

MASSACHUSETTS PLANNING

A publication of the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Planning Association



American Planning Association
Massachusetts Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

Spring 2022

Planning Awards

page 3



*Littleton residents approve
their new Village Common
Form-Based Code*



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On the cover: Socially distanced residents on the Alumni Field of Littleton High School vote on zoning bylaw changes impacting the Littleton Village Common district.

From the President



Congratulations Alison and family on the birth of Elias LeFlore! More news from the President next issue! :-)



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APA-MA/MAPD Annual Planning Awards

The APA-MA awards, co-sponsored by MAPD, recognize outstanding planning projects, individuals, and organizations across Massachusetts for significant contributions to the field of planning.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AWARD

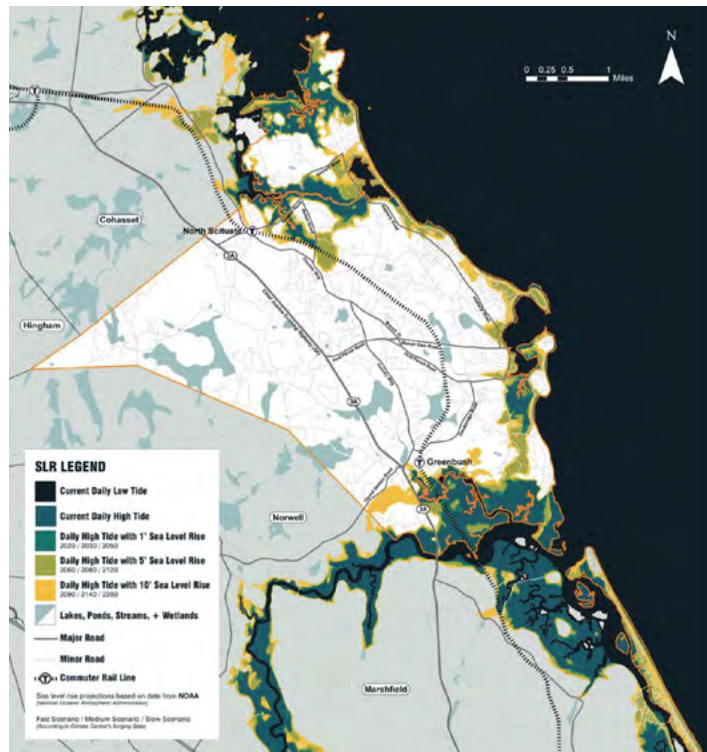
Scituate 2040

The Comprehensive Planning Award goes to Scituate 2040. As directed by town staff and the Master Plan Advisory Committee, Scituate 2040—the town’s Master Plan update—is a “plan of plans,” drawing on extensive planning processes done to date and two concurrent planning studies. The focus of the Plan was resiliency, primarily to climate change, but also in the face of limitations on future growth due to infrastructure and vulnerabilities to current and future flooding. The document therefore provides a guide for future decision-making grounded in economic, social, and physical resiliency.

In addition to this multi-dimensional focus on resiliency, the Plan showcased four innovative approaches to comprehensive planning.



Participants gather at the Second Public Workshop to view the results of the community mapping exercise that prioritized assets and vulnerable areas in Scituate.



First, it addressed multiple time horizons through alignment with parallel planning efforts, defining actions for the next 10 years that would address the next 20 years. Second, it incorporated buildout scenarios that served as the basis for a discussion about trade-offs between preservation and development. Third, the implementation plan included criteria for evaluating actions as a framework for current and future decision-makers. And lastly, the plan focused on municipal resources as part of the decision-making process. These innovative approaches contributed to a more holistic treatment of topics that were necessary per Section 81D, recognizing the need to integrate a discussion of implementation and impacts across multiple areas of planning. The integration of graphics and text in the presentation materials were designed to make the Plan easily accessible to the layperson, town officials, and professional planners.

By working within this framework, Scituate will remain a vibrant community and preserve its unique cultural and natural resources for many decades to come.

ELECTED OFFICIAL AWARD

David Narkewicz, Mayor of Northampton

For the past 16 years, the City of Northampton has been fortunate to have David Narkewicz working tirelessly on behalf of the city and its citizens—first as a City Councilor, and currently as Mayor. The list of planning projects he has supported, often with big political costs, is long. Never afraid to engage in a discussion with constituents—whether on social media, in the press, or good old-fashioned door knocking, he has advanced a multitude of planning projects through significant policy changes and financial support.

Projects include:

- The implementation of the **Community Resilience Hub** to support Northampton residents who face chronic and acute stress due to natural and human-caused disasters, climate change, and social and economic challenges.
- The **Picture Main Street** project, which builds off decades of planning and transportation efforts for the Downtown.
- The rehabilitation of **Pulaski Park**, the well-used public park on Main Street, as one of his top administrative priorities.
- His support for the **cannabis industry**, and notably the first person to purchase cannabis legally east of the Mississippi River when Northampton's first facility opened in 2018.
- His support and leadership on multiple **affordable housing projects**, including the Lumberyard, Live 155, and redevelopment of the former State Hospital.

Over the course of his term, Mayor Narkewicz has shown his dedication to many core planning principals and has encouraged the Northampton community to do



Northampton's Main Street is always a hub of activity.

the same. He understands that climate change, affordable housing, open space protection, and economic development are not competing interests, but are integral to each other to create a vibrant, sustainable community.

Congratulations, Mayor Narkewicz, on this well-deserved recognition!



EMERGING PLANNER AWARD

Natalie Raffol

Natalie Raffol is a Transportation Planner at McMahon Associates and was recently promoted to Project Manager. She has nine years of experience with multi-modal transportation planning and public engagement projects. Natalie has been involved with projects across the Commonwealth, is an active member of APA, MAPD, Young Professionals in Transportation, and is a member of the AICP. Natalie has presented her work at SNEAPA, MAPD Annual Conference, and Young Professionals in Transportation Boston Conference.

Natalie has a unique ability to convey complex technical information in a way that makes it easy for the lay person to understand. She has managed and planned community meetings held in-person and in the virtual space, adapting methods and approaches to engage participants and achieve the intended goal of the outreach effort.

