



## Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

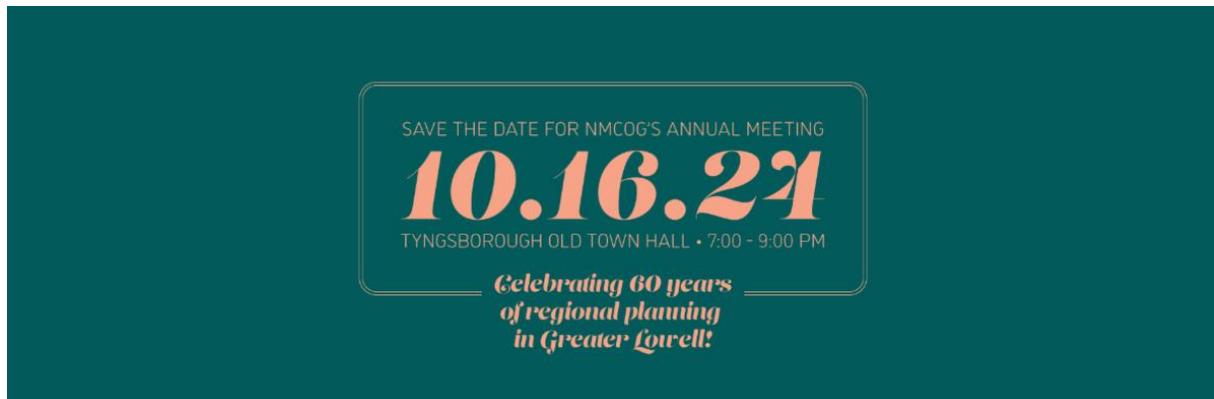
### Events and Opportunities

#### Celebrating 60 Years of NMCOG!

#### *RSVP today for the NMCOG Annual Meeting*

Join us for the NMCOG Annual Meeting, where we'll be celebrating more than 60 years of regional planning in Northern Middlesex. The NMCOG Council is hosting a special meeting, open to all, on **October 16, 2024 from 7:00 – 9:00pm** at Tyngsborough Old Town Hall. The event will include a panel of state and regional leaders discussing the importance and impact of economic development, workforce, and housing across the Greater Lowell region. Visit [nmcog.org/calendar](https://nmcog.org/calendar) for more information.

Please RSVP to [NMCOGAdmin@nmcog.org](mailto:NMCOGAdmin@nmcog.org) by October 11.



## **Creating Chelmsford's Future** — — — **A Strategic Plan**

### Creating Chelmsford's Future: Ice Cream Community Kick-Off

Join the Town of Chelmsford, NMCOG, and Strategic Plan consultant BerryDunn for free ice cream and to learn about the planning process.

**Location:** Chelmsford Elks Lodge, 300 Littleton Road

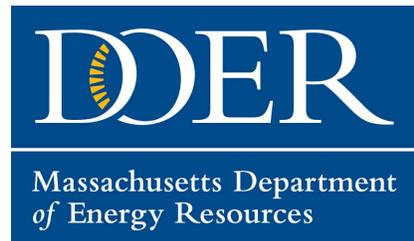
**Date:** September 18, 2024

**Time:** 5:30 pm

The event will start with an open house with tables for the Chelmsford Housing Production Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and other town initiatives. Staff and volunteers will share updates and receive feedback. The event will then feature a presentation and facilitated discussion on the Town's strategic plan. Families are welcome, and there will be children's craft activities! [RSVPs are encouraged](#). Learn more at the [Creating Chelmsford's Future website](#).

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## Draft Stretch Code Updates Available for Public Comment



The Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) has released proposed changes to Stretch and Specialized codes based on public feedback received over the past year and a half. Revisions to the Stretch and Specialized codes are available here:

- [225 CMR 22 MA Residential public comment CLEAN 8-8-24](#)
- [225 CMR 23 MA Residential public comment REDLINE 8-8-24](#)
- [225 CMR 23 MA Commercial public comment CLEAN 8-8-24](#)
- [225 CMR 23 MA Commercial public comment REDLINE 8-8-24](#)
- [Proposed stretch and specialized code changes summary 08-08-24](#)

Help shape the future of our energy resources! Provide your comments in any of the formats below:

- **Virtual public hearing:** [Register for DOER's virtual public hearing on September 16, 2024](#), from 10 AM – 12 PM on Zoom.
- **Email:** [stretchcode@mass.gov](mailto:stretchcode@mass.gov), using the words "STRETCH CODE FEEDBACK" in the subject line.
- **Mail:** Ian Finlayson, Dept of Energy Resources, 100 Cambridge St, 9th Fl, Boston, MA 02114

Comments will be accepted until 5 PM EST on **September 17, 2024**.

