

Executive Report
Submitted to the Executive Committee
October 16, 2024

Arts & Culture

On September 24, MAPC Arts & Culture staff joined Holliston leaders to celebrate the unveiling of a vibrant mural by artist Caoin O'Durgy, as a demonstration project for the [Regional Trails Creative Placemaking Strategy](#). This initiative is designed to help build intuitive connections between rail trails and commercial areas, and enhance community engagement through public art.



The mural features a historical pavilion and a winding trail that symbolizes a journey through time, inviting viewers to reflect on different eras through its portals and dynamic 3D acrylic pieces. The artwork connects thematically to murals on two electric boxes in downtown Holliston: one on Green Street, representing Holliston's contemporary community with figures in historical attire, and another on Hollis Street, envisioning the town's future alongside timeless architecture. The celebration featured live music, dance performances, delicious food trucks, and interactive art stations, allowing the community to engage and immerse themselves in the festive atmosphere.

MAPC Arts & Culture staff teamed up with the Data Services team for a panel presentation at the 2024 National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) Meeting in Detroit this September. Abbey Judd and Brandon Stanaway joined a plenary panel to discuss the role of data in arts and cultural planning, opportunities to connect data with cultural policies, and using data to identify cultural assets within communities. The panel also included presentations from the [Detroit Youth Arts Mapping Project](#) and the [Cultural Treasures of South Los Angeles](#).

On October 1, MAPC facilitated the first joint session of the Marblehead Sustainable Heritage Project, bringing together the Old and Historic Districts Commission (OHDC) and the Green Marblehead Implementation

Committee to discuss clean energy retrofits in the town's historic districts. During this collaborative meeting, both groups engaged in thoughtful discussions, working to better understand each other's perspectives. By sharing insights and concerns, the session aimed to build mutual awareness of the challenges and opportunities surrounding the integration of sustainable energy solutions while preserving Marblehead's historic character. This foundational dialogue set the stage for developing cohesive guidelines that balance clean energy advancements with historic preservation.



Members of the Green Marblehead Implementation Committee and the Old & Historic Districts Commission discuss clean energy retrofits.

On October 3, MAPC and the Chinatown Cultural Plan Working Group gathered with community members and artists to celebrate the completion of the Chinatown Cultural Plan process. The event highlighted stories, qualities, and experiences that make Chinatown a vibrant place of belonging and connection. Attendees enjoyed light refreshments and explored a pop-up exhibition featuring images of the artists' engagements alongside the Plan's strategies, opportunities for feedback, and invitations to help implement the plan and preserve Chinatown's identity as an historic cultural district. Participants were invited to bring home a calendar featuring quotes and artwork from the planning process. Learn more about the Chinatown Cultural Plan [here](#), explore the [Chinatown Cultural Plan Engagement Summary](#), and explore the [Chinatown Cultural Asset Story Map](#).

Clean Energy

Completion of the Malden Climate Action Plan

Last month, the City of Malden released its first [Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP), which was unanimously adopted by the City Council. Julia Nassar, MAPC's project manager, presented the plan to the Council and fielded questions. The CAP outlines 15 priority strategies organized into 5 key goals: championing good governance, advancing net zero in buildings and energy, accelerating sustainable transportation, mitigating heat and flooding impacts, and enhancing community resilience. The planning process was guided by a resident-led steering committee that met monthly and provided input, reviewed deliverables, and supported community engagement throughout the project. Following the CAP adoption, the City Council passed legislation to rename the existing Energy Efficiency and Sustainability Commission as the "Commission on Climate Action and

Sustainability” which will be responsible for overseeing and advising implementation of the CAP. MAPC is meeting with Malden this month to discuss implementation and potential partnerships.

