



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

To: Ms. Elaine Wijnja, Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)

From: Andrea Harris-Long, Technical Assistance Program Coordinator, MAPC

Date: July 15, 2023

Re: District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)
2023 Report to the General Court

This memo constitutes the 2023 MAPC Mid-Year report on DLTA projects and activities for briefing the Massachusetts General Court.

The total funds available to MAPC cities and towns for DLTA projects during 2023 is \$712,086, which consists of \$647,351 in state funds and a \$64,735 MAPC match. Thus far, these funds are enabling MAPC to undertake a total of 38 projects with our member municipalities, as outlined below. Note that MAPC has also extended the influence of the DLTA funds by making some allocations to projects that have additional funds (e.g., municipal funds, MAPC transportation funds, Community Compact grants, EEA Grant Funds, etc.), but need the DLTA funds to complete their full proposed project. In total, as can be seen in the information below where additional budget information is accessible, over \$750,000 of non-DLTA funds are associated with these projects, representing a significant increase over the DLTA and MAPC match funds allocated.

Every year, a project solicitation memo from Marc Draisen, MAPC's Executive Director, is sent to the MAPC communities, which encourages communities to submit proposals for DLTA funding. This same memo outlines the criteria by which MAPC would make decisions related to funding of projects, which include a) the Supporting the Community Compact including Regionalization; Planning Ahead for Housing (including Supporting the MBTA Communities); Planning Ahead for Growth; and Supporting the Housing Choice Initiative categories outlined in the contract between MAPC and the state, and b) the priorities from MAPC's Regional Plan, *MetroCommon2050*.

The following is a list of MAPC's projects that are funded fully or partly using DLTA funds provided by EOHLC.



Boston: Youth in Planning - DLTA \$5,000. Total budget all sources \$15,000. The City of Boston approached MAPC about partnering on a high school mentoring program that exposes young Boston BIPOC high school students to different career paths in the field of planning. The Youth Summer Mentorship program will run from July 31 – August 30, 2023, and 1-2 high school students will be mentored by BIPOC planners at MAPC.

Boston: Urban Agriculture Engagement - DLTA \$20,000. MAPC is supporting the City of Boston's Urban Agriculture Strategy development process (under the GrowBoston project) through integration of a creative engagement lens. A Call for Artists will offer an opportunity for local artists to create public art installations in collaboration with community-based organizations in Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, and East Boston. The art installations will be showcased at four different community events (one per participating neighborhood) with an aim to promote urban agriculture for the purposes of improving resident food security, community economic development, and resilience to climate change and supply chain disruptions.

Cambridge: Active Living Assessment - DLTA \$20,000. Total budget all sources \$43,908. This project implements one of the strategies from Cambridge's 2021 Community Health Improvement Plan. MAPC is working with the city and an advisory committee to identify key points, patterns, and themes in the city's current systems offering physical activity. Engagement events will groundtruth the data gathered and inform recommendations for how to better integrate resident knowledge and priorities for increased physical activity to improve overall health outcomes. Recommendations will focus on actionable policies, practices, and programs that improve public health and promote equitable access.

Cambridge: Data for Housing Equity - DLTA \$35,000. Total budget all sources \$59,000. Cambridge, along with Arlington, Boston, Somerville, and Quincy, are members of the Metro Boston Rental Listings Database Collaboration facilitated by MAPC. This group has been convening for several years to gather and understand trends in rental listing data to inform housing planning. Raising rents were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and it has become even more important for communities to track and understand rental market conditions. This project will make the rental listings data easier to access and understand by creating a digital interface that allows for data collection and visualization. The data is not currently available via a public website, but a goal for the project is to have a public-facing website that would allow the Collaboration to better promote the impacts of the data and grow the Collaborative to include other cities and towns. Expanding the access to this data can support housing efforts such as multi-family zoning (Section 3A) and other rezoning efforts, housing affordability analyses, displacement risk assessment, housing production plans, and other local housing work.

