

## Connect 351 is around the corner

By Owen Page

In just seven weeks, more than 1,000 local leaders will gather in Boston's Seaport District for the MMA's Connect 351 conference, an event that brings together municipal officials, experts and exhibitors for learning, networking, and exploring solutions for Massachusetts cities and towns.

Connect 351 will span two-and-a-half days — Jan. 22-24 — packed with inspiring speakers, timely workshops, countless networking opportunities, a bustling Trade Show, member business meetings, receptions, awards programs, and other engaging activities.

The MMA recently announced the full slate of timely, informative [workshops](#), with full details available online. (See related story in this issue.)

The annual [Trade Show](#) will feature more than 250 companies, nonprofits and government agencies showcasing the



Members participate in a coaching session for municipal officials during Connect 351 in 2025. Pictured, l-r, are Taylor Torres, planning and economic development director in Plainville; Steven Solbo, energy manager for Norwood and Sharon; Medfield Town Administrator Kristine Trierweiler, and MMA President and Franklin Town Administrator Jamie Hellen.

latest innovations, technologies and services of interest to municipal officials. (See related story in this issue.)

The conference will be held at the Menino Convention and Exhibition Center and Omni Hotel. As always, the latest and most comprehensive information about the conference is available at

[connect351.org](http://connect351.org). The event's free mobile app will help attendees make the most of their experience. (See story, this issue.)

"Whether you're a seasoned municipal pro or new to the field, the MMA conference is the best place to swap stories, share a laugh, and learn from colleagues who know all the same highs and can empathize with our similar woes," said Westminster Town Administrator

Stephanie Lahtinen. "Each year, there are new things to learn and apply in our communities."

### Schedule and features

The 2026 conference will open on the afternoon of Thursday, Jan. 22, with the Trade Show, a Women Leading

■ **CONNECT 351** *continued on 18*

## Inside

**Administration releases coastal protection strategy ...3**

**Trade Show to feature solutions, networking ..... 4**

**Community One Stop awards \$179M for projects .....5**

**MMA Business Meeting to feature fiscal resolution.....7**

**MMA Webinars..... 12**

**MIA Report ..... 17**

**Around the Commonwealth .....24**

**People .....27**

**Classifieds ..... 34**

**Calendar .....38**

## Committees conclude hearings on Municipal Empowerment Act

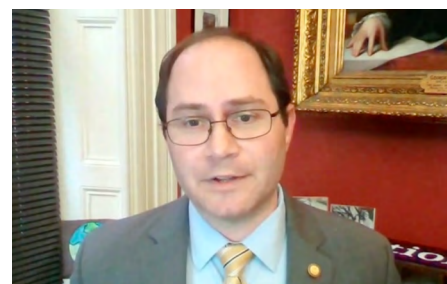
By Ali DiMatteo

The three legislative committees assigned sections of the governor's proposed Municipal Empowerment Act concluded their hearings on Nov. 7.

The [wide-ranging bill](#), strongly supported by the MMA and local leaders, is intended to increase municipal flexibility, reduce administrative burdens, strengthen municipal finances, address municipal workforce challenges, and improve the efficiency of local operations.

The bill was first filed in 2024, and was re-filed in January with some additional provisions.

This session's bill was assigned to three committees: the Joint Committee on Public Service, the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional



Salem Mayor Dominick Pangallo testifies virtually before the Joint Committee on Revenue during a hybrid hearing on Nov. 7 on the proposed Municipal Empowerment Act.

Government, and the Joint Committee on Revenue.

The Public Service Committee held the first hearing, on Sept. 22, and focused

■ **EMPOWERMENT ACT** *continued on 26*

## 2025 MMA Board of Directors

The MMA Board of Directors holds regular meetings, often in Boston, followed by a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission with the administration. Board members are chosen by: Massachusetts Mayors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association, Massachusetts Municipal Management Association, Massachusetts Select Board Association, Association of Town Finance Committees.

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# Executive Director's Report

## Looking to gratitude in the face of adversity

I'll start by acknowledging an obvious truth: these are hard times to be a local government leader. Whether it be budget pressures, resident demands or simply the uncertainty brought by our current political climate, each day in your city or town hall can feel like an insurmountable challenge.

I can't wish all of this adversity away with platitudes, but on the heels of Thanksgiving and at the outset of the holiday season, it is my hope that taking a moment to focus on gratitude can be both a timely and beneficial exercise.

The first thing that comes to mind is just how fortunate we all are to have so many municipal colleagues across the Commonwealth. (I know, I am an alumnus, but I love my alma mater, so to speak.) Local government leadership can be a lonely road, but when you do have the chance to engage and connect with your peers in other communities, it really provides great perspective. I know that I enjoy seeing so many of you connect with one another at monthly membership meetings, and, honestly, the cortisol relief provided by spending time with people facing similar challenges is almost palpable.

Another reason for gratitude is the amazing teams that we all get to work



By Adam  
Chapdelaine

with on the challenges we face. I am certainly thankful for the exceptional people that I get to work with at the MMA each day, and I know that you all feel the same about your teams. The people we work with, the key staff that we trust to accomplish our ambitious goals, are critical to moving our organizations and communities forward. Without these folks, we wouldn't be able to advance important priorities, and essential local government services wouldn't be provided as readily and ably.

When I think about what to be grateful for in the municipal ecosystem, I think about all of the residents and volunteers that give so much of their time to their local government. It can be easy to think about the challenging constituents (yes, we can admit that every municipality has them), but in reality there are far more residents who willingly offer their time, expertise and goodwill to help their city or town operate.

For me, I think about many of you, who serve on MMA policy committees or the MMA Board of Directors, and how grateful I am for your service and counsel.

For all of you, thinking about how fortunate you are to have so many residents willing to volunteer on countless boards, committees and commissions is a great way to acknowledge just how impactful your work is, and how many people appreciate your work so much that they are willing to volunteer their time to help with the cause.

■ DIRECTOR'S REPORT *continued on 31*



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We encourage readers to send comments, story ideas, news items, and events notices to [editor@mma.org](mailto:editor@mma.org).



# Administration releases comprehensive coastal strategy

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Nov. 6 released its comprehensive statewide strategy to help coastal communities protect residents, strengthen local infrastructure, and safeguard the state's natural resources.

Developed with direct input from local officials, residents and regional partners, the final [ResilientCoasts Plan](#) provides practical, community-driven steps to prepare for future storms, flooding, sea level rise, and erosion.

"When we invest in stronger roads, flood protections, and coastal restoration, we're not just preventing damage," Gov. Maura Healey said in a prepared statement. "We're protecting livelihoods."

"How to protect our homes, businesses, and working waterfronts was always top of mind during my time as mayor," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, formerly the mayor of the coastal city of Salem. "This plan takes that local perspective and turns it into real, actionable steps for every coastal community. It gives municipalities the support and guidance they need to strengthen their future."

Research shows that every \$1 invested in resilience can yield about \$13 in benefits and avoided recovery costs — and communities that delay action risk losing up to \$33 in future economic activity for every dollar not invested, according to the administration. The ResilientCoasts Plan supports cities and towns in planning and prioritizing the projects that matter most — stronger shorelines, better storm protection, and safer roads.

The plan is designed to support local decision-making and make it easier for towns and regions to access funding, share data, and coordinate projects. It lays out the steps to protect people and property, strengthen infrastructure, and preserve natural buffers like dunes, wetlands, and salt marshes that reduce flood risks.

"Local leaders are on the front lines battling climate change impacts and recognize the urgent need for effective resiliency strategies," said MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine. "Municipal officials see solutions in this plan that continue to empower them to address the specific and unique challenges that

they face in their communities. We are grateful for the efforts of all involved."

## Plan details

ResilientCoasts identifies 15 Coastal Resilience Districts, grouping nearby cities and towns that share common characteristics like landform type, natural environment, built infrastructure, population and development character, and coastal risks. The purpose of these districts is to promote regional collaboration, inform prioritization of district-scale coastal resilience projects, and help prevent redundant efforts. In addition, data sharing, collaborative risk assessment, and tracking of progress on coastal resilience will be improved across communities.

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**"Local leaders are on the front lines battling climate change impacts and recognize the urgent need for effective resiliency strategies."**  
– MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine

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Within the Coastal Resilience Districts, the plan identifies Near-Term Adaptation Areas with high concentrations of people and housing, development and infrastructure, and/or economic resources expected to be exposed to coastal flooding by the 2030s. Identification of these areas helps direct limited resources where they will make the biggest difference for residents and local economies — for example, in areas with high concentrations of critical local and regional infrastructure at risk.

The plan provides guidance on a suite of resilience measures that can be applied across different coastal landscapes, with a focus on areas along the immediate shoreline or within the coastal floodplain where the highest risks coincide with vulnerable development.



The ResilientCoasts plan helps to protect coastal communities, strengthen infrastructure, and enhance regional collaboration on coastal resilience projects.

Examples include:

- Elevating roads and homes above expected flood levels
- Relocating people and housing to safer locations
- Floodproofing critical infrastructure
- Implementing nature-based solutions like salt marsh restoration, beach nourishment, and cobble berms to absorb flooding
- Retrofitting and redesigning seawalls

## Continuing commitment

Over the past two decades, Massachusetts has invested nearly \$200 million in local resilience projects across 98 coastal communities.

The governor said her proposed environmental bond bill, the [Mass Ready Act](#), would advance many ResilientCoasts recommendations, including authorizing \$200 million for near-term coastal resilience projects. The legislation would also move forward several of the plan's policy recommendations to advance resilience statewide, including requiring flood disclosure to ensure residents are aware of flood risks before they purchase or lease a home, adding resilience expertise to the board that oversees updates to the state building code, streamlining permitting for nature-based solutions, and creating a new Resilience Revolving Fund to provide low-interest loans for municipal projects that protect communities and prevent future damage, such as floodplain protection and nature-based solutions. ●

# MMA annual Trade Show to feature latest solutions

By Stacey Compton-Maga

More than 200 exhibitors will be bringing the latest in municipal solutions to the MMA's Trade Show next month during Connect 351.

The annual Trade Show, held at the Menino Convention and Exhibition Center in Boston's Seaport District, offers an unparalleled opportunity to connect in person with representatives from a wide range of companies, government agencies and nonprofits to discuss products, services and programs targeted to municipal needs.

This year's Trade Show will introduce AI Avenue, and a significantly expanded EV Alley. The floorplan of the vibrant exhibit hall has been redesigned to enhance interaction among attendees.

The Trade Show will also feature MIIA's state-of-the-art driving simulator, which provides a safe environment for drivers to experience and react to various conditions typical of emergency response situations.

A series of 12 educational Learning Labs will be offered on Friday, Jan. 24. The 30-minute sessions will provide opportunities to hear from experts on a variety of topics. (Details coming soon to the [Connect 351 website](#).)

The Trade Show will be open on Thursday, Jan. 22, from 2-5:30 p.m., and on Friday, Jan. 23, from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. An opening reception will be held on Thursday from 4-5:30 p.m. The Trade Show will not be open on Saturday, Jan. 24.

The [Trade Show web page](#) has the latest information, including a continually



The MMA Trade Show during Connect 351 will showcase the latest in municipal services and solutions.

updated list of exhibitors and sponsors.

The following are the Connect 351 exhibitors as of Dec. 1:

AARP Massachusetts  
Abacus Health Solutions  
Acrisure  
AI Engineers, Inc.  
AllOne Health EAP  
Altus Dental Insurance Company  
American Fidelity  
American Lamp Recycling  
AMP  
Apex Companies  
ArxEd – LITIX CTC  
Auctions International  
Azora Software  
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BCLW Consulting  
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BELFOR Property Restoration  
BETA Group  
BidDocs ONLINE  
Black Earth Compost  
Bludot Technologies  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts  
Blue Mantis  
Bonsai Logic  
Boston University Metropolitan College  
Bridgewater State University – MPA program  
Brightly Software a Siemens Company  
Brody, Hardoon, Perkins & Kesten  
Brown Legal  
BSC Group  
CAI Technologies  
Cannabis Control Commission  
Capital Strategic Solutions  
Cascade Engineering  
CaseGuard  
CBIZ  
CHA  
CHA Occupational Health  
Christmas Decor  
CIMS Cemetery Software  
CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen)  
ClearGov  
CMRK  
Collins Engineers  
Comm-Tract Corp.  
Commodore Builders  
Commonwealth Print and Mail Services  
Comprehensive Environmental

Cyvl  
Deckard Technologies  
Delta Dental of Massachusetts  
Dig Safe New England  
Dimonoff  
Downes Construction Company  
E Ink  
Energy New England  
Energy Source  
Enterprise Fleet Management  
Equitable  
Eric A. Kinsherp CPA  
Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities  
Federated Hermes  
Fire-Ground Tactical  
FlashVote  
Foth Infrastructure and Environment  
Freedom Energy Logistics  
Fuss & O'Neill  
Gale Associates  
GameTime Park and Playground Equipment  
Gateway Fiber  
Genlyte by Signify  
GFT  
GHD  
GOGov  
GONetspeed  
Good Energy  
GovDeals  
GovWell  
Granicus  
Greater Boston Police Council  
Green International Affiliates, A Lochner Company  
Group Insurance Commission  
Haley Ward  
Harrington Heep  
HDR  
Hilb Group/Cook & Company Insurance Services  
Hillgroup/LifePlus  
Hilltop Securities  
Horsley Witten Group  
Howard Stein Hudson  
Hoyle, Tanner & Associates  
HUB International New England  
Hyster-Yale Materials Handling indus  
John Guilfoil Public Relations  
John Turner Consulting  
kartoonEDU

Keep Massachusetts Beautiful  
KellifromBoston Communications  
KFDA  
Kimley-Horn  
Kleinfelder  
KP Law  
Leadsmart Training Solutions  
Lexikeet Language Services  
LKB Engineering  
Loureiro Engineering Associates  
Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers  
Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line/MBHP  
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners  
Massachusetts Broadband Institute  
Massachusetts Clean Water Trust  
Massachusetts Councils on Aging  
Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources  
Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection  
Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Local and Regional Health: Metrik  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Local and Regional Health  
Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities  
Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities Damage Prevention Program  
Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
Massachusetts Division of Standards  
Massachusetts Federation of Building Official  
Massachusetts Housing Partnership  
Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA)  
Massachusetts Maritime Academy  
Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association

Massachusetts Office of the State Auditor  
Massachusetts State Lottery  
Massachusetts State Treasury – Unclaimed Property Division  
Massachusetts Veterans Service Officers Association  
MassCor Industries  
Mass Cultural Council  
MassDevelopment  
Mass General Brigham Health Plan  
Mead Talerman & Costa  
Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
MGT Impact Solutions  
MHEC  
Mirick  
Mitsubishi Electric Trane  
Municipalbid.com  
Municipal Police Institute  
MuniTrac  
Murphy, Hesse, Toomey & Lehane  
Musco Lighting  
NEAPWA (APWA New England Chapter)  
NEP (National Enrollment Partners)  
New England Water Works Association/Massachusetts Water Works Association  
Nitsch Engineering  
Office of Inspector General  
Omega Benefit Strategies  
OneLocal Bank  
OpenGov  
Operational Services Division  
Oracle NetSuite for Government  
P-Three  
Pare Corporation  
ParkMobile by Arrive  
PARS  
Pennoni  
Petrini & Associates  
Pierce Davis & Perritano  
Polimorphic  
Power Of Recovery  
PowerOptions  
Precision Concrete Cutting  
Radarsign  
Readyly  
Republic Services

RestoreNow  
RetroFit Technologies  
RevEnergy  
Rockland Trust Investment Management Group  
Roselli, Clark & Associates, CPAs  
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Santander Bank  
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Schaefer Plastics North America  
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Second Life Mac  
Secretary of the Commonwealth  
SELCO  
Sensys Gatso USA  
Solect Energy  
Sora System  
Springbrook Software  
Stresscrete Group  
STV  
Suffolk University MPA Program  
Tighe & Bond  
Toole Design Group  
Toyota Motor North America  
Trane  
Tree Line View Thermal Roof Inspection  
Trident Environmental Group  
Troutman Pepper Locke  
Tyler Technologies  
U.S. BENCOR/MidAmerica  
UMass Boston  
UMass Transportation Center  
UniBank Fiscal Advisory Services  
VADAR Systems  
VC3  
Veolia  
VHB  
vialytics  
Westfield Gas + Electric/Whip City Fiber  
Weston & Sampson Engineers  
Williams Stone  
Woodard & Curran  
Workday  
Wright-Pierce  
Zobrio  
Zoom

■ **TRADE SHOW** *continued on 14*



# One Stop awards \$179M for economic development

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Oct. 31 announced the award of \$179 million in grant funding to 314 projects that will support economic development in 190 communities across the state.

