Executive Director’s Report  
Submitted to the Executive Committee  
April 24, 2024

Arts & Culture

In mid-March, four final artist teams presented concepts for a monument to honor the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Lexington. Thirty-five artists from across the country and abroad responded to the Call for Artists, and four artist teams were selected to develop concepts. Artist teams included Mark Aeling of MGA Sculpture Studio, Miriam Gusevich of M2Studio, the artist and designer team of Zaq Landsberg and Thomas Robinson, and Jonathan and Saori Ide Russell of Ride Art Studio. Each artist team received a $1,000 stipend to develop concepts for a permanent monument in response to three central thematic prompts: what does Lexington represent across time, from 1775 to today? What forces and factors brought about the events of April 19, 1775? And how have the founding principles of democracy and union evolved from then until now? Artist teams had four weeks to develop their concepts for the monument, which were then reviewed by a technical review panel before the teams their proposals at a hybrid public presentation.

**SPARK, Mark Aeling of MGA Studio**

Drawing inspiration from Emerson’s renowned phrase “the shot heard round the world,” Aeling’s concept depicts a flintlock of a musket with a spark emerging vertically from the flintlock, set on a large granite base.
The Path to Liberty, Miriam Gusevich of M2Studio
This monument is an “allegorical garden, a sculptural reenactment to convey the bravery and vulnerability of the American patriots when they confronted the overwhelming force of the British Army Regulars.” The artist's concept creates a plaza designed to reflect the Sons of Liberty flag, with 13 parallel red and white stripes flanked by two groups of steel pipes in blue and red, representing the April 19, 1775, and the events that took place on the battlefield.

Lexington 250 Monument, Zaq Landsberg and Thomas Robinson
This artist and designer team proposed a monument with an “interactive cylindrical bronze sculpture within an architectural garden house.” In the concept, the bronze wheel depicts the story of April 19, 1775, alongside stories of global decolonization movements, struggles for independence, and revolutions sparked by the events inspired by the American Revolution. The style of the etching mimics carvings on powderhorns, which were distinctive to Massachusetts at the time of the Revolutionary War. The site surrounding the garden house is a landscaped garden of native flowering plants.

REFLECTION, Jonathan and Saori Ide Russell, Ride Art Studio
This kinetic sculpture reflects on the “meaning of the gathering on the Lexington Green all those years ago” and the “future and our place in it.” The sculpture is shaped like a tree, joining three pillars at the top to support four circular forms protecting spinning diamond-shaped forms representing the fifty states. Visitors can step inside the sculpture and see themselves reflected in mirror paneling within the tree. The sculpture sits on a concrete circular slab with 77 inlaid circles representing the minutemen and surrounded by two bend structures with thirteen inlaid bronze stars representing the colonies.
Director of Arts and Culture Annis Sengupta joined coalition partners for the Creative Economy Legislative Briefing at the State House on March 26. Convened by MASSCreative, the event featured Mass Cultural Council presenting recently released data on the arts sector's economic impacts, MassINC presenting on the impact of the Downtown Vitality Act for strengthening downtown districts including cultural districts, and Open Door Arts reporting on accessibility in the arts and culture sector. Annis spoke to the role artists play in making our Commonwealth full of healthy, equitable and resilient places, the need to preserve and expand creative and cultural workspace through the Creative Space Preservation Act, and the importance of the PLACE Act for making it easier for public entities to work with artists.

On March 28, MAPC’s Arts & Culture staff convened a group of Chinatown community residents, business representatives, artists, and organizers for an advisory group meeting for the Chinatown Cultural Plan. The meeting was facilitated by the A&C department in collaboration with working group partners at the Chinatown CLT, Asian Community Development Corporation, Pao Arts Center, the Rose Kennedy Greenway, and the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture. Attendees expressed interest in learning from the completed artist-led engagements, including the Memory Mapping Dinners where residents and community members shared memories and places in Boston’s Chinatown that evoked a sense of belonging. One of the two dinners engaged Cantonese-speaking residents of Chinatown through facilitation in Cantonese and interpretation and translation available for Mandarin and English-speaking participants. This language-inclusive approach developed by the team is an opportunity for learning within and beyond MAPC for building more equitable and language-inclusive engagement practices. The advisory group will reconvene in May to provide feedback and additional comments on the engagement findings and further develop definitions of culture and history for the Chinatown Cultural Plan, slated to be completed late June/early July.

