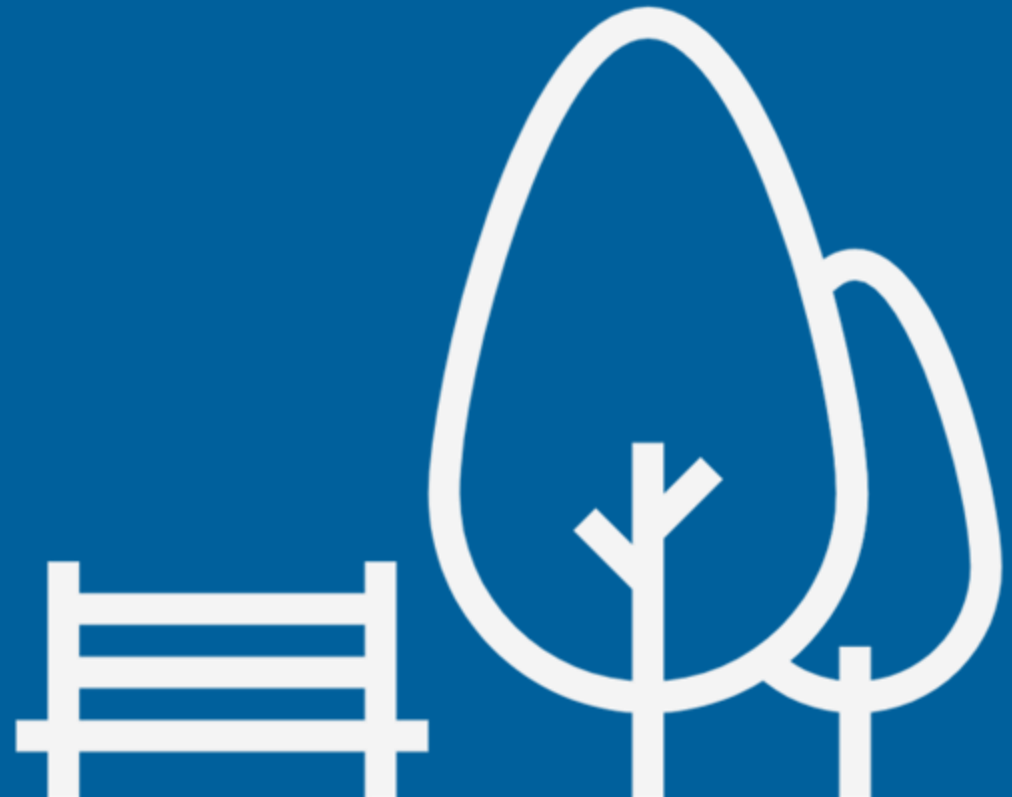
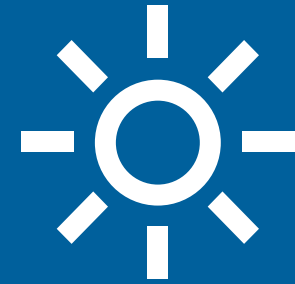


Leading with Equity: A Guide to Community- Driven Planning



1. Increase understanding about **the purpose of community-driven planning**
2. Provide a model for **starting and sustaining relationships** with Community Liaisons
3. Spark discussion about how to meaningfully engage and collaborate with residents in **future municipal projects**

Community-Driven Planning Values



COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLANNING

A definition

The process by which residents of vulnerable and impacted communities define for themselves the challenges they face, and the solutions most relevant to their unique assets and threats.

Adapted from National Association of Climate Resilience Planners

Community-Driven Planning Model

Traditional Planning	Community-Driven Planning
Municipalities engage residents through public meetings, forums, and surveys	Residents engage neighbors and other community members in mutually convenient ways
Community members volunteer their time to provide feedback	Community members are compensated for their time
Municipal and academic expertise is prioritized	Community expertise is prioritized and supported by technical expertise from municipal staff
Tends to emphasize planning	Tends to emphasize practice and action
Tends to be more linear	Tends to be more iterative

WHY USE COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLANNING?