The awards are being made through [Community One Stop for Growth](#), an application portal overseen by the Executive Office of Economic Development. Community One Stop provides a streamlined process for municipalities and organizations to apply for 13 state grant programs that fund economic development projects related to planning and zoning, site preparation, building construction, infrastructure, and housing development.

“We’re proud to be a state of strong cities and towns — made stronger by programs like the Community One Stop for Growth, which give local leaders the tools they need to strengthen their economies and improve quality of life,” Gov. Maura Healey said in a prepared statement.

She said the grants will help communities build housing, lower costs, improve road safety, revitalize downtowns, create jobs and more.

Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll said the grant portal empowers communities to “bring their vision for economic growth to life.”

The Executive Office of Economic Development received 713 applications from 453 organizations with projects in 245 Massachusetts communities in this round of the One Stop. Of the 314 applications awarded, 37% are located in a rural or small town, 28% are located in a Gateway City, 40% are located in a [Housing Choice Community](#), and 53% are located in an [MBTA Community](#). Forty communities are receiving a grant through the One Stop for the first time.

EOED estimates the One Stop awards will help create more than 20,000 new units of housing, including 5,000 new affordable units, 11,000 new permanent jobs, and more than 8.8 million square feet of new commercial development.

The fiscal 2025 One Stop program awards include:

- **MassWorks Infrastructure Program:** \$100 million awarded to 55 projects
- **HousingWorks Infrastructure Program:** \$24.6 million awarded to 21 projects



Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, center, discusses how Community One Stop Grants support community visions for economic growth during an event on Nov. 6 in Monson. Also pictured are Monson Town Administrator Jennifer Wolowicz, left, and Economic Development Secretary Eric Paley. (Photo courtesy Ananya Singh/Governor’s Press Office)

- **Underutilized Properties Program:** \$15.3 million awarded to 33 projects
- **Rural Development Fund:** \$10 million awarded to 54 projects
- **MBTA Community Catalyst Fund:** \$12 million awarded to 13 projects
- **Site Readiness Program:** \$3.7 million awarded to 14 projects
- **Housing Choice Grant Program:** \$5.3 million awarded to 20 projects
- **Community Planning Grant Program:** \$3.6 million awarded to 37 projects
- **TDI Equity Investment:** \$1.6 million awarded to 13 projects



## LGAC discusses municipal ‘Perfect Storm’

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Nov. 18 in Boston, MMA Executive Director Adam Chapdelaine discusses the findings of the MMA’s recent “[Perfect Storm](#)” municipal fiscal conditions report. He said escalating costs, severe restrictions on local revenue capacity, and steadily declining state aid for the main municipal aid account “are not just impacting cities and towns, but impact the Commonwealth as a whole.” The MMA will release its policy recommendations for addressing the fiscal sustainability of cities and towns on Dec. 11.

- **Massachusetts Vacant Storefront Program:** \$1.1 million awarded to 23 projects
- **Brownfields Redevelopment Fund:** \$770,000 awarded to five projects
- **Massachusetts Downtown Initiative:** \$600,000 awarded to 20 projects
- **Real Estate Services Technical Assistance:** \$500,000 awarded to 10 projects

The full list of grant recipients and project descriptions is available on the [EOED website](#).

State and local officials celebrated the grants during a celebration event in Monson on Nov. 6 at the site of the Monson Developmental Center project, which will redevelop the former Monson State Hospital into new housing units and over 100,000 square feet of commercial and civic space. The EOED is supporting the project with a \$5 million MassWorks grant for bridge replacement and infrastructure upgrades to support the redevelopment efforts, and MassDevelopment is providing a \$500,000 Site Readiness Grant to develop a site plan for the project.

For more information about Community One Stop for Growth, visit [www.mass.gov/onestop](http://www.mass.gov/onestop). ●

# Gov. Healey signs \$2.3B supplemental budget

By Dave Koffman

On Nov. 25, Gov. Maura Healey signed a \$2.3 billion supplemental budget to address deficiencies and meet time-sensitive budget needs as Massachusetts officially closes the books on fiscal 2025.

The House and Senate both passed a compromise version of the bill on Nov. 19, the last day of formal legislative sessions until January.

The largest sums in the [law](#) are dedicated to health care, including \$1.67 billion for MassHealth (with a net cost to the state of approximately \$539 million after federal reimbursements) and \$374 million for hospitals formerly run by the now-bankrupt Steward Health Care system.

Of interest to municipalities, the law includes \$1.25 million for fiscal 2023 and 2024 payments to cities and towns for portions of the state's marijuana excise tax dedicated to municipalities that host

social equity marijuana retailers.

The law includes an outside section to assist many municipalities and other health insurance units impacted by recent fiscal challenges at the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust. Section 175 allows any municipality or district belonging to the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust to spread the cost of an unexpected health-insurance deficit incurred in either fiscal 2026 or fiscal 2027 (but not both) over up to five years. To use this option, the community must formally withdraw from the trust and notify the Massachusetts Division of Local Services by June 30, 2027. The Department of Revenue is expected to provide further guidelines.

Other noteworthy appropriations from the law include:

- \$60.7 million for snow and ice removal
- \$50 million for housing preservation

and stabilization

- \$18.5 million for public health hospital operations
- \$12 million for Universal School Meals
- \$10 million to support operations at the Department of Transitional Assistance to ensure access to anti-hunger programs related to changes made to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- \$10 million to support an information campaign on recent Medicaid work requirements and vaccine policy changes made by the federal government
- \$10 million for hosting costs associated with World Cup matches in Foxborough next year, with a requirement that state allocations be privately matched ●

## Senate passes cannabis reform bill; conference is next

By Ali DiMatteo

On Nov. 19, the last day of formal sessions for 2025, the Senate passed a wide-ranging bill aimed at restructuring the Cannabis Control Commission and making changes to cannabis industry regulations.

The House passed a similar reform bill in June.

Both the House and Senate bills would reduce the CCC from five members to three, though they differ on the issue of appointing power. The Senate bill would grant appointing power to the governor for two CCC members, with the third to be appointed by the attorney general. The House bill would give the governor appointing power for all three members.

The Senate bill would allow retailers to hold up to four licenses, an increase from the current cap of three, whereas the House bill would raise the cap to six.

The Senate bill would change the threshold for a minority equity stake from 10% to 12%, rather than 30% proposed in the House version.

Both bills would remove the current vertical integration requirement, which requires medical licensees to both grow and process the products they sell.

The Senate adopted an amendment that would allow delivery of cannabis in any municipality except those that have opted out by obtaining a waiver from the CCC. Municipalities would need to apply to the CCC for the delivery waiver every two years.

The House bill would not change delivery regulations, but includes provisions to reform and regulate the CBD and hemp-derived product industry.

The two bills now move a House-Senate conference committee to resolve the differences. ●



### Driscoll emphasizes collaboration

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Nov. 18 in Boston, Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll, center, advocates for continued communication and collaboration between municipalities and the Healey-Driscoll administration. She said the administration understands “that communities are struggling, as are we, with cost escalation. ... We want to have a strong partnership. We want to support all that you do.” Pictured with Driscoll are Administration and Finance Secretary Matthew Gorzkowicz, left, and MMA President and Franklin Town Administrator Jamie Hellen.



# Members to consider fiscal resolution at Connect 351

Local leaders from across Massachusetts will consider a resolution on the state-local fiscal partnership during the MMA's Annual Business Meeting on Jan. 24 in Boston.

The MMA's Annual Business Meeting is a key component of the [Connect 351](#) conference being held in Boston on Jan. 22-24. Resolutions adopted by the membership at the meeting help guide the advocacy work of the MMA in the year ahead.

The [fiscal resolution](#) seeks to ensure a strong partnership between cities and towns and the state in fiscal 2027. It identifies municipal needs in areas such as unrestricted aid; education and charter school finance; capital needs such as road maintenance; municipal and school facilities, water and wastewater systems, and climate resilience; and local-option flexibility for local revenues.

The MMA is welcoming member feedback on the proposed resolutions



MMA members vote during the MMA Annual Business Meeting at Connect 351 in 2025.

using [an online form](#). In order for the input to be reviewed prior to the Annual Business Meeting, municipal officials are asked to submit comments by Dec. 29.

## Voting at the business meeting

Voting at the Annual Business Meeting is open to all municipal members of the MMA through voting delegates as

defined by the MMA's bylaws.

Individuals eligible to vote at the meeting are:

- In the case of a city, its chief executive or a councillor designated in writing by the chief executive, or
- In the case of a town, the chair of the select board or town council, or another select board member or councillor designated in writing by the chair, or the manager designated in writing by such chair.

In early January, the MMA will be sending a letter about voting procedures to chief municipal officials in each community.

Those who will be voting on behalf of their community should visit the credentials table outside of the business meeting between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Only one voting card will be issued per member community. ●

## Proposed Resolution Supporting a Strengthened Fiscal Partnership Between Municipal and State Governments in Fiscal 2027 and Beyond

**Whereas**, the ability of city and town governments to provide essential public services and adequately invest in reliable and resilient public infrastructure is critical to support the well-being of every resident and business across the Commonwealth;

**Whereas**, state law limits avenues for municipal revenue generation, requiring heavy reliance on property taxes that are tightly capped by Proposition 2½, which has not kept pace with inflation and non-discretionary cost drivers that continue to grow beyond municipal control;

**Whereas**, existing and proposed state and federal mandates require investments beyond the reach of municipal budgets that are statutorily and politically constrained in their ability to generate revenues;

**Whereas**, sufficient and reliable state funding to municipalities and local public school districts is a pillar of support to ensure that cities and towns have the capacity to deliver high-quality municipal and school services that are essential to the success of the Commonwealth;

**Whereas**, today's investments in public schools are a direct, long-range investment in the well-being of local and state economies, and adequate state support to school districts is essential to student success;

**Whereas**, current funding practices for charter schools divert Chapter 70 education aid away from local school districts, exacerbating stressed municipal and district budgets;

**Whereas**, the cost of housing is undermining local economies and increasing the costs of providing services;

**Whereas**, the expiration of direct funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and recent policy changes for various federal programs require municipalities to adjust to a new fiscal reality;

**Whereas**, to ensure that municipalities have the fiscal capacity to deliver the high-quality municipal and school services that are essential to support local economies and families in every corner of the Commonwealth, cities and towns desperately need an adequate share of state revenues, an effective and fair municipal tax system, necessary tools to plan for and fund long-term liabilities, state support for investments in the municipal workforce and capital investments, and full funding for any new or existing state mandates;

**Therefore, it is hereby resolved** that the members of the Massachusetts Municipal Association support the following policy positions to ensure a robust and resilient partnership between cities and towns and the Commonwealth in order to fortify our collective well-being in fiscal 2027 and through an era of growing uncertainty.

### In the Area of Municipal and School Aid:

In fiscal 2027, unrestricted municipal aid should grow by at least the same rate as the growth in state tax collections, and, consistent with the policy recommendations and guidance of the 2025 MMA municipal finance report "A Perfect Storm: Cities

and Towns Face Historic Fiscal Pressures," the Commonwealth should pursue more robust increases that strengthen local fiscal capacity and sustainability, with such aid distributed without earmarks, conditions, or restrictions to all cities and towns so that local officials and residents can adequately fund essential municipal and school services while avoiding an overreliance on the property tax;

State Lottery proceeds, and the revenue from expanded gaming that is statutorily dedicated to pay for municipal services, should be used to support the Commonwealth's commitment to unrestricted municipal aid;

Chapter 70 school aid should be increased in fiscal 2027 consistent with the Commonwealth's constitutional obligation to ensure adequate funding in all schools, at a minimum following the updated spending standard and original phase-in schedule adopted in the 2019 Student Opportunity Act, with each city, town and school district receiving a minimum increase of \$150 per student;

The governor and the Legislature should reform the calculation of the required local contribution under Chapter 70, including the "target local share," and adopt changes to mitigate reliance on the property tax to fund local schools, in particular ensuring that a municipality's increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid is greater than the increase in required local contribution;

The governor and the Legislature should review and

■ **RESOLUTION** *continued on 30*

# Connect 351 to feature 17 engaging, timely workshops

At MMA conference workshops in January, attendees can learn how to lead strategically, adopt best fiscal practices, and become more adept at crisis communications, among many other topics.

[Connect 351](#) will offer 17 timely and informative workshops at the Menino Convention and Exhibition Center in Boston on Jan. 23 and 24. Attendees will gain insights from experts on a range of topics and hear from fellow members who have developed best practices in their communities. They will also be able to participate in three interactive workshops on Saturday.

The following are the Connect 351 workshop titles for 2026:

## Friday, First Session, 2-3:15 p.m.

- The AI Toolkit for HR: Leveraging AI With Confidence\*
- Fiscal Outlook
- Forward Focused: Moving From Reactive to Strategic Leadership\*
- Keeping Up With Clean Energy: Siting and Permitting Updates\*
- Keeping Your Cool When the Public Is Losing Theirs\*
- Language Access: Starting Small in

## Order to Build

- Local Legal Lens: Insights on Municipal Law\*

## Friday, Second Session, 3:30-4:45 p.m.

- Accelerating Housing Supply: Local Leadership for a Statewide Goal
- Collaborative Planning: Bringing Community Initiatives to Life
- Federal Landscape
- From Challenge to Change: A Perspective on Municipal Health Care Costs
- From Hired to Higher: Public Works Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning\*
- Labor Law Landscape\*
- Smart Fiscal Practices During Tough Fiscal Times

## Saturday Session, 1:30-2:45 p.m.

*Ready for Anything: Interactive Sessions*  
*Creating Cyber Resiliency: An*



Attendees listen to a workshop presentation during Connect 351 early this year. The upcoming Connect 351 conference will feature 17 engaging workshops covering timely municipal topics.

## Interactive TTX Card Game\*

- From Prep to Practice: Crisis Communications\*
- When the Waters Rise: Leading Your Community Through Disaster\*

*Workshops with an asterisk are eligible for MIIA Rewards credits.*

*Full [workshop descriptions and panelists](#) will soon be available on the MMA website and will be available in the MMA's Connect 351 app.*

# EOHLC releases 2025 subsidized housing inventory update

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities has released its biennial update to the Commonwealth's Subsidized Housing Inventory — the official statewide count of housing units eligible for inclusion under Chapter 40B.

