

# The Municipal Interface with Housing

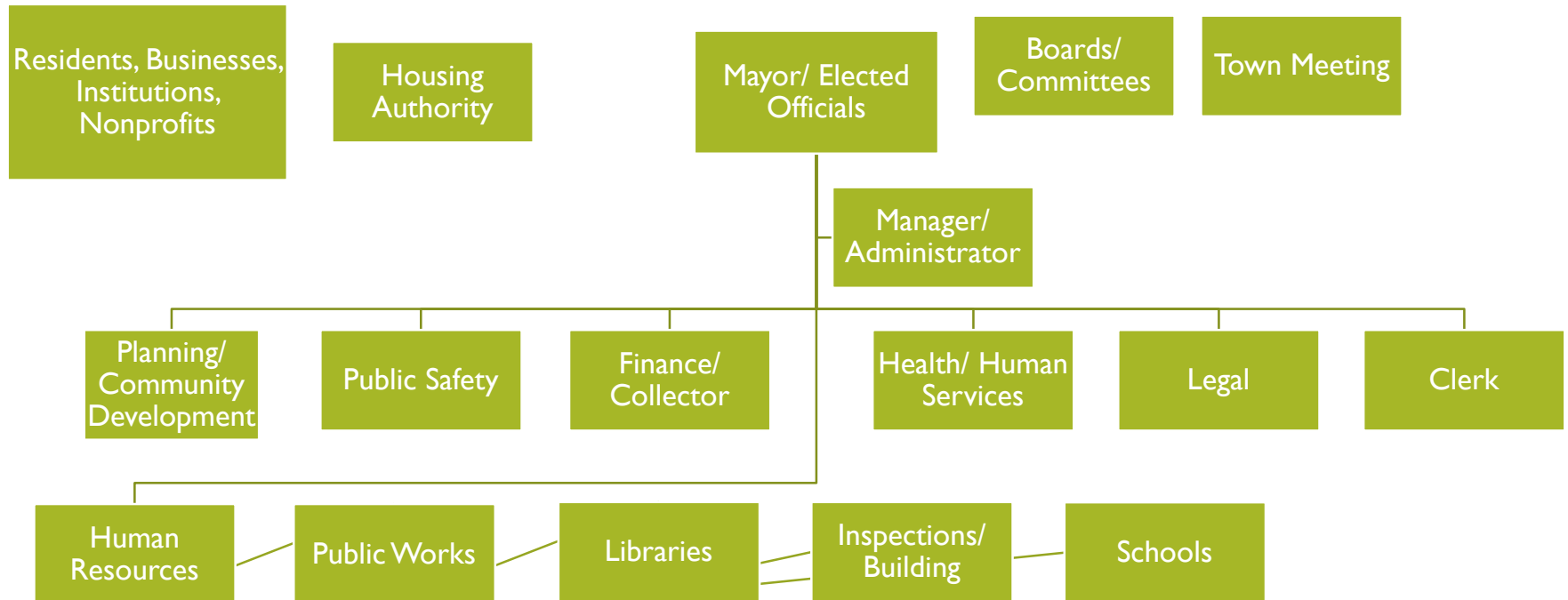
Massachusetts Municipal Association  
May 23, 2023

Jennifer M. Raitt  
Executive Director  
Northern Middlesex Council of Governments



# Municipalities and Housing

- When, why, and how do municipalities get involved in housing-related matters?



