

# Metropolitan Area Planning Council

## Fiscal 2024-2025 Work Plan

### INTRODUCTION

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) adopted its **Strategic Plan** in October of 2015. The plan sets forth four Strategic Priorities in the areas of **smart growth**, **regional collaboration**, **equity**, and **climate change**. Since that time, we adopted our new regional land use and policy plan, MetroCommon2050, in November 2021; and we are nearing completion of a new strategic planning process for the agency, including a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Assessment. However, the four strategic priorities remain in place, and are the guiding objectives for this annual work plan.

MAPC's Strategic Priority definitions are:

- A. Encourage development and preservation consistent with **smart growth** principles, especially by increasing housing production, promoting innovative transportation solutions, and encouraging mixed-use development near various forms of transit.
- B. Partner with our cities and towns to promote **regional collaboration**, enhance effectiveness, and increase efficiency.
- C. Play a leading role in helping the region to achieve greater **equity**.
- D. Help the region reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the physical, environmental, and social impacts of **climate change** and natural hazards.

The full Strategic Plan is available at [mapc.org/about-mapc/work-plans-strategic-plan](https://mapc.org/about-mapc/work-plans-strategic-plan). MAPC uses these Strategic Priorities to focus our efforts toward implementing **MetroCommon 2050**. MetroCommon 2050 includes a set of actions that local and state government can take to improve the region over time. MetroCommon focuses on challenges and opportunities that are bigger than any one place. And it looks at how those issues are connected. MetroCommon 2050 goals are meant to describe what residents want life in the region to be like in the year 2050. They are intended to be bold, yet achievable. The goals are:

**Getting Around the Region:** Traveling around Metro Boston is safe, affordable, convenient, and enjoyable.

**Homes for All:** All residents of Metro Boston have places to live that meet their needs, and that they can afford.

**A Climate-Resilient Region:** Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

**A Net Zero Carbon Region:** The Metro Boston region is highly energy efficient and has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero.

**Dynamic and Representative Governments:** Local governments and regional agencies have the capacity and resources to deliver the services and supports our residents deserve, and to maintain and invest in our built and natural environments.

**A Healthy Environment:** Greater Boston's air, water, land, and other natural resources are clean and protected – for us and for the rest of the ecosystem.

**Economic Security:** Everyone has the financial resources to meet their needs and to live fulfilling lives.

**Economic Prosperity:** Greater Boston's economy benefits all in the region.

**Healthy and Safe Neighborhoods:** We are safe, healthy, and connected to one another.

**Thriving Arts, Culture, and Heritage:** Greater Boston is full of unique places and experiences that bring joy and foster diversity and social cohesion.

This document outlines **MAPC's Fiscal 2025 Work Plan**, which covers July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. At the beginning of their section, departments note the [MetroCommon 2050 goals](#) they intend to advance. After each strategy, a parenthetical reference in red indicates the Strategic Priorities, which that strategy seeks to address. Please note that the Work Plan does not include every program or project that each department implements, but rather the key strategic priorities, the department will undertake in the upcoming Fiscal Year.

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# ARTS AND CULTURE

## MetroCommon 2050 Connections

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## Strategic Goals

### Expand local capacity to support arts, culture, and humanities through policy change and collaboration.

- Support and advance state policies that increase capacity of municipalities to support arts, culture, and the humanities and to expand equitable access to career pathways in the arts, cultural practice, and the creative economy. (A, C, D)
- Engage in state and local level policy change efforts to ensure that housing, economic, and land use policy support equity and prosperity in the creative sector. (A, C, D)
- Develop datasets, literature reviews and research briefs to fill knowledge gaps about the location and characteristics of cultural assets and lay the groundwork for further analysis of cultural displacement, creative economy opportunities and constraints, and equity of access to arts and culture. (A, C, D)
- Facilitate partnerships among state and regional entities to expand visibility and awareness of arts and culture venues and assets at the local and regional level. (D)
- Establish systems and practices that build shared knowledge about innovative practices in arts and culture planning, building pathways to good jobs in arts, culture, and heritage. (A, B, C, D)
- Foster conditions for equitable commemoration and public history. (A, B, C, D)

### Provide technical assistance that enables arts and culture to thrive at the local and regional level, while increasing equity in the arts and culture sector.

- Engage in research that increases understanding of inequality within the arts and culture sector, helps to remove barriers to access, and informs local and state policies. (A, D)
- Provide arts and culture planning technical assistance to remove barriers to arts and cultural development in our cities and towns; and facilitate inclusion of public art and cultural space in publicly owned properties, landscapes, new developments, and infrastructure. (A, C)
- Facilitate partnerships among artists, arts and cultural organizations, and municipalities to design and implement cultural planning, public art, historic preservation, commemoration,

and creative placemaking interventions that create greater inclusion and belonging for marginalized communities and Indigenous peoples and nations in Metro Boston. (A, D)

- Collaborate with the Land Use Department and state and non-profit partners to expand historic preservation, to improve cultural asset mapping, and to increase the understanding and interpretation of contributions to our history that have been ignored or underappreciated. (B, C, D)
- Experiment with arts-based and humanities-based engagement practices as components of planning processes and seek opportunities to collaborate and learn with other departments across the agency. (D, E)
- Facilitate partnerships among municipalities, public entities, artists, arts organizations, stewards of history and culture, and related entities to embed arts, culture, and heritage considerations as public priorities. (A, B, C, D)

### **Expand the use of arts, culture, and humanities as frameworks when planning for healthy and resilient communities.**

- Deepen our understanding of the implications of climate change for our region's cultural landscape (including its food systems), with a focus on cultural and food inequities, and build partnerships with communities and organizations that work toward addressing these inequities. (A)
- Undertake narrative change initiatives that connect artists and stewards of cultural heritage with local planning staff and community-based organizations to expand visibility and awareness of the region's diverse racial, immigrant, and Indigenous communities. (A, D, E)
- Innovate and apply qualitative research methods in assessments and evaluation efforts, including use of participatory action research (PAR) and local storytelling projects. Coordinate with MAPC teams advancing aligned efforts. (A, D, E)
- Host trainings and facilitate shared learning forums with municipal, cultural and community organizations as well as individuals in the creative sector to build regional knowledge and awareness about the intersections of arts, culture, and heritage with planning and community development. (C) (D)
- In collaboration with other departments, advance initiatives and support cross-agency work that builds partnerships with Native American tribes in New England and serve the indigenous individuals and communities that live, work, and hold cultural connections in the MAPC region. (C, D)
- Collaborate with MAPC's subregional coordinators as well as the Public Health, Clean Energy, Land Use, Environment, and Transportation Departments to integrate arts and culture into other agency priorities such as the Landline Regional Greenway and other transportation initiatives, reparative economic development programs, housing initiatives, and climate resilience and public health projects. (B, C)

## **CLEAN ENERGY**

### **MetroCommon 2050 Connections**

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**Support equity-forward climate and clean energy planning, expanding the department’s focus on regional climate planning and strategy development. Research and develop resources to support municipal and regional climate planning, strategy development, and evaluation.**

- Lead the implementation of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) for the Boston MSA, developing the region’s first comprehensive climate action plan and centering Justice40 communities in the process and outcomes. (A,B,C,D)
- Develop new resources and update existing tools to support communities’ efforts to develop climate action plans and to analyze, track, and evaluate their climate mitigation and adaptation progress. This includes developing the Commonwealth’s Climate Resilience Playbook and MAPC’s approach to Climate Planning 2.0. (A,B,C,D)
- Continue to support local and regional climate action plans in the region, particularly for Environmental Justice communities. (A,B,C,D)
- Invest in creating and strengthening trusted relationships with community-based organizations focused on climate justice and energy equity. Work to align regional clean energy and climate planning with the needs and priorities of Environmental Justice communities. (B,C,D)
- With the Communications and Environment Departments, develop and amplify a communications strategy to promote the Clean Energy Department’s work, including federal funding opportunities, the CPRG planning process, equitable climate plan implementation, net zero and affordable housing, building energy codes, and extreme heat mitigation. (C,D)

**Prioritize and accelerate implementation of climate and clean energy strategies locally and regionally in collaboration with other MAPC departments and community-based organizations.**

- Educate and provide resources for cities and towns to adopt the Specialized Stretch Energy Code. Combine this outreach with support on residential and commercial energy efficiency and decarbonization resources, particularly for low- and moderate-income households and affordable housing providers via programs like Electrify Everett and Green and Healthy Affordable Homes certification. (A,B,C,D)
- Help municipalities identify innovative ways to save money, energy, and GHG emissions through programs responsive to the electric grid’s real-time status, such as peak demand programs, solar and storage, microgrids, and virtual power plants for resilience and economic benefit. (D)

- Collaborate with the Transportation and Legal Departments to facilitate regional EV strategy calls and support municipalities and partner organizations in planning for, addressing procurement barriers to, and installing publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, particularly for renters and other residents in denser urban areas and EJ communities who do not have driveways. (A,BC,D)
- Develop and run the next version of the Community Heat Resilience Program with the Public Health Department, with a focus on building social resilience and trust between community groups and municipalities, to ensure that residents who are most vulnerable to extreme temperatures have access to affordable heating and cooling and publicly accessible cooling spaces. (C,D)
- Implement the Metro Mayors Climate Taskforce's regional heat preparedness plan that includes public health interventions, climate-smart zoning, cool roofs, and long-term land use planning to mitigate the urban heat island effect. (B,C,D)
- Continue working with the Economic Development team to implement the clean energy sector elements of the Good Jobs Challenge. Through this and other efforts, advance a diverse clean energy workforce to promote equitable access to good jobs. (B,C,D)
- Accelerate the reduction of gas leaks and the transition away from natural gas infrastructure through activities such as the Multi-Town Gas Leaks Initiative and policy and regulatory processes related to the future of clean heat. (B,C,D)
- Collaborate with partner organizations to develop and pilot the Green and Healthy Affordable Homes certification program encouraging landlords to rent to housing choice voucher holders and make use of energy efficiency and healthy homes retrofit programs. (A,C)
- Continue to expand and innovate on the types of implementation support the department can provide, especially in partnership with other MAPC departments and community-based organizations.
- Support municipalities and community-based partners in understanding and accessing state and federal funding for clean energy and climate work and serve as a convener and lead applicant for municipal and regional proposals that align with the agency's climate and equity priorities.