On April 13, Director of Arts & Culture Annis Sengupta attended the American Planning Association National Planning Conference in Minneapolis, moderating a roundtable on the importance of strengthening cultural infrastructure in the United States as Chair of the APA Arts & Planning Division. Panelists discussed the role that planners can play in ensuring that infrastructure investments engage the arts and culture sector so that those investments result in culturally informed, equitable, and resilient places. The event brought conversations started at the joint National Endowment for the Arts and Domestic Policy Council’s Healing, Bridging, Thriving Summit to the planning field. Featured speakers included APA President Angela Brooks, National Endowment for the Arts Director of Design and Creative Placemaking Ben Stone, Mellon Foundation program director for Humanities in Place Justin Garrett Moore, Founder and Chief Visionary of the Institute for AfroUrbanism Lauren Hood, Executive Director of the Mixed Blood Theater and creative engagement specialist Mark Valdez, and Amanda Lovelee of CAIR Lab who is working as an artist embedded with the Metropolitan Planning Council, the RPA for Greater Minneapolis-St. Paul.
Clean Energy

Greater Boston Climate Action Plan

In March, MAPC and partners released the Greater Boston “Priority Climate Action Plan” (PCAP) as part of the region-wide Greater Boston Climate Action Plan (GBCAP). This planning process is funded by the U.S. EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program, and the region encompasses 167 municipalities across Eastern Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. The PCAP includes a regional Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory, eleven priority GHG reduction measures in the transportation, buildings, electricity generation, and waste sectors, and analysis of the impacts and benefits of measures in federally-designated Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities. The PCAP builds on existing climate action planning and implementation efforts and input from key stakeholders. During the planning process, MAPC held public listening sessions and convened a Regional Planning Agency/Commission (RPA/RPC) Steering Committee, comprised of all RPA/RPCs in the region, a Municipal Advisory Group, and a Justice40 Advisory group, comprised of 25 community-based organizations and individuals representing or working closely with federally-designated Justice40 communities.

The PCAP is the first phase of the GBCAP process. Between April 2024 and August 2025, MAPC will continue to work with partners to develop a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan that will build on the measures identified in the PCAP and establish emission reduction goals for 2030 and 2050. Read more on MAPC's blog post.

EPA CPRG Implementation Grant Application

In addition to providing climate action planning grants, the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program offered $4.3 billion in implementation grant funding to support projects aiming to implement priority measures identified in the PCAPs. On April 1, MAPC submitted an application to EPA's CPRG Implementation Grant program for over $49 million to support affordable housing decarbonization in the Greater Boston region. Our application, submitted in a coalition with the public housing authorities of Boston, Chelsea, and Lowell, aims to establish the Greater Boston Affordable Housing Decarbonization Accelerator (AHDA). If funded, the AHDA will deliver $46 million to the coalition's housing authorities to fund deep energy retrofits at over 430 units of public housing. Additionally, the AHDA would establish a $2 million technical assistance grant program to support decarbonization efforts by other affordable housing owners and managers, strengthen an existing regional community of practice (the Energy Cohort, co-led by LISC Boston and New Ecology, both of whom are partners on the grant), and explore opportunities to streamline procurement for decarbonization measures and services. EPA anticipates providing notices of award in July 2024. Additional partners include the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants, and Tufts University.

Governor Healey's Commission on Energy Infrastructure Siting and Permitting (CEISP)

In September 2023, Governor Healey established the CEISP to identify recommendations for regulatory and legislative reform to streamline clean energy siting and permitting processes across the Commonwealth. MAPC's Deputy Executive Director, Lizzi Weyant, was one of three commissioners appointed to represent municipal interests, in addition to representatives from Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions. In total, the CEISP commissioners included approximately 30 individuals representing 12 stakeholder groups, including environmental justice organizations, climate and environmental advocates, electric utilities, clean energy industry, and housing/real estate interests. The CEISP was tasked with developing consensus recommendations by March 31 that could reduce and streamline permitting timelines and processes while ensuring communities have input in siting and permitting and ensuring benefits and burdens of the clean energy transition are shared equitably.