The office said the update demonstrates continued progress toward the Commonwealth's housing goals, reflecting the work of municipalities, developers, and housing advocates across Massachusetts to expand access to housing.

The following are some highlights:

- 94 municipalities now exceed the 10% statutory minimum for subsidized housing, an increase of 22 communities since the 2023 update.
- 51 municipalities increased their Subsidized Housing Inventory by 1% or more, showing significant local gains in subsidized housing.
- No communities that were above 10%

in 2023 fell below that threshold in the 2025 update.

The 2025 Subsidized Housing Inventory totals and data are posted on the [EOHLC website](#).

The SHI reflects data provided by municipalities through Sept. 30, 2025. Figures are subject to change as new information is received — for example, with respect to building or occupancy permit issuance, or the expiration of affordability restrictions.

Under Chapter 40B regulations, SHI percentages carry a presumption of accuracy, but may be challenged and reviewed if a municipality asserts the 10% safe harbor (or other safe harbor based on SHI eligibility) following an application for a comprehensive permit.



The biennial update to the Commonwealth's Subsidized Housing Inventory demonstrates continued progress toward housing goals.

The EOHLC said it appreciates the ongoing partnership of local governments, developers, advocates, and planning professionals who continue to advance the goal of ensuring every Massachusetts resident has access to a safe, affordable home. ●



# Women Leading Government focuses on empathy

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

During the Women Leading Government meeting on Nov. 13 in Devens, women officials from around the state explored how to lead with empathy, build resilience in the face of adversity, and become better storytellers — both about themselves and the communities they serve.

The meeting featured:

- A panel discussion with women leaders describing how they overcame what could have been career-defining challenges
- A conversation with Marissa Baum, the head of communications in East Hartford, Connecticut
- A discussion of the new book “A Different Kind of Power,” by Jacinda Ardern, the former prime minister of New Zealand and a champion of empathy in leadership

In the book discussion — led by Southborough Assistant Town Administrator Vanessa Hale and Angie Lopes Ellison, a town manager in transition — attendees recalled being told that they show too much empathy, or not enough, or that they’re too sensitive, or too blunt. Hillary Waite, stormwater manager in Braintree, made the case for empathy.

“That’s why we exist,” Waite said. “If we didn’t have empathy, we wouldn’t have public schools, we wouldn’t have libraries, we wouldn’t have departments of public works. Why would we do this, if our job wasn’t to foster the care that we have in our community and for other people?”

## Building resilience

During a panel discussion, four chief municipal officials described how they have built resilience in their careers. Moderator Lisa Wong, town administrator in South Hadley and a former mayor of Fitchburg, reminded the audience that resilience lies in mutual support.

“We cannot do this alone,” Wong said.

Panel members shared challenges and low points from their careers, including being berated at department-head meetings, getting driven off the side of a highway by a disgruntled employee, overcoming a union’s efforts to block a

leader’s hiring authority, and facing an onslaught of personal and public attacks.

North Andover Town Manager Melissa Murphy Rodrigues discussed the crisis her town faced in 2023, during the early days of the Israel-Gaza conflict. Following its flag policy at the time, the Select Board approved requests to fly an Israeli flag, and then a Palestinian flag. That second request prompted death threats, FBI involvement, and the need for SWAT team protection at a Select Board meeting that drew busloads of people. When town employees balked at raising the flag in view of news cameras, Rodrigues did it herself.

“I think as female managers, we have this constant urge to not react, not overreact, don’t be dramatic, don’t be seen as emotional,” Rodrigues said. “In that moment, if I had not allowed myself to react, it would have been an insanely dangerous situation. ... I never felt weak in those moments. I felt strategic. I felt stronger because I was willing to say, ‘Hey, this is a problem. We’re going to need help.’”

Panel members highlighted the need for de-escalation training, the strategic use of outside consultants, the value of leadership training, and the importance of getting continued buy-in from elected officials. Nantucket Town Manager Libby Gibson emphasized the importance of communications and keeping municipal websites updated, which builds trust.

The panel told leaders to take care of themselves, by building teams they trust, expanding their networks to find the right advisors, and relying on friends and mentors for support. Medford Mayor Breanna Lungo-KoeHN urged women leaders to believe in themselves in the face of adversity.



Marissa Baum, right, head of communications in East Hartford, Connecticut, discusses the value of strength and storytelling in public service with Jen Breaker, Danvers assistant town manager and communications director, during a Women Leading Government meeting on Nov. 13 in Devens.



Medford Mayor Breanna Lungo-KoeHN, far left, speaks during a panel discussion about overcoming challenges and building resilience as public servants during a meeting of Women Leading Government on Nov. 13 in Devens. Other speakers included, left to right, North Andover Town Manager Melissa Murphy Rodrigues, Nantucket Town Manager Libby Gibson, and South Hadley Town Administrator Lisa Wong, who moderated the panel discussion.

“Always take your time — whether you need a night’s sleep,” she said. “Don’t let anybody pressure you. Don’t let anybody bully you.”

## Better storytelling

Danvers Assistant Town Administrator Jen Breaker led the conversation with Baum, who is a co-host of “GovLov,” a podcast by [Engaging Local Government Leaders](#) that highlights government work and its workers.

Baum discussed how she overcame imposter syndrome, with a process that involved developing her personal brand, and a memorable elevator pitch, highlighting her strengths and passions.

“As an individual, whether you realize it or not, every single day you are building

■ WLG MEETING *continued on 25*

# State launches ECO One Stop portal

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs has launched an Environment and Climate One Stop portal to simplify the grant application process for climate and environmental resilience projects in Massachusetts.

By consolidating multiple grant applications into one streamlined process, the new “[ECO One Stop](#)” allows applicants to apply to multiple grants through a single application.

The application for the popular Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grants is part of ECO One Stop, along with the following programs:

- Coastal Resilience

- Coastal Habitat and Water Quality
- Cooling Corridors
- Planning Assistance
- Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal
- Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance and Training

The MVP Planning 2.0 grant is not part of ECO One Stop and will continue to be a separate application process.

A key component of the new process is an optional, but highly recommended, Expression of Interest period, which allows applicants to provide a summary of their project idea and receive early feedback from relevant grant program staff before

the formal application period begins in early 2026. (The latest EOI process was closed on Oct. 28.) Potential applicants can submit up to four EOIs.

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs held a webinar on the ECO One Stop process, which is available on the program’s [webpage](#). An FAQ document is also online.

The office will hold an additional set of webinars in January, just before ECO One Stop releases a Request for Responses on COMMBUYS and opens for formal applications. (Webinar registration information will be available once the dates are set.) ●

## MassDOT announces new grants, process improvements

By Violet Gehr

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation announced that it has made a number of updates to its [Grant Central](#) portal, including two new programs, the opening of a new grant round for six programs, and a new fully integrated application for municipalities.

The new programs are:

- [Unpaved Roads Grant Program](#)
- [Community Culvert Grant Program](#)

On Nov. 6, a grant round opened for Unpaved Roads and Community Culvert, as well as the [Complete Streets](#), [Shared Streets and Spaces](#), [Local Bottleneck](#)

[Reduction](#), and [Municipal Small Bridge](#) programs, with applications being accepted through Jan. 9, 2026.

In addition, design grants are available for up to \$150,000 through the Unpaved Roads, Complete Streets, and Shared Streets and Spaces programs. MassDOT-led design consultants will continue to support communities in the Community Culvert, Local Bottleneck Reduction, and Municipal Small Bridge programs.

MassDOT also noted that construction grants are available through the six programs for up to \$1 million — a \$500,000 increase from the prior maximum grant amount. Equipment grants of up to

\$250,000 are also available through some of the programs.

Grant applications can be completed through MassDOT’s new fully integrated application. The streamlined form allows municipalities to apply for all MassDOT community grant programs using a single application.

Updated guidance for each program is available on Grant Central.

MassDOT will host a training via Zoom on [Dec. 4 from 11 a.m. to noon](#) to help municipal officials and others become familiar with the new programs and the application form. A recording of the training will be made available on Grant Central. ●

## MVP Planning 2.0 grant applications due Dec. 15

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is accepting proposals through Dec. 15 for the fiscal 2026/27 round of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Planning 2.0 grant.

The MVP 2.0 grant is a revamped planning grant opportunity that builds on previously developed resilience priorities. The MVP 2.0 process focuses on equity and uses new tools and resources to build local and regional resilience to climate change.

Communities with MVP plans dated between June and December of 2018 will receive priority consideration for funding this round. (This applies to Adams, Buckland, Concord, Essex, Falmouth, Gloucester, Gosnold, Grafton, Lanesborough, Lawrence, Littleton, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marblehead,

Marion, Mendon, Millbury, Monterey, Newbury, Newton, Norton, Norwood, Sandwich, Shrewsbury, Southwick, Stow, Wareham, Weymouth, Williamstown and Winthrop.)

[The recording of an Oct. 30 webinar](#) hosted by the MVP team, and [its slides](#), provide an overview of the grant opportunity. A new [MVP 2.0 Video Series](#) incorporates the perspectives of recent MVP 2.0 participants.

Applications should be submitted through the [EEA Grants Management System](#).

Additional information is available on the [MVP Program website](#), along with an [MVP 2.0 Frequently Asked Questions](#) resource. Questions can also be directed to a community’s respective [MVP Regional Coordinator](#). ●



### Mayor gives thanks, cites local aid

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Nov. 18 in Boston, Medford Mayor Breanna Lungo-Koehn thanks the Healey-Driscoll administration for its attention to local issues and investments in municipalities. Lungo-Koehn also expressed concerns about rising costs in areas such as health insurance and construction for cities and towns.



# MMA seeks members for its five policy committees

Local officials are invited to fill a limited number of positions available on the MMA's five policy committees for 2026.

More than 100 local officials from communities across Massachusetts serve on MMA policy committees, which advise the MMA Board of Directors, MMA staff and MMA members on legislative, regulatory and public policy issues.

- **Application form**

- **Deadline: Jan. 26**

The committees also draft resolutions for the MMA's Annual Business Meeting, municipal best practices for the MMA's Best Practices series, and bills (biannually) for the MMA's legislative package.

Each committee has a regular schedule of meetings, usually one per month. Additionally, committee members may be asked to read legislative summaries, bill text, and/or position papers to prepare for meetings.

Each committee is assigned an MMA staff member to assist with its research, consideration of issues, and administrative functions.

Each committee has 23 members, including mayors, select board members, councillors, city and town managers/administrators, and finance committee members, plus four presidential appointees and four technical appointees.

The MMA president names the chair and members of the committee, subject to approval by the MMA Board of Directors.

Those with the interest and time to serve on a policy committee are asked to fill out the [online application form](#) by Jan. 26. The form provides space to list areas of interest and expertise so that a good match can be made between volunteers and the work of the committees.

## About the policy committees

- **Fiscal Policy Committee:** This committee considers all municipal finance issues. Legislation that has a fiscal impact is referred to this committee from other committees as well. This committee also develops a policy framework for local government financing in the future.



Marblehead Town Administrator Thatcher Kezer III speaks during a meeting of the MMA Policy Committee on Personnel and Labor Relations on June 17. The MMA is seeking local officials to serve on its policy committees in 2026.

- **Policy Committee on Energy and the Environment:**

This committee formulates policy in the following areas: water quality, water supply, air quality, solid waste and recycling, hazardous waste, wetlands, coastal areas, wastewater treatment, renewable energy and energy conservation.

- **Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration:**

This committee considers issues that relate to the organization, structure, efficiency, and productivity of local and regional government and the relationships between the two levels of government. Issues include housing

and zoning, procurement, economic development, regulation of marijuana, open meeting law and public records law, public health and safety, and licensing.

- **Policy Committee on Personnel and Labor Relations:** This committee considers issues in the following areas: collective bargaining, civil service, employee benefits and pension reform.

- **Policy Committee on Public Works, Transportation and Public Utilities:**

This committee considers issues that relate to regional and metropolitan transportation, transportation planning, the relationship between local governments and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and the question of local control in joint state-local public works programs.

The MMA is the one voice that advocates for direct aid and support for core municipal and public education services provided by every community in Massachusetts. The MMA's advocacy efforts are focused on a single goal: Building strong communities in Massachusetts.

For more information, contact Daniel Yi at [dyi@mma.org](mailto:dyi@mma.org) or visit [www.mma.org/advocacy](http://www.mma.org/advocacy). ●



## LGAC highlights municipal fiscal challenges

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Nov. 18 in Boston, Brendan Sweeney, right, a city councillor in Beverly and assistant town administrator and finance director in Boxford, highlights the fiscal challenges facing municipal governments. "That's why increased local aid and a continued state and local partnership at this critical juncture are essential to help communities, both big and small, continue delivering the core services that our residents rely upon," Sweeney said. "I know I'm not the only municipal official who welcomes the opportunity to work together on solutions for our communities in the months ahead." Also pictured is Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti.

# MMA Webinars

## Opioid settlement fund best practices

The MMA hosted a webinar on Nov. 19 focused on best practices for municipal use of opioid settlement funds.

Kelly Joseph, senior program manager at Advocates for Human Potential, said opioid settlement funds offer municipalities a transformative opportunity to meaningfully address the harm caused by the overdose crisis.

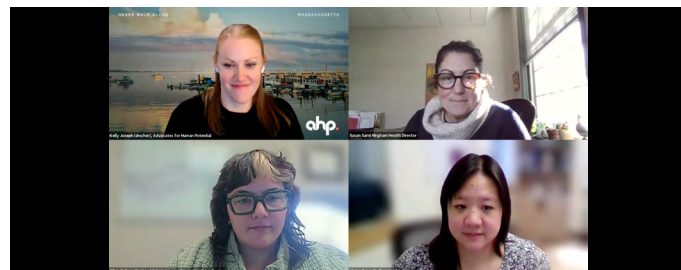
She said structured planning and assessment for how to spend the funds ensures that:

- Funds are effective and responsive to community needs.
- Trust is built through thoughtful community engagement.
- A clear baseline is developed to measure progress and guide future decisions.

Joseph emphasized the importance of prioritizing early planning, leveraging the support of community partners or technical assistance, and letting community-driven data guide local decisions.

Sudbury Public Health Director Vivian Zeng discussed her town's approach to using opioid settlement funds, highlighting how the town joined others to form the [Great Meadows Public Health Collaborative](#) and work regionally.

Zeng discussed the process of hiring a staff person for the collaborative. A regional substance use prevention coordinator, Olivia



Panelists discuss best practices for administering opioid settlement funds during an MMA webinar. Speakers included, clockwise from bottom right, Vivian Zeng, Sudbury public health director; Olivia Dufour, regional substance use prevention coordinator at Great Meadows Public Health Collaborative; and Kelly Joseph, senior program manager at Advocates for Human Potential. Susan Sarni, executive health officer in Hingham, moderated the panel.

**Date:** Nov. 19

**Length:** 75 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

Dufour, was hired to coordinate evidence-based substance use prevention programs and organize community events.

Dufour said the best way to collect community-level feedback is by using mixed-method surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews, all of which will guide the priorities of the region.

— *Kristianna Lapierre*

## MassDOT grant programs

The MMA hosted a webinar on Nov. 6 to review the various initiatives and grant programs recently launched by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Community Grants Administrator Kristen Rebello said MassDOT was [launching two new grant programs](#) on Nov. 6, as well as a fully integrated application, which combines all of the Highway Division's competitive grant programs in one.

