



MEMORANDUM

To: MAPC Council Representatives and Other Local Officials
From: Marc D. Draisen, Executive Director
Subject: Call for Project Concepts
Date: December 15, 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 municipalities 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 2022.

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 production and preservation, especially in regard to affordable housing; economic development, including economic recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 recession; regionalization and shared services; municipal effectiveness and efficiency, including municipal IT; public engagement in planning and municipal governance; improving public safety and public safety practices; public health, including response to COVID-19; climate change (mitigation or adaptation/resilience); clean energy and reducing the carbon footprint; fair housing; equitable transit-oriented development (E-TOD); bicycle/pedestrian mobility; environmental and resource protection; creative community placemaking; arts and culture planning; projects to improve equity and inclusion in the region; and research-based proposals or the development of best practices.

Each TAP solicitation includes priorities for that particular year. This year, projects that promote regional collaboration and serve multiple communities, advance racial equity in the region, promote COVID recovery, and/or seek to implement the multi-family requirements for MBTA communities under Housing Choice, 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 provide 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 and hybrid citizen engagement; municipal IT support related to on-line, remote, or hybrid practices; and making “safe streets” initiatives adopted during the pandemic permanent. A number of municipalities in the MAPC region participated in the Local Rapid Recovery Program. TAP can be used to assist in the implementation of the plans prepared under this program.

Compliance with the MBTA community provision of Housing Choice: Enacted as part of the economic development bill in January 2021, new Section 3A of M.G.L. c. 40A (the Zoning Act) requires that an MBTA community (almost every municipality in the MPAC region is considered to be an MBTA community) shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute. See <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities> for more details about the legislation and guidelines.

Consistency with MetroCommon 2050

Projects should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the new regional land use and policy plan, MetroCommon2050. The over-arching themes of MetroCommon are advancing smart growth, regional collaboration, racial and economic equity, and climate and social resilience. We encourage applicants to consider developing projects that advance the action areas and policy recommendations of MetroCommon, which can be found at <https://www.mapc.org/get-involved/metrocommon-2050/>.

Advancing Commonwealth Priorities

Additionally, MAPC shares with the Commonwealth a particular objective of assisting communities seeking to participate in the Housing Choice program. For further information about Housing Choice, see <https://www.mass.gov/housingchoice>. As mentioned above, MAPC is interested in working with municipalities that need assistance in meeting the multi-family dwellings requirement for MBTA communities that was included in the Housing Choice legislation.

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, Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, Community One Stop for Growth, and Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Planning Assistance Grants. MAPC can assist municipalities in preparing applications for these grant programs for projects where the municipality would like to work with MAPC.

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, MAPC is committed to ensuring that groups traditionally under-represented in the planning process are engaged in projects funded by the TAP program.

Therefore, 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.

Program Requirement

Under state law, all 101 municipalities in the MAPC region are entitled to appoint a representative to the Council, the governing body of our agency. Each community may also appoint an alternate. Most communities keep such appointments current, but unfortunately a fair number do not. In order to encourage fuller representation on the Council, we have established a new requirement for TAP funds. This year, in order to qualify for technical assistance, the lead municipality must have appointed a representative to the Council. If you wish to determine the status of your appointments, or to obtain a template for appointing a Council member or alternate, please contact Operations Manager Heidi Anderson at handerson@mapc.org.

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, new zoning, streamlined permitting procedures, inter-municipal agreement, 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, BIPOC constituencies, youth, seniors, recent immigrants, linguistic minorities, 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 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 MetroCommon 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. For instance, the Barr Foundation has in past years provided generous support to assist in several topical areas, such as arts and culture, E-TOD, and climate mitigation and adaptation/resilience. We also leverage funds from state-administered grant programs, including significant resources from the Commonwealth Community Compact (CCC) Program, Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development, 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 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 **January 31, 2022**. 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 January on a rolling basis. For proposals submitted by January

31, it will be MAPC's goal to announce decisions starting in late February. 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 Annis Sengupta: asengupta@mapc.org
- Clean Energy Director Cameron Peterson: cpeterson@mapc.org
- Data Services Director Tim Reardon: treadon@mapc.org
- Economic Development Chief Angela Brown (start date 1-3-22, check MAPC web site for contact information after that time)
- Environment Director Martin Pillsbury: mpillsbury@mapc.org
- Housing and Neighborhood Development Chief Karina Oliver-Milchman: kmilchman@mapc.org
- Land Use Director Mark Racicot: mracicot@mapc.org or Principal Planner and TAP Manager Ralph Willmer: rwillmer@mapc.org
- Municipal Collaboration Director Mark Fine: mfine@mapc.org
- Public Health Director Barry Keppard: bkeppard@mapc.org
- Community Engagement Director Emily Torres-Cullinane: etorres@mapc.org
- Transportation Director Eric Bourassa: ebourassa@mapc.org

Subregional Coordinators

- Inner Core Committee (ICC) Coordinator Karina Oliver-Milchman: kmilchman@mapc.org
- Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) Coordinator Julie Curti: jcurti@mapc.org
- MetroWest Regional Collaborative (MWRC) Coordinator Leah Robins: lrobins@mapc.org
- North Shore Task Force (NSTF) Coordinator Christian Brandt: cbrandt@mapc.org
- North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Coordinator Alex Koppelman: akoppelman@mapc.org
- South Shore Coalition (SSC) Coordinator [Sasha Parodi: sparodi@mapc.org](mailto:sparodi@mapc.org)
- Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP) Coordinator Brian Luther: bluther@mapc.org
- Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC) Coordinator: Currently open – contact Coordinator of Subregions Emily Torres-Cullinane at etorres@mapc.org