The CEISP met many times from October to March, with listening sessions and opportunities for public comment opening in mid-February. The Commission met the March 31 deadline, offering recommendations
to consolidate permits, better define clean energy infrastructure, set timeframes for mandatory decisions, and establish specific community engagement and community benefit targets. There were several issues on which the Commission was unable to achieve consensus, and this was particularly true when it came to local issues and local control. Throughout the process, MAPC coordinated with other municipal stakeholders to present information to the CEISP on local processes, develop memos and comments addressing recommendations proposed by various commissioner groups, and discuss voting on recommendations. The primary recommendations affecting cities and towns included: (1) establishing a consolidated, revised process for reviewing clean energy infrastructure under local jurisdiction, (2) establishing state standards for local review of clean energy infrastructure, and (3) establishing a Division of Energy Siting and Permitting at the Department of Energy Resources to provide direct support to municipalities for reviewing clean energy infrastructure. While MAPC ultimately endorsed these recommendations, we felt strongly that the proposed process reforms and establishment of a consolidated local permit will only be feasible with robust support provided through state standards and the technical assistance provided by the newly-proposed DOER Division.

The final recommendations submitted to the Governor can be viewed [here](#).

**Climate Resilience Playbook**

In partnership with the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, MAPC recently kicked off stakeholder engagement to shape development of a new Climate Resilience Playbook - a statewide resource that will support communities with best practice implementation actions that build social and environmental resilience to climate impacts. Through stakeholder engagement, MAPC aims to better understand what resources are relevant and applicable to different community types (e.g., coastal, inland, urban, rural) and project types (e.g., infrastructure upgrades/retrofit, educational and outreach to enhance social resilience, etc.). MAPC also aims to understand how municipal and partner resilience priorities do or don't differ and what resources could help enable collaboration where community members are interested.

During this first phase of engagement (April-Summer 2024), the project team will conduct a survey, hold focus groups (both municipal and partner focus groups), collect input from practitioners in other states during the upcoming 2024 National Adaptation Forum, and join existing resilience communities of practice to share about the Playbook and get input. During the second phase (Summer 2024-Fall 2024), an advisory group or focus groups will provide input on drafted potential actions for the Playbook. Non-municipal partners will be compensated for their expertise and ideas. Throughout this process, the team will also incorporate learnings from the ongoing EEA Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) 2.0 Planning Pilot, which aims to support municipalities in centering equity and reaching more voices in the planning process and has a more explicit focus on building social resilience than past MVP grants.

**Communications**

Communications is thrilled to have added a second Visual Designer to the department, increasing their capacity to support large events and projects. The Comms team is helping to plan our upcoming in-person Council Meeting in Boston next month, and successfully partnered with Transportation and Strategic Initiatives to host an extremely well-attended interactive lecture with Author Henry Grabar in March as part of the MetroCommon Speaker Series. The event can be streamed online at MAPC's [YouTube](#) channel.

Communications also helped Community Engagement design and release MAPC's new Language Access Guide through a virtual webinar and press release; the guide and replay video are available at [www.mapc.org/resource-library/language-access-guide/](http://www.mapc.org/resource-library/language-access-guide/).

The team is heading into budget season with a strategic advocacy plan in collaboration with Government Affairs, designed to call attention to MAPC's key legislative priorities through social media graphics, email outreach, and other calls to action.
The team also worked with the Housing team to unveil a new MBTA Communities toolkit for local officials looking for help communicating with residents about 3A. View the new guide, complete with downloadable messaging resources, at www.mapc.org/resource-library/mbta-multifamily-zoning/.

Community Engagement

The Engagement team has been deeply involved in several local plans. The team recently finalized the public engagement for the Stow Housing Production Plan, holding a hybrid forum to present the draft affordable housing goals to the public. The team also kicked off an engagement roadshow for the Everett Housing Production Plan. This will help meet residents where they are, and the team kicked off their engagement by attending the city’s Youth Jobs Fair where they connected with over 50 youths about housing needs in the city. Future planned engagement opportunities include attending the Eliot Family Resource Center’s community baby shower, the Earth Day cleanup, and more. The team also completed a second working group session in the Framingham Climate Action Plan, which was designed to workshop climate goals, strategies, and actions with stakeholders who will be crucial to implementation of the Action Plan. This included CBO leaders, local academics and educators, and municipal officials.