#### **Advocate for affordable, accessible, and equitable climate policies and programming**

- Advocate for policies that build community capacity to reduce GHG emissions across sectors, provide resilience benefits, and adopt net zero building strategies that also support affordable housing goals. (A,B,C,D)
- Advocate for municipal, climate, and equity priorities in the development of the 2025-2027 Energy Efficiency Plan via the Energy Efficiency Advisory Council (EEAC). (B,C,D)
- Support the state's climate action policy development toward meeting its 2030 and 2050 commitments, particularly through the Global Warming Solutions Act Implementation Advisory Committee (GWSA IAC) and implementation of the Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2030. (A,B,C,D).

- Encourage more equitable grid modernization and rate design in the regulatory realm with the Department of Public Utilities. Continue participating in the Grid Modernization Advisory Council representing municipalities. (C)
- Collaborate with Environment and Public Health Departments to advocate for policies that reduce exposure to harm from climate disruption, prioritizing Environmental Justice communities (e.g., ending utility shutoffs, requiring access to cooling/maximum temperature standards). (C,D)

## COMMUNICATIONS

### MetroCommon 2050 Connections

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### Strategic Goals

**Strengthen MAPC’s voice and presence in the Boston media market, providing leadership on issues affecting the region and developing our staff into go-to sources for reporters covering planning and policy issues.**

- Place regular opinion, news, and background interviews in both traditional and emerging outlets, including multilingual publications and channels. Increase the frequency of high-profile placements such as the Boston Globe and high-priority platforms of influence such as State House News, Politico, Contrarian Boston, and Commonwealth Beacon. Expand our regular reach to include industry publications such as Streetsblog.
- Provide in-house media training to staff interested in building their press skill set, specifically teaching the core facets of interviewing well, writing press releases, working within

journalists' deadlines, understanding the different methods for providing background information, and learning how to formally and casually pitch our expertise both on deadlines and over a longer story development arc.

- Coach staff members to share recent speaking engagements, conference presentations, political testimony, and other significant professional opportunities in their work, so that we can amplify their leadership and build awareness of their work on social media and in the press.
- Translate our legislative agenda into media opportunities and promote it through strategic communications tactics, including email action alerts, social media engagement, and proactive press, using on-brand materials with a clear call to action.
- Build on our work this year to emphasize the Arts and Culture team's work in the media, supporting their mission to embed arts and culture planning into more agency projects and their vision of becoming the go-to experts on arts and culture planning and policy locally and nationally.
- Nurture our existing media relationships with frequent and useful story pitches to key reporters and frequently connect with new reporters and reporters who cover beats aligned with our work. Cultivate a strong press list and relationships we can call on when breaking news arises.
- Expand our presence on the most relevant and fastest-growing social media platforms, including LinkedIn and Twitter/X, and increase our engagement via reels, branded story series, and new partnerships with influencers. Utilize these platforms to identify and build relationships with members of the media and to amplify their work as well as our coverage.

**Ensure our visual materials and events are useful and informative, and that they lead with equity, elegance, and accessibility.**

- Steward the agency's brand identity through beautiful, engaging visual designs and with content that is easy to understand, digest, and share.
- Deploy the MetroCommon 2050 visual identity as the agency's default branding, creating sub-families for projects, research releases, legislative priorities and outreach campaigns as needed.
- Oversee the design of our large public-facing virtual and in-person events so they are immediately recognizable as MAPC events. Create event communications plans that identify and target the right audience through creative and appropriate methods, diversifying our attendees and allowing our expertise to reach the right decision-makers for implementation.
- Develop a new employee Intranet in collaboration with CTPS, and HR, weaving this new employee portal into the scope of redesign for mapc.org. Use this foundation as the base layer of an official procurement to redesign the MAPC website.
- Collaborate with Digital Services to streamline our shared web and IT systems, and to help staff identify the most effective staff and platform to achieve their project goals.
- Continue to build out our library of images for use across marketing efforts and agency projects, collaborating with staff across all departments to identify the most-wanted images and hiring professional photographers for dedicated regional photo shoots.



- Complete an accessibility audit of our website in preparation for compliance with new federal guidelines coming in two years, and to help inform our upcoming redesign of mapc.org, so that the agency website will adhere to the latest Web Content Accessibility Standards (WCAG 2.0).
- Help all MAPC staff incorporate our creative team into their projects through the launch of our new Communications Hub, helping to make MAPC a welcoming place to work where all staff are empowered to understand the resources Communications offers.
- Develop an AI policy for the Communications Department in collaboration with the work of the agency AI committee and ensure successful adoption of any new technology across the visual assets we oversee, including report design, use of all images, and all externally focused written materials.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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### Strategic Goals

**Lead MAPC and municipal staff in identifying and engaging diverse communities and incorporating their perspectives into the planning process.**

- Provide technical assistance, training, and municipal capacity building to MAPC's communities on their community engagement practices and planning projects. (C)

- Grow MAPC staff engagement capacity and improve their community engagement skills, practices, and long-term relationship building with partners by providing guides and trainings and hosting lunchtime discussions. (C)
- Oversee scoping of community engagement elements in MAPC's projects and provide MAPC staff with scoping guidance and training for community engagement. (C)
- Provide guidance and support for implementing language access practices and evaluation practices in agency and municipal projects. (C)

**Provide MAPC staff and municipal planning staff with the knowledge and desire to design and implement equitable civic engagement and planning processes.**

- Develop and implement agency-wide Community Engagement standards of practice, including an update to the Community Engagement Guide. (C)
- Implement an evaluation process for MAPC's Community Engagement work to reflect on current processes, hold the engagement team and agency accountable to equity goals, and to promote continual improvement. (C)
- Research and develop best practices in Community Engagement on topics such as language access, digital engagement platforms, qualitative methods, and hybrid practices. (C)
- Share best practices research and work with MAPC staff and regional stakeholders through the CE newsletter, webinar series, TA projects, and other avenues. (A, B)

**Provide municipalities resources and implementation support for their diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) Initiatives.**

- Collaborate and expand on DEI initiatives, Language Access initiatives, and Evaluation Initiatives and processes related to engagement at MAPC. (B)
- Lead DEI initiatives and projects with municipal, subregional, and regional partners, including the DEI Coalition work, and municipal DEI TA projects. (B,C)
- Offer equitable community engagement trainings and presentations to stakeholders throughout the MAPC region and beyond. (C)

**Create connections with, between, and among community organizations and municipal and regional decision-makers that connect community stakeholders to planning processes and to decision-making processes in their communities.**

- Support the administrative and relationship management of the Subregional Coordination Program and MAPC's council. (A, B)
- Identify and implement best practices for MAPC and municipal staff to develop partnerships with community-based organizations and other regional stakeholders of MAPC; document and track these relationships. (C)
- Build, nurture, and maintain long-term relationships with key networks, coalitions, and other partners in the region, for example the Massachusetts Immigrant Support Network, the I-LEAD project, the DEI Coalition, and the Language Access Roundtable, and Commonwealth Seminar. (B)
- Develop a regional Community Engagement Working Group consisting of key stakeholders from around the region to Improve communication among municipalities, advocacy groups, community-based organizations, and residents. (B)

## SUBREGIONAL COORDINATION

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**Strengthen MAPC's relationships with our member communities through a strong subregional program, which includes:**

- Provide technical support and resources to Subregional Council Members while maintaining a pathway for information gathering and sharing of best practices through regular meetings and ongoing communication. (B,C)
- Create a collaborative and supportive peer environment for local elected officials and municipal staff through coordinated discussions and the development of innovative, multi-municipal projects that will advance equity and sustainability in the region. (A,B,C)
- Build relationships with community-based organizations that will open the door to longer term collaboration on projects that support and empower historically disadvantaged groups.
- Diversify membership and voices on the Subregion Councils by adding new stakeholders from municipalities, institutions, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations.
- Increase understanding of the racial equity framework across the Subregions to advance racial equity within subregions.
- Coordinate leadership development for Subregional Council Members, including participation in MAPC Council meetings, assuming other leadership roles such as Legislative and Executive Committees, participating in the Strategic Planning process, and helping to implement the goals of MetroCommon2050. Fulfill the Subregional Program's responsibilities to the Boston Region MPO by encouraging input in the development of TIP, UPWP, and LRTP.