Natalie Raffol is an exemplary planner who embodies a dedication to the practice of planning, a commitment to advancing the profession, and a strong desire to engage the public to promote the ideals of the field.

Littleton Village Common Form-Based Code

The Planning Project Award goes to Littleton Village Common Form-Based Code. It is a project to create a new form-based code Zoning Bylaw and attempts to revitalize the town's village common into a mixed-use, walkable, and compact town center. The project follows from the recommendations of the 2017 Littleton Master Plan and the 2018 Littleton Common Revitalization Roadmap, the latter of which involved Utile Urban Planning as a consultant.

Zoning for Littleton Village Common Revitalization

Proposed Village Common FBC District Boundary



utile | Dan Bartman | Fort Point Associates | UMASS Donahue Institute | Littleton Common Form-Based Code | Feb 20, 2020 | 1

LITTLETON VILLAGE COMMON DISTRICT



Aspirational example of the future of Littleton Common as promoted by the Form-Based Code.

Made in concert with the town and code writer Dan Bartman, the project took approximately 18 months from kickoff through workshops and many public meetings to the final town meeting, which passed by an overwhelming majority on June 13, 2020.

In the summer of 2021, the consultant conducted an in-depth training session with the town staff on how to best administer the code. Today, the newly adopted Form-Based Code (FBC) is actively and positively contributing to the vision of the Common that the town wants to see. Current developers are revising their existing plans and have been pleased to work with the new code.

The Littleton Village Common FBC is an example of form-based code tailored to its context, which promotes sustainable development practices and reflects the many desires of the town residents.

In the one year since it passed town vote, the code has served as a baseline reference for other areas in Littleton where the town would like to see similar walkable, compact, and mixed-use growth.

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Land Use Guidebook

This award is in recognition of the herculean efforts undertaken by Bob Mitchell, FAICP and Bob Ritchie, Esq., over a several-year process that included their tireless efforts and commitment to ensure that land use law in Massachusetts was captured in a comprehensive guidebook.

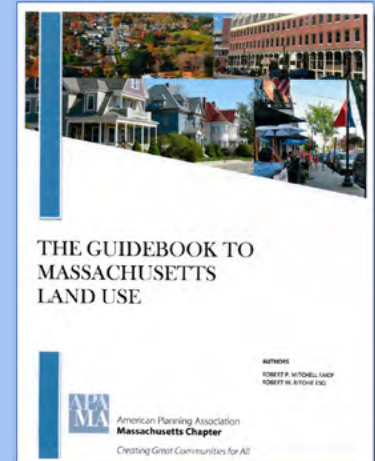
The Guidebook to Massachusetts Land Use is a central resource on the Commonwealth's land use law. It is summarized in eight chapters, with four appendices and over 400 pages of content that includes statutes, regulations, and links to relevant cases from Massachusetts and federal courts.

It was also an incredible display of partnerships between not just Bob and Bob, but also the Social Law Library and the Chapter; so we are very excited about giving this award to the two Bobs and recognizing the tremendous effort and collaboration which it uplifts.



The Guidebook to Massachusetts Land Use, a comprehensive guide to planning, zoning, subdivision, and other related land use topics, can now be accessed on our website at www.apa-ma.org/resources/guidebook, free of charge to members. You will

need your APA ID# to view this content. Find your APA ID# on your printed copy of Planning magazine (look at the mailing label), by logging into your MyAPA profile at www.planning.org, or by contacting APA-MA at communications@apa-ma.org. An informational webinar on the Guidebook is available here: bit.ly/MassGuidebookVideo.



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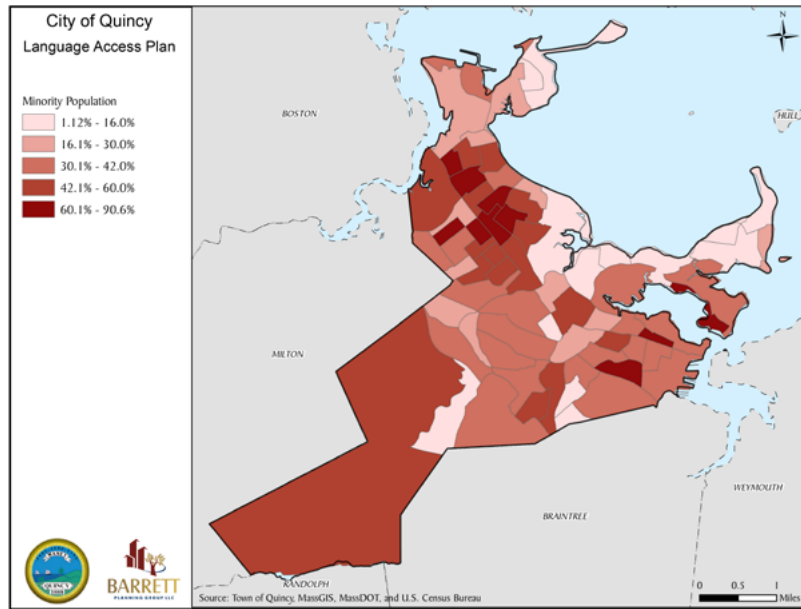
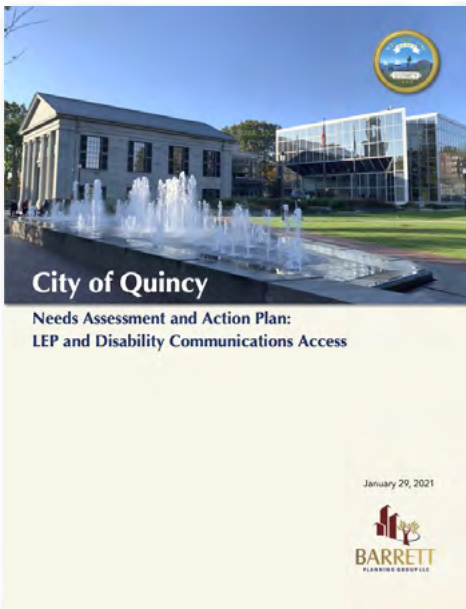
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SOCIAL ADVOCACY AWARD

City of Quincy and Barrett Planning Group for its Needs Assessment and Action Plan: LEP and Disability Communications Access

The City of Quincy Needs Assessment and Action Plan: LEP and Disability Communications Access project advanced social justice, inclusion, and fairness for persons with Limited English Proficiency and persons with disabilities in one of the fastest-growing and most diverse cities in the Greater Boston area. The City has attempted on more than one occasion to develop a language and communications access plan, but without political support, national dialogue on the topic, and resources, efforts fell flat. In January 2020, City Council President, Nina Liang, the City's first Asian American to hold that position, harnessed the political will and support for a comprehensive approach to communications access for all residents became prioritized.