- **Builds resident leadership & civic engagement** with members of the community who may have experienced barriers to participating in traditional municipal processes
- Creates a platform for municipal staff & community members to **learn from and teach one another** new ideas and skills
- **Builds connections between residents** to create more social cohesion in the community
- **Includes community members from the outset of project planning** – moves beyond consulting community members after an action has been decided
- Implements actions & solutions that **the community defined for themselves and support**

Community-driven planning respects and honors certain values:



Power-Sharing



Mutual Respect for Experience/Expertise



Informed Decision-Making



Maximum Involvement



Relationship Building

Power-Sharing

- Planners relinquish decision-making authority to the group as a whole
- Community Liaisons shape the planning process
 - For example, they decide how information will be collected and interpreted
 - They are also included in follow-up implementation projects
- Just as planners are paid for their time, Community Liaisons should be offered compensation
 - Demonstrates that all types of expertise are valued
 - May permit individuals to participate who might not be able to otherwise

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example



- Which of these tools would you be most comfortable using?
- Where and how would you reach people with this tool?
- What other tools should we maybe use?

Mutual Respect for Experience/Expertise

- Community Liaisons and planners each have **unique and equally important contributions**
- Partnership should present an **opportunity and space for co-learning**
- Planners should foster an atmosphere of respect that **emphasizes the dignity and importance of each team member**
- Planners should make a concerted and conscious effort to **not use professional jargon and acronyms**

Informed Decision-Making

- Given the group's different areas of expertise, incorporate training as an ongoing function within the research project
- Allows for collaboration and informed decision-making among the entire group

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example

WEATHER

The minute-by-minute and daily change in temperature, humidity, and wind.

Weather is always changing and changes quickly.

CLIMATE

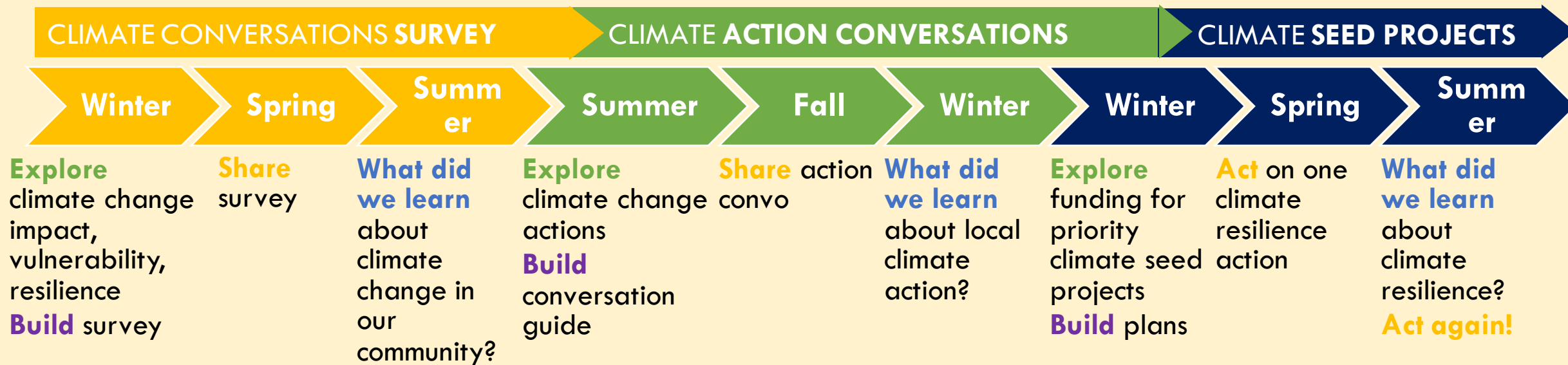
What the weather is like over a longer period of time in a specific region.

Massachusetts has a wet, seasonal climate with hot, humid summers and cold, snowy winters and lots of rain throughout the year.