- Contribute to the development of innovative project ideas through the TAP Program, MPO Project Solicitation Process and through Special Assessment funds (for the MAGIC and MWRC Subregions).
- Strengthen the Subregional Program by training incoming Subregional Coordinators and creating more opportunities for collaboration across departments and Subregions.
- In FY25, reevaluate subregional boundaries with input from all municipal members.

## DATA SERVICES

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#### Produce new data and original analysis on topics of concern to the region.

- Continue to develop research ideas and questions for the MAPC Research Agenda. Implement quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research from the FY25 research agenda, focused on research and data development to support the implementation of MetroCommon and to assist MAPC projects and policy initiatives. (A,B,C,D)
- Continue to collect data for, maintain, and improve MAPC’s novel data products and tools, including the Metro Boston Rental Listings Database, the MassBuilds development database, the MAPC Zoning Atlas, and more. Promote their use within and outside MAPC and apply them in Data Services research and analytical work. Advance the infrastructure and tools for aggregating and standardizing data from multiple municipalities (and other local sources) into regional data assets. (A,B,C)

- Continue to establish a qualitative and mixed-methods research practice at MAPC in collaboration with Community Engagement, including development of participatory action research (PAR) projects with community partners; implement a framework for conducting rigorous and reproducible qualitative research to support MAPC's planning and policy priorities. (A,C,D)
- Update MAPC's MetroCommon Regional Indicators with the latest data and a new set of high-priority equity-focused indicators. Produce indicators with reproducible scripted analysis that can be built into a web platform for semi-automated updates. (A,C,D)
- Serve as the definitive source for socioeconomic, housing, and land use projections for Metro Boston and Massachusetts. Promote MAPC's new household and housing demand projections, support their incorporation into policy development and local planning work, and develop alternative scenarios to study the potential impact of targeted policies. (A,B,D)

**Design, build, and maintain digital tools that inform the agency's work, improve the effectiveness of local government, and involve more people in planning decisions.**

- Strategically increase our capacity for "data storytelling" through project websites, interactive and intuitive maps, short-form data visualizations, and research publications. (A,B,C,D)
- Update the Metro Boston DataCommon for increased functionality and useability. Establish priorities for the update through a user research process. Identify a development roadmap for increasing the utility of the site. (A,B,C)
- Support the digital tools and services that are providing documented value to external partners, such as the DataCommon, MassBuilds, Making Space for Art, Peak Demand Alerts, Trailmap, Rental Listings database, the MetroCommon digital hub, and more. (A,C,D)
- Democratize access to Massachusetts trails data by collaborating with other RPAs and MassGIS to implement a statewide trails data standard and structure for collaborative data management and publication. (A,C,D)
- Assist municipalities with the selection and procurement of software and digital services that will improve municipal efficiency and effectiveness. (B)

**Provide high-quality data, mapping, and analytical services for MAPC planning projects and external clients.**

- Provide insightful and engaging quantitative and qualitative analysis, data management, visuals, and written content for MAPC's technical assistance planning work. (A,C)
- Develop a framework and reproducible analytical approach for assessing displacement risk and anti-displacement response for municipal planning work. (C)
- Continue to conduct innovative analysis on the impacts of coastal and riverine flooding and rising temperatures on vulnerable populations, property, and infrastructure, and opportunities for mitigation. Collaborate with Environment and Government Affairs on policy recommendations. (B, D)
- Provide and improve upon advanced data analysis and decision support tools for MAPC's planning projects, such as the 3A district suitability analysis and the Cool Roofs siting tool. (A,C,D)

- Improve our toolbox of approaches for communicating quantitative data in ways that are accessible and compelling to people with different backgrounds, learning styles, and physical limitations (e.g., colorblindness). (C)

**Bridge the digital divide by advancing digital equity planning and implementation work as a core planning function of MAPC, in partnership with the Municipal Collaboration Department.**

- With funding from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute's Digital Equity Planning program, develop local and regional digital equity plans, assist municipalities with implementation, and identify policies and funding opportunities to help close the digital divide, in collaboration with MAPC's Community Engagement team. (B,C)
- Funded by a \$14.6 million grant from MBI's Digital Equity Partnerships program, including a \$9 million expansion of the program, implement a statewide Affordable Housing WiFi program. Evaluate Housing Authority and Community Development Corporation owned properties for inclusion in the program. Support MAPC's Municipal Collaboration Department to procure installation of Public Access Wireless networks at the affordable housing sites. Work towards connecting 6,650 units over a four-year period. (B,C)
- Design and begin implementation of a program evaluation for the Apartment Wi-Fi program, focusing on lessons learned and program impact based on the experiences of residents living in apartments where free Wi-Fi has been or will be installed and the experiences of the housing providers of these buildings. (B,C)

**Increase the department's impact and reach through greater collaboration and integration with other agency activities and more regular public release of digital data products.**

- Define, document, and disseminate practices and workflows for more effectively and regularly capturing data from local planning projects and integrating them into MAPC's central data warehouse. (A,C,D)
- Create more opportunities to share ongoing research and findings with MAPC staff and agency partners to inform our work and facilitate use of the results in policy and planning applications. (A,C,D)
- Promote project partnership with Analytical Services staff so that projects can benefit from their analytical offerings as well as their subject matter expertise. Work with MAPC leadership and staff to clarify best practice for their engagement.
- Improve the technical and data capacity of MAPC staff through data orientations for new MAPC staff, written guidance on the Analytical Services SharePoint site, and on-call support through email and Slack. Expand these resources to cover new tools at MAPC, such as ArcPro and ArcOnline. (B, C)

**Maintain a stable and high-functioning information technology system that meets the needs of MAPC staff.**

- Complete quarterly, full, dry-run testing of MAPC's disaster recovery system to continue network operations in case of disruption to MAPC on-site servers. (B)
- Build and publish a robust and useful ITHelp website that is accessible to MAPC staff and will provide many areas of self-help, instructional, and training documents.
- Expand the availability of documentation and personal IT Helpdesk support for digital tools such as AirTable, GIS software, and others.

- Transition to a VMWare environment for our hypervisor host servers to provide a better standard for interactions with other important infrastructure environments and virtual machine access.
- Collaborate with staff to ensure the technical capacity of machines and servers to accommodate robust analysis of large and complex spatial and tabular data.
- Enhance and improve the security of MAPC's IT system and infrastructure.
- Working with Operations, improve MAPC environment for on-line and hybrid meetings, improving the experience for all users and participants.

## ENVIRONMENT

### MetroCommon 2050 Connections

**A Climate-Resilient Region:** Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

**A Healthy Environment:** Greater Boston's air, water, land, and other natural resources are clean and protected – for us and for the rest of the ecosystem.

**Healthy and Safe Neighborhoods:** We are safe, healthy, and connected to one another.

**Dynamic and Representative Governments:** Local governments and regional agencies have the capacity and resources to deliver the services and supports our residents deserve, and to maintain and invest in our built and natural environments.

### Strategic Goals

**Prepare the region for the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, changing precipitation patterns, extreme storms, and heat, with a focus on centering equity, promoting nature-based solutions, and improving public health.**

- Provide local technical assistance and regional leadership for climate change adaptation and resilience. FY25 Priorities are: (C, D)
  - Bylaw Review and Revisions: Update Flood Plain Regulations and other Zoning, subdivision, and site plan review regulations to consider more frequent and intense precipitation and other impacts of climate change, protect natural resources, and develop safe and resilient communities. Support municipalities with integrating climate considerations into their planning process, including new practices such as a Climate Resilience Overlay District and Section 3A (Zoning District for MBTA Communities). (D)
  - Sea Level Rise Planning: Apply the most recent sea level rise data projections from the Massachusetts Coastal Flood Risk Model to local plans and regulations in coastal communities. Begin to address the future need for relocation and retreat from the most vulnerable areas. Ensure MAPC's active participation in coastal resilience planning efforts such as the US Army Corps Boston Metro Flood Study, , and CZM's Resilient Coasts Plan. (D)
  - Stormwater Flood Analysis: Leverage the recent MAPC "Water, Water Everywhere" research to continue working with municipalities on stormwater flooding solutions and best management practices. Continue working with state agencies (EEA, DCR) to