Press Release: [News Flash • Malden Unveils Climate Action Plan, Focusing on \(cityofmalden.org\)](#)

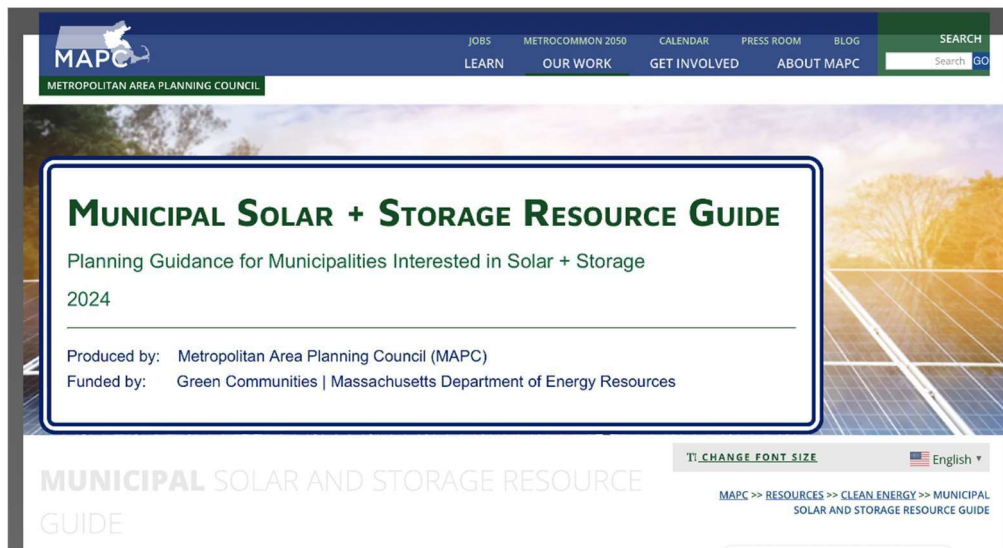


Steering Committee members celebrate the conclusion of the Malden CAP. Left to right: Lipin Ji, Amanda Treat, Bob Fitzpatrick, City Councilor at Large Carey McDonald, Mayor Gary Christenson, Sheila Richards, Sarah Zeiberg, Malden Sustainability & Grants Manager Rebekah McPheeters, Mamadou Balde.

Solar+Storage Webinar

On October 7, MAPC hosted an energy resilience webinar titled “Solar + Storage = Energy Resilience & Savings: Introducing MAPC’s Resource Guide.” This webinar had three panelists who shared their experience working on solar and storage projects to advance energy resilience in their community. This webinar was also an opportunity to launch MAPC’s new Municipal Solar + Storage Resource Guide which will be used to support municipal staff, energy managers, and community leaders as they navigate the complex landscape of solar and storage planning.

The website, built by Amanda Belles in the Communications Department, and funded by Green Communities and the Barr Foundation, provides insight into location selection, equity considerations, financing opportunities, stakeholder communication materials, case studies, and more. The resource guide is a culmination of research and perspectives from experienced solar and storage project managers and seeks to provide foundational knowledge and essential tools to guide comprehensive planning for energy resilience.



Screenshot of the new online Municipal Solar + Storage Resource Guide.

Metro Mayors Climate Taskforce Strategic Vision and Plan

The Metro Mayors Climate Taskforce brings together staff from 16 municipalities, state agencies, and non-profits in the urban core of Metro Boston to work together on building a more climate resilient region and reduce carbon emission. 2025 will mark the Climate Taskforce's tenth anniversary. In September, the Climate Taskforce met to kick off a strategic visioning and planning process to reflect on successes of the past 10 years, how the climate space has changed over the last decade, and plan for the future. Successes have included the development of municipal climate action plans and hundreds of actions on climate. The Taskforce has also worked together to analyze and advocate for solutions to flooding at critical regional infrastructure facilities, as well as creating the first of its kind regional heat preparedness and adaptation plan. The strategic planning process will take place over the next few months and include creating a shared regional vision for our work over the next five to 10 years.

