeholders. The cache will be located in Amesbury at NorthEast EMS. NorthEast EMS will assist the region in operating the cache. The funding from MDPH to support this cache is specifically for PPE. This cache is designed to assist healthcare facilities in emergencies by offering medical grade PPE items. Throughout May, bids were received on all the necessary PPE that will be housed in the cache. On June 30, MAPC staff will host a regional stakeholder meeting to unveil the cache as well as logistics, policies and procedures related to accessing the cache.

### **North Shore Regional IT Collaborative**

Over the past year, MAPC has been assisting North Shore communities to establish the North Shore Regional IT Collaborative. The Collaborative comprises Danvers, Middleton, Hamilton, Wenham, Manchester-by-the-Sea, and Essex and aims to share resources and knowledge to improve internal IT offerings. As all the communities face similar challenges, the Collaborative looks to establish a collective vision and improve regional resources.

Over the last few months, MAPC and the communities have finalized and executed an MOU to establish the Collaborative, set to take effect on July 1. This agreement outlines the governance structure and cost sharing implications of participation. Over FY22 the Collaborative aims to inventory all IT infrastructure and assets while working to standardize equipment and managed service providers. The Collaborative will also work towards improving the communities' cybersecurity posture.

The Collaborative recently received a \$100,000 grant through the Commonwealth's Efficiency and Regionalize Grant (ERG) Program to continue work on a regional fiber loop that would enable the use of Danvers as a regional data center.

## ***Strategic Initiatives***

### **MetroCommon2050 Update**

#### MetroCommonMay!

Our final big push for feedback on the plan just wrapped up after MetroCommon May, an all-out effort to go back to all those that have engaged with us over the past three years seeking feedback on the provisional goals and draft policy recommendations. We are making final edits to these plan elements in June. MetroCommon May kicked off with the premiere of *Living Together*, a short film highlighting the stories of some of our region's residents. Thank you for all of your support with MetroCommon May! Highlights included:

- The survey – we received 376 responses, with over 1,000 comments!
- The *Living Together* film screening – 80 participants.
- Legislative engagement – 60 legislators and staff participated in a briefing on the future of work and 20-30 participated in two focus groups on policy recommendations.
- Four mini-grant focus groups with Union Capital Boston, Greenroots, Wellspring Family Services, and Teen Empowerment – we engaged over 100 constituents in these conversations.

- Council Meeting – 120 participants (98 Council members) joined us for a conversation on MC2050 implementation with a focus on an equitable and resilient recovery from the pandemic.

With these thanks, we also want to update you on the timeline for MetroCommon. We will be submitting the plan to the Executive Committee for approval on September 22, 2021, and we will submit it to the Council for approval October 15. Over the next month we will be working on incorporating edits from MetroCommon May and updating the Digital Hub. The last two recommendations are being released this week on Public Safety and Municipal Finance. We would love to hear your thoughts and feedback on these policies as well.

#### Policy Recommendations

A major focus for MetroCommon over the past two months has been vetting the draft policy recommendations through focus groups, meetings convened by our community partners, internal review by MAPC leadership and staff, and through the MetroCommon May public outreach. We've received thousands of comments on the drafts. Government Affairs Director Lizzi Weyant and Policy Analyst Kasia Hart are leading the process for considering and incorporating feedback into the final versions. This work will continue over the next few weeks. This week, we hope to release the final two drafts on public safety and municipal finance.

#### **Community Engagement**

In an effort to welcome new Council members after the Spring Annual Meeting, Community Engagement staff led a New Members MAPC Orientation hosted by Council President Erin Wortman. Past President Keith Bergman also volunteered his time to share how people can get involved in the Council. It was a wonderful way to get to know incoming members, their interests and have them take full advantage of their role and new network. We will be working on additional initiatives to engage our Council and increase participation.

A new Diversity Equity & Inclusion Coalition has been formed by municipal DEI staff and volunteers in the region. MAPC was invited by the co-chairs, Jillian Harvey, Arlington's Director of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division, and Abu Toppin, Beverly's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director, to help support the Coalition. MAPC will be attending monthly meetings and coordinating this growing community of practice.

CTPS has a new Equity Taskforce and Community Engagement team members are joining the group to combine outreach efforts. The taskforce will kick off this summer in preparation for the MPO's FY22 planning initiatives.

