

May 2026

# Workplan Feedback

Beverly, Danvers, Essex, Gloucester, Ipswich, Hamilton, Manchester-by-the-Sea,  
Marblehead, Middleton, Nahant, Peabody, Rockport, Salem, Swampscott,  
Topsfield, Wenham

## CONTACT INFO

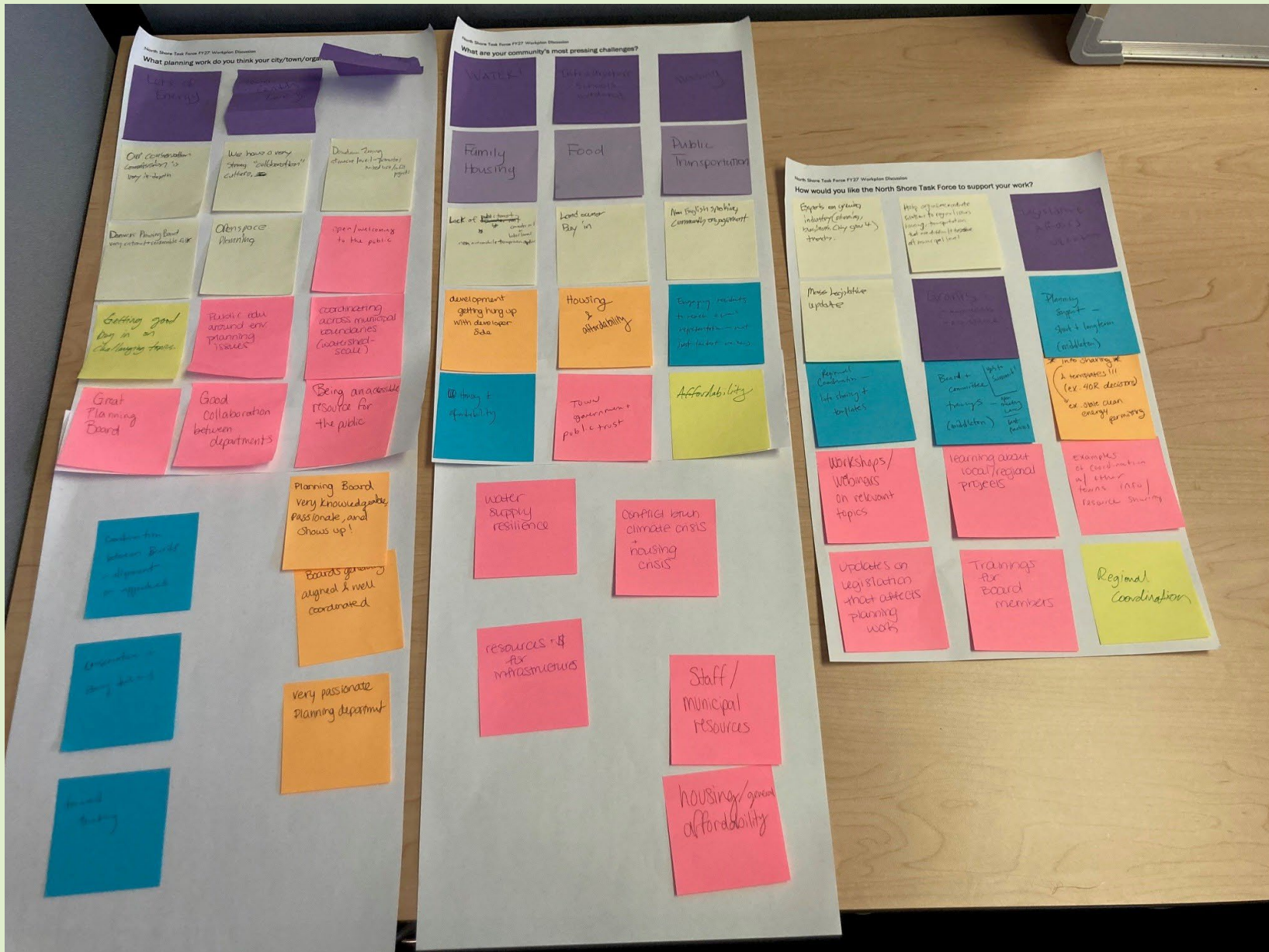
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# FY27 WORKPLAN BRAINSTORMING