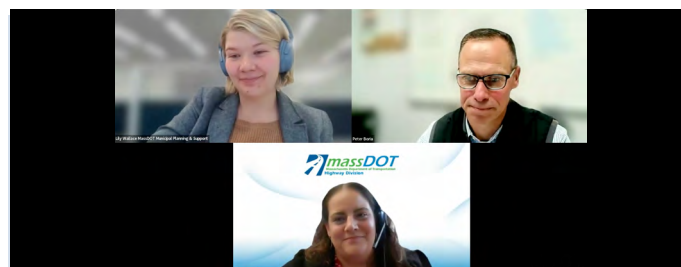
The new grant programs for municipalities are for community culverts and unpaved roadways. Rebello discussed each program's structure, examples of eligible versus ineligible projects, its selection criteria, and application information.

MassDOT's fully integrated application streamlines the process for municipalities. Applicants no longer need to know which program best suits their project; they will answer questions about their project and be assigned to the most applicable program.

Lily Wallace, regional transportation manager on MassDOT's Municipal Planning and Support Team, discussed another new program — Learning Early Action Planning — designed to provide early-stage planning and project development assistance for underserved communities. Eligible assistance includes support for concept development, safety or traffic analyses, cost estimation, and technical assistance.

LEAP is making \$1 million available to municipalities during fiscal 2026. Requests are reviewed on a rolling basis, and Wallace said MassDOT is actively reviewing the first set of applications now.

Local leaders are encouraged to visit [Grant Central](#) for more information on MassDOT's programs.



Panelists discuss recently launched grants and initiatives by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation during an MMA webinar. Speakers included Kristen Rebello, bottom, MassDOT community grants administrator, and Lily Wallace, regional transportation manager with MassDOT's Municipal Planning and Support Team, top left. Peter Boria, utilities and facilities superintendent in Spencer, moderated the panel.

**Date:** Nov. 6

**Length:** 60 minutes

[VIEW WEBINAR ↗](#)

Peter Boria, the utilities and facilities superintendent in Spencer, moderated 30 minutes of questions and answers, addressing inquiries regarding applying for multiple programs, whether matching funds are required, and how many LEAP requests can be submitted.

— *Kristianna Lapierre*

## Webinar topic suggestion form available

The MMA invites members to submit topic ideas for webinars or offer their expertise to present on a topic. Visit the [webinars form](#) on our website.



# MMCA to hold training session for new councillors

The Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association will hold its third biennial training session for newly elected councillors on Friday, Dec. 5.

The free meeting will be held at Cyprian Keyes Golf Club in Boylston from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The program will begin with "You've Been Elected — Now What? Navigating Your Role as a Councillor," a panel discussion with experienced councillors who will share guidance on topics ranging from constituent services to working with department staff to all other aspects of the



Michael Ossing



Lisa Feltner

role. Panelists will include councillors John McLaughlin of Waltham, Lisa Feltner of Watertown, Brendan Sweeney of Beverly,

Afroz Khan of Newburyport and Michael Ossing of Marlborough.

Other sessions will cover budgeting and operating with a code of conduct. There will also be a dedicated networking session.

The meeting is targeted to newly elected officials, but all city and town councillors are invited. An invitation and registration information has been sent to all councillors and is available on [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org).

## Voters elect 34 mayors across Massachusetts

By Owen Page

Voters on Nov. 4 elected mayors in 34 cities across the state, including six new mayors.

The following mayors were elected (\* denotes incumbent):

Agawam: Chris Johnson\*

Attleboro: Cathleen DeSimone\*

Beverly: Michael Cahill\*

Boston: Michelle Wu\*

Brockton: Moises Rodrigues

Chicopee: John Vieau\*

Easthampton: Salem Derby

Everett: Robert Van Campen

Fall River: Paul Coogan\*

Fitchburg: Samantha Squailia\*

Framingham: Charlie Sisitsky\*

Gardner: Michael Nicholson\*

Gloucester: Paul Lundberg

Haverhill: Melinda Barrett\*

Holyoke: Joshua Garcia\*

Lawrence: Brian DePena\*

Leominster: Dean Mazzarella\*

Lynn: Jared Nicholson\*

Marlborough: Christian Dumais\*

Medford: Breanna Lungo-Koehn\*

Methuen: David "D.J." Beaugregard Jr.\*

Newburyport: Sean Reardon\*

Newton: Marc Laredo

Northampton: Gina-Louise Sciarra\*

North Adams: Jennifer Macksey\*

Peabody: Edward Bettencourt\*

Salem: Dominick Pangallo\*

Somerville: Jake Wilson

Taunton: Shaunna O'Connell\*

West Springfield: William Reichelt\*

Westfield: Michael McCabe\*

Weymouth: Michael Molisse\*

Woburn: Michael Patrick Concannon\*

Worcester: Joseph Petty\*

Because they are in the middle of four-year terms, mayors were not on the ballot in Amesbury (Kassandra Gove), Braintree (Erin Joyce), Greenfield (Virginia "Ginny" DeSorgher), Malden (Gary Christenson), Melrose (Jen Grigoraitis), New Bedford (Jon Mitchell), Pittsfield (Peter Marchetti), Quincy (Thomas Koch), Revere (Patrick Keefe Jr.), Springfield (Domenic Sarno), and Waltham (Jeannette McCarthy).

The mayors of Cambridge and Lowell will be chosen from their respective city councils in January.

With the exception of Easthampton, the mayors elected on Nov. 4 will begin their terms in early January.

The following 11 communities with a city form of government have councils but do not have mayors: Amherst, Barnstable, Bridgewater, Chelsea, East Longmeadow, Franklin, North Attleborough, Palmer, Randolph, Southbridge, Watertown and Winthrop. Of this group, Bridgewater, East Longmeadow, North Attleborough, Palmer and Southbridge did not vote on Nov. 4, as they hold their elections each spring.

A regular municipal election was also held on Nov. 4 in the town of Saugus, which follows a city election schedule, where voters elected selectmen, town meeting members and other town officials. ●

## MMMA, MMHR to hold joint holiday meeting on Dec. 11

The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources will hold their joint holiday meeting on Dec. 11 at the Manor in West Boylston.

The meeting will feature a session on building strong habits and setting New Year's resolutions, led by Ashland Town Manager Michael Herbert.

MMA Executive Director Adam

Chapdelaine will provide a legislative update.

The meeting is open to all MMMA and MMHR members. The registration fee of \$40 includes coffee and lunch.

Registration and the



Michael Herbert

full agenda are available at [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis at [mdavis@mma.org](mailto:mdavis@mma.org)

# New at Connect 351: Affinity networking spaces

By Jillian Harvey

The MMA's annual conference, [Connect 351](#), will have a new networking feature in January called affinity spaces.

Affinity spaces are curated environments where individuals with a shared interest, identity, passion or goal can connect in a setting that is welcoming and respectful. These types of spaces foster a sense of community and belonging.

There will be designated times and spaces for groups to connect, based on aspects of identity and areas of interest that were expressed by MMA members.

There is no structured agenda for these gatherings. The goal is to allow municipal employees from across the state to come together and build new, meaningful, authentic connections.

The affinity spaces are scheduled as follows:

**Thursday, Jan. 22, Trade Show floor** (center with round tables)

3-4 p.m.: Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts

4-5:30 p.m.

- Veterans
- LGBTQIA+
- BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)

**Friday, Jan. 23, Connect 351 Lounge** (open space with tables and chairs across the skybridge)

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.: Regional gatherings

- Western
- Central
- Metrowest
- Southeast
- Northeast
- Greater Boston

- Small town and rural

1-2 p.m.: Young professionals

**Saturday, Jan. 24, Connect 351 Lounge** (open space with tables and chairs across the skybridge)

10:45 a.m.-noon: Neurodivergent and people with disabilities

Noon-1:15 p.m.: Job function gatherings

- Finance and Treasurers
- Assessor/collectors
- DEI directors
- Human resources
- Communications
- Information Technology

For questions or more information, contact MMA Chief Equity Officer Jill Harvey at [jharvey@mma.org](mailto:jharvey@mma.org). ●

## MMA webinar will spotlight 'alternative response teams'

The MMA will host a webinar on Dec. 9 spotlighting three "alternative response teams" throughout the state.

These unarmed community response programs, rooted in racial equity and trauma-informed practices, work to provide behavioral health support and resources to community members.

Attendees will hear about Lynn's CALM Team, Cambridge's Community Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) Team, and Amherst's Community Responders for Equity, Safety and Service (CRESS) team.

Panelists will include:

- CRESS Director Camille Theriaque
- Cambridge Community Safety Department Director Marie Mathieu
- Lynn Calm Team Program



Marie Mathieu



Faustina Cuevas



Camille Theriaque

Administrator Abdel Razak Kawaf

- Lynn Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer Faustina Cuevas

Presenters will give an overview of how each initiative operates, and how they differ in scope, funding, and staffing based on the community's needs and resources. They will also discuss the

importance of community buy-in when launching a similar program.

[Online registration is available for the 75-minute webinar](#), which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected

officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

For more information, contact MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at [klapierre@mma.org](mailto:klapierre@mma.org). ●

## TRADE SHOW

*Continued from page 4*

If you know of a company, agency or nonprofit that would be interested in sponsoring or exhibiting but is not listed, contact the MMA's event

and development specialist, Stacey Compton-Maga, at [tradeshow@mma.org](mailto:tradeshow@mma.org) or 617-426-7272, ext. 154.

[Information for exhibitors](#), including a contract for exhibit space and a new, interactive exhibit hall floor plan, is

available on the Connect 351 website. The MMA is updating the online floor plan as exhibit contracts are received. ●



# SAPHE 2.0 is topic of MMA webinar on Dec. 17

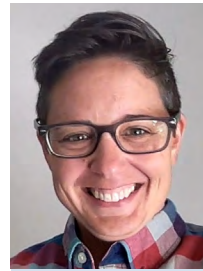
The MMA will host a webinar with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on Dec. 17 regarding the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE 2.0) program.

The Department of Public Health says it is committed to improving the health of every person in the Commonwealth by transforming the local public health system to meet modern-day needs.

In the webinar, Rachael Cain, deputy director of the Department of Public Health's Office of Local and Regional Health, and Aimee Petrosky, the office's director of performance standards and data systems, will discuss the Department of Public Health's commitment to partnering with municipalities, and how SAPHE 2.0 lays the foundation



Rachael Cain



Aimee Petrosky

for a healthier Massachusetts.

Enacted in November 2024, SAPHE 2.0 is intended to elevate the capabilities of local public health departments to provide sustainable and equitable public health services to build stronger, more resilient communities across the Commonwealth.

Panelists will also discuss resources available to municipalities to help create a better local public health system, including the Public Health Excellence Grant Program and a new public health workforce and data platform called Metrik.

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at [klapierre@mma.org](mailto:klapierre@mma.org)

## MMA to hold webinar on digital accessibility requirements

The MMA will host a webinar on Jan. 14 with the Commonwealth's Accessibility Center for Consulting, Education and Support Services (ACCESS) team covering what municipalities need to know regarding digital accessibility.

In April 2024, the [U.S. Department of Justice updated its regulations](#) for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, specifically for state and local governments. The requirements set Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 Level AA as the technical standard to ensure that all digital content is accessible to all community members.

Municipalities with more than 50,000 residents must comply with version

2.1 Level AA by April 24, 2026, and smaller municipalities must comply by April 26, 2027.

This webinar will detail what local leaders need to know to prepare for the upcoming deadline, including expectations for different types of digital content, strategies for approaching the rule changes, and resources to facilitate the accessibility journey.

Adam Gojanovich, accessibility training coordinator with the [ACCESS](#) team, will



Adam Gojanovich

share resources that municipalities can use to prepare for their compliance date, and will answer questions from webinar participants.

[Online registration is available](#) for the 75-minute webinar, which will begin at noon. Only MMA members may register. MMA members include elected officials and municipal employees from MMA member communities across the state. Media members are not permitted to attend.

Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre at [klapierre@mma.org](mailto:klapierre@mma.org)

## LGAC discusses Municipal Empowerment Act

During a meeting of the Local Government Advisory Commission on Nov. 18 in Boston, Ashland Select Board Member Yolanda Greaves emphasizes how the administration's proposed Municipal Empowerment Act would help cities and towns. "The Municipal Empowerment Act is critical to help modernize and streamline many operations in local government, creating new efficiencies and flexibilities that are essential to provide high-quality services to residents," Greaves said.



## Let us know about your local news

Every day across the Commonwealth, municipal leaders are finding ways to deliver services more efficiently, save taxpayers money, engage more citizens in the work of local government, and improve the effectiveness of services that have a direct impact on people's lives.

The MMA wants to spread the word about these local efforts. If your community has launched a new program or initiative, or has found a unique solution to a common problem, please let us know with our [Local News Tips form](#) on the MMA website. ●

# MMA, Suffolk expand certificate program

By Kate Evarts

Due to the popularity of the program, in September 2026 the MMA and Suffolk University will add a third cohort of the Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program.

The 2026-2027 certificate programs will be hosted in Littleton, Medfield and Palmer.

The graduate-level academic program provides a solid grounding in municipal management, and covers topics such as human resources management, budgeting and financial management, and strategic leadership.

The program is held over the course of 25 Fridays from September through May, with 40% of the classes held in person and the rest via Zoom. Each location can accommodate up to 25 students.

The certificate program application will be available on the [MMA website](#) on Feb. 1, and the deadline to apply will be April 30. Applicants will be notified of their status by mid-May.

An information session about the MMA-Suffolk certificate program, as well as the finance and human resources seminars, will be held on March 11 at 10 a.m. via Zoom. To register, visit [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

## Municipal Finance Management Seminar

The MMA and Suffolk University will offer three Municipal Finance Management Seminar programs in 2026.

The seminar provides an overview of municipal finance in Massachusetts, including the structure and purpose of local government, municipal budgeting systems and sources of revenue, financial reporting and record keeping, financial management, principles of property assessment, the intersection of human resources and financial resources, and best practices in local government finance.

The seminar is for municipal employees interested in furthering their careers in municipal finance or employees who are new to municipal finance. More than 450 local officials have completed the municipal finance seminar since it began in 2019.

Seminars are held via Zoom over the course of five Fridays, with start dates as follows:

- Winter 2026: Jan. 9 (fully enrolled)



Emily Granoff, deputy director of housing and community development for the city of Chelsea, listens during a class on municipal legal issues on Oct. 24 as part of the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program in Winchester.

- Spring 2026: March 6 (registration opens Dec. 10)
- Fall 2026: TBD

Students are expected to attend all course sessions, participate in class activities, and complete all course assignments. Each session can accommodate up to 25 students, and the cost is \$925.

Registration is first-come, first-served. Applicants will be vetted to ensure that they are municipal employees and that there are no more than three participants per municipality.

Questions about the registration process can be directed to Kate Evarts at [kevarts@mma.org](mailto:kevarts@mma.org) or 617-426-7272, ext. 172.

## Municipal Human Resources Seminar

The MMA and Suffolk University will offer three Municipal Human Resources Seminar programs in 2026.

The seminar covers human resources management, policies and practices specific to Massachusetts cities and towns. Topics include hiring and onboarding, benefits administration, policy development, collective bargaining, and employee reviews and evaluations. Students also review relevant labor laws and best practices in municipal human resources management.

The seminar is designed for municipal employees interested in furthering their career in municipal human resources, employees who are new to municipal human resources, and employees who work in a municipal function with human-resources-adjacent tasks. More than 125 participants have completed the seminar since its inception in 2024.