- evaluate and map flood vulnerability and develop actionable strategies, particularly in Environmental Justice communities. (D)
- Integrate climate adaptation into agency plans such as comprehensive plans, open space, economic development, and housing plans. Maintain and update MAPC's Climate Resilient Land Use online resource to support this work internally, as well as for the use of participating cities and towns. (D)
  - Lead the development of the statewide Climate Resilience Playbook, in partnership with EEA and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, to support municipalities with a guide on best practices regarding climate strategy planning, project implementation, and community relationship building. (C, D)
  - Assist communities in aligning their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update process and identification of priority actions with local and state climate planning opportunities.
  - Fund and implement climate resilience projects through the Accelerating Climate Resiliency (ACR), Technical Assistance Program (TAP), and other funding sources, in collaboration with Clean Energy and Public Health. (C, D)
  - Develop new program ideas and areas of practice in collaborations/partnerships with local grassroots, community-based organizations, watershed associations and tribal partners on climate justice efforts such as urban forestry, green infrastructure stormwater management, wetlands restoration, public realm improvements, and placemaking for social resilience, in collaboration with other MAPC departments (e.g., Community Engagement, Arts & Culture, Data Services). (C, D)
  - Leverage state and federal programs to support local and regional climate resilience planning and implementation, including the pilot MVP 2.0 program, DEP's MS4, and 604B grant programs, and FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program. (C, D)
  - Develop regional and watershed-scale climate resilience projects, in cooperation with watershed associations and other community-based organizations (CBOs). Seek opportunities to build on and extend work already begun in the Neponset and Charles River watersheds and reach out to other watersheds or subregions in the MAPC region. (C, D)

**Promote the adoption and implementation of sustainable water resources policies and practices at the state, regional and local level through coordination, advocacy, and technical assistance.**

- Contribute to the development of state water policy through MAPC's role on the Massachusetts Statewide Stormwater Coalition, the MWRA Water Supply and Wastewater Advisory Committees, and the Water Infrastructure Alliance. (A, D)
- Facilitate knowledge sharing, community outreach, funding opportunities, and local implementation of Nature-Based Solutions such as Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development through technical assistance and local partnerships with municipalities, watershed associations and environmental and community-based organizations. (C, D)
- Support collaborative approaches, such as the North Shore Water Resilience Task Force, to address water supply and water quality issues; OARS has been identified as new potential partner for collaboration in FY25.



- Provide leadership for efforts to fund water supply, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure adequately and equitably, and to ensure that communities have access to federal and state funds through the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Focus on equity, ensuring safe and adequate drinking water for all communities, regardless of wealth or other advantages. (C, D)

**Expand MAPC’s Environmental Program to include other critical areas of concern to our cities and towns, and community-based organizations (including Environmental Justice advocacy groups, etc.).**

- Follow up on research about other Regional Planning Agencies’ environmental programs. Pursue opportunities for MAPC to build capacity and provide services for topics such as waste management, trees, and urban forestry, PFAS contamination of water supplies, and other critical contamination issues, and air quality, particularly in EJ locations. (D)
- Collaborate with community-based organizations and advocates to explore potential new forms of collaboration and strengthen existing partnerships to advance environmental and climate justice initiatives. (C, D)
- Collaborate with municipalities, state agencies, and community-based organizations to address critical waste management issues in the region, including such matters as waste disposal, building deconstruction, energy generation, recycling, composting, etc., with the goal of maintaining or establishing systems that are better for the environment, complement climate change efforts, and assist Environmental Justice communities. (C, D)
- Enhance MAPC’s ability to identify and implement priority actions across the Resilient Coasts region and support coastal resiliency projects. Bolster the Team’s efforts in advancing climate resiliency in the coastal region through technical assistance, planning initiatives, regional collaboration, and meaningful engagement, ensuring the active participation of EJ and vulnerable communities in coastal resilience planning and implementation. (C, D)

**Strategically participate in developing and advocating for state policies, legislation, and regulations that will advance MetroCommon goals for equity, sustainable development, and climate resilience.**

- Prioritize MEPA review of projects that both raise critical environmental and equity issues. Some examples include, Equitable Transit Oriented Development, mixed use, multi-mode transportation accessibility, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, climate mitigation and adaptation, sustainable water, wastewater, or stormwater practices, and preservation of critical open space, wetland, and habitat resources. (C, D)
- Working with Data Services, Transportation, Clean Energy, and Government Affairs, explore ways to quantify the air quality and GHG impacts of mixed-use development, housing production, development near transit, and affordable housing in ways that might influence to application of the MEPA process – and other state programs – to advance these goals; consider legislative, regulatory, or programmatic changes as appropriate. (A, C, D)
- Work with the MWRA, MWRA Advisory Board, EEA, and other RPAs on the issue of MWRA expansion, ensuring that expansion options are financially feasible for cities and towns, that expansion addresses critical environmental issues such as streamflow and PFAS contamination, and that expansion does not fuel sprawl development. (A,C,D)
- Prepare municipalities (through education and technical assistance) for changes to federal and state level stormwater regulations and requirements. (D)

- Work with local watershed associations to assist with public outreach and potentially provide technical assistance to municipalities in response to the pending EPA Residual Designation Authority (RDA) program.
- Advocate for strong regulatory language to promote climate resilience in the DEP Stormwater Regulations version 2.0.
- Continue participating in the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA) Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) and Natural and Working Lands initiative to support the State's climate change legislation initiatives (e.g., An Act Creating a Next-Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Policy, and the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan for 2025 and 2030). (D)
- Working with Government Affairs to support and advocate for implementation of state climate change adaptation strategies and funding of adaptation planning, capacity building, and implementation of resilience strategies at the regional and local levels. (B, D)
- Join the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange to learn and share in partnership with other organizations promoting equitable green infrastructure planning and implementation nationwide. (C,D)

## EQUITY TEAM

### MetroCommon 2050 Connections

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**Thriving Arts, Culture, and Heritage:** Greater Boston is full of unique places and experiences that bring joy and foster diversity and social cohesion.

### Strategic Goals

**Begin implementing elements of MAPC's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment (DEIA) as well as the MAPOC recommendations.**

- Develop and help to implement an action plan based on the goals of the DEIA, the MAPOC memo and other proposals.
- Engage staff, particularly directors and managers, as well as the Executive Committee, on progress and challenges to implementing the DEIA.

**Guide and support efforts to incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging into the internal practices and management of MAPC, as recommended by the MAPOC Memo.**

- Create opportunities to incorporate an Equity Team introduction into the New Hire Orientation and Onboarding Process. Enhance the integration of new staff by providing them with training focused on equity principles.
- Develop, curate, and monitor Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging events and Cultural Celebration Days.
- Provide space, structure, and facilitation for 3-4 Equity Project Share Forums - a space for staff to share what it is like to pursue and engage in equity-leading projects - to include presentations on the identification and implementation of equity-leading work. Recognize staff leading equity-facing projects at MAPC.
- Guide staff in using terminology that is best suited for the work that we do and how to do so in a way that is accessible, understandable, and inclusive by way of the Shared Language Project & Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Glossary.

### **Operationalize and harmonize equity into MAPC programs, projects, and partnerships.**

- Work with DSI to expand the Operationalizing Equity program to at least two more departments and/or working groups within the agency. Build on the efforts and incorporate lessons from implementation of the program within Transportation, Clean Energy, Research, and Economic Development .
- Expand the use of the Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement (REDIS) to departments beyond Land Use. Working with those who have used REDIS, train staff on the importance of REDIS, best practices regarding its use, inclusive community stakeholder outreach, and how to implement it. update REDIS statement and making it more suitable for different types of projects and programs.
- Continue to monitor the Technical Assistance Program’s (TAP) Call for Projects process, as well as the equity elements of the project review guide to provide feedback and recommendations for consideration within the next TAP process. Provide comments to the TAP Coordinator on how proposed projects could become more equitable or where there are risks of perpetuating inequity.
- Create and conduct an agency-wide accessibility training focused on ways to incorporate accessibility into our work both internally and externally to make accessibility resources available to all audiences. Consider creating a Best Practices and “How to” Toolkit for MAPC to further support the incorporation of accessibility into our work.
- Provide support and guidance to MAPC staff regarding ways to prevent, minimize, and respond to racist, sexist, or insensitive statements or treatments in the course of public meetings and projects, including appropriate opportunities for staff training and sharing.

## **GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

### **MetroCommon 2050 Connections**

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## Strategic Goals

**Promote and build MAPC’s role as a source of influence, expertise, and research on Beacon Hill, with state agencies and our federal delegation. Propose legislation and move the conversation among legislators and advocates to pass legislation and allocate resources to advance equity and create a stronger foundation for our region.**

- Outreach to legislators of the MAPC Region, including building relationships with new legislators, so they are aware of the role MAPC plays in their communities. (A,B,C,D)
- Highlight projects we are working on throughout the region, share relevant reports and research, and emphasize our value to municipal, state, and federal partners. (A,B,C,D)
- Advance budget priorities of the agency with a focus on DLTA and GAP (DLTA-A) funding, the Charles E. Shannon Community Safety Initiative, and other funding to advance MetroCommon 2050 priorities. (A,B,C,D)
- Serve as a liaison between state/regional/local needs and federal funding available including working with MARPA directors, subregional coordinators, the federal delegation, the Federal Funds office, and MAPC directors. (A,B,C,D)
- Develop and promote legislative priorities that help to lift the burden faced by underserved and underinvested communities. Prioritize legislation that has co-benefits across different sectors (e.g., housing with clean energy and public health with housing) and that recognizes that our physical infrastructure shapes the demands on and capabilities of our social safety net. (A,B,C,D)

**Promote and build MAPC’s priorities while collaborating with external partners, including other coalitions and regions.**

- Solicit input from cities, towns, subregions, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders to build and advance MAPC’s legislative agenda with an equity framework. (B)
- Enable the Metropolitan Mayors’ Coalition and the North Shore Coalition to serve as forums to advance collaboration among member communities, working together to solve common problems, and elevate their priorities to the Legislature and Administration. (A,B,C,D)

- Serve as the legislative liaison to Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) and advance the coalition’s statewide priorities, with a particular focus on legislation that allows RPAs to advance regional recovery priorities and support applications for federal funding. We will continue to oppose legislation that might negatively impact the finance or operations of RPAs. (A,B)
- Work with transportation, housing, climate, immigration, and other topic-area coalitions to call for intersectional solutions to challenges facing the Commonwealth. (A,C,D)
- Increase relationships with members of the business community, labor community, and other economic development partnerships, where our goals intersect.