Maximum Involvement

- Community Liaisons are brought into all areas of phases of a project: planning, administration, implementation, and completion

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example



Relationship Building

- Emphasizes non-transactional relationships
- Focus is beyond time-limited engagement and planners seek to continue relationships after the project “ends”
- Can mean investing more of ourselves into the work and personalizing the work, which can feel taxing at times
- The trust that comes with relationships allows us to probe more deeply and to make changes that improve services and programs



Community Liaison Model



Working with Community Liaisons is an Iterative Process



STEP 0: PREPARING THE TEAM

- Identify and affirm values underlying the project
 - See *Community-Driven Planning Values*
- Determine project management roles and responsibilities
 - Define the role of community liaisons within the project team
- Develop draft project materials
 - Materials likely needed, include liaison role description, forms for liaison compensation, introductory project language for community organization outreach, project webpage

STEP 1: RECRUITMENT

- Speak with community leaders and/or community-based organizations (CBOs) who know or work with the priority community about the project and Community Liaison position. Use these conversations to:
 - Get feedback/co-develop on the project scope of work and role description of the liaison
 - Promote the liaison opportunity
 - Foster relationships with contacts and CBOs doing related work.
- Develop and distribute a 1-2 page flyer in the appropriate languages that includes:
 - Project description
 - Community Liaison role in project
 - Benefits of participation for project & individual
 - General requirements for Community Liaison role
 - Expectations for activities and time commitments
 - Timeline
 - Compensation amount

Tip: Doing individualized outreach is more successful than general promotion. Collaborate with contacts and CBOs to identify people who may be interested.

Example: MetroWest Climate Equity Recruitment Outreach

Project Introduction

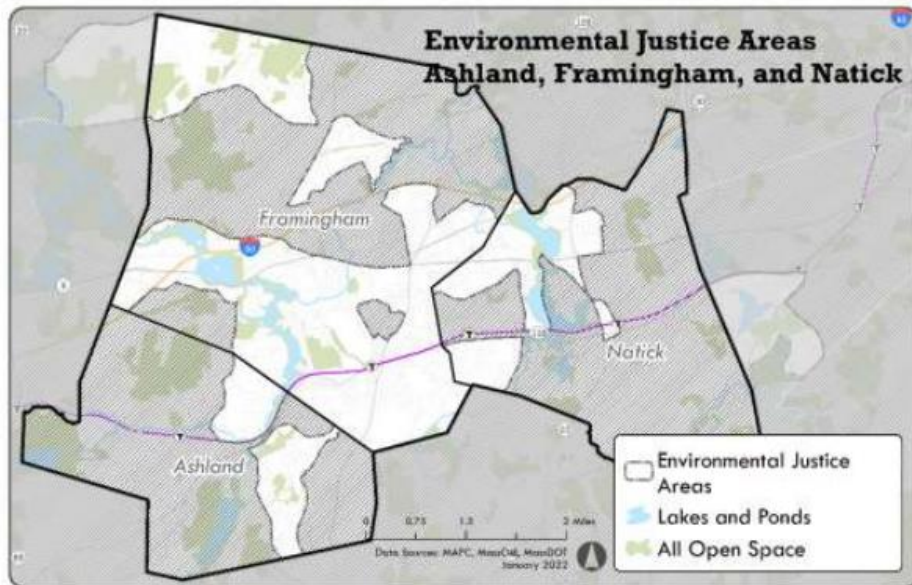
The towns of Ashland and Natick and the City of Framingham have partnered on a project focused on the intersection of climate change and equity. The *Metro West Climate Equity* project aims to reduce the social, environmental, and economic vulnerabilities that affect Environmental Justice communities across the three municipalities and to build local resilience to climate change.

Community Liaisons

Community Liaisons will work individually and together with the *Metro West Climate Equity* project team to collect information in their communities to explore perceptions of climate change and identify actions that would increase equity and resiliency in the Environmental Justice (EJ) neighborhoods of Ashland, Framingham, and Natick.

Eligibility:

Community Liaisons should live, work, or volunteer in Ashland, Framingham, and Natick, be at least 16 years old, comfortable working in English, and able to participate for the full length of the project. Preference given to participants who are comfortable speaking a language other than English and for residents from the EJ neighborhoods (see map).



Activities:

The research portion of this project will run from **February 2022 – July 2022**. We will ask that Community Liaison are able to commit to ~30 hours during this 6-month window.

