



North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC) Work Plan, FY 2024

Effective October 23, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Introduction

This Work Plan outlines NSPC goals for FY 2024 and a schedule of meeting topics and activities the Subregional Coordinators 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 as well as regional collaboration;
- 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;
- Educate participating communities on new and important issues in the planning field; and
- Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in planning processes.

Funding

NSPC work in FY 2024 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 Select Board or City Council in the case of a city) or a designee appointed by the Select Board 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 Coordinators (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, community-based organizations, citizens, businesses, and additional Select Board 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 Coordinators 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

Francelis Morillo Suarez and Brandon Stanaway serve as the NSPC Subregional Coordinators. The Coordinators 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; support the development of project ideas; and provide regular correspondence regarding MAPC or subregional programs/projects, events, meetings, announcements, or funding opportunities.

The co-chairs for the end of 2023 will be Andrew MacNichol, Community Development Director, Reading and Melisa Tintocalis, Economic Development Director, Burlington. **An election will be held in February 2024 to elect co-chairs for the next term period.**

The co-chairs shall share the following responsibilities: assist the Subregional Coordinators with the preparation of meeting agendas; facilitation of meetings; appointment of all sub-committees; ensuring that the Subregional Coordinators carry out Council directives; and represent the Council before other local, regional, or state agencies or organizations. The subregion has one designee to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): Melisa Tintocalis, Economic Development Director for the Town of Burlington.

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.

NSPC Goals and Program, FY 2024

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
- Resources, tools, and best practices for including an equity lens to their work
- A forum for exchange of information between municipal officials

In particular, NSPC will

- Expand its network and contact base to include non-municipal representatives from non-profit, business, environmental, housing, education, and other community groups
- Advance racial equity by engaging diverse groups in local and subregional planning processes

- Collaboratively identify, recommend, and/or pursue studies or project opportunities involving multiple communities in the subregion;
- Build capacity and expertise in topic areas such as economic development, environmental and energy planning and policy, public health planning, among other topics; 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 adapt to the new reality communities face as our health care, economic, transportation systems have changed as a result of the global pandemic.

The NSPC Subregional Coordinators, 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 Coordinators 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 Select Boards.
- 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 Coordinators 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 Coordinators 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 coordinators 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 meet with key municipal staff and discuss technical assistance opportunities.

Meetings, Workshops, and Forums

NSPC will aim to offer two meeting types in FY 2024: subregional meetings by topic, and workshops or forums. NSPC will hold a minimum of eight meetings in FY 2024.

- 2.1 Topical meetings. NSPC will continue to offer topical meetings on various planning topics.
- 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 Coordinators 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 Coordinators will prioritize assistance for projects that advance equity, subregional development, and preservation priorities identified through the NSPC Priority Mapping Project. The Coordinators 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. The Coordinators will also connect member municipalities with the work MAPC is doing and can support with post-project implementation questions.

Meeting Structure

All NSPC meetings are open to the general public. Official meeting notices are posted on the MAPC website. Meeting agendas are posted on the NSPC webpage of the MAPC website at www.mapc.org/nspc. 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 2024 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 FY2024 will be hosted on Zoom, in-person, or hybrid as is the preference of NSPC members.

The chart below is a draft of ideas for FY2024 meetings. Locations marked with an asterisk are not confirmed.

Date	Location	Meeting Topic
September 2023	Via Zoom and in-person	<i>Individual meetings with all NSPC members</i>
October 19, 2023	Via Zoom	<i>Government Affairs MPO/TAP Funding Update FY24 Work Plan Discussion</i>
November 14, 2023	Via Zoom	<i>MBTA 3A Compliance</i>
December 12, 2023	*	<i>Socioeconomic Projections for the MAPC Region NSPC Regional Transit Discussion</i>
February 13, 2024	<i>In person*</i>	<i>Co-Chairs Election MC2050 Update Clean Energy & Climate</i>
March 12, 2024	*	<i>Economic Development Discussion Potential site visit to an NSPC member community</i>

Date	Location	Meeting Topic
April 2024	In person*	<i>Legislative Breakfast</i>
May 14, 2024	In person*	<i>In-person workshop</i>
May 2024	*	<i>(Optional) Evening Forum for Members</i>
June 11, 2024	<i>In person*</i>	<i>Professional Development Day</i>

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

Process Benchmarks and Policy Outcomes

The NSPC Coordinators have 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