**Promote knowledge and awareness of Government Affairs work among MAPC staff.**

- Develop an overview of Government Affairs work, the Massachusetts legislative context and MAPC Legislative priorities and present to staff regularly.
- Support the subregional coordinators in building the agency’s strong local relationships with legislators and municipal leaders. (B)
- Increase advocacy on key priorities working closely with the Communications team, including blog posts and updates to MAPC’s website to enhance outreach efforts. (A,B)
- Coordinate with MAPC departments to advance MAPC’s legislative agenda for the 2025-2026 legislative session, giving staff opportunities to testify in the State House, meet with legislators on relevant topics, and inform any new policy positions on legislation to be endorsed by Legislative and Executive Committees for the next legislative session.
- Collaborate with Data Services to shape research products that support our legislative priorities and create a data-driven approach to our testimony. (B,C)
- Diversify gubernatorial appointees to MAPC’s Council and members of our Legislative Committee in terms of geography, race, gender, size, type of community represented, and active participation of allied organizations. (C)

## LAND USE

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## General

The Land Use Department is a collaborative group of planners who seek to convene teams of expert staff from across the Land Use divisions, as well as from other MAPC Departments, to undertake projects of state, regional, municipal, and neighborhood significance toward the implementation of MetroCommon 2050.

## Strategic Goals

### **Implement sustainable smart growth strategies that are appropriate for the location, natural resources, infrastructure, and other features of the municipality.**

- Provide a range of services to MAPC communities, from neighborhood level plans to multi-municipal, in collaboration with other MAPC departments when possible, in fields such as visioning, master plans, ETOD plans, zoning, general land use studies, housing, economic development, open space and recreation, development visualization, urban design, and historic preservation. (A)
- Pursue single community projects that will deepen MAPC staff expertise in specific areas and can become an example or a pilot that could be of benefit to multiple municipalities. Topics may include but not be limited to:
  - ADUs
  - 3A Bylaws
  - Mixed Use Design Guidelines
  - Floodplain model bylaw
  - Green roofs requirements in zoning
  - Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development guidelines
  - Coastal resilience zoning
  - Parking maximums and minimums, mixed use and commercial use parking, and shared parking among uses
- Collaborate with other MAPC departments to undertake coordinated planning processes over several years within the same geography to implement key aspects of MetroCommon (e.g., 3A Zoning work followed by economic development assistance to support small businesses and Complete Streets improvements) (A,B)
- Collaborate with the Arts & Culture Department and state and non-profit partners to expand historic preservation, to improve cultural asset mapping, and to increase the understanding and interpretation of contributions to our history that have been ignored or underappreciated. (B, C, D)
- Building on the success of “Rethinking the Retail Strip,” work with municipalities, chambers, and other stakeholders to retrofit suburban malls and shopping plazas in ways that advance smart growth and mixed-use development.
- Develop post-project strategies to support municipal implementation. Consider past implementation activity levels when evaluating municipal requests for additional TAP funds. In other cases, work with municipalities to implement programs and policies consistent with MetroCommon even when MAPC was not involved in the planning process. (A)
- Lead or assist in projects that promote equity, climate resiliency, and sustainability through changes to the built environment—e.g., affordable housing, housing diversity and development; parks accessible by walking, bus and rail; incorporation of green infrastructure into MAPC projects and plans; as well as projects specifically oriented toward racial equity,

such Fair Housing plans and programs in individual or multiple communities, or the Racial Equity Advancement and Collaborative Hub (REACH) program. (A,C)

- Collaborate with municipal partners to ensure that equity and inclusion are incorporated into all aspects of planning projects, including scoping, engagement, planning, and implementation. Evaluate impact of MAPC's Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement (REDIS) to determine if changes are needed in the document or its use. Continue to incorporate the REDIS into scopes/contracts and follow up on implementation. (C)
- Develop tools and strategies to educate residents, committee members, and local elected officials on the benefits of items like equity, affordable housing, and climate change mitigation and resilience, as well as to provide illustrations of good developments at various density scales, and to combat disinformation around a variety of smart growth planning practices. (A,C)

**Advocate for, and otherwise seek, adequate funding to enable Land Use projects to incorporate outreach and engagement techniques that facilitate inclusion of individuals and groups that have been left out of the planning process historically.**

- Seek opportunities to advance projects in collaboration with community-based organizations, community groups, and other outside organizations to broaden public participation in planning programs, advance equity by ensuring inclusion in the planning process, and establish long-term strategic alliances to carry our future efforts to implement MetroCommon2050.
- Ensure that participation in projects, including participation in any project advisory committee, represents local and regional diversity, including diversity by race, ethnicity, gender, income, age, familial status, ability, primary language, and other measures, and incorporate efforts to reach out to historically under-represented populations. Incorporate lessons from the MAPC Language Access project where appropriate. (A,C)
- Collaborate with the Community Engagement (CE) team to design and execute effective and representative forms of public engagement, drawing upon lessons from various engagement efforts at MAPC including hybrid engagement. Expand and deepen relationships within communities with stakeholders who might not usually be at the table by utilizing resources from other divisions such as A&C team, Clean Energy Team, and the subregional coordination program to enhance outreach efforts. (A,C)

**Seek, and take advantage of, opportunities to advocate for changes to state policies and programs that will benefit MAPC communities.**

- Collaborate with Government Affairs, and directly with state agency staff and partners in advocacy organizations, to implement state-level policy changes to improve implementation of state programs as well as to provide input for state legislation relating to land use, housing, economic development/workforce, resources protection, and zoning. (A,C)
- Promote alternative land use development practices such as cottage cluster developments, Open Space Residential Design by right, Transfer of Development Rights, etc. (A)
- Promote state-level requirements and resources to improve the training of individuals involved with planning decisions, such as members of Planning Boards and Boards of Appeals; promote participation in the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative.

- Advocate for changes to state grant funding that would enable individual municipalities to participate in regional collaborative proposals without precluding their submission of an individual municipal grant.

## Economic Development

### Strategic Goals

**Provide target municipalities and partners with implementable economic recovery and resilience plans that lead to positive changes in municipal programs, policies, and regulations, as well as the lives of local residents and workers.**

- Solicit, manage, and deliver equitable economic resilience and recovery plans (municipal and regional), downtown revitalization plans, corridor studies, small business development and support strategies, market analyses, and build out analyses. (A,B,C)
- Develop and utilize criteria to assess the equity rationale for doing certain projects in certain places. This includes key questions including whom the project serves, who benefits, the extent to which marginalized communities are prioritized, and how the project addresses economic disparities.
- Develop joint projects with MAPC departments and subregional coordinators that promote smart growth, regional collaboration, and equitable economic development.
- Establish and build relationships with partner organizations, primarily led by or serving women and/or people of color, to expand the impact of MAPC's economic development work in ways that advance the equity-related policy goals MetroCommon2050. Focus on partnering with organizations that are committed to bridging the digital divide (e.g., Mass Broadband Institute), improving transportation connections to economic opportunities (e.g., MassHire North Shore WIB,) improving economic opportunities for people of color (e.g., Emerald Cities Collaborative and Browning the Green Space), and advancing critical sectors like childcare (e.g., Community Alliance on Young Learners/CAYL). (A,C)

**Develop and facilitate access to resources to advance equitable economic development , workforce development, smart growth, and regional collaboration.**

- Provide research, guidance, facilitation assistance, and disseminate to municipalities best practices and program ideas for using federal funds, including but not limited to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding, and/or funds available from the Commonwealth.
- Guide municipalities, colleges, and non-profit groups through EDA and other funding applications using the CEDS, MetroCommon, smart growth principles, and equity criteria.
- Work with the City of Boston and our non-profit/school partners to implement the 3-year, \$23 million Good Jobs Metro Boston Coalition Project with the goal of training and placing more than 4,600 participants into good jobs in the Child Care, Clean Energy, and Health Care sectors.