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## Contribute to Regional Flood Vulnerability Insights

Help us understand regional flood challenges by taking part in a survey on flooding events. Your responses will assist our project team—NMCOG, in partnership with MAPC and funded by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)—in building knowledge on flood risk in our communities and guiding future actions.

- **Who should participate:** Municipalities, Gateway Cities, areas with designated Environmental Justice (EJ) block groups, and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).
- **Survey Deadline:** **September 30**
- **Survey link:** [Take the survey!](#)

Thank you for helping us build a clearer picture of flood vulnerability in our communities.

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## Draft Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan 2023-2031 Available for Comments

The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has released the [draft Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan 2023-2031](#) for public feedback. The plan targets preservationists across Massachusetts, not just MHC. MHC is requesting that the plan be shared with municipalities across the Commonwealth, notably historic district commissioners, officials, staff, and local preservationists.

The comment period ends **September 30, 2024**. Feedback should be submitted via email to Jennifer Doherty: [Jennifer.Doherty@sec.state.ma.us](mailto:Jennifer.Doherty@sec.state.ma.us)

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## Week Without Driving Challenge: September 30 to October 6, 2024

America Walks encourages elected officials, transportation professionals, and individuals to participate in the [Week Without Driving](#) to experience the barriers non-drivers face daily.

Approximately one-third of Americans are unable to drive and often struggle with inadequate sidewalks, poor transit, and dangerous roads. These challenges highlight the need for a transportation system that supports everyone, regardless of ability, age, or income. The Week Without Driving initiative, started by [Disability Mobility Initiative](#) in Washington, is now a national movement, offering resources and support for communities to host their own challenges.



Want to challenge yourself and your community not to drive for one week? [Sign up to participate and help build better, inclusive communities!](#)



## At Home in Greater Lowell

a housing strategy for the greater lowell region

### Secretary Ed August Announced as Keynote for Ideas to Action: At Home in Greater Lowell Fall Housing Summit

On **Thursday, November 7**, NMCOCG will host “Ideas to Action,” the fall summit for *At Home in Greater Lowell*, featuring Ed August, Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities as keynote speaker. Experts from the Massachusetts Taxpayer Foundation will discuss municipal financial impacts of housing production, and community engagement specialists from the Citizens Housing and Planning Association will speak about fair housing and engagement. This third summit will include the results of the year-long process to create a housing strategy for the Greater Lowell region and a discussion about working together on the next steps.

[Register today!](#) Networking at 5:30 pm, program begins at 6:00 pm. Additional event details will be posted to the [NMCOCG event calendar](#) and shared via the [At Home in Greater Lowell mailing list](#).

*This project is led by NMCOCG and funded by an Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Planning Assistance Grant, District Local Technical Assistance, and the Greater Lowell Community Foundation.*

## Grant Opportunities & Resources

### Forest Reserves Grant: Apply Now!

The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs has released a new grant opportunity to support forest conservation and expand the Commonwealth’s network of forest reserves as part

of the Forests as Climate Solutions Initiative launched by the Healey-Driscoll administration last year. The program funds activities regarding forest conservation and expansion of state forest reserves, with no timber harvesting or active management required.

#### Who can apply?

- Municipalities
- 501(c)(3) land conservation organizations
- Other conservation groups (e.g., Land Banks)

#### Important Details:

- **Max Award:** 50% of project cost, up to \$2,000,000
- **Application Deadline:** Friday, September 27th at 3:00 PM

To learn more, visit the [Acquisition for Forest Reserves Grant program website](#) on Mass.gov.