The Municipal Human Resources Seminar will be held via Zoom over the course of five Fridays, with start dates as follows:

- Winter 2026: Jan. 9 (fully enrolled)
- Spring 2026: April 10
- Fall 2026: TBD

The application for the spring seminar is [available online](#). Applications are due by Jan. 30, 2026. This is a competitive application process; applicants will be notified of their status by mid-February.

Questions about the registration process can be directed to Kate Evarts at [kevarts@mma.org](mailto:kevarts@mma.org) or 617-426-7272, ext. 172.

## Municipal Fellowship

Municipal professionals interested in pursuing a [Master of Public Administration](#) degree at Suffolk University are encouraged to apply for the Municipal Fellowship program.

Launched in partnership with the MMA in 2021, the program offers a scholarship of up to \$28,000, while the recipient's municipality commits to continuing their salary and position while they attend the program part-time.

Fellowship applicants must be accepted for admission to Suffolk's Master of Public Administration program and must receive the support of the chief municipal official in their municipality. Additional consideration will be given to graduates of the MMA-Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management program.

Those interested in the Municipal Fellowship should check off, on [Suffolk's application](#), that they are a municipal employee interested in the fellowship, and apply to Suffolk by May 1. The fellowship selection committee will interview qualified applicants and award up to two fellowships in June.

## More information

The MMA has partnered with Suffolk University since 2011 to offer programs designed exclusively for municipal employees to help them further their professional careers.

For more information on any of the MMA-Suffolk programs, visit [mma.org/suffolk](http://mma.org/suffolk) or contact Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or [kmccue@mma.org](mailto:kmccue@mma.org), or Kate Evarts at 617-426-7272, ext. 172, or [kevarts@mma.org](mailto:kevarts@mma.org).



## MIIA sponsors workshops at Connect 351

By Joyce McMahon

Managing rising health care costs, avoiding cybersecurity attacks, and stemming public harassment of municipal employees are top of mind for many municipal officials.

Here's some information that supports these concerns:

- [Total health care expenditures in Massachusetts increased](#) by 8.6% from 2022 to 2023 to a total of \$78.1 billion, or \$11,153 per resident.
- According to the [MassCyberCenter](#), a new organization falls victim to ransomware every 14 seconds, and local governments are ideal targets.
- In a 2024 [National League of Cities survey](#), 73% of mayors, councillors and city managers reported experiencing harassment as part of their work, and nearly 60% felt political harassment had gotten worse since they entered office.

MIIA is presenting three hands-on workshops during the MMA's annual conference, [Connect 351](#) to help municipal organizations manage these challenges.

### Keeping Your Cool When the Public Is Losing Theirs

Friday, Jan 23, 2-3:15 p.m.

This dynamic workshop will equip municipal employees with essential skills to navigate the unique challenge of serving a public that may be frustrated, confrontational or uncivil — often due to circumstances beyond any single employee's control.

Participants will explore how emotional intelligence serves as the foundation for remaining calm and professional under pressure, including a practical three-step defusing technique to de-escalate tense interactions before they spiral.

The session will cover critical strategies, including:



Cally Ritter



Paul Sweeney



John Petrozzelli

- When and how to end abusive conversations while maintaining dignity for all parties
- Techniques for supporting colleagues who face incivility
- The power of deep listening as a de-escalation tool

Attendees will also draft statements and questions that demonstrate genuine empathy and transform adversarial exchanges into productive dialogues.

This seminar will be led by Cally Ritter, principal of Positive Ripple Training and Consulting, and will feature Southborough Assistant Town Manager Vanessa Hale, who will share her experiences with handling tough customer situations.

### From Challenge to Change: Rethinking Municipal Health Costs

Friday, Jan 23, 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Rising health care costs continue to challenge municipalities, straining budgets and impacting the ability to attract and retain employees.

This workshop will offer a forward-looking perspective on how local governments can navigate these financial pressures through informed decision-making, collaboration and innovation.

The workshop will examine the factors driving municipal health care expenses, including workforce demographics,

benefit design and regulatory obligations, while showcasing practical approaches to managing costs without compromising employee well-being. Participants will engage in discussion to identify actionable strategies to

help their communities.

The panel will be moderated by Pat Haraden, president of Lockton Company and a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals.

Panelists will be:

- MIIA Health Benefits Trust Director Chris Bailey
- Paul Sweeney, senior vice president, Municipal/Labor and Diversified Sales, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
- Kevin Brousseau, secretary-treasurer of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO

### Creating Cyber Resiliency: A Tabletop Exercise Card Game

Saturday, Jan 24, 1:30-2:45 p.m.

This interactive workshop, led by the MassCyberCenter, will engage participants in realistic cybersecurity scenarios through collaborative gameplay.

In a card game called CyberSecure Deck: Defend the Network, players will take on roles to navigate threats, make strategic decisions, and strengthen their understanding of cyber risk management in a dynamic, hands-on environment.

Panelists will include:

- MassCyberCenter Director John Petrozzelli
- Attorney Greg Bautista, a partner with Mullen Coughlin

■ MIIA continued on 31

## CONNECT 351

Continued from page 1

Government session, and a new interactive networking and skills activity called Boardroom Breakout. The Trade Show and [Headshot Station](#) for members will open at 2 p.m.

Conference programming continues all day on Friday, Jan. 23, with a general session, the Women Elected Municipal Officials Leadership Luncheon, two sets of workshop blocks, affinity and regional group receptions, and a dinner with presentations of legislative awards.

Saturday's schedule includes MIIA's Annual Business Meeting and Breakfast, member group business meetings, the MMA Annual Business Meeting, and three interactive workshop sessions titled "Ready for Anything." The conference will conclude at 3:30 p.m. with a dessert reception.

### Speakers

Friday's keynote speaker — nonprofit leader and Dignity Index co-creator [Timothy Shriver](#) — will explore how bridging the divisions between opposing viewpoints and focusing on one another's humanity can move conversations forward.

In Saturday's keynote, National League of Cities Executive Director [Clarence Anthony](#) will discuss building partnerships, healing divisions, navigating artificial intelligence, and addressing housing needs.

At the WEMO luncheon on Friday, [Tami Pyfer](#), co-creator of the Dignity Index and a former city councillor and gubernatorial advisor, will share insights gained over her career in public service to restore dignity and lower the level of contempt in public discussions.

### Networking

Connect 351 provides countless opportunities to meet and network with colleagues, including receptions, awards ceremonies, and other activities.

Networking opportunities include meetings of Massachusetts Municipal Communicators, Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts,

mayoral chiefs of staff, affinity group spaces (see story, this issue), regional meet-ups, and the [MMA-Suffolk programs](#) reception. And there are always the hallway conversations and numerous seating areas where members can engage with peers whenever they'd like.

### Other features

- A special Women Leading Government session on Thursday, Jan. 22, will be called "Burning Questions" — a panel discussion that takes its cue from the popular web series "Hot Ones." A panel of local government leaders will discuss impactful "hot topics" that their communities face while eating progressively spicier hot wings.
- Boardroom Breakout, from 3-4 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 22, is an interactive team-building activity in which groups of six to 10 players work together to solve a series of puzzles, challenges and critical-thinking tasks about how to progress through the activity before the clock runs out.
- Attendees can get free, professional photos taken at the Headshot Station, which will be open on Thursday from 2 to 5:30 p.m. and on Friday from 8 to 9:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Registration

[Online registration](#) for Connect 351 will be available through Jan. 20.

The early registration rate is \$289 for MMA members and Partner Program members.

Partners must be in good standing as of Dec. 30, 2025, to be eligible for registration and attendance. New MMA Partner Program applications will not be accepted after Nov. 30, and renewal applications will not be accepted during Connect 351.

Registration is also open for the WEMO luncheon on Friday, Jan. 23, at a cost of \$59, and the Friday dinner, at a cost of \$69.

Connect 351 registration is not available by mail or over the phone. The MMA accepts credit cards for all Connect 351 transactions and is able to invoice for the event afterwards as well.

Online registration requires a member's unique username and password. Those who either do not have a username and password or may have forgotten their credentials can email [connect351@mma.org](mailto:connect351@mma.org) for assistance.

Nonmember governmental entities are also welcome to attend Connect 351, at a cost of \$359.

Registration will be available on-site during the conference at a rate of \$329 for MMA and Partner Program members, and \$399 for nonmember government entities.

### Hotel information

The Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport, conveniently located across the street from Menino Convention and Exhibition Center, has a room block available for Connect 351 attendees. The MMA negotiated a reduced room rate of \$229 per night in the Artist Tower or \$259 per night in the Patron Tower. The reduced-rate rooms are expected to sell out quickly and must be booked by Dec. 22.

The Westin Seaport, located next to the Menino Convention and Exhibition Center, has a small room block available for the nights of Thursday, Jan. 22, and Friday, Jan. 23. The MMA negotiated a reduced room rate of \$239 per night. The reduced-rate rooms are expected to sell out quickly and must be booked by Dec. 29.

All hotel reservations must be made directly with the hotel. To make or cancel a reservation, use the [Omni online form](#) or the [Westin online form](#) specifically for our event. Members may also call the Omni Boston Hotel at 1-800-THE-OMNI or the Westin Seaport at 617-532-4600 and mention Massachusetts Municipal Association.

Both hotels have a cancellation policy of noon three days before check-in.

For more information on Connect 351, visit [Connect351.org](https://connect351.org) or contact Timmery Kuck at 617-426-7272, ext. 106. For Trade Show and Partnership Program information, contact Stacey Compton-Maga at 617-426-7272, ext. 154, or [tradeshow@mma.org](mailto:tradeshow@mma.org). ●



# ATFC publishes updated Finance Committee Handbook

A new edition of the Association of Town Finance Committees' Finance Committee Handbook is now available.

Published as a PDF, the handbook includes general updates to all chapters. Its co-editors are Mansfield Finance Committee Member Melinda Tarsi-Goldfien and Arlington Finance Committee



Member Allan Tosti, both of whom are members of the ATFC Governing Board.

The handbook features chapters on budgeting, capital planning, borrowing, contracting and procurement, general government and accounting operations, IT, establishing fees, employee benefits (including other post-employment benefits, or OPEB), revenue

and expenditure forecasting, banking, and Proposition 2½.

The handbook is a member benefit provided to all finance committee members of dues-paying ATFC communities. These members may receive access to the handbook by emailing Katherine Christy at [kchristy@mma.org](mailto:kchristy@mma.org) at the MMA.

Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org)

## Going to Connect 351? There's an app for that

Attendees of Connect 351 in January can use the event's free mobile app to make the most of their MMA conference experience.

The app, now in its eighth iteration and available for all smartphones and tablet devices, is the primary resource for planning and navigating [Connect 351](#). Users will find schedule details, workshop

listings, speaker profiles, exhibitor information, helpful maps, and much more.

Attendees can use the app to personalize their meeting schedule, network with other attendees, and receive up-to-the-minute updates and alerts.

A guide to accessing the app will be emailed to registrants in the weeks leading up to Connect 351. Advance

registration for Connect 351 is advised, so attendees have time to explore the app and take advantage of its many features.

Assistance will be available during Connect 351 to answer any questions and help on-site registrants.

— Meredith Gabriliska

## MMA's energy program helps cities, towns with buying electricity

By Katie McCue

In today's volatile energy market, waiting too long to make a buying decision can be costly for cities and towns. When it comes to electricity supply, timing, strategy and market awareness can make a big difference.

Electricity prices are influenced by a complex web of factors: natural gas markets, weather patterns, grid demand, policy changes, and global energy dynamics. When municipalities delay locking in their electricity supply, they can be vulnerable to sudden price spikes. What might have been a favorable rate one month can climb significantly the next, erasing opportunities for savings and predictability.

MMA's energy program, [MunEnergy](#), helps cities, towns and districts with a proactive buying strategy that can help mitigate this risk and shift decision-making from reactionary to strategic.

The best strategies also align with broader goals: budget certainty, sustainability targets, and risk tolerance. Engaging with a trusted competitive electricity supplier early — before renewal deadlines or market deadlines approach — ensures that decisions are data-driven rather than deadline-driven.

Local government entities are increasingly recognizing that electricity is not just an expense to manage, but a strategic asset to plan for. Acting early, with insight and intention, is the best way to keep costs under control.

Constellation Energy — the largest generator of electricity and the largest supplier of electricity in America — is the

trusted and endorsed competitive electricity supplier for MMA members via the [MunEnergy program](#).

For more information, contact MMA Deputy Executive Director Katie McCue at 617-426-7272, ext. 111, or [kmccue@mma.org](mailto:kmccue@mma.org).



### Managers discuss strategic planning

Worcester Public Library Executive Director Jason Homer, center, speaks during a panel on strategic planning during the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association Fall Conference on Nov. 20 in Worcester. Homer, along with Westford Town Manager Kristen Las, left, and Holliston Town Manager Frank Gervasio, discussed the strategic planning best practices they've learned during their careers.

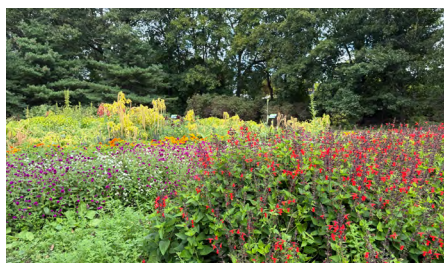
# Grant proposals sought for biodiversity program

The Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game has announced a new grant opportunity — the [Community Biodiversity Grants Program](#) — which seeks proposals for projects that drive on-the-ground progress toward the state's [Biodiversity Conservation Goals](#).

The program will award grants of \$20,000 to \$200,000 to support local efforts to protect and restore biodiversity and bring nature to every neighborhood.

The application deadline is Dec. 26.

Eligible applicants include public and non-public entities, such as municipalities, state agencies, nonprofit



A new grant program will award funding for local biodiversity protection and restoration efforts.

organizations, tribal governments, museums, and academic institutions. Partnerships between eligible grantees

and private organizations are welcome.

Examples of eligible projects include: biodiversity monitoring; habitat protection and stewardship; restoration; enhancing wildlife corridors; building pollinator gardens, community gardens, rain gardens, micro forests, and food forests; and participatory science, educational programs, and public art or natural history exhibits focused on the biodiversity in Massachusetts.

Projects or phases of projects must be completed before June 30, 2026.

[Click here to apply.](#)

## State seeks comments on CDBG grants plan for 2023 floods

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities has posted for public comment a draft action plan for Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds related to flooding in Massachusetts in 2023 (FEMA Disaster #4780).

The draft plan can be found on the [EOHLC's disaster recovery website](#).

In January, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allocated \$7.95 million to Massachusetts

related to catastrophic floods in 2023, for distribution through the Massachusetts CDBG Program.

The CDBG Disaster Recovery funds are for necessary eligible expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the "most impacted and distressed" areas resulting from a qualifying major disaster.

The CDBG-DR Action Plan is a key

mechanism for the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities to inform the public and HUD of the intended use of the funds within their community and how this plan connects to the community's remaining unmet needs and mitigation needs associated with the qualifying disaster.

The EOHLC will accept comments through Dec. 28 to Community Development Manager Kathryn McNelis at [kathryn.mcnelis@mass.gov](mailto:kathryn.mcnelis@mass.gov). ●

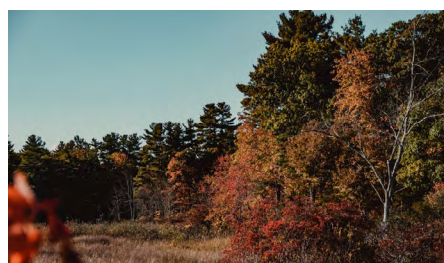
## EEA awards \$12 million for conservation, parks

The Healey-Driscoll Administration on Oct. 27 announced over \$12 million in grants for projects in 40 communities across Massachusetts that will help protect open space, build parks and give more people access to the outdoors.

Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll announced the grant awards during the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commission's Fall Conference in Devens.

The awards come from three programs overseen by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs:

- The Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities program, which helps municipalities create and renovate outdoor recreation areas
- The Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity program, which supports conservation commission efforts to protect natural land
- The Conservation Partnership Grant, which supports nonprofit land trusts



The Healey-Driscoll administration has announced grants to support open space and parks development and preservation.

working to conserve open space for future generations

The funding will support projects like creating new walking trails, protecting forests and wetlands, building neighborhood parks, and preserving land near rivers and lakes that provide drinking water.

Parkland Acquisitions grants ranging from \$98,000 to \$425,000 were awarded to Boston, Brockton, Chelsea, Dennis, Easthampton, Gardner, Haverhill,

Holyoke, Lynn, Malden, New Bedford, Southbridge and Worcester. Small-Town Parkland Acquisitions grants ranging from \$16,500 to \$100,000 were awarded to Charlemont, Chesterfield, Heath, Reading, Southampton, Swampscott and Ware.

Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity grants ranging from \$173,173 to \$425,000 were awarded to projects in Monson, Northampton, Plymouth, Rowe, Southampton, Wenham, Worcester and Yarmouth.

Conservation Partnership awards between \$52,500 and \$425,000 went to Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Barnstable Land Trust, Becket Land Trust, Buzzards Bay Coalition, Dudley Conservation Land Trust, The Franklin Land Trust, Greater Worcester Land Trust, Harwich Conservation Trust, Mattapoisett Land Trust, Orenda Wildlife Land Trust, Orleans Conservation Trust, Truro Conservation Trust, and Westport Land Conservation Trust. ●





# CONNECT 351

**JANUARY 22-24, 2026**

Menino Convention & Exhibition Center  
and Omni Boston Hotel at the Seaport

## NETWORKING

Our dynamic, high-energy conference provides countless opportunities to discuss the challenges you face and to learn what other local leaders are doing to move their communities forward.

- Receptions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday
- A lively **Trade Show** for meeting with exhibitors and colleagues
- Events for **Women Leading Government, WEMO** and other groups
- A Friday evening dinner
- **Affinity networking spaces** (new for 2026!)
- Hallway conversations and numerous seating areas where you can engage with colleagues whenever you like



## TRADE SHOW

Our **Trade Show** is a great opportunity to find out what's new in the municipal marketplace! More than 200 exhibitors will be showcasing the latest in products and services tailored to Massachusetts cities and towns. And experts on a variety of topics will share their knowledge in a series of six Learning Lab workshops.

## WORKSHOPS

Our **workshops** cover the latest developments affecting local government.

### Topics:

- Accelerating Housing Supply: Local Leadership for a Statewide Goal
- The AI Toolkit for HR: Leveraging AI With Confidence
- Collaborative Planning: Bringing Community Initiatives to Life
- Creating Cyber Resiliency: An Interactive TTX Card Game
- Federal Landscape
- Fiscal Outlook
- Forward Focused: Moving From Reactive to Strategic Leadership
- From Challenge to Change: A Perspective on Municipal Health Care Costs
- From Hired to Higher: Public Works Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning
- From Prep to Practice: Crisis Communications
- Keeping Up With Clean Energy: Siting and Permitting Updates
- Keeping Your Cool When the Public Is Losing Theirs
- Labor Law Landscape
- Language Access: Starting Small in Order to Build
- Local Legal Lens: Insights on Municipal Law
- Smart Fiscal Practices During Tough Fiscal Times
- When the Waters Rise: Leading Your Community Through Disaster

Workshop details are available on [Connect351.org](https://Connect351.org)





Join more than 1,000 local leaders at this inspiring, can't-miss event devoted to learning, problem solving and idea sharing!

## SPEAKERS



### FRIDAY KEYNOTE

Special Olympics Chair,  
Nonprofit Leader and Dignity  
Index Co-Creator  
**Timothy Shriver**



### WEMO LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON

UNITE Chief External Affairs  
Officer and Dignity Index Co-  
Creator **Tami Pyfer**



### SATURDAY KEYNOTE

National League of Cities  
CEO and Executive Director  
**Clarence Anthony**

“I think the greatest value of Connect 351 is that it broadens your perspective. Every year you leave with an enhanced passion to go out there and keep moving forward with that positive energy after being recharged from the conference.”



**Liz Sullivan**, Town Administrator, Dennis



### HEADSHOT STATION

Attendees can get free professional headshots taken at the Trade Show.

Visit  
**Connect351.org**  
for complete  
information.



Make the most of your Connect 351 experience with our official app. Find out how to get it in this issue of The Beacon.

**REGISTER TODAY!**





# Massachusetts boosts municipal cyber defense

The Healey-Driscoll administration and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative's MassCyberCenter are providing municipalities with up to \$25,000 to bolster cyber defense through the [Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Grant Program](#).

The program enables cities and towns to purchase [CyberTrust Massachusetts](#)' Managed Detection and Response (MDR) services, which provide around-the-clock cyber defense at an affordable price.

Powered by SentinelOne and a student-supported Security Operations Center, CyberTrust's MDR service

ensures the protection of municipal endpoints with advanced detection techniques, including AI and machine-learning algorithms.

The service — which provides 24/7 managed endpoint detection and response, vulnerability management, asset inventory, and active directory and identity security — provides a powerful cyber defense capability for resource-constrained municipalities.

As cyber adversaries become more sophisticated and persistent, it is essential that municipalities have the capability to continuously monitor and respond to threats on their network. A single

undetected vulnerability can lead to a business email compromise that damages already-strained municipal budgets or a ransomware attack that disrupts the delivery of essential services to residents.

Municipalities may contract directly with CyberTrust Massachusetts without a public procurement process (See Ch. 77, Sec. 195).

Applications to the Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Grant Program are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis. [Click here for more information](#) about the program, including the link to apply. ●

## Cybersecurity Awareness Program opens application period

The Executive Office of Technology Services and Security has opened the application period for its 2026 Cybersecurity Awareness Program.

The program continues the Office of Municipal and School Technology's mission to strengthen local government operations across the Commonwealth

through innovative technology support, shared resources, and cybersecurity readiness.

The office invites eligible municipalities and school districts to participate in a collaborative effort to enhance digital resilience, improve service delivery, and advance community-focused technology

goals.

For more information and to submit an application, visit the [Office of Municipal and School Technology's website](#). The website also has details about a Dec. 15 informational webinar. ●

## Everything new on the MMA website, straight to your inbox.

MMA.org is the best source for the latest developments affecting Mass. cities & towns:

- State budget & local aid
- State & federal grant opportunities
- Member group meetings & webinars
- Connect 351 announcements
- And much more!



Sign up for our Weekly Review newsletter, sent every Friday morning.

**SIGN UP TODAY**



**MMA** | Massachusetts  
Municipal  
Association

Visit [mma.org/weekly](https://mma.org/weekly) to get on the list today!

# Around the Commonwealth

## Lynn, Swampscott

### Neighbors collaborate on beach clean-up efforts

A collaborative pilot program run by the city of Lynn and town of Swampscott used UV technology in an effort to clean up King's Beach, which straddles the border of the communities.

The beach has some of the worst water quality in the greater Boston area due to two pipes, one in Lynn and one in Swampscott, that discharge stormwater into the ocean at the beach. The discharge mixes with sewage and other polluted runoff during wet weather, which can elevate bacteria levels at the beach and lead to frequent closures during the summer.

The problems at King's Beach have been ongoing for years, and each community faces a different challenge when it comes to pollution at the site. In Lynn, the city separated its sewer and stormwater systems in the late 1990s, but the city has found numerous illegal sewer connections and may have missed some connections during the separation process. In Swampscott, the sewer and stormwater systems are separate, but aging infrastructure has made them prone to leaks over time.

"Part of the reason why this has been a problem for decades is because it's complicated," said Lynn Mayor Jared Nicholson. "It's complicated scientifically, it's complicated environmentally, but it's also because it spans multiple jurisdictions."

The communities formed a steering committee with the Lynn Water and Sewer Commission and other local stakeholders to evaluate options for cleaning the beach. This work largely focused on complementary solutions, as "the main strategy always has been and is going to be source elimination," Nicholson said.

The committee worked with a consultant to identify potential solutions, which included redirecting the outfall, pumping stormwater into the wastewater treatment plant, chlorination and de-chlorination, extending the discharge pipe farther into the ocean, and UV

sanitization. Ultimately, committee members opted for the UV treatment, which was more affordable, Nicholson said, "while still a substantial investment," and offered "a more reasonable time frame as well as a more favorable regulatory outlook."

The technology works by pumping stormwater into a tank, exposing it to powerful UV light to eliminate bacteria, and then discharging into the ocean. A team of interns conducted daily water quality tests for the program's duration to mark project progress.

The municipalities received a \$5 million earmark from the state for work at King's Beach through advocacy from members of their delegation, including Sen. Brendan Crighton and Rep. Jennifer Armini, whose districts include the beach. Approximately \$800,000 from that earmark went to the UV pilot program.

The UV pilot wasn't an easy undertaking: heavy rainfall overwhelmed the system and churned up sediment, making the UV less effective, and project managers had to install grates to keep seaweed out of the UV tank.

Results were positive, however, as the UV treatment decreased bacteria at the beach.

"The system that was designed was working and it increased the number of days that the beach was open," Nicholson said.

The next steps for Lynn and Swampscott are to use the pilot program data to evaluate the feasibility and location of a permanent UV facility. A 2023 estimate puts the cost at about \$25 million.

"What has allowed us to make such incredible progress is really embracing this idea that this is all of our problem, and we need to work together to solve it," Nicholson said. "That means having a sort of collaborative mentality and focusing on solutions."

— Owen Page



A team of student interns performed daily water quality testing at King's Beach for the duration of the UV pilot project recently undertaken by Lynn and Swampscott.

## Plymouth

### Cranberry bog purchase adds to conservation efforts

With a new state grant and Town Meeting's backing, Plymouth is continuing efforts to reclaim its natural habitats, one retired cranberry bog at a time.

This fall, Plymouth received a \$348,000 Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity grant toward the purchase of a 20.8-acre piece of land containing roughly 11 acres of cranberry bogs. The town, which has been buying and restoring old cranberry bogs to wetlands for almost two decades, is hoping this newest project will improve water quality and the local habitat, while also expanding recreational trail access in the area.

Restoring these former bogs to wetlands also helps return a greater diversity of insects, fish and wildlife to the parcel, said David Gould, Plymouth's director of energy and environment.

"I think that [residents] have seen us do four or five large-scale cranberry bog restorations already, and they've seen the tremendous benefit of bringing these wetlands back to naturally occurring wetlands as conservation areas, where people can also recreate," Gould said. "They can see the difference in fish and wildlife habitat. And I think because people have seen those over years, they really did support this proposed acquisition as well."

■ COMMONWEALTH *continued on 25*



# Around the Commonwealth

## COMMONWEALTH

*Continued from page 24*

Cranberries are an iconic Massachusetts industry, the official state berry, and a staple of Thanksgiving dinner, but cranberry farming poses challenges to the environment. The process involves creating a monoculture — one kind of plant, providing only one kind of habitat, for a limited number of species, Gould said. In addition, herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers are discharged into the surrounding land and nearby waterways, he said, and the farming disrupts fish passage for species including river herring and American eel.

Plymouth's LAND grant is part of a state program that supports the efforts of conservation commissions to protect natural land. On Oct. 27, the state announced the award among more than \$12 million in grants given through LAND and another program, Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities.

"These projects support local economies, improve public health and make our neighborhoods better places to live," Gov. Maura Healey said in a statement about the grants. "This funding helps ensure that every resident has access to the benefits of nature."

The town's restoration work will

improve kayak and canoeing access to Little Island Pond, a popular destination, and expand trail connections from the town's nearby Beaver Dam Conservation Area.

In October, Town Meeting approved the purchase by a vote of 137-2. The property costs \$700,000, and Plymouth is setting aside another \$29,000 for closing costs, property signs and other expenses, Gould said. Along with the state grant, the town is using \$281,000 in Community Preservation Act funds and \$100,000 from Mass Audubon, whose nearby, 481-acre wildlife sanctuary will also benefit from the water-quality improvements.

Gould said the town hopes to close on the property by year's end. Once the purchase is complete, Gould's 10-employee Energy and Environment Department will manage and maintain the property.

Though other communities and land trusts are doing this type of restoration work, Gould expressed pride in Plymouth's almost two-decade track record of purchasing and restoring



The town of Plymouth is in the process of buying this former cranberry bog property to restore it to wetlands. (Photo courtesy Nate Cristofori/town of Plymouth)

bogs. He said it's gratifying to see these properties come back to life as diverse habitats.

"Being able to restore them and see new plants coming back, to see an increase in bird species, to see an increase in fish and wildlife that are using these properties, because we're creating that natural wetland habitat — for me, that's the best part about doing it," he said.

— Jennifer Kavanaugh

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*This monthly column features local and regional news items related to local government in Massachusetts. To suggest an item for this column, email [editor@mma.org](mailto:editor@mma.org).*

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## WLG MEETING

*Continued from page 9*

your own personal brand, just in the way that you communicate, the way that you collaborate, the way that you conduct yourself, the way that you dress," Baum said. "You know all of that, and so why not take a proactive approach and control that narrative for how people talk about you when you're not in the room, right?"

By learning to tell better stories about herself, Baum said, she became a better storyteller about East Hartford.

Through videos on social media, Baum has shown the mayor jumping out of a pile of leaves to announce the start of leaf-vacuuming season; announced the

installation of a much-anticipated flashing-yellow intersection light with the theme music from "2001: A Space Odyssey," and had employees perform a choreographed dance to the song "We're All in This Together" to celebrate the Town Hall's renovation.

"I know that if residents and businesses are entertained by the content that we're putting out," she said, "they're much more likely to take home the message that I need them to take home." ●



Braintree Stormwater Manager Hillary Waite participates in a discussion about empathetic leadership during the Women Leading Government meeting on Nov. 13 in Devens.

## State awards \$5.5 million in public safety grants

The Office of Grants and Research and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security in October announced \$5.5 million in grants for police departments and state agencies to support public safety initiatives.

The grants use federal funding through the [Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program](#).

Municipalities and state agencies can

deploy this funding for numerous purposes, including prosecution and court programs, prevention and education programs, corrections and community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, crime victim and witness initiatives, and planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs.

The Office of Grants and Research awarded a total of \$3.94 million to 171 municipal police departments and \$1.56

million to 28 state agencies. The full list of recipients is [available online](#).

This program uses funds awarded to Massachusetts in prior federal fiscal years; the funding is not subject to grant conditions related to immigration enforcement that have been placed on some grants in the current federal fiscal year. ●

## State awards \$139 million for clean water projects

The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust's Board of Trustees on Nov. 5 approved \$139 million in low-interest loans and grants to cities, towns and water utilities through the Massachusetts State Revolving Funds.

The funds help communities build or replace water infrastructure that enhances existing water resources, ensures drinking water safety, protects public health, and increases community resiliency.

More than \$92.7 million went to clean water projects in Barnstable, Chicopee, Haverhill, Provincetown, and Boston Harbor.

Grants totalling \$43 million went to drinking water projects in Attleboro, Grafton, and projects overseen by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority.