Language Access Guide

The Engagement team organized and led the launch event for our newly-released Language Access Guide for Municipalities. The event, Weaving Language Access into Local Projects: A Guide for Cities and Towns, was attended by 150 people, including one of our most supportive Senators, Sal DiDomenico. The guide represents a culmination of nearly two years of work at MAPC, serving as a tool for municipalities who are working to establish and strengthen language access at the local level. Language Access is defined within a language justice framework, which means that every person can meaningfully take part in aspects of daily life, our systems and processes consistently adapt to people’s needs, and every person can act and also lead in their community in the language and format that works best for them. We see this as a continually evolving practice at MAPC.

Engagement Training

The Community Engagement team hosted a training for the Mel King Institute, a beloved MAPC partner, for over 20 individuals. Participants were introduced to topics including defining the purpose of engagement, the meaning of equitable community engagement, how to do community asset mapping, and the importance of stakeholder analysis.

Data Services

Apartment Wi-Fi Site Selection / Program Expansion

The MAPC Data Services and Municipal Collaboration Departments reached a major project milestone in March with the announcement of our first cohort of affordable housing sites to receive support under our free Apartment Wi-Fi program as part of the Mass Broadband Institute’s Digital Equity Partnership grant. The sites are located in Boston (Urban Edge, Columbus Ave Corridor – 884 units), Somerville (Somerville Housing Authority, Mystic River and Mystic View Apartments – 455 units), Lynn (King’s Beach Tower, Redwood Housing – 183 units), and North Adams (North Adams Housing Authority, multiple sites – 305 units). Together these sites add 1,827 units of affordable senior and family housing that will be served by free broadband internet, expanding on the existing sites in Chelsea, Revere, and Quincy.
Environment

Neponset Watershed Climate Collaborative

MAPC is partnering with the Neponset River Watershed Association and Weston and Sampson Engineers to convene and support the Neponset Watershed Climate Collaborative, a 10-town initiative to coordinate climate resiliency efforts. On April 17, MAPC led a technical assistance workshop on Green Infrastructure. Rachel Bowers presented MAPC's Equitable Green Infrastructure Tool and demonstrated its application for the town of Norwood. The featured speaker was Kate England, the Green Infrastructure Director for the City of Boston. The 30 attendees further explored these topics in two breakout sessions.

EEA Flood Vulnerability Assessment for Impacts on Environmental Justice Communities

A team led by MAPC was selected by Energy and Environmental Affairs to conduct a statewide assessment of flood vulnerability with a focus on Environmental Justice communities. The 18-month project will involve staff from Environment, Community Engagement, and Data Services, as well as three partnering subcontractors, Weston & Sampson Engineers, Robyn Gibson, and Community Planning, LLC. Phase 1 for FY24 is underway. Working with our sister RPAs across the state, we will begin by assembling all known mapping and data on statewide flood vulnerabilities and preparing a stakeholder outreach plan and contact lists to be used for surveys this spring. The Phase 1 work is focused on the 26 Gateway Cities across the state and several other EJ communities, as identified by EEA. Phase 2 in FY25 will broaden outreach to all 187 EJ communities in Massachusetts and conduct more in-depth engagement in four or five pilot communities.

Hazard Mitigation/Climate Resilience Plans

MAPC is preparing eight Hazard Mitigation Plans this year and enhancing the plans to address climate resilience issues. Five plans have been completed for Essex, Hull, Medway, Norfolk, and Norwood. The remaining plans for Littleton, Millis, and Sharon will be completed by June.

Government Affairs

DLTA Day and State Budget Advocacy
On February 27, MAPC and the directors of MARPA hosted the now 2nd annual State House Day to advocate for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) and the Grant Assistance Program (GAP) in the FY25 budget. This served as a kick off to the team’s budget advocacy this budget season, and we are planning upcoming events to highlight funding for the Shannon Community Safety Initiative. While the budget is expected to be more fiscally constrained this year than in recent years, the team is hard at work advocating to protect funding and advocate for critical increases that will support cities and towns.

