



NMCOG Secures Funding for Safety Action Plans

As part of a cross-regional partnership, the **Merrimack Valley Planning Commission** and **Northern Middlesex Council of Governments** were awarded \$469,042 in federal funding for the development of a Comprehensive Safety Action Plans from the **U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT)**.

Funding will be used to develop local and regional safety strategies, projects, and targets with a Vision Zero goal of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries on our transportation networks. [The Safe Streets and Roads for All Program](#) and **Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)** funding will be used to cover broad outreach and engagement in 24 urban, suburban, and rural municipalities in northeast Massachusetts.

The Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization and Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization will lead the effort to develop the Comprehensive Safety Action Plans in partnership with MassDOT to support our shared goal of creating a safe and equitable transportation system for the region.

The region of 658,276 people includes diverse cities representing 46% of the population, with 20% identified as historically disadvantaged, including the cities of Lawrence and Lowell, but which bear the weight of 51% of the 1,495 fatalities, with 43% of those injured or killed having resided in these communities. To create a Safety Action Plan, the MPOs will analyze regional crash data to identify trends and high-risk corridors, engage with communities disproportionately impacted by roadway safety issues, and generate evidence-based, data-driven policy and project recommendations.

Federal funding for this grant is provided under USDOT's Safe Streets and Roads for All program established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, with matching funds provided by MassDOT. [Contact Jennifer Raitt, Executive Director](#) for additional information on the grant and planning process.



[Learn more about SS4A](#)

Net Zero: From Inventory to Implementation Regional Clean Energy Workshop Series

Join NMCOG on **February 23, 2023 at 1:00 PM**, to learn more about how to plan for and implement actions to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

This workshop will include a presentation from Talia Fox on net zero plan development and lessons on implementation from her work as the Town of Arlington's Sustainability Manager. Additionally, MAPC's Energy Department will provide a training session on MAPC's GHG Inventory Tool which helps cities and towns identify, target, and then measure the largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in their community.

This workshop will be held remotely via [Zoom](#) and will begin promptly at 1:00 PM. Please contact NMCOG's Sustainability Planner, Daniela Garcia Moreno dgarciamoreno@nmcog.org, with any questions or concerns.

AARP Community Challenge

The **AARP Community Challenge** provides small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages. In 2023, the AARP Community Challenge is accepting applications across three different grant opportunities, two of which are new this year.

Important Upcoming Dates

- February 14: Webinar with America Walks: *The Walk Audit: An Effective Tool for Community Change* at 2 p.m. (EST) **[Click here to register](#)**
- February 16: Webinar with 80 Cities: *Community Gardens: A Tool for Growing Community Change* at 2 p.m. (EST) **[Click here to register](#)**
- March 15: Applications are due by 5 p.m. (ET)
- Mid-May: All applicants will be notified by email of their status
- June 28: Public announcement of the selected grantees — and work on the projects begin!
- November 30: All funded projects must be completed
- December 31: Deadline for after-action reports

Applicants and others with questions can look at the **Frequently Asked Questions** or email CommunityChallenge@AARP.org.

Grant Opportunities

In 2023, the AARP Community Challenge is accepting applications across three different grant opportunities. Organizations, including cities and towns are eligible to apply for more than one grant opportunity and may submit multiple applications.

1. Flagship Grants

Projects funded under this category aim to benefit residents — especially those age 50 and older - to:

- Create vibrant public places that improve open spaces, parks and access to other amenities;
- Deliver a range of transportation and mobility options that increase connectivity, walkability, bikeability, and access to public and private transit;
- Support housing options that increases the availability of accessible and affordable choices;
- Ensure a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion while improving the built and social environment of a community;
- Increase digital connections by expanding high-speed internet and enhancing digital literacy skills of residents;
- Support community resilience through investments that improve disaster management, preparedness and mitigation for residents;
- Increase civic engagement with innovative and tangible projects that bring residents and

- local leaders together to address challenges and facilitate a greater sense of inclusion; and
- Improve community health and economic empowerment in support of financial well-being and improved health outcomes.