Throughout the past year, the Community Engagement team has continued to meet the needs of municipalities and their remote meetings. In May, MAPC staff helped run Norwood and Stoughton's Spring Town Meetings, marking the fifth and sixth time we have run this endeavor. In May, the CE team led a Virtual Community Engagement Training for the Mel King Institute with AmeriCorps members that are spending a year working in Metro Boston. We hope that the next training with MKI is in person in the late fall. Lastly, we have launched a Community Engagement Newsletter with updates, tips and resources. To keep up with the Community Engagement team's activities and its network, [please sign up here to receive it!](#)

## **Subregions**

Inner Core and MAGIC have begun work-planning to prepare for the upcoming year, exploring climate resiliency and transportation related key projects, among other topics. North Shore and North Suburban hosted a joint subregional breakfast hosted by Senator Joan Lovely and featuring a panel of speakers discussing accomplishments of the past year and priorities for the next. Metro West and SWAP jointly hosted a Subregional Breakfast with Senate President Spilka to discuss key priorities within both subregions as they relate to state legislation and work of the Senate President. South Shore launched a last-mile pilot project focusing on ways to improve access from transit nodes to key destinations on the South Shore. Progress was also made on the Site Readiness project, focusing on providing recommendations for increasing water/wastewater capacity for six sites in five communities on the South Shore. TRIC has been meeting to discuss ARPA funding opportunities and planning for a July event focused on diversifying boards and committees in the region. Lastly, each subregion hosted the MetroCommon2050 team to discuss the draft policy recommendations and collect comments and questions from subregional members. These presentations often tied in with discussions of recovery efforts as we move into this next year.

## **Public Health**

### **Randolph Community Wellness Project**

The Randolph Community Wellness Project seeks to improve community health, and advance racial and health equity through putting into action the [Randolph Community Wellness Plan](#). MAPC is partnering with Randolph on this implementation project over a five-year period. Initially the project will work to advance the goals related to “Health Care & Public Health”, “Community”, and “Schools”. In this first year of the project, a steering committee has been established and activated; four working groups have been established to advance the three prioritized goals of the Community Wellness Plan; and a partnership has formed to explore establishment of a federally qualified health center, and in doing so meet the critical needs for expanded health services.

The Randolph Community Wellness Project seeks to improve community health, and advance racial and health equity through putting into action the [Randolph Community Wellness Plan](#). Recent efforts have focused on bringing a much-needed community health center to Randolph, a key recommendation of the Plan. A recent partnership between MAPC, the Wellness Project, Randolph Public Schools, the town, and Codman Square Health Center, has sought funding to build and start operations of a health center in Randolph High School. Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley is actively supporting these efforts. She is advocating for \$1 million to be allocated by Congress for the renovation and construction costs. If funded, the school-based health center will provide primary care and behavioral health services to students, their families, and the broader community.

The pandemic hit Randolph harder than most communities and made clear the critical importance of building health service infrastructure. In a town with limited health services, disproportionately high chronic disease rates, and a unique racial and ethnic diversity, the establishment of a health center will make meaningful advancements in community health equity.

### **Public Health Excellence Grant Awards**

DPH announced awards in May for the Public Health Excellence Grant opportunity, which will support shared public health efforts across municipal lines. Of the 29 grant awards, 13 proposed arrangements include municipalities in the MAPC region. Through the Public Health and Municipal

Collaboration Departments, MAPC will be involved in facilitating and supporting at least seven of the shared service arrangements. The arrangement include a mix of positions, including health inspectors, public health nurses, and epidemiologists, and MAPC will assist in coordination of working groups, development and hiring of the new positions, and drafting and execution of the municipal arrangements (e.g., IMA, MOU). Through federal and state funding, these arrangements represent significant investments in our local and shared public health infrastructure that will protect residents from future communicable diseases and promote equitable health outcomes in our communities.

### **Keep Cool Somerville Mini Grant Program**

Keep Cool Somerville is an initiative to improve community resilience to extreme heat. The initiative began in 2020 as a collaboration between Somerville and MAPC to address the health impacts of climate change. In 2021, the initiative is building upon the findings of earlier community engagement and research to focus on supporting community solutions to address heat.

This spring, community organizations and groups were invited to propose small-scale, pilot projects to improve resilience to heat. The city received ten applications from local community organizations and resident-led groups, for a total funding request that was twice as large as available mini-grant funding. Six teams were selected to implement their projects this summer: Somerville Fresco! (a resident-led heat health group), Somerville Housing Authority, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Clarendon Hill Towers Resident Services, the Bent/House Arts group, and Groundwork Somerville.