Through the creation of this Plan, City staff are now equipped with an all-encompassing strategy to reach those most in need who have gone previously underserved. Through extensive outreach and engagement and data analysis at the neighborhood level, including a verification process to ensure engagement of the most at-risk populations, the City of Quincy and Barrett Planning Group distinguished where resources were lacking, inconsistencies in information, and where resources needed to be promoted. The Plan is designed to instill confidence in those with disabilities and non-English speakers, as those who are confident and comfortable have higher participation rates in their local government. The Plan is also designed to forward inclusion and fairness by guiding departments, nonprofits, schools, and other stakeholders to create clearer avenues for access, ensuring a clear feedback loop, and strengthening overall compliance.

The City hopes this Plan will assist in forming and solidifying relationships with constituents, neighborhoods, schools, libraries, and community groups already championing this work on the ground, collaborating on an ongoing basis to advance service delivery and undermine barriers to equitable inclusionary communication. In response to the planning document, the City Council allocated \$150,000 new budget line item to the Planning Department to implement the plan.

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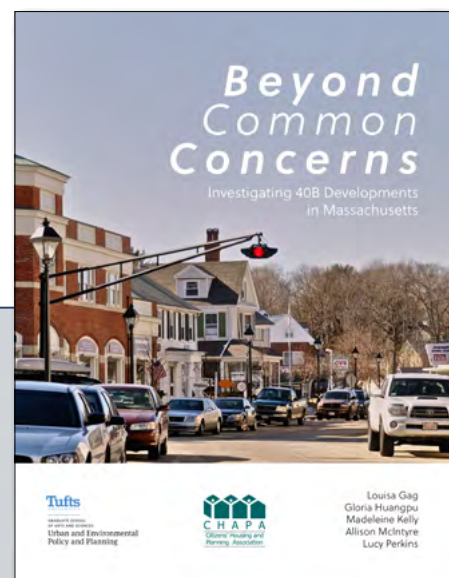
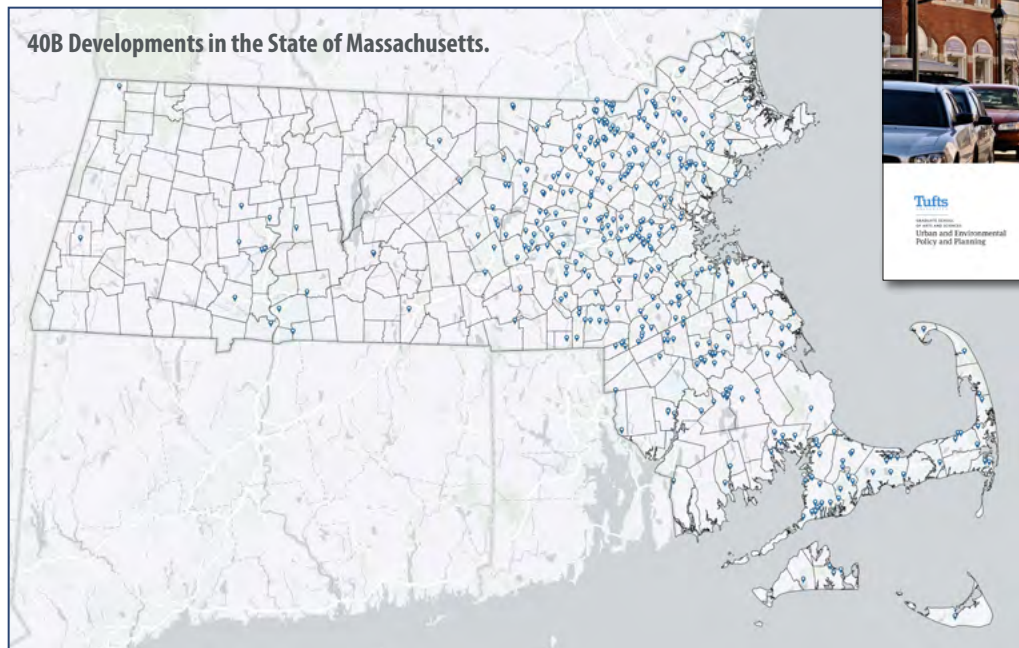
Beyond Common Concerns: Investigating 40B Developments in Massachusetts

In 2009, five Tufts UEP students worked with Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) to evaluate four controversial 40B projects and assess their outcomes. This report proved to be a key resource for CHAPA and was cited by professionals in the housing field as one of the only systematic studies of community changes before and after 40B developments were built and occupied. More than ten years later, Massachusetts continues to suffer from a severe affordable housing crisis as communities continue to push back on projects that will provide much needed affordable units for low- and moderate-income residents. Today, compounding the affordable housing crisis is the added strain of COVID-19, which is causing additional housing instability. Together, the two crises highlight the considerable racial inequities in housing across Massachusetts.

"Beyond Common Concerns: Investigating 40B Developments in Massachusetts" seeks to meet the moment by asking deeper questions to understand how opposition to affordable housing and community development can be rooted in racial and economic exclusion. Different values that people in the field often hold up

racialized housing discrimination, ultimately, the findings of this report illuminate how Chapter 40B has and can continue to play a role in providing affordable housing as a right to all people.