The Massachusetts Clean Water Trust has awarded \$139 million in low-interest loans and grants to cities, towns and water utilities for water infrastructure.

A total of nearly \$3 million in Asset Management Planning Grants went to Cohasset, Dartmouth, Dover, Egremont, Erving, Fall River, Hinsdale, Lawrence, Lee, Leicester, Lenox, Lexington, Lowell, Lunenburg, Mendon, Newton, North Attleborough, Oxford, Sudbury,

Swansea, Tyngsborough, Wakefield, West Springfield, and Weston.

Easton and Plymouth received a total of \$900,000 for community septic management.

Holyoke received a grant of \$250,000 for sewer overflow mitigation and stormwater reuse.

Hadley and Marlborough received a total of \$53,000 in related cybersecurity improvement grants.

Visit the [SRF programs webpage](#) for more information. Information on the state's [Loan Forgiveness Program](#) is also available online. ●

## EMPOWERMENT ACT

*Continued from page 1*

on two provisions of the bill:

- To allow municipalities to apply for a critical shortage exemption from certain post-retirement limitations on employment for specific job titles and classes for a period of three years
- To establish an Other Post-Employment Benefits Commission to address unfunded liabilities from non-pension employee benefits

The Municipalities and Regional Government Committee, which holds a bulk of the bill's provisions, held its hearing on Oct. 28. Nearly 20 officials from the Healey-Driscoll administration and cities and towns testified on the importance of the bill, focusing on

provisions including:

- Making the current remote and hybrid meeting flexibilities for public meetings permanent
- Reforming procurement procedures and regulations, including increasing the threshold for all municipal purchases under Chapter 30B, streamlining cooperative purchasing agreements, and including snowhauling services with snowplowing services as exempt from 30B rules
- Updating borrowing rules for school projects by extending the borrowing term to 40 years
- Establishing enforcement mechanisms for prohibitions on doubled-up utility poles

The Revenue Committee held the final hearing, on Nov. 7, focused on the local-option tax provisions in the bill, including:

- Extending property tax exemptions for seniors
- Increasing the maximum local-option meals tax from 0.75% to 1%
- Increasing the local-option tax on hotels, motels and other short-term rentals from 6% to 7% (and 6.5% to 7.5% in Boston)
- Allowing a surcharge to assessed motor vehicle excise taxes by up to 5%

The three committees must now recommend which items may be pushed forward in the legislative process. ●



# People



Mia Francesconi

**Mia Francesconi** will become the new town coordinator in Heath on Dec. 8.

Hailing from a family that has served for generations in municipal government, Francesconi has served as executive assistant

and as conservation agent in Cheshire for the past year and a half. She has also been serving as a member of the Conservation Commission in Colrain. Previously, she worked as an emergency medical technician for Northern Berkshire EMS.

In Heath, Francesconi replaces **Hilma Sumner**, who is retiring at the beginning of 2026, after serving for six years in the role.



Gina Kwon

On Nov. 12, Gov. **Maura Healey** appointed **Gina Kwon** as secretary of the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. She replaces **Terrence Reidy**, who retired after four years in the role.

Kwon had been serving as the office's undersecretary for law enforcement since February 2023. Previously, she was the criminal bureau chief at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. Serving in the AG's Enterprise and Major Crimes Division, she began as an assistant attorney general in 2015, before being promoted to deputy division chief in 2017 and to division chief in 2019.

Kwon previously served as an assistant district attorney in both Suffolk and Middlesex counties. She is a member of the Massachusetts Hate Crimes Task Force, and has served on the Governor's Task Force on Hate Crimes and the Forensic Science Oversight Board.

**Susan Terrey**, who served as interim secretary, is continuing in her role as deputy secretary and undersecretary for homeland security.



Joseph Curtatone

**Joseph Curtatone**, a former longtime mayor of Somerville, last month became vice president of government affairs and strategy for in-diGO Technologies, a Woburn-based electric vehicle company.

Curtatone served for 18 years as mayor, from 2004 to 2022, after serving for eight years on the city's Board of Aldermen, before it became the City Council. He was president of the Massachusetts Mayors' Association in 2007 and 2008.

Since leaving office, Curtatone had been serving as president of the Alliance for Climate Transition, which previously was the Northeast Clean Energy Council.



Eugenia Buker

**Eugenia Buker** joined the MIIA Health Benefits Trust as a Medicare specialist on Nov. 24.

Before coming to MIIA, Buker was an enrollment specialist for the Cambridge Health Alliance's

PACE Program and for the Massachusetts Health Connector. She has also been a membership leader for the Salvation Army, a chief leader and supervisor at B.GOOD restaurants, an administrative assistant at B&Me Cleaning Services, and a sales representative at Genius Planet. She was also a sales manager at CV Telecom, and a secretary at Roque Silva Law Firm, both in Cabo Verde.

Buker is a Massachusetts Health Connector certified navigator, a trained SHINE counselor and a trained medical interpreter. She is fluent in English, Portuguese, Spanish and Cape Verdean Creole, and knows basic French.

**Mary Blanchard**, a six-term member of the Sturbridge Select Board, died on Sept. 14 at the age of 80.

A Sturbridge resident for more than a half



Mary Blanchard

century, Blanchard had been on the Select Board for 17 years at the time of her death, and had previously served on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Open Space Committee.

At the Select Board meeting on Sept. 15, her fellow board members reflected on her service to the community and honored her with a moment of silence. Select Board Chair **Jamie Goodwin** read the Robert Frost poem "Nothing Gold Can Stay" in her memory.



Marilyn Contreas

**Marilyn Contreas**, a longtime state official who worked extensively with municipal leaders throughout Massachusetts, died on Oct. 20 at the age of 74.

For four decades, Contreas worked for the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (now the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities), becoming known for her expertise on municipal and civic governance. She worked closely with the MMA, was a fixture at Local Government Advisory Commission meetings, and was a long-serving officer with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council.

After retiring from her state position, Contreas became a senior associate who specialized in modernizing Massachusetts municipal charters at the Collins Center for Public Management at UMass Boston.

Rep. **Ann-Margaret Ferrante**, who served in the Massachusetts House since 2009, died on Nov. 27 after a long battle with pancreatic cancer. She was 53.

Ferrante, who represented Essex, Gloucester, Rockport and Manchester-by-the-Sea, was vice chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means. She

■ **PEOPLE** continued on 29

## New Easthampton mayor reflects on new role

By Jennifer Kavanaugh

When Salem Derby was sworn in as Easthampton's mayor on Nov. 19, he brought two decades of experience in city government, along with a Native American heritage that he says has helped shape his philosophy of public service.

Derby was elected mayor on Nov. 4, after having served almost four months as interim mayor. Formerly the City Council president, he accepted the interim role when former Mayor Nicole LaChappelle left on July 15 to become commissioner at the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

A member of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah), Derby joins a relatively small group of mayors nationwide with Native American backgrounds. Derby told the MMA that his Wampanoag heritage doesn't impact most policy-making decisions, but it does influence his world view.

"I think that it's just an important foundation to operate from, to understand that you're not the only ones, and there were people that came before you," Derby said. "And so how you act now makes a difference to the people who come next — and how we are inclusive and embrace all of the people that are around us, to create a community that's welcoming and supportive of all

different cultures and all different types of people."

Derby, who first joined the City Council in 2004, traces his immediate Wampanoag family to his great-grandmother, Carrie Derby, who was born in Aquinnah. She was a model and a musician who may have been the first woman to sing on Boston radio, according to family lore. She helped raise Derby's father, Charles, who went on to become a Tribal art historian.

"And so for my dad, really, it instilled in him a deep respect of his Native heritage," Derby said, "and that was transferred to me."

Derby's great-grandfather, Benjamin Derby Jr., served as the postmaster general in Concord, and both he and his father had served as elected municipal officials there. Benjamin Derby Jr.'s lineage derives from the prominent Derby family dating back centuries in Salem, which accounts for the interim mayor's name.

"And so it was like this melding of these two really interesting cultures of the Native American culture from



Salem Derby

Aquinnah, and then the kind of old-school Derbys from Salem," Derby said.

Derby did bring his background to the forefront in 2021, when he was one of Easthampton's leaders who called for its recognition of Indigenous People's Day in October. And this past August, he participated in a land acknowledgment during an event to mark the 80th anniversaries of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan during World War II.

"As far as me putting it out there ... I put it out in ways that it's meaningful," Derby said.

After his election, Derby stepped down from his longtime role as a wellness and physical education teacher at Northampton High School. He is now focused on ensuring Easthampton's fiscal stability, seeking renewable ways to lower electricity costs for the city and for residents, balancing development and open space needs, and keeping redevelopment projects on track, including two affordable reuse projects that he hopes will help mitigate rising housing costs.

Derby said it was a "little sad" to leave teaching behind, but he is "so happy to be able to continue to serve the city I love." ●

## Chapdelaine named to NLC Board of Directors

MMA Executive Director and CEO Adam Chapdelaine has been appointed to the National League of Cities [Board of Directors](#), the NLC announced on Nov. 22.

Chapdelaine is one of four state municipal league executive directors appointed to serve two-year terms on the board.

His appointment took effect during the NLC's 2025 City Summit, which was held Nov. 20-22 in Salt Lake City. The NLC also elected its new president, Kevin Kramer, a member of the Louisville Metro Council in Kentucky.

Chapdelaine has been leading the MMA since September 2023, and served as the MMA president in 2021. He has an extensive background in municipal management and public service, including 12 years as town manager in Arlington and two years in various roles in the city of Fall River.



Adam Chapdelaine

He has also served as deputy director of the Boston Blue Ribbon Commission, taught courses on public policy and finance at UMass Boston and at Boston University's Metropolitan College, worked as a youth council director in a New Bedford-based organization, and served as a legislative aide at the State House.

He has a bachelor's degree in political science from UMass Dartmouth and a master's degree in business administration from Suffolk University.

— Jennifer Kavanaugh



## New councillors elected across Mass. on Nov. 4

The following are new city and town councillors elected on Nov. 4. This listing is meant to highlight first-time councillors, but it's possible that some are returning to their council after an absence. Most incoming councillors will take office in the first few days of January, though some have been sworn in earlier.

**Agawam:** Peter McNair, Christine Rickmon

**Amesbury:** Kelly Sullivan, Maryann Welch

**Amherst:** Jillian Brevik, Amber Cano-Martin, Andrew Churchill, Samuel MacLeod

**Attleboro:** Brendan McIntyre, Erin Morrissey

**Barnstable:** William Crocker Jr., Lisa DaLuz, Tom Keane, Barry Sheingold

**Beverly:** John Mullady, Keith Sonia

**Boston:** Miniard Culpepper

**Braintree:** James Daiute, Ryan Sterling

**Brockton:** Jeff Charnel, Carla DaRosa, Marlon Green

**Cambridge:** Ayah Al-Zubi, Timothy Flaherty

**Chelsea:** Deron Hines

**Chicopee:** Jessica Avery, Douglas Girouard, Joel McAuliffe, Joseph Pasternak

**Easthampton:** Kiam Jamrog-McQuaid, Nathan Markee, Amanda Newton, Jonathan Schmidt

**Everett:** Michele Capone, Vivian Nguyen

**Fall River:** Michael Canuel

**Fitchburg:** Joe Bowen Jr.

**Framingham:** Mary Kate Feeney

**Franklin:** Jane Calloway-Tripp, Gene Grella, Caroline Griffith, Michael LeBlanc, Stephen Malloy, Maxwell Morrongiello, Kenneth Ojukwu

**Gloucester:** Hannah Kimberley, Patti-Ann Page

**Greenfield:** Sarah Bolduc, Maisie Sibbison-Alves, Max Webbe

**Haverhill:** Daniel Diodati

**Holyoke:** Nicole Maisonet, Mimi Pantich, Richard Purcell, Anne Thalheimer

**Lawrence:** Rosaly Gonzalez, Franklin Miguel

**Leominster:** Eladia Romero-Rodriguez

**Lowell:** Belinda Juran, Siney Liang, Sean McDonough

**Lynn:** Jordan Avery, Cardeliz Paez

**Malden:** Michelle Luong

**Marlborough:** Heather Gould, Matthew Sargent

**Medford:** Liz Mullane

**Melrose:** Jason Chen, Brad Freeman, Elizabeth Kowal, Christopher Park

**Methuen:** Ryan Dizoglio, John Drew Jr., Ella Maclaren, Yanilda Santos, Mike Simard

**New Bedford:** Scott Pemberton, James Roy

**Newburyport:** Brian Callahan, Mary Delai, Sarah Hall, Stephanie Niketic, Lisa Medina Smith, Elizabeth Trach

**Newton:** Brittany Hume Charm, Cyrus Dahmubed, Brian Golden, Lisa Gordon, Julie Irish, Sean Roche, Jacob Silber

**North Adams:** Alexa MacDonald, Marie McCarron, Lillian Zavatsky

**Northampton:** Aline Davis, Laurie Loisel, Gwenevra Nabad, Margaret Robbins, Christopher Stratton

**Peabody:** Jaclyn Corrieveau, Jarrod Hochman, Wendy Latoff

**Pittsfield:** Cameron Cunningham, Katherine Moody

**Quincy:** Walter Hubley, David Jacobs, Anne Mahoney, Maggie McKee, Deborah Riley, Virginia Ryan, Zialang "Susan" Yuan

**Revere:** James Mercurio

**Salem:** Timothy Flynn, Katelyn Holappa, Lydia King, Andrew Smith, Jason Sydoriak, Erin Turowski

**Somerville:** Emily Hardt, Jonathan Link, Ben Wheeler

**Springfield:** Justin Hurst, Gerry Martin

**Taunton:** Debra Botellio, Deborah Carr, David Chaves, Edward Correia

**Waltham:** Tim King, Emma Tzioumis

**Watertown:** Theophilus Offei

**West Springfield:** Diana Coyne, David Sypek, James Welch

**Westfield:** Daniel Knapik

**Weymouth:** Andrew Donovan, Kathy Kelly, Rebecca Sherlock-Shangraw, Stephen Shinney

**Winthrop:** Kimberly Dimes, Kurt Millar, Paul Reardon, Joseph Romano

**Woburn:** Yano Amara

**Worcester:** Robert Bilotta, John Fresolo, Satya Mitra, Jose Rivera, Gary Rosen

### PEOPLE

*Continued from page 27*

previously served as first division chair, House chair of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, House chair of the Joint Committee on Community Development and Small Businesses, and House vice chair of the Joint Committee on

Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

Ferrante was an attorney who specialized in fisheries and land-use issues.