**Affordable Homes Act Advocacy**

As co-chair of the Local Option for Housing Affordability Coalition, MAPC led a municipal sign on letter supporting local option transfer fees in The Affordable Homes Act, the housing bond proposal filed by Governor Healey, also noting areas where additional flexibility would benefit the proposal. The letter's 43 municipal signatories from 29 communities across the Commonwealth represent some of the largest and smallest communities in the State and includes both those that have petitioned the Legislature for their own transfer fee proposal and those that have not taken that step.

**Competitive Energy Supply Legislation**

At the March Legislative Committee and then Officers meeting, MAPC endorsed H.3196/S.2106 An Act Relative to Electric Ratepayer Protections, and H.4143/S.2521 An Act Establishing the Environmental Justice Trust Fund. The support was very timely as MAPC was then able to join a sign-on letter with more than 100 other organizations to push for the ratepayer protection legislation.

**Land Use**

**Lynnfield Visioning Plan**

MAPC completed the Town of Lynnfield visioning plan, which will provide the foundation for a future comprehensive plan.

**Swampscott Vinnin Square Design Guidance**

In May of 2023, Swampscott Town Meeting approved zoning changes to encourage mixed-use redevelopment of a commercial strip mall area in Vinnin Square. MAPC has completed design guidelines for Vinnin Square in Swampscott that would supplement the zoning. The design guidelines have been adopted by Swampscott’s Planning Board, and provide additional direction on architectural, landscape, and design aspects of future redevelopment projects. The guidelines were developed with community input and working in close partnership with the Planning Board. Additionally, MAPC and the Town of Swampscott have initiated a Town-wide Master Plan process.

**History and Heritage Webpage Launch**

MAPC has recently launched a new webpage that provides centralized information about our work to uplift history and heritage in communities throughout our region. The webpage frames our unique approach on equity and community-building and outlines the range of services and resources the agency provides. It also highlights our interdepartmental staff with expertise in historic preservation and public humanities. We hope that the webpage will help cities and towns learn more about how to partner with us to build an understanding of our shared past that leads us to a future in which everyone can thrive.

**Economic Development**

MAPC and the Town of Concord have launched an Age Friendly Business Initiative to foster the inclusivity of Concord businesses to older residents and visitors. The work will start with a survey to better understand
shopping habits in Concord’s three business districts, alongside other questions aimed at better understanding transportation, convenience, and affordability. The goal is to create a toolkit to offer information and tips for residents and visitors.

In a significant step towards revitalizing the Wood Road area in Braintree, MAPC is pleased to present the final Wood Road Existing Conditions Report. This document, completed in February 2024, offers a comprehensive analysis of the current economic, infrastructural, and spatial conditions within the Wood Road District. It synthesizes findings from various studies and data to outline both the opportunities and challenges facing this key development area.

**Housing**

MAPC’s Housing and Data Services teams, along with UMass Donahue Institute and Amy Dain, were selected by EOHLC to lead research tasks to inform the first Massachusetts Statewide Housing Plan. Work will commence in late spring 2024.

**Capacity Building through a HUD Grant**

MAPC is participating with the City of Boston Housing Innovations Lab on a HUD research grant, “HUD Breakthrough Pilot Handbook: Growing Offsite Construction for Housing Through Regional Pilot Projects.” Greater Boston joins housing partners in Virginia, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, California, and Seattle/King County to identify regional barriers to offsite construction as a means to increased housing production. The grant program begins in July 2024.

**Municipal Collaboration**

**Region 3 Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition**

MAPC Staff on behalf of the Region 3 local public health departments held the third of four Equity Workshops on equitable emergency preparedness, with a focus on resources and sheltering. This occurred in person on March 14th at Northern Essex Community College. The speakers were Alyssa Kreiger, the Director of Community Outreach and Anastasia Saia, Community Outreach Manager of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MSPCA), Madeline Noonan, the Assistant Director and Tara Hammes, the Healthy Aging Manger for the Massachusetts Council on Aging and Emily Mew, Massachusetts Director of Emergency Disaster Services for the Salvation Army. This event had 30 people in attendance.