- ~ 2 hours of training on climate change, risks, and vulnerabilities.
- ~ 3 hours to participate in a research methods and questions development workshop
- ~ 18 hours of data collection
- ~ 2 hours of data analysis
- ~ 3 hours to work with project team to plan and do outreach for the Community Climate Conversations
- ~2 hours to attend one Community Climate Conversation

Financial Compensation:

Community Liaisons will receive a \$500-\$1,000 stipend in recognition of their significant contribution to this project. Stipends will be issued by MAPC upon submission of documentation.

Skills important to the project to be advanced through trainings and workshops include:

- Speaking to local climate risks and vulnerabilities
- Developing research methods and questions
- Identifying data sources within the community
- Interviewing and surveying
- Qualitative and quantitative data analysis

Project timeline:



You can be a Community Liaison!

As someone living or working in Ashland, Natick, or Framingham, you know a lot about the community; That knowledge is critical to the *Metro West Climate Equity* project.

Connect with us at MWClimateEquity@mapc.org or 617-933-0788 and let us know you are interested in being a Community Liaison. In your message, please share your:

- Name;
- Age range;
- Town/City and neighborhood in which you live, work, or volunteer; and,
- Any other language skills you have beyond English.

Recruiting for Community Liaisons: What are you looking for?

In general, Community Liaisons:

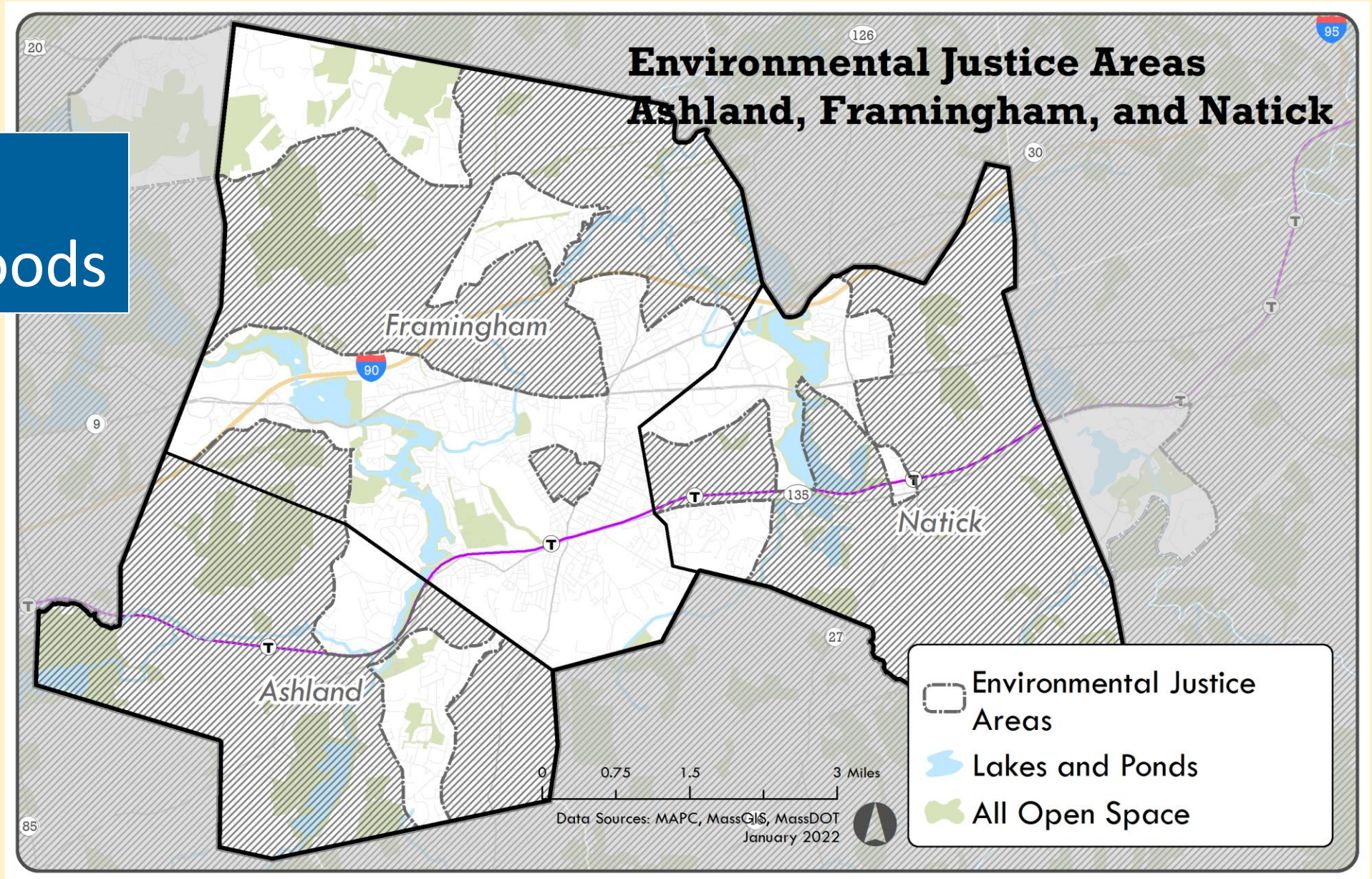
1. Are a member of the community of interest
2. Have interest in the topic area and time to investigate it
3. Are well-connected with community members