**Grow reliable, productive, and active knowledge sharing and collaboration opportunities that municipal leaders, economic development practitioners, and stakeholders use to advance regional economic recovery goals.**



- In partnership with other MAPC departments, subregional coordinators, and external partners, facilitate access to trainings or host exchanges, workshops or other activities to facilitate collaboration and capacity-building. (A, B, C)
- Provide content expertise via an interactive virtual workshop on commercial displacement, commercial community land trusts, and related matters, geared to audience of municipalities and other key local partners. (A, C, D)
- Provide data and facilitation expertise to support the strategic planning efforts of key partners, such as MassHire Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs,) Chambers, and, Economic Development Backbone Organizations, including sectoral development organizations in the innovation economy (information technology, life sciences, clean tech.) (A,B,C)

**Advance policies and programs at the regional, state, and federal level that support smart growth, regional collaboration, and equitable economic development.**

- With a focus on building an equitable economic recovery, advancing disaster resilience, and improving economic opportunity for disadvantaged or marginalized workers in the regional economy, commence the nine-month planning process to prepare the region's 2026 - 2023 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). (A,B,C)
- Help to inform and shape and, where appropriate, advance policies and programs at the regional, state, and federal level that support smart growth, regional collaboration and equitable economic development while minimizing and mitigating residential and commercial displacement.
- Identify key policy priorities from the MetroCommon 2050 and the agency's forthcoming strategic plan with the Government Affairs team and develop a strategy to pursue those priorities. Policy priorities include those that: (A,B,C)
  - Expand housing stability and household financial stability;
  - Expand access to high-quality jobs through workforce development support;
  - Expand access to childcare;
  - Advance fair lending and increase predatory lending protections;
  - Lead to creative redevelopment of underutilized commercial space;
  - Improve public procurement practices focused on purchasing from local and MWBE enterprises; and
  - Expand and improve digital and transportation access.
- Offer suggestions and content management support to Government Affairs, as they communicate and establish relationships with outside networks and key partners around legislative/administrative policy priorities. This includes seeking funds to research, assess and explore policy objectives in the above priority areas (A,B,D)

**Housing**

**Strategic Goals**

**Lead a range of regional and local planning and implementation activities to expand housing inclusivity, advance equitable development and preservation of both affordable and market-rate housing, and minimize/mitigate displacement.**

- Prepare local and regional plans that direct housing activities, from production and preservation to stability, fair housing, and investments. Plan types include housing production plans, fair housing plans, equitable transit-oriented development (E-TOD) and neighborhood plans, and strategic plans for local housing-related boards and committees.
- Embed equity into local and regional plans through innovative and adaptable engagement techniques, inclusion of anti-displacement and housing stability strategies, and recommendations to advance fair housing.
- Lead multi-municipal projects to increase local housing capacity and develop best practices for expanding housing choice in all communities.
- Continue to develop and pursue projects that expand and diversify the Housing Division's practice areas with a focus on public land disposition, fair housing tools, wealth-building strategies (like community land trusts), pro-housing communications and support-building for implementation, and strategic visualization of the built form.
- Lead housing-related research in partnership with the Research and Analytical Services Divisions to understand and communicate opportunities and barriers to local implementation.
- Build on the momentum of implementation of Section 3A/MBTA Communities to create more walkable, transit-accessible neighborhoods through collaboration with other MAPC planning teams, state partners, and CBOs.
- Continue to support cities and towns as they modernize zoning regulations (including compliance with Section 3A/MBTA Communities) and development review processes to promote housing choice and sustainable neighborhood development.

**Promote regional collaboration and housing innovation with state and local partners to advance implementation of state, regional, and local housing policies.**

- Continue to refine development feasibility modeling and apply analyses for inclusionary zoning policies and site-specific redevelopments to maximize the amount of affordable housing achieved through private developments.
- Continue to explore new housing development models and production innovations, such as co-locating housing with municipal facilities and services, to create more affordable housing, particularly at deeper levels of affordability.
- Collaborate with Clean Energy to implement carbon neutral development and decarbonize existing residential buildings.
- Collaborate with Government Affairs to refine and advance existing MAPC's housing policy priorities and legislative priorities of the Metro Mayors Coalition Housing Task Force.
- Leverage relationships with municipalities to track/assist with local implementation of Housing Choice, Section 3A, inclusionary zoning, fair housing, and other local housing tools.
- Strengthen relationships with state, regional, and local housing organizations and identify opportunities for collaboration through projects, capacity building programming, and events.

- Inform municipalities about state and local funding opportunities that can help advance inclusive housing goals. Support municipalities as they apply for grants through assistance with applications and matching funds, when possible.

**Ensure planning and implementation processes engage those who stand to gain from and are likely to support inclusive housing efforts.**

- Engage with local pro-housing coalitions and community-based organizations who represent those with the greatest housing needs (like renters, people with lower incomes, seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, etc.) to create housing planning, research, and implementation projects that can better advance housing equity. Encourage pro-housing advocates to serve on project steering or advisory committees and other municipal boards/committees.
- Prioritize working in communities with established or emerging pro-housing coalitions, in partnership with Abundant Housing MA, Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA), the Massachusetts Association of CDCs, the Mass Affordable Housing Alliance, and other local coalitions and leaders.
- Target housing stability and fair housing projects to communities with higher rates of renters to address the disparate impacts of the current housing crisis on renters, who generally have fewer resources and experience greater displacement risk.

## MUNICIPAL COLLABORATION

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## Collective Procurement

### Strategic Goals

**Pursue new procurement opportunities that respond to community needs and are consistent with MetroCommon goals, such as climate resilience and equity.**

- Collaborate with the Communications and Economic Development Departments and Subregions to increase awareness of how MAPC’s procurement practice can help address municipal and small business purchasing issues through cooperative purchasing. (B,C)
- Assist communities in exploring methods to increase purchasing from minority and women-owned businesses and research ways to update our own procurement practices to promote equity. (B,C)

- Continue to develop and improve procurements for fruit and vegetables for area schools and work with the Public Health Department to promote values-based food procurement approaches, including supporting districts to purchase directly from area farmers. (B,C)
- Work alongside the Clean Energy and Transportation Departments to implement and promote electric vehicle and infrastructure procurements, including for electric school buses and charging stations, and promote existing electric vehicle options on current MAPC contracts. (A,B,C,D)
- Continue to collaborate with MAPC's Clean Energy Department on procurement best practices and eventual procurement of materials and services for cool roof infrastructure. (B D)
- Continue to refine best practices regarding public Wi-Fi procurements to advance digital equity in the region. (B,C)

**Improve marketing and outreach of public safety and public works vehicles and equipment contracts and ensure all current contracts are renewed.**

- Improve and rebid the contracts for heavy and medium duty construction equipment on behalf of Greater Boston Police Council (GBPC) members. (B)
- Develop creative solutions to address supply chain and price volatility challenges that are impacting the purchase of vehicles and equipment and functioning of current contracts. (B)
- Search for opportunities to expand and or develop a new public works services consortium alongside the existing groups in MetroWest and the South Shore. (B)
- Explore equipment, services, and technology that public safety and public works professionals may need to perform their duties. (B)
- Continued to strengthen our relationships with our partners at GBPC and Fire Chief's Association of Massachusetts (FCAM) through regular meetings and participation in their membership events and trade shows. (B)

## Emergency Preparedness and Public Safety

### Strategic Goals

**Perform the management, administrative, and planning duties associated with the Commonwealth's Homeland Security Program, as a means of enhancing public safety and preparedness for natural and human-caused disasters.**

- Execute and track the effectiveness and efficiency of our work on behalf of the four homeland security councils, focusing on the key areas of procurement including engaging diverse vendors, vendor management, and stakeholder satisfaction, while advocating for projects that benefit multiple regions and ensure a whole community approach to emergency preparedness. (B, C)
- Support efforts to diversify membership for both the NERAC Full Council and its committees to ensure there is a range of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, experiences, and skillsets to inform the allocation of Federal Homeland Security Funding. (B, C)
- Encourage the prioritization of equity considerations in NERAC projects and perform increased appropriate outreach to Environmental Justice communities within the region

during the annual inventory process to ensure these communities are aware of the resources offered through NERAC. (B,C)

**Continue to build our emergency preparedness practice to help cities and towns (and other community-based partners) better prepare for and become more resilient so they can protect residents, employees, and visitors from harm, particularly those most at-risk from such hazards.**

- Continue to work with various MAPC departments including Clean Energy, Public Health, Government Affairs, and Data Services to identify and engage a variety of communities in Massachusetts with a focus on cities and towns with Environmental Justice populations that could benefit from our emergency preparedness planning services, including developing emergency plans, providing trainings and exercises, as well as supporting a range of homeland security and health and medical preparedness activities, specifically centered around support to new migrant arrivals and mitigating risks to residents most vulnerable to regional climate emergencies. (B, C, D)
- Amplify collaboration with the Environment and Data Services Departments to explore the intersection between the emergency preparedness practice and the development of Hazard Mitigation Plans and how both streams of work can be leveraged to increase preparedness efforts across the region. (B, C, D)

**Support local efforts to adopt new approaches to public safety response, such as those that incorporate behavioral health support and outreach, jail diversion and non-armed interventions.**

