# South-West Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP) Workplan

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

# Introduction

The purpose of this Work Plan is to outline SWAP’s to provide a schedule of meetings, an overview of potential topics, and ongoing Subregional Topics.

The purpose of SWAP is to:

* Facilitate communication and knowledge sharing between and among the municipalities, in partnership with MAPC representatives, through the participation of local officials involved with planning issues;
* Foster cooperative planning efforts among the municipalities; and,
* Create an agenda for action on planning topics including housing, economic development, environment, natural resources, transportation, smart growth, and land use that will help to manage development while maintaining the region’s economic prosperity and desirability.

# Technical Assistance and Current MAPC Projects in SWAP

The Subregional Coordinator may provide small-scale technical assistance on an as-needed basis to member municipalities on topics related to 2022 regional plan for Metro Boston, MetroCommon, goals and objectives. Support may include data collection and analysis, assistance with proposal writing, and collaborative project development. The Subregional Coordinator will also aim to connect SWAP members 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, municipal, or other resources.

### Currently Funded

* Town of Norfolk Master Plan: January 2023 – June 2024
* MetroWest Bus Fleet Electrification Plan: January 2023 – December 2023
* SWAP/TRIC Shared Housing Services Office: January 2022 – September 2023

### Project Ideas

* **SWAP Student to Local Government Pipeline**

While the MetroBoston region is home to many Urban Planning and Public Administration Programs, the pipeline to municipal government (especially in the suburban communities) needs improvement. The SWAP communities would be interested in a program that builds relationships with the area colleges and matches interested students to internships or project related work in the communities. Potential project ideas include:

* + Subregional Job Fair
  + Enhanced Internships Placement Program
  + SWAP Capstone Project for Local Program
* **Stormwater Enforcement Shared Office/Staff**

Over the last several years, the oversight of stormwater has become a more important local function. The SWAP communities would be interested in forming a shared office to that would be able to perform stormwater related tasks including: permitting, inspections, enforcement and compliance monitoring, public outreach, regulatory compliance, and improvement planning.

* **Project and Document Database**

When a unique project is submitted to the community for review, many of the local communities reach out to each other to see if any other departments have experienced something similar. A shared database could hold relevant project documents and be searchable by the project’s characteristics. Communities would benefit and learn from each other without requiring

* **Marketing for Municipalities:**

The Planning Departments are often tasked with creating public facing documents and announcements. The communities would be interested in training or resources that would help them create more effective communications and reach more residents. This could include tips and tricks related to graphic arts software, Canva, Microsoft Publisher, Google, social media, other

# Monthly Meetings

Meetings will generally be held from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on the 2nd Tuesday of the month unless circumstances require a change in meeting time, with every other meeting held in-person. No meetings will be held during the months of July or August unless a time-sensitive matter arises that requires a meeting of the membership. Meetings locations will rotate among the communities, allowing each an opportunity to host a meeting. Locations are subject to change depending on venue availability.

### Standing Agenda Items

The agenda should consistently feature each of the following items:

* Community Exchange (monthly): opportunity to share notable municipal achievements or updates. The host community may offer an extended update on a project of note that may be of interest to the group.
* Legislative update (bi-monthly): update on legal precedents pertaining to land use and updates on state legislation of note and information regarding advocacy for SWAP or MAPC legislative priorities. These updates will be provided by the MAPC Government Affairs staff in person or by conference call.

Additionally, SWAP will also receive periodic updates from CTPS on the status of the TIP, UPWP, and other relevant transportation planning efforts, as well as updates on SWAP regional projects.

### SWAP Meeting Schedule and Topics

Each month, the SWAP Coordinator will facilitate a meeting topic. Meetings topics should be discussed and decided by the Coordinator, SWAP Chairs, and Membership in the month preceding the next meeting. The SWAP Coordinator will attempt to time appropriate meetings topics with the relevant progression of events that affect municipal planning efforts and facilitate presentations from various subject matter experts. SWAP Members are free to propose a new meeting topic at any time.

### FY’24 Topics of Interest

Previously identified topics of interest include:

* Boston MPO Election **(September)**

The Boston MPO, also known as the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization or the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), is led by a Board of 22 voting members. Each of the MAPC subregions are represented on this Board, including SWAP. The term of the current SWAP representative lapses in 2023 and an election will be held to determine the next SWAP representative.

