

North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Work Plan, FY 2022

Effective October 12, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Introduction

This Work Plan outlines NSPC goals for FY 2023 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 2023 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's budget; provide small-scale technical assistance to participating municipalities; implement subregional projects, and provide regular correspondence regarding MAPC or subregional programs/projects, events, meetings, announcements, or funding opportunities.

Alex Koppelman will be taking intermittent parental leave that includes the months of October 2023, January 2023, and February 2023. **During this time, Najee Nunnally, MAPC Community Engagement Specialist, will serve as interim coordinator.** While interim coordinator, Najee will assume the responsibilities described above and focus on working towards two broad goals for NSPC in FY2023: expand the NSPC network and contact base and promote diversity equity and inclusion in the planning process.

The co-chairs for the start of 2022-2023 will be Andrew MacNichol, Staff Planner, Reading and Melisa Tintocalis, Economic Development Director, Burlington. 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

As noted above, the NSPC bylaws will be updated based on a consensus of the NSPC representatives.

NSPC Goals and Program, FY 2023

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

- Expand its network and contact base
- Advance racial equity by engaging diverse groups in local and subregional planning processes
- Build capacity and expertise to respond to the pandemic and its impacts to public health, housing, the economy and other areas of need

- Monitor and comment on the Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); and implement the 2017 NSPC Mobility Plan
- 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
- Work with the MAPC legislative team and the NSPC representative to the Legislative Committee to advance key legislative priorities
- Build capacity and expertise to respond to the pandemic and its impacts to public health, housing, the economy and other areas of need

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 2023: subregional meetings by topic, workshops, and forums. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings in FY 2023, 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 MetroCommon 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 meeting 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. 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 **9:30 AM to 11:00 AM** on the second Tuesday of the month unless circumstances require a change in meeting time, such as holidays or school vacations, or the group decides to change this meeting time. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings during the FY 2023 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 for FY2023 will be hosted on Zoom as is the preference of NSPC members. NSPC members may decide to begin hosting these meetings in person.

The below chart is a draft of ideas for FY2022 meetings. Locations marked with an asterisk are not confirmed.

Date	Location	Meeting Topic
September 13, 2022	Via Zoom	Community Exchange Introduce Najee Nunally, Interim NSPC Coordinator FY22 Workplan Review Government Affairs Update
October 11, 2022	Via Zoom	ARPA Update from NSPC Communities Building out the NSPC Network
November 8, 2022	Via Zoom	MBTA 3A Compliance Overview and Q+A
December 13, 2022	Via Zoom	NSPC Mobility Study Update Meeting with the Boston MPO
February 14, 2023	Via Zoom	Promoting Diversity Equity and Inclusion
March 14, 2023	Via Zoom	Economic Development Topic (TBD)
April 11, 2023	Via Zoom	Legislative Breakfast
May 9, 2023	Via Zoom	Clean Energy Topic (TBD)
June 13, 2023	Via Zoom	Arts and Culture Topic (TBD)

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. NSPC will have a group exchange as well as an informal presentation from each community regarding a specific topic of interest during the meetings identified in the chart above.
- 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 MetroCommon.
- 3) A consideration of the impacts the group's decisions have on the advancement of Regional Equity when decisions are made.