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## Economic Development Administration Announces \$25 Million Good Jobs Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is now accepting applications for the FY 2024 Good Jobs Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). With \$25 million available, this initiative aims to support locally led workforce training programs that lead directly to good jobs. Building on the success of the first round funded by the American Rescue Plan, this round focuses on sectoral partnerships that unite diverse stakeholders to develop high-quality training.

Targeted at jobs requiring less than a bachelor's degree, the FY 2024 Good Jobs Challenge emphasizes advancing industries critical to U.S. and regional economic competitiveness. The NOFO highlights the importance of including worker input in the design and execution of these programs, particularly for those impacted by technological changes and other disruptions. **Applications are due by September 27, 2024, at 4:59 PM EST.**

[Learn more and download the Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

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## 2025 Making it Public for Massachusetts Municipalities Cohort

Making It Public (MIP) for Massachusetts Municipalities is a public art training program inspired by Forecast Public Art (FPA) and co-designed by the [Metropolitan Area Planning Council's \(MAPC\) Arts and Culture Department](#) and New England Foundation for the Arts' (NEFA) Public Art Team. The curriculum incorporates the use of grant agreements as defined in [Section 2 of MGL Chapter 30B](#) and trains municipalities in practices to commission public art that are in alignment with the principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability in public procurement. At the end of the Municipal Track training, each municipality will apply the skills they've learned to release a Call for Temporary Public Art. Each participating municipality receives a \$15,000 grant from NEFA to fund artists through their Call.

[Learn more and sign up for office hours to ask questions](#). **Applications due September 30, 2024.**

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## Apply for Land Conservation Assistance Program Grants Applications accepted on a rolling basis through April 11, 2025

The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Division of Conservation Services seeks applicants for a new grant – the Land Conservation Assistance Program. This new grant will support the following activities toward land conservation:

- Application Preparation: Preparing grant applications for land protection
- Land Protection Transactions: Completing tasks for land conservation deals
- Open Space Planning: Updating municipal Open Space and Recreation Plans
- Park Development : Planning or renovating parks

**Info Sessions:** To learn more and ask questions, join an upcoming info session in person on

## Plans and Resources

### Reminder: Year-6 MS4 Annual Report Due September 30 *Tools and Resources Available on NMCOG Website*

The Year-6 MS4 Annual Report deadline is approaching on Monday, September 30. To assist municipalities in completing their reports, NMCOG has compiled the following resources:

- Access the Small MS4 [Year-6 Annual Report Template and a Tips and FAQs document](#).
- For additional information and resources, [visit the 2016 MA Small MS4 General Permit website](#) here.

The EPA is hosting webinars on the Annual Report template and reporting requirements. Upcoming webinars will be announced [on the EPA's website](#).

## NMCOG News

### NMCOG supports the Tyngsborough Affordable Housing Trust at the Block Party by the Bridge

On August 23, NMCOG staff joined volunteers from the Town of Tyngsborough to share information about Tyngsborough's Housing Production Plan planning process. We collected dozens of surveys focused on the housing-related issues faced by residents and heard many stories of housing challenges and triumphs. We also shared information about the Trust and handed out candy to Tyngsborough residents. Thank you, Tyngsborough Affordable Housing Trust, for inviting us to this fun event! [Surveys are accepted online through September 30.](#)



*NMCOG Staff at the Tyngsborough Affordable Housing Trust Table*

### Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative (NMSC) Tours Duck Island During Quarterly Meeting

On September 10, members of the NMSC met for their fall quarterly meeting to share resources, learning opportunities, and reaffirm their commitment to collaboration through an updated MOU. The meeting included an EPA MS4 Annual Report webinar, followed by a tour of Duck Island.

For more information about the NMSC and NMCOG stormwater resources, contact Meghan Tenhoff, Sustainability Planner II, at [mtenhoff@nmcog.org](mailto:mtenhoff@nmcog.org).



*Members of the NMSC touring Duck Island*

## Work with Us! Employment Opportunities and RFPs

### NMCOG is Hiring!

Come work with us! We are seeking to fill the positions of Senior Sealer of Weights and Measures (40 hours per week) and Sealer of Weights and Measures (24-32 hours per week). Learn more and apply at [nmcog.org/employment](https://nmcog.org/employment).

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