In addition to contributing to the discourse on Chapter 40B and incorporating new voices into the conversation, this project equipped CHAPA with a series of concrete recommendations that focus on the role and positionality of CHAPA as an advocacy and capacity building organization. These recommendations guide CHAPA to introduce new concepts into existing municipal engagement programming that focus on solidarity, develop additional resources to support homeownership



associations in navigating more just practices, and explore advocating for mechanisms that make living in a community accessible to residents in affordable homes. Cumulatively, the research findings and analysis suggest that all practitioners, scholars, and other stakeholders expand the conversation to

are brought into conversation with lived experiences of local residents to raise provocative questions, rather than providing as neat an answer as "concerns from town residents and officials did not materialize after 40B housing was built and occupied." As a result, this report contributes to the discourse around Chapter 40B and incorporates new voices into conversation to problematize dominant narratives of inclusion, access, and belonging. While systemic change is needed to rectify the history of harm perpetuated through exclusionary zoning and

grapple with new questions that offer a nuanced understanding of the impact of Chapter 40B on communities in Massachusetts. This means considering not only the impact of 40B on housing affordability, but also the impact on the ability to afford to live in a community. It means considering opportunity not just as a location, but also a condition and sense of welcoming. Through these new lenses, the work to ensure that every person in Massachusetts should have a safe, healthy, and affordable place to call home can take on new meaning.



SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCY AWARD




Green Worcester Plan

The Green Worcester Plan originated with a desire by city leadership to raise public awareness about the city's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to make city facilities and operations more energy-efficient, improve water quality of its lakes and ponds, invest in green open spaces, and other initiatives.


This idea evolved into a broader project with several components, creating an integrated sustainability and resilience plan, including a professional public opinion survey, an inventory of green projects in Worcester (both municipal and private sector), and a set of sustainability success stories to raise awareness about how Worcester is working to advance sustainability and resilience.

Originally scheduled to be published on April 22, 2020, the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the pandemic lockdown and impact on public activities postponed approval for a year. The resulting Green Worcester Plan is a strategic framework and umbrella plan, not a climate action plan, though it builds on the city's 2007 Climate Plan and incorporates aspects of a climate action plan to

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give priority to actions that have multiple co-benefits. But it's not a prescriptive blueprint with detailed analysis of all possible actions or interventions to achieve the goals. The plan is written to encourage flexibility for accelerated actions and goals as opportunities arise, such as financial and regulatory assistance from state and federal authorities. The additional time resulting from the pandemic allowed for discussion of the Massachusetts 2015 decarbonization roadmap issued in December 2020, and other recent developments and legislation.



Draft Guidelines for MBTA Communities — Multi-Family Zoning Near Transit

by Chris Kluchman, FAICP

Over the last 30 years, housing production has dropped to almost one-half of what was built between 1960 and 1990. Housing prices are among the highest in the country. Massachusetts is losing talent to less expensive regions. The Baker-Polito administration offered changes to the state's Zoning Act to remove barriers to housing production. This article summarizes these changes with a focus on the requirements for multi-family zoning for 175 communities.



Reforms to MGL Chapter 40A

In January 2021, Governor Baker signed the Economic Development Bond Bill into law, known as Chapter 358 of the Acts of 2020. In this legislation were the “Housing Choice” reforms to the Massachusetts zoning act, MGL c40A. One change makes it easier to adopt zoning that supports housing by changing the threshold of vote required for certain “pro-housing” zoning amendments from a two-thirds majority to a simple majority, guidance related to this can be found at mass.gov/housingchoice. The second major reform is the inclusion of a new Section 3A, which this article describes in detail.

New Section 3A

Section 3A adds a requirement for 175 “MBTA Communities” to have at least one zoning district of reasonable size that allows for multi-family use “as of right” with the following features:

- Minimum gross density of 15 units per acre
- Not more than one-half mile from a commuter rail station, subway station, ferry terminal, or bus station, if applicable
- No age restrictions
- Suitable for families with children

A dedicated web page, mass.gov/mbtacomunities, has many resources such as draft guidelines, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), webinar recording, slide deck, and information about How to Comply in 2022.

What are the 175 MBTA Communities?

Figure 1 illustrates the 175 communities that are identified as “MBTA Communities” in the legislation. These communities are listed in c161A section 1. Boston is not included because it is not subject to c40A.

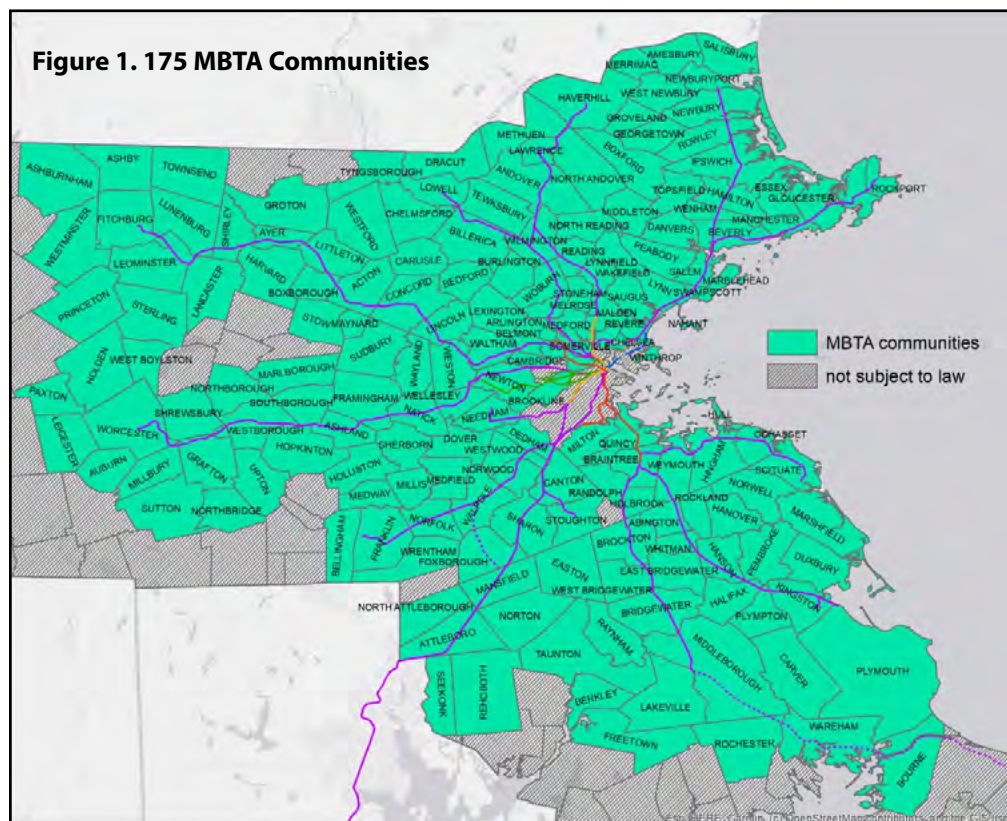
How were draft guidelines developed?