2. Capacity-Building Microgrants

Projects funded under this category aim to benefit residents - especially those age 50 or older - in the following categories:

- Walkability: Implement a walk audit to assess and enhance the safety and walkability of a street or neighborhood with support from **America Walks**, using the **AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit**.
- Community Gardens: Start or enhance a community garden with support from **880 Cities**, using the new AARP publication **Creating Community Gardens for People of All Ages**.

3. Demonstration Grants

Projects funded under this category aim to benefit residents - especially those age 50 or older - by:

- Advancing solutions that build capacity towards transportation systems change. This opportunity for grant funding of approximately \$30,000 to \$50,000 per project is sponsored by Toyota Motor North America and
- Implementing accessory dwelling unit (ADU) design competitions that increase public understanding of this housing option and encourage the implementation of ADU supportive policies. This opportunity for grant funding will provide approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 per project.

AARP Community Challenge Grants

Bay State Roads Training Opportunities

Bay State Roads has a number of upcoming training opportunities. Many of the sessions are free and may be useful to new municipal staff working on transportation, roadway, and mobility planning projects.

- Traffic Signal Design and Operation - Virtual Classroom on 3/7/2023 at 9:00 AM
- Pavement Markings - Use, Application, Compliance, and Materials on 3/15/23 at 9:00 AM

For more information on webinars and available resources please visit:

[UMass Transportation Center website](#)



Save the Date for March 22nd Public forum on future mobility in the NMCOG region

NMCOG is developing **Envision 2050** to establish a foundation for cost-effective, energy-efficient, and equitable transportation options for all users. It will include a comprehensive evaluation of transportation services, prioritize transportation goals, projects, and studies, and align with a funding plan which will be the long-range transportation plan for the Northern Middlesex region. The next **Public Forum is on March**

NMCOG staff at the Chelmsford Senior Center from left to right: Justin Howard, Transportation Director; Chris Curry, Associate Planner/ Transit Manager; Shravanthi Gopalan Narayanan, Transportation Planner; Jessica Boulanger, Transportation Planner.

22nd from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM at the UMass Lowell Wannalancit Mills. Recordings of past presentations and discussions, additional details about the plan and planning process, and upcoming meetings are posted on the [Envision 2050 webpage](#). For more information, **[please contact us](#)**.

As part of the development of Envision 2050, NMCOG led a discussion on transportation access for seniors in partnership with the Town of Chelmsford and Council on Aging (COA). Many opportunities were discussed, including extending COA service for afternoon, evening, or weekend activities and appointments, availability of drivers to extend service, additional shuttles to senior housing around town, and general access to public transportation for seniors. NMCOG looks forward to continuing these and other discussions across the region as we develop and implement the long-range regional transportation plan.

NMCOG in the News

Massachusetts Delegation Applauds More than \$30 Million in Federal Funding to Improve Roadway Safety Across Massachusetts

"*Washington (February 3, 2023)* – The Massachusetts congressional delegation, Senators Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), and Representatives Richard Neal (MA-01), Jim McGovern (MA-02), Lori Trahan (MA-03), Jake Auchincloss (MA-04), Democratic Whip Katherine Clark (MA-05), Seth Moulton (MA-06), Ayanna Pressley (MA-07), Stephen Lynch (MA-08), and Bill Keating (MA-09), today applauded an [announcement](#) from the U.S. Department of Transportation that it will award \$30 million in grants to communities across Massachusetts from its Safe Streets for All program. The lawmakers helped create the Safe Streets for All program as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law...

In September 2022, Senator Markey led a letter to Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg [supporting](#) the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments' application for a safety planning grant from the Department of Transportation's Safe Streets for All program. The grant will help the regions – including Haverhill, Lawrence, Lowell, and Methuen – create an all-inclusive and equity-focused road safety plan in communities with large immigrant populations and where transit accidents are more likely to occur." [READ MORE](#)

Employment Opportunities at NMCOG

Come join a talented team working across the NMCOG region.

Open Positions

Senior Planner - Housing and Land Use

Full-time, \$65,000 - \$80,000/annually with comprehensive benefits



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

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