The initiative is advised by the Keep Cool Advisory Committee, an interdisciplinary group of city staff and community representatives, and is supported by a grant from the MAPC Accelerating Climate Resiliency Grant Program.

### **Extreme Heat Preparedness**

The Public Health Department is leading or partnering on several other heat preparedness initiatives this summer, including the inaugural Heat Prep Week (May 24-28), the COVID-Safe Cooling Grant Program, the Metro Mayors Coalition Heat Preparedness Plan, and an implementation guide for artist and creative team collaboration on heat resilience interventions. Across these projects, the Public Health team is providing research, communications, grant administration, and evaluation support.

## ***Transportation***

### **Income-Tiered Electric Community Carshare Launch**

On June 5, Good2Go, an income-tiered and equity-focused electric vehicle carshare program, held a launch event as part of Sanative Fest 2021 at Bartlett Station in Roxbury. E4TheFuture is partnering with Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation, MAPC, Eversource, the City of Boston, and Shared Mobility, Inc. to deploy this project under an Accelerating Clean Transportation Now (ACTNow) grant awarded by MassCEC.

The carshare model allows users to reduce their environmental footprint while sparing insurance costs, maintenance, and other expenses that come with owning a car. Good2Go features tiered pricing, and customers can qualify for the reduced \$5 per hour rate (half the regular rate) by demonstrating enrollment in a public assistance program such as showing a SNAP or WIC card, a utility bill showing receipt of fuel assistance, or living in affordable housing. The hourly rate includes charging, insurance,



and roadside assistance for all customers. There are now six electric vehicles deployed at Roxbury Community College, Bartlett Station, and in Jamaica Plain. Registration is open! [Evgood2go.org](http://Evgood2go.org)!



### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning**

In May, staff kicked off bicycle and pedestrian planning projects in Wakefield, Milton, and Mattapan, with a focus on safe bicycle connections to important local destinations and regional trail networks. In addition to these three discrete planning studies, MAPC has been participating in a regional convening of public and private sector active streets stakeholders hosted by the Conine Foundation, a new family foundation in Boston interested in increasing active transportation modes.

### **Boston MPO**

The MPO has created an ad-hoc committee, chaired by MAPC, to investigate transportation project cost increases and whether the MPO should adopt new policies to estimate project costs more effectively and to consider other options as they go up in cost, such as encouraging value engineering, not funding cost increases, removing projects from the TIP, or other actions. The committee will meet through the summer and present recommendations to the full MPO in September.

### **National Science Foundation Grant to Study Mobility-As-A-Service**

MAPC has partnered with researchers at MIT to submit a \$1 million proposal to the National Science Foundation to study Mobility-As-A-Service (MaaS), which essentially is a smart phone app that provides users with all their transportation options — MBTA, rideshare, bikeshare, walking, personal auto, etc. The app indicates associated travel times and costs, and enables access those services. If the proposal is funded, participants would conduct a pilot experiment by providing the MaaS app to 1,100 low and moderate-income participants in Chelsea and Everett. The pilot would allow participants to choose from pre-constructed bundles of mobility services that better suit individual circumstances and affordability. Public transit will be the backbone of our MaaS pilot, while emerging mobilities like bikesharing and ridehailing will be used to feed into transit services and meet infrequent unanticipated needs. Apart from our partners at MIT, our team includes Everett, Chelsea, several CBOs, the MBTA, and Bluebikes. The findings can inform the design of long-term car-lite strategies for the upcoming transportation management association that will serve the Lower Mystic area.

### ***New Staff***

**Jesse Way** joined the Clean Energy Department in May. As a Clean Energy Specialist II, he will lead the department's clean transportation projects, support climate action planning, and provide technical assistance to communities. Prior to joining MAPC, Jesse worked for The Cadmus Group as a Senior

Analyst. In this role, he supported public sector and non-profit organizations with climate strategy development and policy analysis. He also supported a range of clean transportation projects for state and local governments, including the development of a Clean Transportation Roadmap for the State of New York and developing a playbook to increase access to electric vehicle charging for renters. He holds Master's Degree in Environmental Management from Duke University and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics and Environmental Studies from St. Lawrence University.