



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Events and Opportunities

Greater Lowell Vision Zero Comment Period Closes Tuesday, June 12

On May 22, 2024, the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO) released the [draft Greater Lowell Vision Zero Plan](#) for public comment. The draft plan includes recommended projects and policies to improve roadway safety and reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries across the NMCOG region. Projects must be listed in a regional safety action plan to meet the eligibility criteria for FHWA Implementation funds under the Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant program.

The public comment period for the plan closes Wednesday, June 12, 2024; comments are invited at publiccomment@nmcog.org. Learn more about the planning process and download the draft plan at nmcog.org/glvisionzero, or contact Jessica Boulanger, Mobility Specialist and Project Manager for Greater Lowell Vision Zero, at jboulanger@nmcog.org.



At Home in Greater Lowell Summit Draws Nearly 80 Participants

*Miss the summit?
Take the Strategies Survey to
provide suggestions for
regional housing solutions*

Last week, the *At Home in Greater Lowell Strategies Summit* brought together nearly 80 elected officials,

board members, experts in housing, advocates, and public and nonprofit staff to confirm shared goals for housing production across the region. Staff from UMass Donahue Institute, a consultant on the project, presented data demonstrating the region's housing needs ([download the slides here](#)). Together, participants began developing strategies to achieve those goals.

The work continues in June, as a [Strategies Survey](#) is open to the public through June 28. Weigh in on our goals to make sure they reflect the shared values of the Greater Lowell region and suggest strategies and specific actions that will help us collectively reach those goals.

A full meeting summary will be shared shortly, along with exciting announcements about *At Home in Greater Lowell* Summer Storytelling Socials. [Join the At Home in Greater Lowell mailing list](#) to receive ongoing notifications about the plan. Visit nmcog.org/ahgl for more details about the planning process or contact Deputy Director Kelly Lynema at klynema@nmcog.org for more information.

Spring Citizen Planner Training Collaborative Schedule Announced

The Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) has released its spring workshop series, with training scheduled for topics ranging from overlay zoning to fair housing law. All workshops are held remotely via Zoom, and are designed for elected and volunteer board members, local planners, and community organizations. Registration fees are \$35 and payable upon registration or via mail.

1. **Roles & Responsibilities of PB & ZBA Boards:** Tuesday, June 6, 2024, 5:30 PM
 2. **Introduction to the Zoning Act:** Tuesday, June 18, 2024, 5:30 PM
 3. **Writing Reasonable & Defensible Decisions:** Thursday, June 20, 2024, 5:30 PM
- Learn more and register on the [Mass CPTC website](#).

Grant Opportunities & Resources

Municipalities Invited to Apply for Up to \$25,000 in Cybersecurity Technology Upgrades

The MassCyberCenter recently announced \$1.4 million in funding for municipal cybersecurity improvements through the Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Grant Program. Under the program, municipalities are eligible for [grants of up to \\$25,000 to fund narrowly-focused cybersecurity technology upgrades](#) which will be identified through a cybersecurity vulnerability assessment. Grants may fund capital equipment, technology and infrastructure for cybersecurity improvement projects including vendors/contractors or IT-related staff costs of the municipality performing the upgrades.

The MassCyberCenter will begin reviewing applications on July 1, 2024. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis after this date and then reviewed quarterly. [Learn more and apply](#).

Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Opens Planning Assistance Grant Cycle

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) is offering Massachusetts cities and towns technical assistance to improve their land use practices. EEA Planning Assistance Grants are available to the Commonwealth's municipalities, and Regional Planning Agencies acting on their behalf to support their efforts to plan, regulate (zone), and act to conserve and develop land consistent with the Massachusetts' Sustainable Development Principles. In recent years, Planning Assistance Grants have funded NMCOG municipalities' Open Space and Recreation Plans, Housing Production Plans, and planning for compliance with MBTA Communities Law. Applications are due July 3, 2024, and require a minimum non-state match of 25%. [Learn more and apply](#).

MassDOT Highway Division Launches New Community Grants Portal

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Highway Division last week announced the launch of a new community grants portal named Grant Central. The portal will be a hub of information and resources about MassDOT grants available through six municipal grant programs, including the Chapter 90 Program, Complete Streets Funding Program, Shared Streets and Spaces Program, Municipal Pavement Program, Municipal Small Bridge Program, and the Local Bottleneck Reduction Program. The site includes information about how to apply for funding, how municipalities will be reimbursed, how applications are scored, and more. Learn more at the [Grant Central Portal](#).

NMCOG News

Where Fun Meets Fresh Air

On June 1, Meghan Tenhoff, NMCOG's Sustainability Planner, joined the Chelmsford Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) Subcommittee to kick off community engagement for the OSRP at the Market on the Common's Pride celebration. The primary goal of tabling the event was to educate the community about the OSRP process and encourage participation. Visitors learned about the importance of open space and recreation planning and how they can help shape Chelmsford's green spaces.

To foster further engagement, the team handed out wildflower seed packets labeled with a QR code linking to the [project survey](#) to spread awareness and provide a lasting reminder of the project's significance.

Please [take the survey today](#), and join the team at the [Chelmsford OSRP Open House on June 20](#) at the Chelmsford Senior Center from 5-7 PM to learn more about the plan or contact Sustainability Planner II Meghan Tenhoff at mtenhoff@nmcog.org.



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