Carlisle: Housing Production Plan - DLTA \$10,000. MAPC worked in 2022 to help Carlisle complete a housing production plan to understand and better meet local housing needs and foster more housing



production. This DLTA funding allowed for MAPC to work with the Planning Board and Select Board on finalization of the Housing Production Plan ahead of local adoption.

Carlisle: Shared Services Study - DLTA \$7,500. Carlisle is working with MAPC to study the town's ability to share services with local organizations and municipalities, an initiative that is a priority in the town's recently completed master plan. The Town hopes to establish a committee that will investigate the benefits and trade-offs of service regionalization, interlocal agreements, and participation in MAPC's collective purchasing program. The project is the first phase of many. Recommendations from this study will inform subsequent work to further assess feasible shared services opportunities.

Dedham: Formalizing Human Services Post-Covid - DLTA \$15,000. Total budget all sources \$25,000. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Town of Dedham, with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and other community partners, launched a Covid-19 Relief Fund to help individuals and families impacted by Covid-19. The Relief Fund partnered with several local organizations to provide resources and services to Dedham's most economically vulnerable neighbors. Due to the immediate need for pandemic response, the Relief Fund needed to quickly be established and underway. Now that the pandemic response has slowed, Dedham is working with MAPC to assess the services provided and institute more training and formal systems to ensure the social services and resources can be formalized and potentially regionalized to continue beyond pandemic conditions. The project includes an overall evaluation of all human services delivery so the Town may move towards a Department of Health and Human Services model.

Everett: Housing Production Plan - DLTA \$7,500. Total budget all sources \$75,000. MAPC is supporting Everett as they update their housing production plan. The process is being led by an Advisory Committee and the city's DEI director is part of the project team to shape the community engagement plan more directly.

Framingham: Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Planning - DLTA \$5,000. Total budget all sources \$20,000. Working with the city's Sustainability Coordinator, MAPC will be working with Framingham and other MetroWest communities to explore locations for EV infrastructure planning. The project will likely be folded into a larger regional effort that MAPC is coordinating under the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Federal Grant program (if awarded).

Gloucester: Climate Resiliency Assessment - DLTA \$10,000. Total budget all sources \$37,500. As a coastal community, Gloucester has undertaken several steps towards understanding the city's heightened vulnerability as climate change impacts worsen. Gloucester has enlisted MAPC's support to review past planning efforts and work with city leaders and residents to develop a short list of priority projects. Once the priority projects are determined, city staff will determine appropriate grant funding opportunities and apply for funds.



Ipswich: 3A Zoning - DLTA \$40,000. Total budget all sources: \$90,000. MAPC is working with Ipswich to conduct community visioning, undertaking zoning compliance modeling, and prepare 3A-compliant zoning for consideration at Town Meeting ahead of the 12/31/2024 deadline.

Lexington: Lawn Equipment Electrification - DLTA \$538.06. A number of cities and towns have passed ordinances to transition land care providers from using fossil-fuel based land care equipment. This project will work to support this transition effectively, help land care providers make the switch in a manner that they can afford and manage, and consider what incentives to provide them, are important areas for discussion. Activities will include looking at collective purchasing, updating state contracts for such equipment so municipal public works departments can buy electric equipment, and considering potential buy-back programs for diesel blowers and discounts for electric tools. *Note: this project was funded by DLTA in 2022. This small allocation of 2023 DLTA funding allowed for completion of this phase of work.*

Lynn: Workforce Development Strategic Plan DLTA \$2,250. Total budget all sources \$55,000. As the city of Lynn works to prioritize racial equity in its municipal planning and implementation, it seeks to create a workforce development strategy. MAPC will document Lynn's ecosystem of resources, identify barriers to economic mobility for Lynn's diverse population, and develop a comprehensive plan for the Lynn workforce in the context of the regional labor market. The plan will include a set of strategies to promote alignment among stakeholders. A steering committee of local stakeholders will help guide the planning process and conduct community outreach. MAPC and City-led engagement activities may include virtual and in-person meetings, interviews, surveys, and focus groups.