EOHED and DHCD engaged in discussions with

stakeholders to inform the compliance guidelines the law requires us to issue. This included an inter-agency work group consisting of staff from EOHED, DHCD, MassDOT, MassHousing, Mass Housing Partnership (MHP), and Mass-Development. EOHED and DHCD worked closely with MHP’s Center for Housing Data to incorporate data analysis that informed the compliance framework. Other key stakeholders provided input into the principles and approach for the draft guidelines.

On December 15, 2021, DHCD published [draft guidelines](#) and set a public comment period through March 31, 2022. Comments and suggestions related to the draft guidelines should be made through [this](#)

continued next page



[online form](#). DHCD also published requirements for the MBTA Communities who wish to remain eligible for the 2022 round of Mass-Works and Housing Choice grants, “[How to Comply in 2022](#),” which directs the 175 local governments to hold a briefing on the guidelines with their select board, city council, or town council and to submit proof of that public meeting agenda and other summary information on [this](#) online MBTA Community Information Form.

What is included in the Draft Guidelines?

1. Overview
2. Definitions
3. General Principles of Compliance
4. Allowing Multi-Family Housing “As of Right”
5. Determining Reasonable Size
6. Minimum Density
7. Determining Suitability for Families with Children
8. Location of Districts
9. Determination of Compliance
10. Renewals and Rescission of a Determination of Compliance

One primary feature of the draft guidelines is the mapping of four transit categories to each municipality as illustrated in Figure 2.

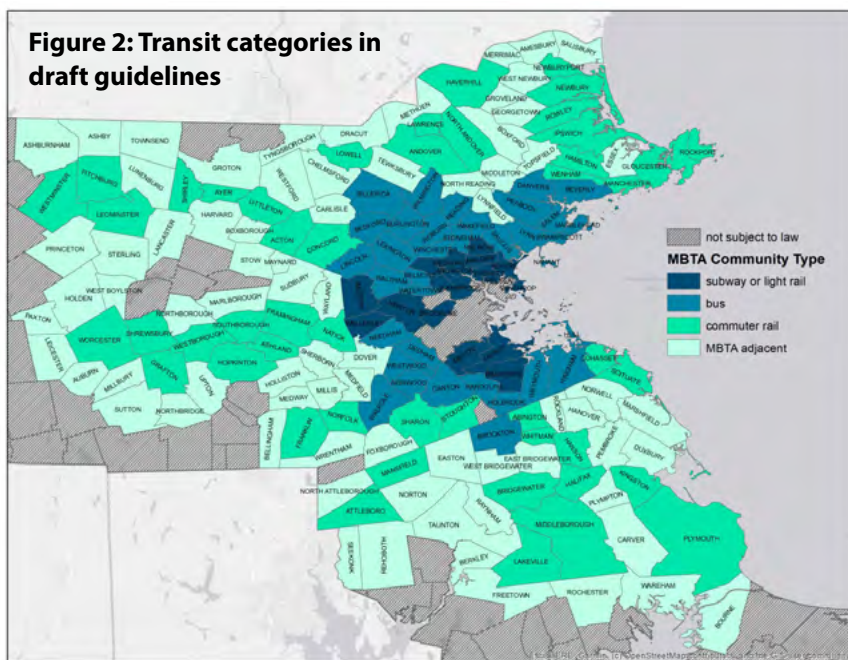
Reasonable size is discussed in detail in Section 5 of the draft guidelines and includes a two-pronged test:

1. Minimum Land Area: multi-family districts must comprise at least 50 acres of land – or approximately 1/10 of the land area within 0.5 mile of a transit station – with a **minimum gross density of 15 units per acre**, subject to any further limitations imposed by relevant aspects of the state environmental code. Note that the 50 acres does not need to be contiguous.

2. Minimum Multi-Family Unit Capacity: The multi-family unit capacity is a number of units based on a percentage of total housing units within the community. This represents the number of multi-family housing units that can be developed as of right within the multi-family district. That percentage varies by access to transit:

Category	Minimum multi-family units as a percentage of 2020 total housing stock
Rapid transit community	25%
Bus service community	20%
Commuter rail community	15%
Adjacent community	10%

Figure 2: Transit categories in draft guidelines



Every community can find the minimum multi-family unit capacity online at the main [MBTA Communities web site](#). Final guidelines will be issued once DHCD has an opportunity to solicit, deliberate on, and respond to comments from MBTA communities and other interested stakeholders.

There Will Be Help!

Recognizing that adopting by-right multi-family districts will not be easy for many MBTA Communities, the administration is assembling a wide array of Technical Assistance resources from a coordinated combination of state agencies and regional planning agencies. We expect communities will be supported by “universal resources,” such as online GIS models, template zoning materials, public educational materials, and grant funding for consultant assistance in a variety of disciplines. Visit the [Massachusetts Housing Partnership web page](#) to learn more about these resources which will be built out over time.

The [Community One Stop for Growth](#) consolidated grant program includes three grant programs that will fund MBTA compliance activities in FY2023: Community Planning, Rural and Small Town Development Fund and Housing Choice Community grants. Applications for these programs must be submitted during the period May 2 through June 3, 2022. Stay tuned for more information about technical assistance once the final guidelines are published.

– Chris Kluchman, FACIP is the Deputy Director of the Community Services Division at the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). She can be reached at chris.kluchman@mass.gov.