Extreme Heat Letter of Support

In September, Clean Energy collaborated with Government Affairs and Public Health to develop a letter of support to the Healey Administration on extreme heat preparedness and adaptation. The letter built off MAPC's strong foundation of work on extreme heat across many sectors, including a policy memo based on municipal and CBO input from 2022's COVID safe cooling and Metro Mayors Keeping Metro Boston Cool Plan. The sign on letter had over 30 organizational signatories including other regional planning agencies, advocacy groups, and non-profits. We look forward to continued partnership with the state on scaling up solutions to extreme heat across the region and Commonwealth.

Community Engagement

In September, the Community Engagement team hosted the first of eight virtual Community Engagement Conversations, focused on the principles of community engagement. Over 120 people registered for the event, and over 70 people attended. The Community Engagement Conversation Series aims to gain a group understanding of community engagement principles, strategies, and frameworks, create a space for attendees to share barriers they face around community engagement, and introduce attendees to the MAPC Community Engagement Team. For more information please click on the following link: [MAPC Community Engagement Conversations Series – MAPC](#)

On September 25, staff from the Community Engagement department facilitated a half-day retreat for the Mayor of Salem and the Mayor's leadership team. Over 15 leadership staff members participated. Several department heads participated and offered positive feedback about the conversation and opportunity to engage in a strategic discussion. The mayor reached out to offer his thanks, and is planning to use our work to make changes to the structure of interdepartmental coordination and communication.

The Subregional Program welcomed Casey Williams and Zoe Iacovino as the incoming coordinators for the Inner Core Committee, Gurdeep Kaur as a co-coordinator with Georgia Barlow in the Minuteman Advisory Group of Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC), and Matt Walsh as interim coordinator for the South West Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP).

Environment

Accelerating Climate Resilience (ACR)

This fall, the Resilience Community of Practice hosted three project site visits in Braintree, Cambridge, and Watertown. These site visits represent an opportunity for RCOP members to learn from fellow municipal staff and project partners about how they advanced resilience in their community. Braintree's project team presented stormwater retrofits being constructed in one of its public parks. Cambridge's project team took participants on a tour of Alewife's Russell Field and Central Square, where artistic shade structures have been installed for public use to cool down. Watertown's project team presented on the ways the city has partnered with school and local artists to create community gardens and provide climate educational programs for local middle and higher school students through gardening. The next and final site visit will be in Ipswich, at the end of October, to learn more about the town's rain harvesting program at current public housing properties.

Neponset Climate Collaborative

On September 18 the Neponset Climate Collaborative reconvened to continue developing a workplan for climate resilience planning and implementation over the next three to five years. Together, municipal staff (DPW, Planning, Conservation, etc.) participated in a working session to determine the final set of priority actions that would be further detailed with implementation roadmaps (partners, funding, co-benefits, centering equity, etc.). The Collaborative will meet again at the end of October to review draft implementation roadmaps and provide additional feedback as needed.

Government Affairs

MARPA Conference

On October 10, MAPC staff co-hosted the annual MARPA/DLS conference for local and state officials at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. The planning efforts were led by Norman Abbott on the GA Team. Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll kicked off the day alongside four cabinet secretaries. The Lieutenant Governor highlighted her love of planning, and the partnership she appreciates with RPAs across the Commonwealth. Secretary Augustus, Secretary Snyder, Secretary Tibbits-Nutt, and Secretary Gorzkowicz all outlined their priorities for the next few years in the Healey-Driscoll Administration. In a first for the MARPA/DLS Conference, MAPC staff worked to secure AICP credits for attendees of the breakout sessions. Thanks to a robust outreach effort on the part of Communications and Government Affairs, the conference was very well-attended and participants offered positive feedback on the sessions and the networking opportunities.

Legislator and Legislative Staff of the Year

At the Fall Council Meeting in early October, MAPC awarded Rep. Christine Barber of Somerville/Medford as our Legislator of the Year, and honored Eduardo Moreno Mendez and Christianna Golden, both of State Senator Lydia Edwards's office, as our Legislative Staffers of the Year. The meeting also included a fantastic panel of first-term Mayors and Managers from throughout the region, including Mayor Erin Joyce of Braintree,

Jennifer Grigoraitis of Melrose, Manager Jennifer Constable of Hull, Manager Fidel Maltez of Chelsea, and with facilitation by host Mayor Jared Nicholson of Lynn. The meeting also kicked off with a special tribute to Heidi Anderson, former MAPC employee.