Potential Speaker or Presentation

* Eric Bourassa, Transportation Director at MAPC
* MBTA Communities

The DHCD Section 3A guidance has created numerous challenges for municipal planners as they attempt to implement the requirements. SWAP is interested in keeping tabs on each of their community’s efforts and the various challenges that each face.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* MAPC’s Housing Team
* The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
* State Legislature/Bill sponsors
* Mass Housing Partnership
* E-Commerce

MAPC has conducted 2 recent studies on the effects of E-Commerce on the region, (*From App to Table: Rapid Food Deliveries in Massachusetts; Hidden and in Plain Sight: Impacts of E-Commerce in Massachusetts*). SWAP would like to keep informed on MAPC’s work in this space and explore the future of commerce. How do communities protect commercial diversity as retail shifts from retail stores to home delivery through commercial delivery enterprises?

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* Travis Pollack
* NAIOP
* Metro/West 495 Partnership
* Living Little

MAPC conducted a study in 2018 that explored the different types of small housing that would be well-suited for suburban communities throughout the region, which traditionally build large single-family housing. SWAP would like to receive an update on any small housing projects or building trends in the region.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* MAPC’s Housing Team
* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is an important component of municipal planning. As municipalities engage the public in key decision making and long-term planning, it is imperative that they connect with all demographics in which they represent. Planners play an important role in advancing DEI efforts as they often engage the public and advocate for policies that promote equity.

* Zoning Reform

A core function of planning, SWAP is always interested in new trends in zoning reform and the efforts of our region’s municipalities to reform their zoning.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* MAPC Land Use Team
* Update on the New Administration and Priorities

The Healy-Driscoll Administration took the reins of the State Government in January 2023. SWAP is interested in an update on their priorities and how they affect municipal planning efforts.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* Solar Siting Analysis

As the American energy industry attempts to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels, Solar Energy has become increasingly common. Solar project Sites have many requirements and SWAP would be interested in hearing how these prospective sites are identified and evaluated. In particular, how these sites consider the runoff of stormwater and forested habitats.

* Stretch Code

Specialized Stretch Code encourages builders to fit new construction with all-electric heating cooling and hot water. SWAP is interested in exploring local incentives or alternative approval compliance paths for developments that commit to all-electric utilities.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* Local Building Inspectors
* Succession Planning

Over the last decade, the planning profession has experienced a high level of turnover from retirement and those exiting the field. This trend has been accelerated by numerous factors, and it has exposed the planning field’s lack of mid-level planners to fill upper-level positions. When this topic is discussed it would be useful to explore a possible program

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* Local College Program Staff or Professors
  + Ken Reardon, Dept Chair, UMass Boston UPCD
  + Antonio Raciti, Assist Prof, UMass Boston UPCD
  + Betsy Sweet, Grad Prog Director, UMass Boston UPCD
  + John Petrin, or other from MMA Suffolk program
* Communities who have comprehensive succession planning programs
  + Town of Carlisle – UMASS Boston Succession Planning Study
* Solid Waste and Municipal Recycling

A core public function, the disposal of solid waste and municipal recycling services are in the midst of several foundational challenges. SWAP is interested in learning how other municipalities are meeting these challenges and would also like to hear how the rest of the country is fairing.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* Local Waste Management Staff
* Sustainability Staff
* MVP Program 2.0

The Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program has launched MVP 2.0. From their website, ‘MVP 2.0 focuses on addressing root causes of social vulnerability and moving from planning to implementation. MVP 2.0 allows communities to revisit resilience priorities defined during their original planning process with the involvement of the wider community, and includes new training and guidance on strategies for building climate resilience, equity, and climate justice.’ SWAP would like to have a speaker come to discuss the changes and how to apply.

Potential Speakers or Presentations:

* MVP Staff

Other Topics

* Supporting Grassroot Organizations
* MS4 Permitting
* Online Permitting

### Proposed SWAP FY23 Meeting Times

| **Date** | **Time** | **Location** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **September 19th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | Virtual |
| **October 10th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | In-Person (Location TBD) |
| **November 14th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | Virtual |
| **December 12th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | In-Person (Location TBD) |
| **January 9th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | Virtual |
| **February 13th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | In-Person (Location TBD) |
| **March 12th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | Virtual |
| **April 5th** | 8:30am-10:00am | Thayer Homestead (subject to change) |
| **April 16th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | In-Person (Location TBD) |
| **May 14th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | Virtual |
| **June 11th** | 9:30 – 11:00 am | In-Person (Location TBD) |

* *Note: Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please note that the SWAP Legislative Breakfast is generally held on a Friday.*