Planners' Gateway City Dream Job: MassDevelopment TDI Fellow

by Noah Koretz

MassDevelopment is bullish on Gateway Cities. Defined by the Massachusetts legislature as small to mid-sized cities that anchor regional economies around the state, Gateway Cities are home to one-of-a-kind businesses, institutions, and communities, with an abundance of unmatched cultural capital. That's why in February, we were proud to join the Baker-Polito Administration as it announced a historic expansion of the Transformative Development Initiative (TDI), our program for Gateway Cities designed to accelerate economic growth within focused districts in downtowns or neighborhood commercial centers. Now, we are looking to hire and deploy about a dozen professionals with experience in

urban planning, development, and small business initiatives to help us carry out this work.

The Transformative Development Initiative works with cross-sector partnerships in targeted commercial districts in Gateway Cities in order to engage community members, implement local economic development initiatives, and spur further public and private investment. The program concentrates economic development activities, resources, and investments within designated neighborhood areas, known as "TDI districts," for a term of three years.

Announced in February, the program's latest expansion included the selection of 13 TDI districts in Attleboro, Barnstable (Hyannis), Fall

River, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Pittsfield, Revere, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester. All districts will be awarded "TDI fellows" — MassDevelopment employees who will provide on-the-ground economic development expertise and collaborative leadership in these cities for three years — and will have access to a range of tools to help accelerate development, including technical assistance, grants to support local market development and arts and cultural infrastructure, collaborative workshops, resources, events, and more.



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This expansion more than doubled the size of the Transformative Development Initiative, which currently operates districts in five Gateway Cities, and represented a \$23.7 million investment in Gateway Cities over three years. As Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy, who serves as chair of MassDevelopment's Board of Directors, explained in his remarks last month: "That's because it works."

"By developing coalitions of local public, private, and nonprofit partners to make progress toward shared neighborhood goals, MassDevelopment's Transformative Development Initiative has become a proven model for accelerating economic development in Gateway Cities across Massachusetts," said Secretary Mike Kennealy. "This collaborative, street-level approach engages community members to advance small businesses, activate public spaces, rethink vacant properties, and more."

Since 2015, MassDevelopment has invested \$20 million in TDI districts through tools such as technical assistance, real estate investments, grant programs, and fellows — that investment has directly influenced over \$100.2 million in public and private investments in the districts, and assisted an additional \$219.9 million.

Why has the Transformative Development Initiative been so impactful? From day one, the secret sauce of the program has been the TDI fellows: full-time MassDevelopment employees hired specifically to serve as the main organizers for place-based economic development in Gateway Cities for the duration of their designation as a TDI district, leading and facilitating the day-to-day work of the local partnership and helping direct where agency investments go.

Our current TDI fellow for the City of Fitchburg, Francisco Torres, described the role, saying, "On any given day, we're tasked with working with a variety of stakeholders,



Former Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) Fellow for the City of Lawrence, Jess Martinez, led a four-part event series aimed at reimagining storefronts in downtown Lawrence.

including residents, property owners, and artists, to identify solutions essential in creating vibrant and attractive places. Those seeking to work independently in an environment where the target changes frequently, based on the needs of the community, should consider a role as a TDI fellow. The reward: visually seeing the impact I have made."

In addition to spearheading economic development within a city, TDI fellows engage as a cohort in group team building, trips and learning journeys, and other leadership and professional development opportunities, bringing best practices back to their district to further economic growth.

As the Transformative Development Initiative builds on past experience to bring new resources, expertise, and energy to 13 Gateway Cities, we will be hiring a new cohort of TDI fellows to work in these communities.

And — as someone who served in the inaugural cohort of TDI fellows, working from 2015 to 2018 in the City of Haverhill before becoming

director of the program — I couldn't be more excited to welcome and guide a new group of professionals to create real impact in communities across the state.

If you are interested in applying to be a TDI fellow, please visit <https://bit.ly/35xzMRs> to sign up for updates. We hope to begin the hiring process in April.

— Noah Koretz is Director of MassDevelopment's Transformative Development Initiative (TDI). He comes to this work with a cross-disciplinary background in law, design, affordable housing finance, and holistic community planning. He was a member of the inaugural cohort of TDI fellows and also previously served as the Deputy Director of TDI. He previously managed federal affordable housing investments for a consortium of eight cities north of Boston and practiced real estate litigation at a major Boston law firm.

FAICP: College of Fellows of AICP

Induction to the AICP College of Fellows is the highest honor the American Institute of Certified Planners bestows upon a member. Fellows of AICP are nominated and selected by their peers to recognize and honor their outstanding contributions as a professional planner. All Fellows are long-time members of AICP and have achieved excellence in professional practice, teaching and mentoring, research, and community service and leadership. Please join us in congratulating the following members of the Massachusetts Chapter of APA who have been newly named Fellows of AICP:

David Spillane creates plans for regions, downtowns, waterfronts, and neighborhoods that empower communities to shape places that are more vibrant, equitable, and sustainable. His work draws on the power of design to inspire—building around a shared vision that is both aspirational and pragmatic. Working with diverse coalitions of elected officials, business and community-based organizations, and local citizens, he has created new models for public engagement that are both inclusive and responsive. His work in Massachusetts and across the East Coast has been recognized through numerous national, regional, and state planning awards.



Jim O'Connell's multi-faceted professional career has been dedicated to planning, advocating for, and implementing projects related to sustainable development. His work has focused primarily on Massachusetts—Greater Boston, Cape Cod, and Springfield, MA/Pioneer Valley. Jim's planning work has been grounded in extensive citizen participation, seeking to build upon a community's historical sense of place and desire for improvement to motivate concrete, long-lasting planning initiatives. One of O'Connell's most significant projects has been leading efforts to reform Massachusetts zoning and planning laws to encourage sustainable development, particularly transit-oriented development and affordable housing.



Daphne Politis is highly regarded as an innovative consultant to a range of clients, primarily municipalities in New England, advancing the profession's highest ideals through her outstanding work. She has had a life-long commitment to equity, as in her recently completed Plan for the City of Boston, which applies an equity lens to the City's policies. She has received several awards for master plans and participatory place-making. Daphne is well known for designing innovative processes, that engage those traditionally excluded. She is considered by her peers to be a thought leader and an enthusiastic promoter of the planning profession.