- Work with public safety and public health departments to explore non-armed public safety response functions, as well as alternative substance use response approaches, enabling them to share best practices, programs and services and provide better assistance to residents. (B,C)

**Perform the management, administrative, and planning duties associated with the FY24 and FY25 Metro Mayors Shannon Grant Community Safety Initiative (CSI) to reduce youth violence and gang-related crime in metropolitan Boston.**

- Work in collaboration with other departments within MAPC (Public Health, Arts & Culture, Government Affairs, etc.) to develop ideas for new programs and initiatives that can be funded through the Shannon Grant, with a focus on youth mental health, and work with grant partners to develop and implement those programs. (B,C)
- Develop partner funding factors in collaboration with the Community Engagement Department to enhance the equitable dispersion of funds. (B,C)
- Support efforts to diversify Shannon partnerships for both the MMC site partners and its Steering Committee to ensure there is a range of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, experiences, and skillsets to inform the allocation of site funds and priorities. (B,C)
- Convene both MMC site partners and, when appropriate, statewide Shannon Grant partners at monthly meetings, community events, workshops, and virtually through the Civic Roundtable to share best practices and learn from featured presenters and panelists, while engaging program youth in the discussions. (B,C)
- Assist the Government Affairs and Communications Departments in educating legislators, MAPC staff, stakeholders, and the public about the benefits of the program, and to increase funding for the MMC grant and program overall. (B)

**Build the capacity of the Region 3 Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition to help its core stakeholders prepare, respond, and recover from emergencies while increasing preparedness efforts for the vulnerable population and meet required deliverables.**

- Execute and complete all required deliverables provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health - Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management (DPH-OPEM) to further enhance regional preparedness among all stakeholders and vulnerable populations. (B)
- Develop and promote HMCC meetings, workshops, and trainings to strengthen and promote the emergency preparedness and response capabilities of the region, while increasing the development of diverse relationships and partnerships across disciplines. (B)
- Provide stakeholders 24/7 support and assistance in serving as the Region 3 HMCC Duty Officer by collaborating with all HMCC member organizations to provide situational awareness, resulting in the development of a common operating picture across the communities and agencies in the region, and facilitate resource sharing. Also, assist hospitals with patient transfer needs as requested. (B)
- Provide excellent facilitation and program and budget management services to the Region 3D Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition, which results in effective decision making and the establishment of sustainable programs and activities. (B)

## Municipal Services

### Strategic Goals

**Build the capacity of city and town governments to deliver high-quality public services and improve the well-being and quality of life for area residents.**

- Continue the partnership with local Public Health Departments and the MAPC Public Health Department to build health service capacity and improve health outcomes for residents by supporting regional public health efforts, focused mostly on communities with a history of health inequities. (B,C)
- Support the North Shore Regional IT Collaborative, which is led by Danvers and includes Middleton, Essex, Manchester, Wenham, Topsfield, Marblehead, and Hamilton, in efforts to expand fiber infrastructure, standardize equipment and services, improve the region's cybersecurity posture, and procure a shared managed IT provider so they can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their municipal operations. (B)
- Continue to work with MAPC's Data Services and Community Engagement teams to close the digital divide and ensure more moderate and low-income households have access to high-quality internet services, and support cities and towns in their efforts to provide open-access community broadband networks by providing procurement and grant management support to such efforts funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute. (B,C)
- Assist communities in developing and implementing inter-municipal projects that focus on equity and in support of MAPC's subregions. (B,C)
- Reach out to a wider range of municipal leaders and officials to assist municipalities in improving their internal operations and governing structures across a range of function areas by supporting regional studies and shared service opportunities. (B)

- Explore opportunities and avenues to increase and facilitate partnerships between academic research institutions and municipalities and other public agencies seeking academic research services. (B)

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### MetroCommon 2050 Connections

**Healthy and Safe Neighborhoods:** We are safe, healthy, and connected to one another.

**A Climate-Resilient Region:** Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

**Dynamic and Representative Governments:** Local governments and regional agencies have the capacity and resources to deliver the services and supports our residents deserve, and to maintain and invest in our built and natural environments.

**A Healthy Environment:** Greater Boston’s air, water, land, and other natural resources are clean and protected – for us and for the rest of the ecosystem.

### Strategic Goals

**Increase resilience and health equity in greater Boston by addressing the public health impacts of climate change and environmental pollution.**

- Support state and local policies that promote environmental and climate justice and public health to address racial health disparities. Provide policymaking process with public health research, data, and strategies that address risks to human health from pollution, extreme temperatures and storms, and changes in disease vectors. (C) (D)
- Implement place-based climate change and environmental health projects that address exposures to extreme weather (e.g., urban heat island, flooding) and air pollution (e.g., indoor air quality, near roadway traffic related air pollution). In these projects, pilot and evaluate emergent practices (e.g., resilience hubs). (A) (C) (D)
- Facilitate community-led climate change and environmental justice planning projects that elevate community ownership of change, power sharing and action to address racial health equity. (C) (D)
- Host trainings and facilitate shared learning forums with municipal and community organizations to promote climate change resiliency and justice. Topical focus areas for training include older adults, economically insecure populations, and culturally resonant strategies. (C) (D)
- Support the development and use of community and environmental health tracking data to understand and respond to cumulative health hazards at the municipal level, particularly those that drive inequities by race and income. (C) (D)
- Develop communication pieces (e.g., webpages, articles, blogs) that highlight our work on climate change, health impacts and public health response strategies in the Greater Boston region. (C) (D)

**Expand local public health capacity through policy change, collaboration, and shared service initiatives.**

- Work with Government Affairs to support state policy changes that strengthen local public health infrastructure and provision of foundational public health services through shared service initiatives and public health department collaborations. (B)
- Partner with city and town public health departments to develop and sustain public health communicable disease-related emergency response capabilities with specific focus expanding data and analytics capacity, development of municipal policies, and use of behavioral insights in community interventions and communications. (C)
- Implement local public health projects that utilize the foundational public health services framework and expand collaborations between municipal, community and health care organizations. (C)
- Facilitate public health training for local public health department staff and Boards of Health to increase workforce credentials, certifications, and capabilities consistent with recommendations of the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health. (B)
- Produce communications (e.g., fact sheet, research brief) that can assist local public health departments in capacity building and implementation of innovative practices that address health inequities. (B)

**Provide technical assistance to increase the use of policy, system and environmental changes that address food systems, housing conditions and stability, economic opportunity, and community agency.**

- Engage in state-level food systems, housing, and economic opportunity related policy change efforts by providing input and analysis about the impacts on systemic racial and income-driven health inequities. (A) (C)
- Provide municipal food system technical assistance to build equitable and resilient food systems, reduce food insecurity, expand values-based food procurement with the Municipal Collaboration team, and increase access to nutritious, culturally affirming, affordable foods. (A) (C)
- Develop an understanding of climate change's implications on food systems, with a focus on health inequities and food security, and build partnerships with communities that work towards addressing current and root causes of these conditions.
- Use existing, and pilot new Health in All Policies (Hip) practices with partners in municipal, community-based, and Indigenous peoples and nations to assess and address root causes of health inequities related to housing, economic opportunity, and social capital and cohesion. (A) (C)
- Increase the capabilities of municipalities and community organizations to make equitable changes housing, economic opportunity, and community networks by offering training, shared learning forums, communication resources, and data and mapping infrastructure. (B) (C)

**Address the root cause of health inequities by leading and supporting innovative efforts that target structural determinants of health.**



- Undertake narrative change initiatives that connect local public health departments and community-based organizations to address the role of community power and justice in achieving health equity. (A)
- Lead and contribute to evaluation projects that focus on investments by hospitals and health systems, community health centers, and community development organizations in housing, economic mobility, community ownership of land, and public health social work as social determinants of health. (A) (B) (C)
- Support municipal and state policy changes, programs and investments aimed at improving mental and behavioral health by working downstream (e.g., Metro Mayors Task Force on Opioids) as well as upstream (e.g., economic stability, youth mental health, trauma-informed practices). (B) (C)
- Develop literature reviews and research briefs to fill evidence gaps on the impact of social and environmental risk factors on physical and mental health, social cohesion, injury prevention, maternal and child health, and health equity. (C)
- Innovate and apply qualitative research methods in assessments and evaluation efforts, including use of participatory action research (PAR) and root cause-focused data to action projects. Coordinate with MAPC teams advancing aligned efforts. (C)
- Increase partnership with arts and cultural organizations on design and implementation of interventions with specific focus on creating greater inclusion and belonging for marginalized communities and Indigenous peoples and nations whose roots and lives include the Metro Boston region.

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### MetroCommon 2050 Connections

**DSI is committed to helping lead the implementation of MetroCommon 2050. We will advance all goals of the plan, with an emphasis from our department on:**

**Getting Around the Region:** Traveling around Metro Boston is safe, affordable, convenient, and enjoyable.

**Homes for All:** All residents of Metro Boston have places to live that meet their needs, and that they can afford.

**A Climate-Resilient Region:** Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

**A Net Zero Carbon Region:** The Metro Boston region is highly energy efficient and has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero.