**Emergency Preparedness Practice**

MAPC Staff conducted a shelter site visit at Manchester Essex Regional High School. Staff have been working with Manchester by the Sea to develop a Mass Care and Shelter Plan for the town. The site visit is one of the final pieces of the plan. Staff worked with the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Public Health Director to determine the appropriate layout inside and outside the school in the event it was activated to support the municipality. This included identifying parking for residents and emergency vehicles, registration, medical station, feeding, dormitory, personal hygiene and locations for resident’s pets.

**Collective Procurement**

MAPC has successfully reprocured a school food market consultant through the Request for Quotes process. Bob O’Neil works with MarketWatch consulting and has been previously procured for work in this position. In this role, he will work to finalize bidding information relating to the current school food contract and the usage by the schools listed as participants. He will also be assisting our department in preparation for a new procurement for Eastern Mass Schools regarding fresh produce, specifically for fruits and vegetables.
Additionally, new street sweeper purchasing contracts were procured on behalf of the Greater Boston Police Council. The new contracts have the most often preferred models of street sweeper, as well as a wide new array of alternative fuel and electric options.

**Shannon CSI Grant**

MAPC staff attended the 2024 Juvenile Justice Conference in Cleveland Ohio to learn about cutting edge topics and issues facing the juvenile and family court system to inform MAPC’s Metropolitan Mayors Coalition Shannon CSI work. Staff attended sessions focused on trauma-informed strength-based approaches and youth programming, equity focused juvenile justice, and emerging reforms for emerging youth.

**The Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC)**

NERAC supported an Active Attack Integrated Response Course (AAIR) on March 11th and 12th for 32 multidisciplinary public safety personnel in the northeast region. AAIR is a performance level course designed to improve integration between law enforcement, fire, tele-communicator and emergency medical services (EMS) in active attack / shooter events.

**Public Health**

**Boston Urban Agriculture Strategy**

The Public Health Department completed the Boston Urban Agriculture Strategy project in April 2024. Working in partnership with GrowBoston (the Office of Urban Agriculture of the City of Boston), the team, led by Heidi Stucker and Jessika Brenin, facilitated a 16-month planning process to equitably advance opportunities for more urban agriculture in the City of Boston. The process included extensive engagement of priority neighborhoods, municipal entities, and community stakeholders in the urban agriculture field.

The Boston Urban Agriculture Strategy presents a range of recommendations, which reflect resident-desired, neighborhood-level changes for urban agriculture in Dorchester, Roxbury, Mattapan, and East Boston; youth-desired change for urban agriculture in their neighborhood, schools, and government; and opportunities for changes in municipal policy, practices, and collaborations to build on current efforts and introduce new approaches to equitably improve and expand urban agriculture in Boston.
COVID-19 Peer-Reviewed Publications

The Public Health team was involved in a number of COVID-19 pandemic support and response activities, similar to other departments at MAPC and alongside city and town partner across the Commonwealth. The Public Health team worked with a set of partners to document these experiences as well as share their impacts and lessons learned through a series of articles. Two of these articles recently received peer reviews and were published in leading journals: *The Chelsea Project: Turning Research and Wastewater Surveillance on COVID-19 Into Health Equity Action, Massachusetts, 2020–2021* and *A comparison of SARS-CoV-2 wastewater-based surveillance in a sentinel community versus a large metropolitan sewershed in Massachusetts, 2020-2023*. These articles form an important basis to help prepare for future public health emergencies and continue a tradition of publications to share MAPC’s involvement in innovative and important public health work.

Priority Development and Climate Resiliency Plan

We are working with five towns west and southwest of Boston to identify priorities for development and climate resiliency investments. This pilot project, largely funded by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, is seeking to establish a partnership between the municipalities, MAPC, and the Healy Administration. We recently held the kick-off meeting with the participating communities of Ashland, Framingham, Natick, Wellesley, and Watertown.

**Strategic Initiatives**

Strategic Plan/DEI Assessment Update
For the Strategic Plan, we have assembled work teams to build out the goals and strategies for each of the five topical priorities. These inter-departmental teams will work over the next month and a half to develop these.