Municipal Collaboration

Collective Procurement

Members of the Municipal Collaboration team staffed a booth for our collaborative partners, the Greater Boston Police Council, at the 2024 New England Public Works Expo in Marlborough. The event included more than 230 individual vendors, many of whom participate in collective purchasing agreements with MAPC and GBPC for use by GBPC membership for vehicles. Over 2,000 registered participants attended the two-day long event.

Emergency Preparedness

Staff completed the development of the Emergency Preparedness Plan for the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA). On September 10, the Emergency Preparedness team presented the plan to the BHA Board of Commissioners, and on September 26 the team presented the plan to BHA staff.

Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council

The Municipal Collaboration team planned and staffed the 2024 NERAC School Safety Seminar, which took place in early October at Northeastern University's Innovation Campus in Burlington. In attendance were over 130 first responders and school personnel, who all gathered to increase community awareness and school preparedness related to active shooter threats, hostile events, human trafficking, and other dangers to school safety. The seminar speakers included Todd McGhee, an active shooter and international anti-terrorism trainer and law enforcement and security analyst, who presented on early intervention and de-escalation best practices. Dr. James Barrett, Director of Clinical Support Services at the Cambridge Police Department and Assistant Professor of Psychology at the Harvard Medical School presented on threat assessment and risk mitigation. Supervisory Special Agent Brian LeBlanc of the FBI's Boston office and the Domestic Terrorism and Threat Response Squad of the Joint Terrorism Task Force spoke about swatting and internet-based threats. Valerie Haven, an emergency management expert, spoke about disability inclusion in emergency preparedness. There was also a presentation from Kate MacDougall, Essex Assistant District Attorney, on the issue of human trafficking, specifically the recruitment and exploitation of students. This successful seminar continued NERAC's work to advance projects that seek to create safe and secure school environments for youth across the Commonwealth.

Transportation

MAPC & MBTA Host 10/1 Webinar, 'Going Green: How the MBTA Is Taking Climate Action'

The Transportation team kicked off October with an educational webinar hosted in partnership with the MBTA, focused on how the agency is advancing resiliency efforts in the face of escalating climate change, and on the ways we are helping cities and towns meet ambitious climate goals. The event was an opportunity for the T's relatively new Climate Team to highlight the ways that the T is working to plan for and protect the agency's valuable assets. More than 250 people registered for the event and about 175 participated, with many questions submitted in advance and a few addressed live. Below you will find a link to the event recording, the presentation slides, links to resources discussed, additional resources, and how to stay engaged in the conversation.

- [Event Recording](#)
- [MAPC Presentation Slides](#)
- [MBTA Presentation Slides](#)
- [Questions and Answers Summary](#)

Boston MPO Awarded 'Safe Streets for All' Grant for Demonstration/Implementation Projects

The Boston Region MPO (MPO) was awarded \$7.5 million for a FY24 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Planning and Demonstration Grant. These funds will be matched by MassDOT for a total program budget of \$9.38 million. This new grant will support and supplement the MPO's regional Vision Zero Plan that is funded via a FY22 SS4A Planning grant. The goals of the funding are to support safe streets planning at the municipal level, help cities and towns build traffic calming interventions and develop a regional Vision Zero Action Plan for the Boston region, and learn how traffic calming strategies perform around our region.

The MPO will partner with municipalities in the region to support supplemental planning efforts and quick-build traffic calming projects on a network of municipal owned streets. The MPO will offer a menu of project types for municipalities to choose from that will help to build support for Vision Zero at the local level and to strengthen the regional Vision Zero action plan in development.

MAPC will assist the MPO in grant administration, consultant procurement, site selection, and community engagement. The MPO anticipates the grant to be executed by early 2025, with demonstration projects starting in 2025 and 2026.