Neil Angus is an AICP Certified Environmental Planner, LEED Accredited, and Living Future Accredited Professional whose leadership and combined expertise in natural systems thinking, green building, and green infrastructure has significantly advanced the planning profession in both Canada and the U.S. From innovative regulatory approaches that integrate the natural and built environment, to education and implementation of green infrastructure solutions, Neil's career accomplishments have transformed all communities he has worked in and beyond by serving as a replicable model for planners looking to advance low-impact development, smart growth and energy efficient design to create more inclusive, resilient, healthy, and sustainable developments.



The 2022 Class will be inducted into the College of Fellows at the National Planning Conference in San Diego on May 1, 2022.

The PDO Corner

by Ralph Willmer, FAICP, MA Chapter PDO



This is my first column as the new PDO for the MA Chapter of APA and I hope you are all doing well. I wanted to alert you to several important updates as we start 2022. As was mentioned in the Winter edition of the newsletter, APA National has updated the AICP certification process. APA is expanding the benefits of the AICP Candidate Path to all APA members. When you apply, you will have the opportunity to take the AICP test first and then gain your professional experience. Once you have your professional experience completed, you can then submit your experience to receive the AICP designation. Full details can be found at www.planning.org/certification.

As a reminder to current AICP members, starting this year there will be two new CM credits that you will need to fulfill in order to maintain your AICP certification – 1.0 CM credit for Equity and a 1.0 credit for Sustainability & Resilience. Find out more about these new credits at www.planning.org/cm/credits. And lastly, please note that if your reporting period ended 12/31/2021, the current grace period ends on May 31st, 2022. Please don't

forget to check your CM log to make sure that you have the credits required for your two-year reporting period. Here are some helpful links for logging in your credits.

- [How to Log CM Credits](#)
- [How to Earn CM Credits](#)

If you are looking for more credits, you can find some free virtual opportunities on the APA National website here or through the Planning Webcast Series. As always, stay well and feel free to reach out to me at pdo@apa-ma.org with any questions.

– Ralph Willmer, FAICP is the Technical Assistance Program Manager and Principal Planner at the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. He has over 30 years of planning experience in both the public and private sector. In 2010 he was inducted to the AICP College of Fellows. In addition to his role as PDO, he is Chair of the Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division of APA, and Chair of the Citizen Planner Training Collaborative. He previously served as the Massachusetts Chapter President and as a member of the National Board of Directors of APA.

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- conservation and open space planning
- neighborhood and district area planning
- corridor, small-area, and transportation planning
- historic preservation planning
- research, mapping, and data visualization
- grant and funding assistance
- peer review
- permitting assistance

Updated AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Planning has always been a profession that serves the public interest, and the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct reflects that core purpose. The Code offers an aspirational guidepost, while providing APA members with professional backing when you are faced with difficult or contentious decisions in your work.

AICP is committed to incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of certification (planning.org/equity/certification). After a year of review, feedback, and outreach to members, chapters, and divisions, the AICP Commission approved the updated Code of Ethics (planning.org/ethics/ethicscode) and developed a glossary of terms (planning.org/ethics/ethicscode/#-glossary) frequently used within the Code to be used as a companion resource.

The updated AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct went into effect January 1, 2022.

For more about the updates and the foundational values that the AICP Code of Ethics represents, read the [blog post](#) by Mitchell Silver, AICP President.

Summary of Updates

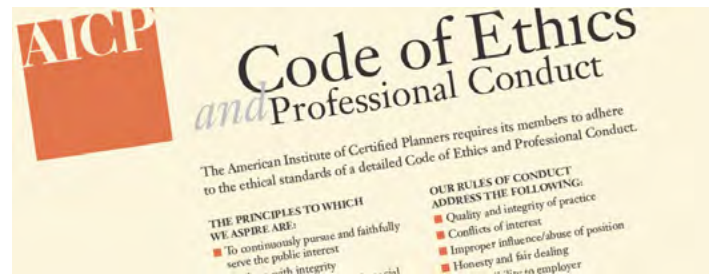
The Aspirational Principles were organized into logical groupings to highlight the planners' role in serving the public interest.

Judi Barrett
Principal



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Additionally, changes to the Principles:

- More fully account for the planners' role in social justice and racial equity while accepting our responsibility to eliminate historic patterns of inequity tied to planning decisions
- Respect the rights of others and prohibit discrimination against or harassment of others
- Increase opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to become professional planners

The Rules of Conduct were organized into logical groupings to increase clarity for compliance.

Additionally, changes to the Rules:

- Eliminate geographic inconsistencies for how the Rules of Conduct are enforced
- Clarify types of additional employment that would create an actual or perceived conflict of interest
- Require an AICP member to cooperate with the AICP Ethics Officer if they have information relevant to a charge filed against another AICP member

Lead and Inspire

As leaders of the profession, AICP-certified planners must be equipped with the knowledge, principles, and professional backing to incorporate equity and justice in their work. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to ethics and the profession of planning. If you have any questions, please reach out to ethics@planning.org.

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Ten Early Lessons from the Pandemic

by Kathleen “Kathy” McCabe, FAICP, Vice-President, Consulting Planners of Massachusetts

Just two years ago, we experienced the unprecedented closure of public life. Indoor spaces, restaurants, schools, entertainment venues all closed. Meetings and public hearings became virtual. Planners developed new skills in video meeting platforms. Zoom became a regular part of our lexicon. As spring 2022 unfolds and we seek to meet in person resume “normal” life again, there are some early lessons from the pandemic that we need to apply to our work as planners.

LESSON 1: It’s not over. Even as mask mandates are eliminated, reports indicate that an omicron variant is on the rise. As planners, we need to continue to be nimble, use hybrid meeting platforms, and integrate best public health practices in our plans and municipal capital projects. We may be moving out of a Covid crisis-mode, but we need to apply the lessons and continue the work, so our communities are better prepared.

LESSON 2: Many small and micro businesses are still recovering. Small and micro businesses, especially women-owned and minority-owned businesses need our support and patronage. We need to examine how our planning and economic development initiatives are positively or disparately effecting small business, particularly woman- and minority-owned enterprises.