**Dynamic and Representative Governments:** Local governments and regional agencies have the capacity and resources to deliver the services and supports our residents deserve, and to maintain and invest in our built and natural environments.

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### MetroCommon 2050 & MAPC Strategic Plan Connections

**DSI is committed to helping lead the implementation of MetroCommon 2050 through our new Strategic Plan. We will advance all goals of the plan, with an emphasis from our department on:**

**Getting Around the Region:** Traveling around Metro Boston is safe, affordable, convenient, and enjoyable.

**Homes for All:** All residents of Metro Boston have places to live that meet their needs, and that they can afford.

**A Climate-Resilient Region:** Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

**A Net Zero Carbon Region:** The Metro Boston region is highly energy efficient and has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero.

**Dynamic and Representative Governments:** Local governments and regional agencies have the capacity and resources to deliver the services and supports our residents deserve, and to maintain and invest in our built and natural environments.

## MetroCommon 2050

### Strategic Goals

**MAPC will, with the support of our partners, work to implement MetroCommon 2050, which establishes a vision for the future of Greater Boston focused on equity, sustainability, resilience, and collaboration.**

- Complete the Strategic Planning process and integrate some recommendations from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment into the plan. Build out the organizational investments content working with staff across the agency.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with grassroots leaders, local officials, state agencies, and organizations representing under-represented populations. This will include planning outreach, presentations, subregional visits, and one-on-one meetings to explore joint work, especially where community priorities align with MetroCommon priorities. (A,B,C,D)
- Work with agency leadership and directors to align department and agency strategy and structures with the Strategic Plan to encourage the plan's recommendations are implemented effectively.
- Working with various departments, advance the agency's work in the following key strategic arenas: (A,B,C,D):
  - The climate strategic priority, by working with the Interdepartmental Climate Team, agency leadership and directors;
  - Priority development and preservation mapping;
  - Working with Environment and Government Affairs, advance efforts to address expansion of the MWRA and to address PFAS issues;
  - Expanding the agency's focus on age-friendly planning and policies;
- Develop teams and mechanisms to carry out and monitor the other strategic priorities;
- Support the development of the next generation MetroCommon research agenda and provide leadership and coordination on research releases. (A,B,C,D)
- Identify and launch three MC 2050 speaker events.
- Hold quarterly MC orientations for new staff and annually for the SPURs program at MIT.

### **Manage relationships with agency funders and policy partners to advance MAPC's mission and strategic priorities.**

- Oversee the final year of Climate Resiliency and Mobility Grant from the Barr Foundation and strategize for a renewal. (A,B,C,D)
- Assist with policy, legislative, and coordination on strategic initiatives of the agency. (A,B,C,D)
- Cultivate new sources of support for the plan implementation, including foundations that have not recently provided financial support to MAPC, including identifying and targeting three major funders. Serve as a grant application resource to colleagues. (A,B,C,D)
- Help the agency to develop internal practices and department priorities to develop longer-term relationships with community-based organizations and advocates, who are working in spaces that support and advance the MetroCommon agenda. Use grants managed by DSI and other agency resources to advance this initiative. (A,B,C,D)
- Help the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director to manage the Executive Discretionary Fund, Special Assessment, and other internal resources, as needed, in ways that will develop new lines of work to meet changing needs, implement MetroCommon, and address racial inequities in the region. (A,B,C,D)
- Work with staff to apply for and develop presentations of MAPC products at national and regional conferences, as a way of disseminating our work and enhancing professional development of staff.

## **Learning and Evaluation**

### **Strategic Goals**

#### **Solicit, compile, and spread successful MAPC practices, including department specific technical expertise as well as organizational procedures.**

- Strengthen MAPC's learning environment by encouraging and supporting departments and teams to routinely document successes and challenges and use the findings to improve their strategies and products. (A,B,C,D)
- Identify, in coordination with the Strategic Planning process, a learning agenda that includes pressing challenges MAPC faces. Coordinate discussions with leadership and staff to develop and implement improvements based on findings. (A,B,C,D)
- Streamline and improve the Project Inventory so it assists in identifying innovative strategies and lessons learned, while also informing Council leadership of MAPC's work products. (A,B,C,D)
- In collaboration with the Equity Team, lead two or more departments/divisions through the Operationalizing Equity framework and continue to support departments and teams who have completed the framework on implementation. Use the findings of these efforts to improve the tool while also incorporating ideas into the Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness Assessment and next steps. (A,B,C,D)
- In collaboration with the Deputy Executive Director, HR, and Operations, establish one location for MAPC's internal practices and procedures so that staff can access organizational procedures and successful practices quickly and easily. (A,B,C,D)

- Solicit and convene staff to identify best practices from other regional planning commissions and similar public agencies as well as from conferences and webinars and share them via lunch and learns. (A, B, C, D)

**Provide departments with the structure and support to establish department level outcomes, evaluate progress towards those outcomes, and identify and implement improvements.**

- Ensure departments feel ownership over the Strategic Plan and support departments' integration and implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Assist departments in establishing routines that identify and solve problems, enhance communication between directors/managers and staff, and assess the effectiveness of strategies and projects.
- Partner with departments to identify or refine anticipated project outcomes and develop and deploy systems and tools, such as project evaluations and the Project Inventory, which identify improvement opportunities and pathways to incorporate them into future projects. (A,B,C,D)
- Support each department's annual contribution to the agency work plan as well as their monitoring, evaluation, and improvement practices.
- Collect and assess post-project feedback from project partners (generally municipal officials), project managers (MAPC staff), and other key stakeholders (e.g., community or business leaders). Present findings to project teams for improving future projects. (A,B,C,D)

## TRANSPORTATION

### MetroCommon2050 Connections

**Getting Around the Region:** Traveling around Metro Boston is safe, affordable, convenient, and enjoyable.

**Homes for All:** All residents of Metro Boston have places to live that meet their needs, and that they can afford.

**A Climate-Resilient Region:** Metro Boston is prepared for – and resilient to – the impacts of climate change.

**A Net Zero Carbon Region:** The Metro Boston region is highly energy efficient and has reduced its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to net zero.

**Economic Security:** Everyone has the financial resources to meet their needs and to live fulfilling lives.

**A Healthy Environment:** Greater Boston's air, water, land, and other natural resources are clean and protected – for us and for the rest of the ecosystem.

**Thriving Arts, Culture, and Heritage:** Greater Boston is full of unique places and experiences that bring joy and foster diversity and social cohesion.

### Strategic Goals

**Improve public transportation with a focus on transit dependent populations.**

- Advocate for increased capital and operating funds for the MBTA and municipalities. Research new transportation funding sources, coordinate with stakeholders, and be active in

the Governor's Transportation Finance Task Force and in making policy recommendations to increase funding for transportation.

- Provide technical assistance for municipalities to implement dedicated bus lanes and other street-level bus and transit priority measures.
- Assist the MBTA with their roll out of Bus Network Redesign by educating municipal staff and elected officials about the planned service changes and goals of the project.
- Provide technical assistance for suburban municipalities to plan for the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income people to access critical destinations.

**Provide safe and connected walking and cycling infrastructure.**

- Advance the LandLine vision of a connected network of trails and greenways through local technical assistance, funding opportunities, research to identify priority gaps and equitable access to the network, and an updated website.
- Support the Bluebikes bicycle share system, including expansion into new neighborhoods, electrification of bikes and docking stations, sustainable funding sources, engagement with external stakeholders, and development of the next RFP for a system operator.
- Support cities and towns with strategic bicycle and pedestrian improvements, including quick build, shared streets and complete streets treatments, and applying for federal and state grant funding.
- Work with the Boston MPO, municipalities, and advocacy organizations to develop a regional safety action plan funded through the Safe Streets and Roads for All federal grant program.

**Support transit-oriented development and transportation demand management strategies so that new growth produces low vehicle miles traveled and mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles.**

- Support municipalities to adopt progressive parking plans and policies for on and off-street parking.
- Conduct interdisciplinary planning studies at the subregional, corridor, or transit station level, to make multi-family zoning areas accessible neighborhoods.
- Review and comment on new development projects with a focus on their impacts to transportation access and mobility and encourage mode shift, minimize SOV trip generation, and low vehicle miles traveled. Work to improve the state environmental permitting process to require strong transportation demand management.
- Research areas in the region that face transportation insecurity with low auto ownership rates, lack of convenient public transit, poor and pedestrian infrastructure. Coordinate with "universal basic mobility" research.

**Advance decarbonization and improved air quality.**

- Advocate for the electrification of public transit vehicles (bus and rail), municipal fleets, and the expansion of e-bikes.
- Support municipalities and school districts to procure and implement electric school buses and electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Convene municipal and state planners bi-monthly to share learnings and best practices in the adoption of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

**Plan for the impacts of new mobility technology.**

- Develop an e-commerce “regional playbook” that will enable municipalities and the state to mitigate impacts of e-commerce distribution centers and promote e-cargo bikes as a solution in urban areas.
- Analyze new Transportation Network Company (TNC) data collected by the Department of Public Utilities to inform policy that reduces their impact.