Lynn: Lynn Grows Food Justice DLTA \$20,000. The City of Lynn's Public Health Division is conducting a community food assessment and has sought MAPC's assistance in a supplemental effort to better understand and improve food security and health equity. The supplemental effort will result in a Community Food Action Plan that engages residents to understand current and emerging needs and access to existing efforts and charts existing efforts to have a better and common understanding of food security conditions, issues, and opportunities. A 3-5 year action plan will include recommendations to make Lynn's food systems more equitable.

Lynnfield: Visioning Plan DLTA \$7,500. Total budget all sources \$67,900. The Town of Lynnfield last completed a master plan in 2002. The Planning Board hopes to update the master plan in phases, beginning with an updated Vision for the Town. MAPC is supporting this project and working with the Planning Board to create and execute a community engagement strategy that will culminate in an updated Vision to inform an update to the master plan.

Malden: Climate Action Plan DLTA \$15,000. MAPC and Malden are working together to create a climate action plan to serve as a roadmap for the city's response to climate change, laying out how the city can



prevent damage from extreme weather, reduce its energy use, and support residents in doing the same. A base conditions survey included a greenhouse gas audit and review of existing city policies and practices that impact climate. Community engagement focuses on understanding how climate change impacts residents and what actions they hope to see from the city.

Manchester: Emergency Preparedness Planning DLTA \$10,000. Total budget all sources \$20,000.

Manchester-by-the-Sea is beginning a phased process to establish a regional approach to better emergency planning efforts pertaining to major storm events and other disasters. Phase I includes assessing current emergency planning systems and adding local shelter plans and emergency dispensing site planning to the existing Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Phase II expands the work to neighboring communities along the North Shore interested in parting to develop a regional approach that includes sheltering, distribution, and public education.

MAPC Region: Metro Mayors Coalition Climate Task Force - DLTA \$15,000. Total budget all sources \$25,000.

MAPC is partnering with the Metro Mayors Climate Taskforce to build on the successful project, “Building Resilience to Climate-Driven Heat in Metro-Boston,” aimed at developing a regional heat preparedness and resilience plan that includes multi-municipal coordination on rising temperatures and extreme heat. The Task Force will develop template resources and materials for municipal zoning and policies to establish more heat-resilient zoning regulations. Additional work that the Task Force is undertaking includes implementation of the new, more resilient building codes and exploring federal grant opportunities to fund climate work.

MAPC Region: Local Public Health Collaboration - DLTA \$10,000. Total budget all sources \$20,000. The MAPC Public Health and Municipal Collaboration Departments have worked in tandem to increase Local Public Health knowledge and resource sharing through a variety of activities and efforts. Even prior to COVID, a significant need existed in Public Health to collaborate and share resources. The COVID pandemic exacerbated an already underfunded Public Health infrastructure and accelerated the regionalization process as communities relied on each other to navigate this unfamiliar emergency. MAPC has assisted throughout the pandemic and has recently begun hiring shared staff for numerous LPH functions that span several communities. This includes case tracing, care resources coordination, nursing, inspectional services, and others.

MAPC Region: Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan - DLTA \$31,850. The Government Alliance on Race and Equity / Race Forward, the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, and MAPC partnered in 2020 to pilot an innovative racial equity training and action planning program for six communities in the region. Each community has created its own action plan, built internal organizational capacity through quick and direct action, and launched a long-term commitment to addressing issues of racism and racial inequality. In 2023, the implementation of each community's action plan will begin in earnest.