The provisionally endorsed strategies are:

- Advance equity in the economic wellbeing, health, and safety of our region’s residents.
- Accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to help achieve the Commonwealth’s goal of net zero emissions by 2050 and improve the region’s resilience to climate change.
- Encourage sustainable development and mobility with a focus on affordable homes, good jobs for low-income workers, a healthy environment, non-auto transportation options throughout the region, and access to critical amenities and services.
- Expand our region’s commitment to support artists, advance the arts, and celebrate our region’s diverse cultural heritage.
- Assist local governments to become more effective, efficient, and inclusive through capacity building, convening and collaboration, and community engagement.

**Transportation**

**Federal Congestion Relief Grant**

In April, MAPC submitted a $30 million grant application to the Federal Highway Administration’s Congestion Relief Program. The application included funding for an expansion of the Bluebikes bike share system and an upgrade to the stations to support more e-bikes. It also included the expansion of first-mile, last-mile transit services in neighborhoods of Boston, focusing on Mattapan, Allston-Brighton, Grove Hall, and the Seaport district.

**Finding the Fit: How Parking Policies Shape Our Neighborhoods and Determine Housing Outcomes**

On March 19 MAPC hosted author and journalist Henry Grabar for an in-person presentation and panel discussion at the Boston Society of Architects. Henry, the author of *Paved Paradise: How Parking Explains the World*, is a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. The event drew more than 100 attendees and featured a keynote from Grabar and a panel with local municipal planners. The event also served as the official relaunch of MAPC’s MetroCommon 2050 Speaker Series for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. “Finding the Fit” (video recording available here) provided a timely discussion of the connections between parking, housing, and transportation outcomes. As Grabar declared early in his keynote, “the approach to parking will determine whether the MBTA Communities Act succeeds.” As cities and towns in Greater Boston are working on zoning reform to accommodate more multifamily housing near transit stations, parking is often overlooked as a factor that increases traffic, pollution, and housing costs, while reducing transit usage and open space.

**Revere Bike/Ped Plan**

In March, MAPC kicked off a bicycle and pedestrian plan with the City of Revere. The focus of the plan will be to establish a Bike/Ped Advisory Committee to inform street changes, improve walking and cycling conditions across Rte 1 and 1A, and connect Revere to the Northern Strand shared use path.

**Everett Soccer Stadium**

At the beginning of March, MAPC hosted municipal planning staff from Boston and Everett to discuss the proposed soccer stadium along the Mystic River and within the Designated Port Area (DPA). There is a bill in the legislature to remove the site from the DPA. The discussion focused on the Community Benefit Agreement that Everett has with the Kraft Group and the potential impact on transportation.

**Boston MPO**

In March and April the Boston MPO developed the FFY 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), which is the region’s rolling five-year transportation capital investment program for the federal transportation
funds the region receives. The MPO focuses on the approximate $728 million “discretionary” funds used for a combination of municipal, MassDOT, MBTA, and RTA priorities. This year many projects increased in cost and were not ready in their TIP year. While many projects were pushed to outer TIP years, no projects were removed from the TIP.

A few new project highlights for this TIP development cycle include a new funding program to pilot design funds for five municipal projects, new funding for Bluebikes state of good repair needs, $5 million to upgrade the Nubian Square busway, $4 million to provide elevators to the Central Square Red Line station, and $2.5 million for additional bike lockers at MBTA stations. The full FFY25 – 29 TIP can be found at Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) | Boston Region MPO (bostonmpo.org)

Subregions

A joint subregional legislative breakfast was held on March 22 at the historic Life-Saving Station in Nahant. The breakfast, hosted by the North Shore Task Force and the North Suburban Planning Council subregions, was attended by over 40 people and featured Representatives Ciccolo, Capano, and Kassner as well as Nahant Town Administrator Tony Barletta. Leah Robins, Director of Government Affairs, led a panel discussion with the legislators and a robust Q&A with attendees.

Human Resources

David McDonald joined MAPC as an official full-time employee in March after being a temporary employee since September 2023. David is the new Visual Designer with the Communications Department. In this role, he will be supporting the Communications Department in visual product design and implementation, along with conceptual visioning, editing and posting. David holds a Master's Degree in Communications Management from Simmons College and comes to MAPC with prior experience in both branding and design roles at BNY Mellon and Eaton Vance.