# Importance of Municipalities in Housing Efforts

- Housing is connected to and is the basis for social equity, economic development and resiliency, and community well-being and intersects with many other community goals and priorities

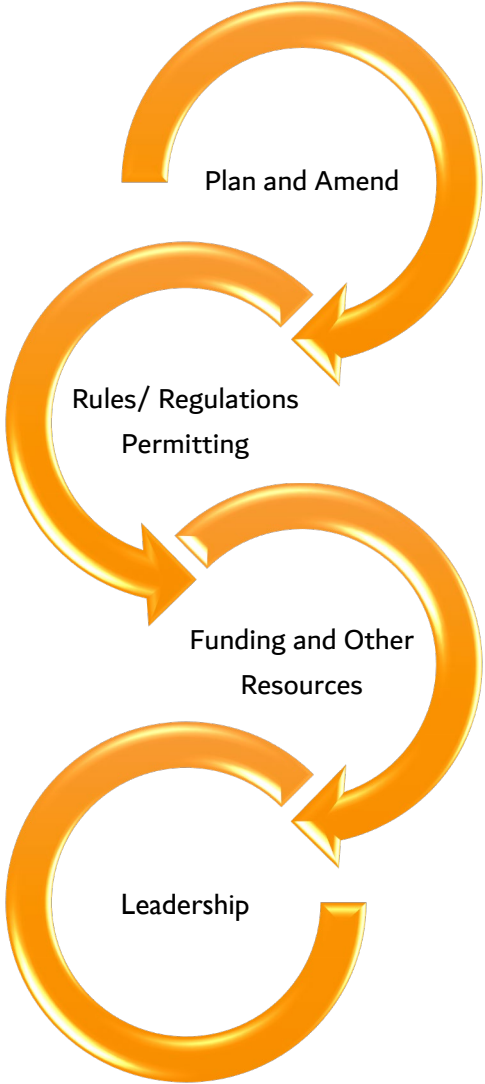


# Municipalities as Policy Makers

- Create a conducive environment for development and growth, address community needs, and act
- Promote a diverse housing stock by removing regulatory barriers preventing a diverse housing stock
- Make reforms to promote fair housing as required by state and federal laws
- Understand your local process of developing and implementing housing policies, including comprehensive planning, land use planning, zoning maps, zoning regulations and requirements, public hearings, review processes, permitting processes, and enforcement



# Municipalities as Policy Makers



# Municipal Initiatives and Policies

## - Plan and Amend



- **Housing Plans**

Housing Action Plans, Fair Housing Action Plans, Housing Element, Housing Strategy, Community Development Strategy... And Climate Action Plans, Transportation Plans, Economic Development Plans, and more

- **Housing Production Plans (MGL Chapter 40B):**

- Housing Inventory, Needs, Housing Demand
- Vision, Goals and Objectives;
- Development constraints (regulatory/ non-regulatory)
- Development sites/ districts/ targets
- Implementation strategies/ action plan



# Municipal Initiatives and Policies

## - Rules/ Regulations/ Permitting



- What are your current bylaws and policies and where can you make reforms to increase affordability, including exploring public/ private partnerships and incentivizing development?
- How long did it take the most recent affordable home or multifamily development to be created in your community from planning to rent/ lease up or sale? How did that timeline compare with a single-family home?



# Municipal Initiatives and Policies

## - Funding and Other Resources



- Do you have long-term funding to address housing needs? Consider municipal sources, Community Preservation Act and Affordable Housing Trust Funds, to address local affordable housing access.





# Municipal Initiatives and Policies - Leadership



- Assess capacity – staff, volunteers
- Consider the role(s) of municipal boards, committees, elected and appointed officials
- Utilize other local, regional, state, and federal partners
- Work with other municipalities on broader housing goals and objectives
- Carry the work, the energy, and the “why”
- Keep people engaged



# Municipal Initiatives and Policies - Leadership



- Ask for help/ find technical assistance and support
- Connect with your regional planning agency  
<https://www.apa-ma.org/resources/massachusetts-regional-planning-agencies/>
- Work with other TA providers, including CHAPA and MHP
- Utilize the MA Housing Toolbox  
<https://www.housingtoolbox.org/>



**Thank you!**

**Jennifer M. Raitt**  
**Executive Director**  
**Northern Middlesex Council of Governments**  
[jraitt@nmcog.org](mailto:jraitt@nmcog.org)  
**(978) 854-8021 x 120**