In MetroWest Climate Equity Project, Community Liaisons:

1. Resided in Environmental Justice neighborhoods or reflected demographics of target population
2. Were recruited for their interest in climate equity
3. Had networks through ESOL+ program, senior center, social groups, etc.

Example: MetroWest Climate Equity Community of Interest

Priority
Neighborhoods



STEP 2: TALK TO INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- Schedule time to talk to interested community members about the project and the Community Liaison role and responsibilities
 - Can be via 1-1 or small group meetings with interested community members
- Set clear expectations about the Community Liaison role to allow individuals to make informed decisions about their participation
 - Assists community member to consider the physical, intellectual, and emotional implications of becoming a team member

Tip: Show an example of an activity Liaisons may do as part of the project to help them decide if they're interested

STEP 3: OBTAIN COMMITMENT

- Meet or talk 1-1 with the potential Liaison to address any concerns or questions
 - Share an agreement to participate in Community Liaison Role following the conversation
- Confirm the individual's desire and willingness to fulfill the role and responsibilities of becoming a Community Liaison
- Execute an agreement between the municipality and Community Liaison

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example

Re: MetroWest Climate Equity Project

Thank you for your participation in the MetroWest Climate Equity Project and for your voluntary participation for the term of March 1, 2022 – July 30, 2022.

Honorarium: In recognition of the time and service you are providing, MAPC agrees to pay you an \$850 honorarium for your participation as a Community Liaison for the MetroWest Climate Equity Project. In order for you to receive payment, you must send MAPC a signed copy of this form with a completed W-9 form. Electronic signature is acceptable. You are responsible to comply with any and all state and/or federal tax liabilities related to this payment. One payment of \$250 will be made at the completion of the Community Liaison Training and a final payment of \$600 will be made at the completion of the honorarium term.

Release: In signing this Release, you hereby forever release and discharge MAPC from, and/or based on, any and all suits or claims, or other such legal process. Further, by your signature, you confirm that you are not an employee or related to an employee of MAPC.

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please include your name and address to where you would like to have the check mailed below:

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Address: _____

Street Address

Apt, Suite, Etc.

City, State

Zip Code

Please email this completed form and a completed W-9 form to Barry Keppard at bkeppard@mapc.org.

Please keep one copy of this form for your records.

Tip: Consider recruiting more Liaisons than needed. There will likely be attrition.

STEP 4: COLLABORATE

- Start meeting with the Community Liaisons to discuss project work
- Plan meeting around the Liaisons' schedules! Evenings or weekends may work best and consider non-traditional locations that are more accessible to those without cars
- Co-create ground rules to return to in moments that spark discomfort

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example

Group Agreements

1. Be Fully Present
2. Everyone is here to learn
3. Listen for understanding
4. Take space, make space
5. Speak from your own experience; use "I" statements
6. One Mic
7. Accept and expect lack of closure
8. Share the lesson not the story

STEP 5: TRAIN EACH OTHER

- Use a Popular Education model to foster co-learning: everyone has something to teach and to learn!
 - Leave space in agendas and material development to allow the group to make decisions about what topic to explore in-depth
- Train each other about the topic you are investigating
 - Planners: Can share maps and data about the topic
 - Community Liaisons: Can shared lived experience with that topic
- Use interactive activities to enhance engagement

Example: MetroWest Climate Equity Project

Popular Education Approaches in Training

Who or what do you see in your daily life that you think contributes to climate change?