MAPC Region: Language Access Project - DLTA \$10,000. Total budget all sources \$35,000. The Town of Randolph, City of Beverly, Town of Arlington, and Town of Milton, in collaboration with Blue Hills Community Health Alliance are looking to expand their multi-language resources for municipal processes. The goal of this project is to develop a consistent language access strategy, so that our language access is not limited to project-specific work and dependent solely on project budget availability. Expanding linguistic access could include translating key resources into the top three languages spoken in each municipality, setting up a long-term contract with translation and interpretation agencies, and/or expanding access to interpretation certification for community members to be able to act as paid interpreters in municipal processes. Additionally, this project would include opportunities to connect with these constituencies via in-language and/or disability accessibility focus groups to better understand their access needs. In 2023, a Language Access Guide and digital toolkit will be developed to share learnings and best practices.

MAPC Region: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coalition - DLTA \$16,000. Total budget all sources \$32,000. MAPC facilitates the Massachusetts Municipal DEI Coalition, a group of professional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practitioners employed by cities and towns. This is a group of professional DEI practitioners in the local MA government space that share experiences, compare best practices, and support each other through common challenges. At bi-monthly meetings, group members share experiences, compare best practices, and support each other through common challenges. In addition to hosting these conversations, the group created a guide for fellow municipal DEI employees, identifying potential partnership opportunities, and advocating for resources and support at the state level. In 2023, the DEI Coalition is focused on formalizing a governance structure to ensure sustained efforts.

MAPC Region: MetroWest Climate Equity Outreach - DLTA \$7,500. Total budget all sources \$15,000. Natick, Ashland, and Framingham are partnering to advance recommendations from the MetroWest Climate Equity Project. This phase of the work focuses on creating climate readiness educational materials in commonly spoken languages (e.g., postcards, fridge magnets, webpages, etc.) and working with Community Climate liaisons to finalize materials and create a dissemination plan.

MAPC Region: MetroWest Bus Fleet Electrification - DLTA \$8,000. Total budget all sources \$55,000. Cities and towns from across MetroWest, SWAP, TRIC, and MAGIC subregions are collaborating to understand opportunities for electrifying the school transportation system. The project will entail assessing the current landscape for school transportation and opportunities for shared infrastructure and public-private partnerships. MAPC will also support the communities in identifying federal grant programs that may align with furthering this work.

MAPC Region: MetroWest Heat Mapping - DLTA \$16,200. Framingham, Ashland, Natick, and Holliston have partnered with Framingham State University to apply for and secure a NOAA Urban Heat Island



Mapping Campaign grant. MAPC is supporting a portion of the grant activities by providing expertise in content areas such as public health, urban heat islands, equitable community engagement, and data analysis. The project will collect real-time data on heat and air quality in the summer of 2023.

MAPC Region: SWAP-TRIC Regional Housing Services Office - DLTA \$3,000. MAPC is supporting participating communities from the SWAP-TRIC subregions to establish a regional housing services office. MAPC is providing technical expertise for establishing inter-municipal agreements and procurement services.

Marlborough: 3A Zoning - DLTA \$2,222.97. MAPC provided guidance through early meetings and project scoping for Marlborough's efforts to comply with Section 3A. Marlborough decided not to work with MAPC on the actual implementation of their 3A zoning project.

Marshfield: Economic Development Plan - DLTA \$2,500. Total budget all sources \$57,500. MAPC is supporting the Town of Marshfield in the preparation of an Economic Development Plan. The Plan will include an assessment of the baseline economic programs and priorities in the Town, analysis of commercial, industrial, and residential and demographic data for the town, presentations on this analysis to the community, and work with it to identify a vision and goals for the economic priorities of the Town. All this work will be compiled as an Economic Development Plan for the town that will be integrated in an updated town-wide Master Plan. *Note: this project was funded by DLTA in 2022. This small allocation of 2023 DLTA funding allowed for completion of this phase of work.*

Maynard: Fowler School Reuse Study - DLTA \$30,000. Total budget all sources \$45,000. The Town of Maynard owns a former school building, sited on two acres. The school is no longer habitable and requires many building improvements to meet the current safety standards. MAPC is assisting an advisory committee to evaluate potential residential redevelopment scenarios for the school site. Financial feasibility of redevelopment scenarios is included in the scope of work, and the project will result in recommendations for a Request for Proposals to dispose of the site for future development. Any redevelopment on the site will include affordable housing, pursuant to the town's inclusionary zoning bylaw.