# WHAT WORK DO YOU THINK YOUR CITY/TOWN/ORGANIZATION DOES WELL?

## Your Responses:

- Affordable housing progress
- Lots of energy
- Our Conservation Commission is very in-depth
- We have a very strong “collaboration” culture
- Downtown zoning at macro level – promotes mixed use/infill projects
- Planning Board very rational and reasonable folk
- Open space planning
- Open/welcoming to the public
- Getting good buy in on challenging topics
- Public education around environmental planning uses
- Town center zoning
- Coordinating across municipal boundaries (watershed-scale)
- Great Planning Board
- Good collaboration between departments
- Being an accessible resource for the public
- Coordination between boards – alignment on approaches
- Conservative in zoning decisions
- Forward thinking
- Planning Board very knowledgeable, passionate, and shows up!
- Boards generally aligned and well coordinated
- Very passionate Planning department

## Common Themes

- Effective land use boards, especially Planning Boards
- Productive coordination and collaboration
- Support and enthusiasm for the work
- Downtown zoning districts
- Specific planning topics (i.e., affordable housing, open space, environment)

# WHAT ARE YOUR CITY/TOWN/ORGANIZATION'S MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES?

## Your Responses:

- WATER!
- Infrastructure – schools outdated
- Housing
- Family housing
- Food
- Public transportation
- Lack of public transit – commuter rail and bike lanes, non-automotive transportation options
- Land owner buy-in
- Non-English speaking community engagement
- Development getting hung up with developer side
- Housing and affordability
- Engaging residents to reach equal representation – not just loudest voices
- Housing and affordability
- Town government public trust
- Affordability
- Water supply resilience
- Conflict between climate crisis and housing crisis
- Resources and money for infrastructure
- Staff/municipal resources
- Housing/general affordability

## Common Themes

- Housing (including family housing and housing affordability)
- Outdated and insufficient infrastructure (e.g., water, schools, non-auto transport)
- Equitable community engagement
- Developer partnerships

# HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THE NSTF TO SUPPORT YOUR WORK?

## Your Responses:

- Experts on growing industry (planning, business, city government) trends
- Help organize and coordinate solutions to regional issues – housing, transportation – that are difficult to solve at municipal level
- Legislative affairs updates
- Mass legislative updates
- Grant awareness and assistance
- Planning support – short and long term
- Regional coordination – info sharing and templates
- Board and committee trainings – open meeting law, best practices, yes to summit!
- Info sharing and templates!!! (ex. 40R decisions, state clean energy permitting)
- Workshops/webinars on relevant topics
- Learning about local/regional projects
- Examples of coordination with other towns, info/resource sharing
- Updates on legislation that affects planning work
- Trainings for board members
- Regional coordination

## Common Themes

- Sharing information and best practices
- Developing templates
- State policy updates and legislative advocacy
- Regional coordination
- Board and committee trainings

# PROPOSED WORKPLAN

## Meeting Topics:

- Massachusetts legislative updates
- Leveraging public land for affordable housing
- Building relationships and buy-in with property owners and developers
- Lookback at ADU regulation, permitting, and production since the Affordable Homes Act
- Relationship between water infrastructure and land use planning
- Equitable community engagement
- Regulating short-term rentals to balance housing, environment, and economic development goals

## Special Events:

- Training for land use board members and staff on planning best practices
- Annual legislative breakfast

## Regional Initiatives:

- Applying for a OneStop grant to support a training series on inclusionary zoning policy development
- Developing a comparative guide to individual municipal approaches to zoning
- Researching municipal fiscal benefits of administrative support for planners

## **FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS**

**Do you want to learn more about the Massachusetts legislature and MAPC's legislative affairs work, or do you just want periodic updates on relevant bills and budgets?**

**Are there specific types of regional coordination you would like to see?**

**What kinds of templates would be useful to your city/town/organization?**

**Would you like to do a summer outing?**

- Paddling on the Ipswich River
- Tour of Baker's Island Light
- Something connected to Rev250
- Tour of the State House with local legislators
- Other ideas?