Climate Jeopardy Activity

Knows and trusts neighbors	Neighborhood has a park and plenty of trees	Owens a car
Home is well insulated	Need to take medication on a regular basis	Infant or child
65 years or older and live alone	Work outdoors	Belong to a community or neighborhood group

Name the actions most frequently taken to prepare for extreme weather:

- 1** Signed up for City/Town emergency alerts (65%)
- 2** Checked in on loved ones (57%)
- 3** Checked on flooding risk (37%)

STEP 6: CO-DEVELOP PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- At every phase in a project, planners should introduce:
 - Intent for the proposed activity
 - Alternatives for implementing the activity
 - Implications and relevance for the priority community
- The group can decide how to proceed
 - Seek consensus but have a fallback decision-making method (e.g., group majority decision)

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example



- Which of these tools would you be most comfortable using?
- Where and how would you reach people with this tool?
- What other tools should we maybe use?

STEP 7: CO-EXECUTE PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Ask the Community Liaisons what kind of support they would appreciate when executing the agreed upon activities
- Examples of support include:
 - Co-facilitating interviews or focus groups
 - Providing local press on effort to affirm legitimacy of activities
 - Scheduling on behalf of Community Liaisons
 - Developing flyers, postcards, or promotional materials
 - Developing talking points that the Community Liaisons can use

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example: Community Postcard (Spanish Language Version)



Cuéntenos cómo crees que podemos hacer que Ashland, Natick y Framingham sean más saludables y fuertes frente al cambio climático. Queremos escuchar tus ideas sobre cómo su ciudad puede apoyar:

- a) La preparación ante emergencias
- b) La transportación
- c) La energía limpia

Únase a nosotros en una conversación sobre estos temas en:

- el 12 de septiembre, 7-8:30pm, Morse Institute Library en Natick
- el 26 de septiembre, 7-8:30pm, Morse Institute Library en Natick

¡Usa el código QR para inscribirte!



Aprender más : www.mapc.org/resource-library/metro-west-climate-equity/



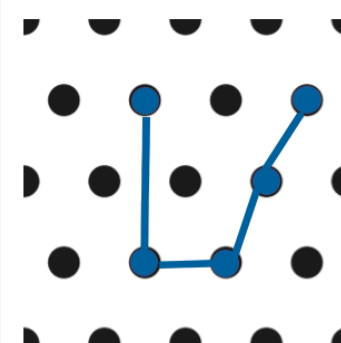
Tip: Reflect and iterate on project activities. Check-in with the Community Liaisons throughout about what is and is not working well. Adjust methods and project team support accordingly.

STEP 8: CO-INTERPRET PROJECT RESULTS

- Host collaborative workshops with Liaisons to make meaning out of results and reflect on the activity
- Ask each Liaison:
 - What's one result that stands out to you and why?
 - What could be causing that outcome?
 - What might happen as a result?
- Ask the group:
 - As you've been listening to each other, what thoughts have you had about bigger patterns that come out of these results?
- Reflect on additional project activities that may be needed to act on information
 - May need to return to Steps 6 and 7 for new activities

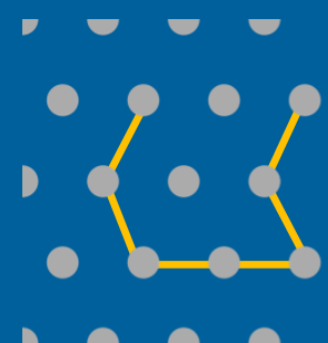
MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example

Linking



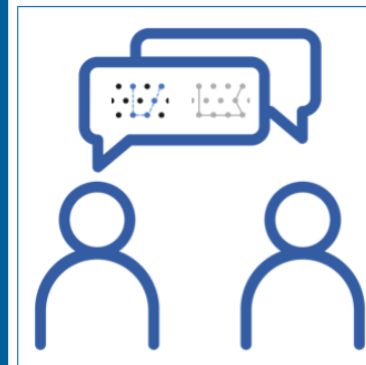
Making Connections
Between Different
Pieces of Data

Interpreting



What's Going On? What
Does the Data Say?