Medford: Medford Square Redevelopment - DLTA \$5,000. MAPC is supporting Medford in engaging the public to identify potential redevelopment scenarios for two municipally-owned lots in Medford Square. The project will include recommendations for a Request for Proposals for disposition of the site for development.

Middleton: Affordable Housing Trust Five-Year Strategic Plan - DLTA \$25,000. Middleton recently created an Affordable Housing Trust and has enlisted MAPC's assistance in establishing initial goals and creating a



five-year action plan to implement the Town's Housing Production Plan (2019) and Master Plan (2018). The project includes community engagement to help the Trust prioritize actions and understand opportunities.

Millis: 3A Zoning - DLTA \$25,000. Total budget all sources: \$81,800. MAPC is supporting the Town of Millis in the preparation of a visioning and rezoning effort for the Town Center that will facilitate progress towards community goals, expanded housing opportunity, and compliance with the Multifamily Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities.

Randolph: Community Wellness Planning - DLTA \$15,000. The multi-year project has catalyzed efforts to establish a school-based health center in Randolph and has expanded Randolph's capacity to participate in regional planning efforts. As a result, community health services that have historically been absent in Randolph are now accessible to the town's young residents and their families. In 2023, MAPC will support the Community Wellness Planner to build capacity across municipal departments; pursue permanent funding for the community wellness program; and undertake strategic planning.

Reading: Municipal Net Zero Plan - DLTA \$8,000. Total budget all sources \$70,000. Reading is conducting a Municipal Net Zero Plan and has requested MAPC's assistance to conduct a baseline greenhouse gas inventory of both public and private emission sources. Once the assessment is completed, MAPC will work with the town to develop recommendations to reduce emissions. The community will be engaged in this effort to help with prioritizing actions and understanding overarching goals for the work.

Salem: Inclusionary Zoning - DLTA \$40,000. In 2019, MAPC worked with Salem to create an inclusionary zoning ordinance, but it was not adopted at that time. In 2023, MAPC will revisit previous work, update the financial feasibility of recommendations, and make recommendations based on current market conditions. This project will also demonstrate economic feasibility for Salem's proposed 3A zoning to ensure multi-family zoning includes affordable housing.

Salem: Open Space and Recreation Plan - DLTA \$10,000. MAPC is helping the City of Salem prepare an update to their Open Space and Recreation Plan. MAPC will reach out to a wide range of stakeholders – from sports leagues to historic/cultural groups to environmental advocates and others – to understand their assessment of the City's open space and park resources and future resource protection, community, and management needs. MAPC will incorporate relevant information from MetroCommon to assess regional needs to address the public health/land use connections and how the City can provide opportunities to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. *Note: this project was funded by DLTA in 2022. This small allocation of 2023 DLTA funding allowed for completion of this phase of work.*



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Somerville: Cab to Health - DLTA \$6,200. Total budget all sources \$12,400. Somerville received a grant to initiate a “Cab to Health” program that provided free cab rides to transit-dependent Somerville residents with lower incomes to ease access to grocery stores and prescription/medical services. MAPC is supporting the city as they consider how to sustain the program in the long-term to ensure residents have consistent access to food and medical needs.

Wakefield: Master Plan - DLTA \$21,058. Building on the Vision plan completed in 2022, Wakefield is working with MAPC to update their master plan. The process includes significant community engagement to better understand current conditions, issues, and opportunities. The project will culminate in a master plan of updated goals, policies, and strategies and a roadmap for implementation.