LESSON 3: People liked outdoor dining on streets, sidewalks and parking lots. We need to make many of the “temporary provisions” for restaurants and small businesses a permanent part of our town centers, neighborhood commercial districts and downtowns. MassDOT and local municipalities need to continue and expand the shared streets program.

LESSON 4: Essential workers still need our thanks, respect, plus more. Good community planning and design needs to be essential worker aware. Essential workers are important part of our communities. They undertook health risks in the height of the pandemic. Many caught Covid,

their families suffered, and some died. We need to make our communities easier and more supportive of essential workers. This includes affordable and workforce housing; transit options that operate and serve workers who work the evening and weekend shifts; parks and outdoor spaces; and public bathrooms. Where does your FedEx or UPS driver go when Dunkin’s and MacDonald’s are closed? And offices will receive packages, but not allow people to enter?

LESSON 5: Digital meeting access needs to be institutionalized. Hybrid meetings are the future. The use of digital video meeting platforms enabled a wider range of participants at public meetings, including parents of young children, as well as people who had to travel a distance or didn’t have access to transport. While there are benefits to in-person

meetings, as planners we will need to continue the use of digital meetings to expand audiences and access. For municipalities and public agencies, video meetings can save travel time and expense for routine discussions. As a planning community, we should continue using a mix of meeting formats, video, in-person and hybrid. Municipal offices and public agencies will need to make investments for a minimum of at least one meeting room in every city and town hall is well-designed and equipped for effective hybrid meetings. Meetings need to work for in-person and remote attendees. Appropriate technology, particularly good microphones, cameras, acoustics and lighting are needed. We will need to fine-tune our meeting skills to better serve in-person and digital audiences.

continued next page



Planters define the expanded dining area using on-street parking spaces in busy Harvard Square during the pandemic.

Photos: Leonardi Aray



Temporary street closure during the pandemic enabling outdoor dining along Moody Street in Waltham

Ten Early Lessons *cont'd*

LESSON 6: Digital procurement and submissions worked. During the pandemic some municipalities opted to accept all digital submissions for procurement, bidding and municipal applications. It worked. Let's encourage procurement officers and municipalities to accept digital submissions, so it is a more widely used municipal practice.

LESSON 7: Healthy buildings with good HVAC need to be more widespread. We need to make our community gathering places, schools, public buildings safer and healthier if we expect to be able to remain open during future spikes in the Coronavirus and other airborne contagions. Updated HVAC systems that provide clean air and safer environments in schools, public meeting spaces, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and entertainment venues, are a must. As planners, we need to advocate for adoption of well building standards and high-quality HVAC systems as part of public spaces, if we are going to be prepared. Approximately 3% of the population is moderately-to-severely immuno-compromised per the CDC (i.e., persons receiving cancer treatments, with disabilities and chronic diseases). Immuno-compromised persons and their families/household

members cannot risk exposure to Covid. When considering household members, this effects approximately 8% of all households. Healthy buildings are a must if everyone (not just the majority) has the opportunity to resume an active or "normal" life.

LESSON 8: Parks and open spaces are essential infrastructure. Planners have long cited many reasons for parks and open space. During the pandemic parks and open spaces provided critical space for folks during the pandemic. Parks were a place to be active, to stretch and exercise outside, gather, and get a mental health respite. We re-learned that parks are essential, and not an "extra."

LESSON 9: Equitable results require forethought and building relationships. The confluence of the racial reckoning spurred by George Floyd's murder and the coronavirus pandemic amplified the calls for addressing racial disparity and health care, particularly when distributing Covid testing and vaccines. More purposeful planning as to racial justice

for distribution and testing sites resulted. Success was easier when there were existing relationships and trust. As planners we need to build relationships with all parts of our communities to be effective. We need to apply a race equity lens not just during the pandemic but as we move forward to advance equity and just access.

LESSON 10: We need to spread kindness and joy. In these challenging times, we need to remember change is hard for all of us. We need to recognize that the public is an underlying level of community stress created by covid and the high levels of uncertainty. Planners are often involved in managing or leading change, and thus the recipients of unwelcomed blow-back at times, adding difficulty and tension to our jobs. We need to practice kindness and help defuse and lower community stress levels. We need to find and share joy.

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NEWS FROM CPM | Consulting Planners' Perspective

by Kathleen "Kathy" McCabe, FAICP, Vice-President, Consulting Planners of Massachusetts

Advancing Racial Equity — Incorporating Race-Sensitive/Anti-Racism Practices in Planning

Consulting Planners of Massachusetts is offering planners a two-session workshop on how planners can change the professional playbook and view their role through a racial justice lens. Starting with an understanding of the role planners have played in creating inequity in land use, housing, wealth building, transportation and health outcomes, the workshop will help participants to first recognize, then reverse implicit biases. The workshop will help participants move from talking about equity to adopting new approaches, enabling them to take action to help make planners part of the solution and no longer part of the problem.

The workshop will include videos, personal discussions and tools for continuous learning. Each session is two hours. Participants will receive a certificate documenting they received YWCA DEI training. CPM has partnered with the APA Planning & the Black Community Division to offer AICP CM credits for Equity (pending). Equity credits are a new annual required CM credit.

Session 1 — Thursday, March 31, from 3:00-5:00 p.m. Understand implicit/unconscious biases/microaggressions.

Session 2 — Friday, April 8, from 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Racial Equity 101: Understand planners' role over time and the impact of racism on society and relationships, as well as how planners work with communities. Develop a racial equity/justice lens and framework for planning.

The YWCA of Central Mass will lead the workshop, organized by CPM. The YWCA's mission is eliminating racism and it has offered highly regarded racial equity workshops to professional, municipal officials, and nonprofit leaders. This workshop series is especially targeted to planners. Sponsorship has generously been provided by BETA Group, Barrett Planning Group, Jacobs, Favermann Design, Leonardi Aray Architects LLC, and LDS Consulting Group.

Workshop fee: \$110 for CPM members and \$130 for non-members. Registration is limited to 25 participants. Deadline: March 25, 2022. Register here: consultingplanners.org/events.



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