



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

NMCOG Announces Funding Awards for Technical Assistance

The Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) is pleased to announce over \$800,000 in technical assistance across the region to the City of Lowell and the Towns of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Pepperell, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough, and Westford addressing housing, energy and sustainability, economic development, and transportation.

In early spring 2023, NMCOG distributed a request for assistance proposals to the nine communities and awarded a total of 32 projects. These local projects are funded by multiple sources, including the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). In addition, seven regional projects serving all communities were awarded assistance primarily through the DLTA program, supplemented by other sources.

Additionally, as staff to the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization, NMCOG will also be utilizing federal transportation funds to provide regional technical assistance to member communities through the Unified Planning Work Program.

Nearly all projects seek to advance equity and ecological sustainability in the region. Many will include working with communities on innovative outreach strategies to increase inclusivity of the process and actively solicit and respect input from people with diverse lived experiences.

NMCOG intends to release a second request for proposals, this one focused on assistance with capacity-building related to prioritization of projects and grant seeking, writing, and managing. This call is anticipated to be released in early summer 2023. More information on specific awards and the full announcement is available at www.nmcog.org.

NMCOG Awarded Grant from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation

NMCOG was one of 19 organizations awarded **funding from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation** as part of their discretionary grant funding cycle in the spring of 2023. The \$15,000 grant was made under the category of Racial Equity and Inclusion. The funding will support the outreach and engagement as part of the development of the *At Home in Greater Lowell: Regional Housing Strategy Plan through 2035*. NMCOG is excited to begin working on this plan in 2023 and looks forward to robust and creative engagement as we focus on improved quality of life in our region and increased availability, affordability, and attainability of housing for all. For additional information about the planning process and recent award, please contact **Jennifer Raitt, Executive Director**.

MassDOT Funding Opportunity

A **Notice of Funding Opportunity for Age-Friendly Funding Alert**: MassDOT Community Transit Grant Program became available today. MassDOT's annual Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP) offers funding for transit authorities, municipalities, Councils on Aging, and nonprofits to expand mobility for older adults and people with disabilities. In order to give you all a chance to participate, we wanted to share this message early. The **Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP)** awards funds to help meet the transportation and mobility needs of seniors and people with disabilities. The annual competitive program distributes Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310: Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities funds and State Mobility Assistance Program (MAP) funds.

MassDOT will provide two trainings on May 8 (1-3PM) to learn about applying for funding through MassDOT's Community Transit Grant Program. Applications for operating and mobility management projects will open **May 8** and close **June 23**.

To register for an application training, or if you have any questions, please contact Rachel Fichtenbaum, Manager of Grant Programs and Mobility Management at MassDOT Rail & Transit: Rachel.L.Fichtenbaum@dot.state.ma.us or (857) 368-8584.

Lowell Housing Forum

Lowell Forward, the city of Lowell's comprehensive plan, is holding a second city-wide workshop on **Wednesday, May 31st at 6:30 PM, at the Lowell Senior Center** (276 Broadway Street). This workshop will focus on **Homes, Housing, and Community in Lowell** and will be co-facilitated by City of Lowell and NMCOG staff. It will be a chance to **share stories about your or Lowell's housing** and **create a vision and goals for housing and community** together. The workshop will build off what the Lowell Forward team heard in the first workshop, survey, and through more than 20 focus groups and interviews.

Register now for the Massachusetts Housing Partnership's Housing Institute

Now in its 16th year, MHP's Housing Institute is designed for municipal officials, employees, volunteers, and advocates interested in the creation and preservation of affordable housing in their communities. This intensive two-day training actively engages participants in discussion and problem-solving activities related to the development of affordable housing in Massachusetts. **Communities are encouraged to send multiple representatives from municipal government and/or local boards.**



This year's topics include:

1. Examining senior affordable housing
2. Eliminating barriers to participation for community engagement
3. Enacting market-responsive housing policies

4. An update on MHP's Complete Neighborhoods Initiative
5. Leveraging public land for affordable housing
6. Creating and supporting Local Action Units
7. Building local fair housing capacity
8. Local tools for financing affordable housing

The cost to attend the virtual meeting on June 14 is free and the cost to attend in-person on June 15 is \$50. Need-based scholarships are available through Friday, May 26.

How to register:

JUNE 14 - VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING
JUNE 15 - IN-PERSON

All training materials will be provided electronically.

Last day to register is Wednesday, June 7. Contact Christine Madore for more information at cmadore@mhp.net.

New to the Housing Institute? Want to review what we did in 2022? Here's what was covered last year: **Housing Institute 2022**



NMCOG Delivers Testimony to the Joint Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

On Wednesday, April 26, 2023, Daniela Garcia Moreno, Sustainability Planner, provided testimony in support of H.905/ S.586 *An Act to Create a Merrimack River Collaborative* at a Joint Committee on Natural Resources and Environment hearing. This legislative effort is led by Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, and will formalize a collaboration for work related to Merrimack River water quality if it is approved by the Legislature. You can read the full written testimony [here](#). If you have any questions about the Merrimack River Collaborative or NMCOG's testimony, please reach out to Daniela at dgarciamoreno@nmcog.org.

Employment Opportunities at NMCOG

Come join our talented team! We have the following open positions:

Regional Land Use Planner I/II
Regional Transit Planner I/II
Transportation Mobility Specialist

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Website



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