Making Meaning



So What? Why is this
important?

STEP 9: ACT

- Core to community-driven planning is the importance of *moving to an action phase*
- Based on the project results, determine what are the next steps for action
 - Share findings with community-based organizations, government agencies, residents, and other stakeholders
 - Apply for grant funding or use departmental budget to implement action steps
- Seed projects allow you to pilot action steps with Liaison involvement

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example



January 9, 2023

Dear Mike:

Congratulations! On behalf of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), I am pleased to inform you that Town of Natick, MA has been selected as one of four (4) awardees in the project "Demonstration Sites in Climate and Health" through support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

We are excited to support your project, *Climate Readiness – Emergency Communications to Frontline Neighborhoods*. Your organization will act as a "demonstration site" of the important and innovative work local health departments are undertaking at the intersection of global climate change and local public health. The total awarded funding is \$20,000 for the period January 9, 2023 – June 30, 2023 and is contingent upon execution of a contract. Awarded funding will only be provided for allowable expenses as detailed in the [Request for Applications](#) and will not be provided for non-allowable expenses.

Example: MWCEP Climate Emergency Communications Project

- Liaisons and municipal staff co-created climate emergency magnets & flyers
 - Materials were sent to 7,000 households in EJ neighborhoods
- Based off Liaison feedback, municipal staff updated Framingham & Natick's emergency preparedness websites to:
 - Highlight translation options
 - Feature only the most important information
 - Improve navigation
- We developed principles for communicating about climate emergencies:
 - Simplicity is key
 - Focus on the most immediate impacts
 - Partner with other groups to get the word out



STEP 10: CELEBRATE

- Celebrate the work of the Community Liaisons!
- Celebration can take many different forms:
 - Certificates of Excellence
 - Potluck
 - Group outing
 - Community event to share the work of the Community Liaisons

MetroWest Climate Equity Project Example



COMMUNICATION IS KEY

- Ask the Community Liaisons for their preferred mode of communication at the project start
 - You may need to communicate with Liaisons in different ways (email vs. Whatsapp vs. text)
- Different people have different needs and that's okay!
 - Some people may require more frequent communication than others
- Maintain transparency throughout the project
 - Be honest about what the municipality can do for residents and do not overpromise
- Be flexible! Things won't always go as planned.
 - Be prepared to throw away your agenda and follow the Liaison's lead

**How might you incorporate this model
into your own work?**

**Questions? Want to engage Community Liaisons
in your department?**

**Contact Barry Keppard, Sharon Ron, or Claire
Hoffman at Metropolitan Area Planning Council
(MAPC).**

bkeppard@mapc.org

sron@mapc.org

choffman@mapc.org

Appendix

BACKGROUND

Information on the MetroWest Climate Equity Project

- **MVP Action Grant** for Fall 2021 – 2023
- Partnership with **Ashland**, **Natick**, and **Framingham**
- Focused on the intersection of climate change and equity
- Trying to accomplish 3 things:
 1. **Build lasting relationships with MetroWest Environmental Justice (EJ) communities** to facilitate long-term engagement on climate change resilience and action
 2. **Learn from the community** about how they experience climate change and what their climate priorities are and **update local plans and direct funding** to reflect findings.
 3. **Increase city and town staff's knowledge** of climate equity through training and **build capacity to support and engage EJ communities**

<https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/metro-west-climate-equity/>

Sources

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- Danley, K. S., & Ellison, M. L. (1999). *A handbook for participatory action researchers*.
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- Rural Support Partners (n.d.). *Spiral Model of Popular Education*. <https://www.ruralsupportpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Spiral-Model-of-Popular-Education-Toolkit-One-Pager-1.pdf>