Ann-Margaret Ferrante

*This monthly column highlights transitions, accomplishments and awards, and life events of municipal officials. To submit information for People, contact MMA Associate Editor Jennifer Kavanaugh at 800-882-1498 or [jkavanaugh@mma.org](mailto:jkavanaugh@mma.org).*

## RESOLUTION

*Continued from page 7*

address fiscal challenges facing rural schools, including the recommendations of the Commission on the Long-Term Fiscal Health of Rural School Districts;

The governor and the Legislature should amend charter school finance law to mitigate the burden placed upon cities and towns by increasing and extending charter school mitigation payments, limiting charter school tuition assessments placed on local government, providing a means for direct state appropriation of additional tuition payments to charter schools funded outside of Chapter 70 local district aid, decoupling student performance from tuition assessment limitations, and requiring a local impact analysis when considering new or expanded charter schools;

Pending passage of charter school finance reform legislation, the full amount of the schedule in the Student Opportunity Act to fund charter school mitigation payments should be appropriated for fiscal 2027 so that each district is reimbursed in full according to the schedule in the Student Opportunity Act;

Full funding of the Commonwealth's commitments to the Special Education Circuit Breaker Program, as provided by state law, should be appropriated, adhering to the Student Opportunity Act;

Pending review by the commission created to promote geographic equity in the state-owned land PILOT program, the full amount of the Commonwealth's obligations to the program, including a hold-harmless provision, should be included in the fiscal 2027 budget. The PILOT program for state-owned land should also be reviewed to analyze the financial impact that different activities on state-owned land have on municipalities;

The governor and the Legislature should fully fund the state's obligations to reimburse the costs of regional school transportation, regular school transportation, out-of-district vocational transportation, and the transportation of homeless students under the McKinney-Vento unfunded mandate;

Full funding of the Commonwealth's obligations and commitments to Chapter 40S "smart growth" reimbursements, regional and municipal libraries, anti-gang grants, innovation and regionalization grants, the Community Compact Best Practices program, and other effective municipal and school aid programs should be included in the fiscal 2027 budget;

### **In the Area of Capital Projects and Budgeting:**

The governor and the Legislature should work together to ensure timely continuation of the historic investments in the Chapter 90 road and bridge program, including authorizing at least \$350 million annually through a multi-year bond bill authorization and direct appropriation, indexed to grow to match

construction inflation, with a notice of allocations for fiscal 2027 by March 1, 2026;

The governor and the Legislature should strengthen Massachusetts School Building Authority and Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners grants by adjusting reimbursements to reflect the actual costs of construction;

The state's fiscal 2027 capital plan should include funding for MassWorks, HousingWorks, and all grant programs through the Community One Stop for Growth to help pay for important local infrastructure projects, including housing, economic development, and road safety programs;

The Legislature and governor should continue to prioritize investments in essential water resource infrastructure to ensure drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure is in a state of good repair, able to withstand changing weather patterns, and expanded as needed to serve housing development. Contamination mitigation, including but not limited to PFAS and Combined Sewer Overflow mitigation, must also be prioritized;

Continued prioritization of support to cities and towns to assess and respond to challenges related to climate change, including the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program, Coastal Resilience Grant Program, Green Communities Program, Green School Works, Disaster Relief and Resiliency Fund, among other programs, should be supported in both the fiscal 2027 budget and capital plan;

The governor and the Legislature should work with cities and towns to ensure that municipal information technology systems are modernized and resilient against cyberattacks, and enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources needed to implement these investments across the state;

The governor and the Legislature should enact a state funding mechanism and program to provide the resources needed to support cities and towns with the construction and improvement of municipal buildings;

### **In the Area of Local Taxing Authority, Revenues, and Modernizing Municipal Government:**

Municipalities should be granted flexibility to adopt and expand local revenues to help pay for municipal services;

The Legislature should pass the governor's proposed Municipal Empowerment Act, which would provide local governments with additional tools, flexibility, and authority to modernize practices and operate more efficiently;

Cities and towns should be granted increased local-option flexibility to implement targeted property tax relief programs, including for seniors and low-income homeowners, and to adjust the relative property tax burden for different classification of

properties; and

Cities and towns should be granted new local-option flexibility to require the adoption of local PILOT agreements with nonprofit organizations;

### **In the Area of Long-Term Liabilities and Sustainability:**

In order to allow cities and towns to manage current costs and ensure fiscal sustainability over the long term, the Legislature, the governor, and state agencies should determine, report, and review the actuarial liability of post-employment benefits for public employees and undertake a comprehensive reform of the laws and practices related to post-employment benefits for public employees, with an immediate focus on Other Post-Employment Benefit (OPEB) liabilities related to health insurance for retired public employees. Reform should include ways to manage liabilities and finance benefits, and should not impose any new unfunded mandates or preempt any existing decision-making authority that cities and towns currently use to manage their OPEB liability;

The governor and the Legislature should determine and report the long-term cost to cities and towns as part of the evaluation of all legislative proposals to amend public employee benefit programs, and no legislation to expand benefits should be acted upon until this cost analysis is complete and made public;

The governor and the Legislature should work closely with cities and towns to take actionable steps to strengthen the Massachusetts health care system and stabilize all health insurance costs for municipalities;

### **In the Area of Timely Notice of Local Aid for Good Planning and Implementation:**

To ensure orderly and efficient financial planning at the local level and the implementation of balanced and adequate local operating and capital budgets, the governor and the Legislature should reach early agreement on unrestricted municipal aid and Chapter 70 school aid and local contribution amounts so that a consensus local aid resolution can be approved and reliable Cherry Sheets can be released by March 1;

In order to support communities in taking full advantage of the construction season, the Legislature and governor should move swiftly to finalize and make available to communities Chapter 90 road and bridge funding before March 1.

### **In the Area of Housing:**

The governor and the Legislature should work with municipalities to identify and enable resources and tools that can be opted into and tailored to the unique needs of all municipalities;

It is further resolved that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the governor and members of the Massachusetts General Court. ●



# Coalition opens workforce development program

The Northeast Microelectronics Coalition Hub on Nov. 3 launched the Preparing Our Workforce for Microelectronics Resiliency Program, a \$1.2 million initiative to support education, training and workforce development throughout the Northeast.

The program, also known as POWER, aims to provide grant funding to a wide range of organizations, including nonprofits, private companies and local governments, to address existing workforce barriers. Grant funding supports regional partnerships, internship programs, curriculum development and

mentor programming.

The POWER program requires a minimum 20% cost-share. Successful applicants will identify a barrier to their success, propose a workforce solution, and show how the proposed project could measurably improve their ecosystem experience and output.

The Northeast Microelectronics Coalition Hub is a network of over 280 organizations, including commercial and defense companies, leading academic institutions, federally funded research and development centers, and

startups located in eight Northeast states. POWER is funded through the Microelectronics Commons Program.

Applications for the POWER program are due on Dec. 15 and may be submitted online at [nemicroelectronics.org/power](https://nemicroelectronics.org/power). Questions can be directed to Program Manager Laura Hastings at [hastings@masstech.org](mailto:hastings@masstech.org).

More information about the NEMC Hub and POWER program is available at [nemicroelectronics.org](https://nemicroelectronics.org). ●

## New Bedford-based Youth Programs Team recognized

At the State House on Nov. 19, Gov. Maura Healey and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development honored the MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board's Youth Programs Team with the Business Collaboration Award.

The award recognizes exemplary partnerships that strengthen career pathways for young people and promote workforce development across the state.

Healey highlighted the Youth Programs Team's innovative work in building meaningful employer relationships, supporting youth development, and strengthening the regional workforce pipeline. The honor reflects the team's commitment to connecting young people with real career opportunities and

demonstrates the value of collaboration between government, employers and youth-serving organizations.

During the summer of 2025, the Youth Programs Team connected more than 280 young people, ages 14 to 25, with six-week paid internships across industries such as manufacturing, hospitality, early childhood education, clean energy, and robotics. The youths gained hands-on experience and were exposed to high-demand careers.

The Youth Programs Team continues to expand employer partnerships, increase access to career pathways for underserved youth, and align programming with both regional workforce needs and statewide priorities.

The award and the work of the Youth Programs Team occur within the broader context of the state's YouthWorks initiative, with MassHire Greater New Bedford administering local programs.

[MassHire Greater New Bedford](https://masshiregreaternewbedford.org) is a business-led, policy-setting board that oversees workforce development initiatives in a 10-community region including Acushnet, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Freetown, Lakeville, Marion, Mattapoisett, New Bedford, Rochester and Wareham. Appointed by New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell, the board is composed of business, civic, education, labor and community leaders. It is one of 16 similar boards in Massachusetts. ●

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### DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*Continued from page 2*

Taking a moment for gratitude won't wipe away the real and complex challenges that you face, but it is my sincere hope that a small sip of gratitude will

help you recharge for the hard work that awaits all of us in the new year.

From me and the whole team at the MMA, we are thankful to be part of the Commonwealth's municipal family, and we all look forward to the work ahead in

the service of improving conditions for local government in Massachusetts. ●

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### MIIA

*Continued from page 17*

- David Dowd Jr., vice president of claims at MIIA

- Susan Noyes, director of the Office of Municipal and School Technology in the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security

Lin Chabra, senior risk manager at

MIIA, will moderate the discussion.

For full details, registration, and MIIA Rewards eligibility, visit the [Connect 351 website](#) or consult the event app. ●

# State, MassTech invest in regional technology growth

The Healey-Driscoll administration and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative's Innovation Institute on Nov. 6 announced the designation of 14 regions across Massachusetts as official TechHubs through the Massachusetts TechHubs Program, along with \$16.3 million in funding.

The program aims to strengthen innovation through investment in technology development, high-growth industries, and innovative local companies.

Regions apply to become a TechHub, a designation that the administration says will boost visibility and credibility to attract talent and investment. TechHubs gain access to grants for strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and innovation infrastructure. Membership in the statewide TechHub Network fosters collaboration, resource-sharing, and the exchange of best practices.

The 14 TechHubs span the state from the Berkshires to the South Coast and reflect a range of industry clusters, including advanced optics, bio-industrial manufacturing, marine technology, quantum technologies, and robotics.

To support collaboration among TechHubs, MassTech also launched the Massachusetts TechHub Network, a peer-driven community of practice for regional innovation leaders. This network

will also inform future funding opportunities that may be offered through the TechHub Program.

The TechHub program offers awards and designations in three tracks to support regions at different stages of development: Transformation, Strategy Development, and Designation-Only.

Transformation grants of between \$4.3 million and \$5.2 million were awarded to the Advanced Optics TechHub led by Berkshire Innovation Center (Pittsfield); Bioindustrial Manufacturing TechHub led by Worcester Polytechnic Institute (Worcester); Marine TechHub led by New Bedford Ocean Cluster (New Bedford).

Strategy Development grants of \$100,000 were awarded to the Advanced Mobility Technologies TechHub led by Endicott College (Beverly); Advanced Manufacturing TechHub led by Old Colony Planning Commission (Route 24 Corridor); AI, Robotics and Advanced Materials TechHub led by Merrimack College (North Andover); Housing Innovation TechHub led by UMass Lowell (Greater Lowell); Soil to Sea Sustainability TechHub led by



The state has designated 14 regions across Massachusetts as TechHubs through the Massachusetts TechHubs Program, which aims to strengthen local innovation.

InnoVenture Labs (Metro North); Food Science TechHub led by Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (Pioneer Valley).

Designation-Only TechHubs include the Advanced Manufacturing TechHub led by Middlesex 3 Coalition (Middlesex 3 Corridor); Digital Infrastructure TechHub led by Qubic Labs (Quincy); Blue Economy TechHub led by Massachusetts Port Authority (Boston); Robotics TechHub led by MassRobotics (Boston); Quantum Technologies TechHub led by Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council (Pioneer Valley).

For more information, visit [innovation.masstech.org/techhubs](https://innovation.masstech.org/techhubs). ●

## State awards \$632k to support local cooling efforts

The Healey-Driscoll administration on Oct. 31 announced nearly \$632,000 in grants from the Cooling Corridors program, which focuses on planting trees in identified hotspots, along popular walking routes, and in Environmental Justice neighborhoods across Massachusetts.

Managed by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Division of Conservation Services, the funding supports eight projects proposed by municipalities and nonprofit organizations. The projects aim to increase tree canopy and lessen the health impacts of extreme heat, while creating cooler, safer public spaces through increased shade from tree cover. The projects also include comprehensive watering plans, impervious surface removal, and painting surfaces light colors.

Establishing tree cover, including small groups of trees known as micro-forests, can significantly help reduce heat-related health issues during high summer temperatures. In high-density urban areas, just five trees planted per acre can benefit 15 to 25 households.

Grants ranging from \$36,600 to \$100,000 were awarded to the towns of Chelmsford, Needham and Plymouth, the city of Gloucester, Biomimicry New England (Gloucester), Mystic River Watershed Association (Medford and Melrose), Speak for the Trees (Boston),



The Healey-Driscoll administration has announced grants for tree-planting efforts to cool communities during warmer temperatures.

and Tree Eastie Inc. (East Boston). ●



# Boston CIO to keynote Urban Studies seminar

By Carlos Rufin

Local leaders are invited to hear Santiago Garces, chief innovation officer for the city of Boston, give a keynote address on Dec. 9 as part of a “What Is AI for Urban Governance” seminar at Suffolk University in Boston.

The event is part of the [Urban Studies Foundation](#)’s seminar series aimed at promoting discussion among academics and urban governance practitioners on the development of a research agenda for new, responsible and transparent AI capabilities for accessible decision support for urban governance.

The seminar series agenda features training sessions for early career researchers, and is open to other academics and practitioners. It will be disseminated among wider audiences via webinars and policy briefs.

The series will have three key events:

- Dec. 8-10: “What Is AI for Urban Governance” and “AI for Advanced Urban Simulation Methods” ([Register online](#))
- April 8-10, 2026: “AI as a Tool for Inclusive DS” and “AI for Participatory



Methods,” at University of Brasilia in Brazil

- July 22-24, 2026: A co-produced research agenda for responsible and transparent AI for DS in urban governance, and a methodological toolkit to include responsible and transparent AI in urban governance research, at the University of Manchester in England

A series of webinars and policy briefs will complement the events, starting with a launch webinar that was held on Oct. 24.

The series will bring together urban academics and urban governance practitioners in the three countries, and the follow-up webinars and policy briefs will disseminate the findings globally to wider communities.

Policy briefs will be translated into multiple languages.

The series has the support of the Massachusetts Municipal Association (USA), the National Federation of Mayors (Brazil), and the Local Government Information Unit (UK), who will provide support in mobilizing the local and national communities of urban stakeholders and in disseminating the findings of the seminar series.

The seminar series is expected to generate a forum of discussion with academics and urban stakeholders to address the fast pace of GenAI development in urban governance. It will then create a large community of academics and urban stakeholders engaged in research and practices in urban governance where GenAI is presenting itself as a central future avenue of development.

The seminar series is expected to give a robust contribution to the discussion about the development and use of AI in urban governance.

[Click here for more information about the seminar series.](#) Questions may be emailed to [crufin@suffolk.edu](mailto:crufin@suffolk.edu).

Carlos Rufin, Ph.D., is a senior lecturer at Suffolk University. ●

## State awards \$559,000 for green spaces in Gateway Cities

The Healey-Driscoll Administration on Oct. 23 announced \$559,000 in grants to support community green spaces and remove concrete and asphalt in Gateway Cities across Massachusetts.

The funding is allocated via the Greening the Gateway Cities Program.

A total of \$370,800 will be allocated through the Gateway Cities Program Implementation Grant Program, which provides funding to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the planting and care of trees, removing impervious surfaces, and enhancing the urban tree canopy.

An additional \$188,747 will go to seven projects under the Gateway Cities Non-Profit Partnership Grant Program, focusing on grassroots outreach to ensure more trees are planted where they’re needed most.



The Healey-Driscoll administration has announced grant awards for community green spaces and concrete and asphalt removal through the Greening the Gateway Cities Program.

The [Greening the Gateway Cities Program](#) is a collaborative effort between the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s Urban and Community

Forestry Program, and local governments and community organizations. The program supports tree planting in urban neighborhoods, improved air quality, reduced energy costs, flood prevention flooding, and mitigating heat impacts during warm months.

Program implementation grants ranging from \$34,800 to \$100,000 were awarded to the cities of Everett, Salem and Springfield, as well as One Holyoke and Saint Bernard’s High School in Fitchburg.

Non-Profit Partnership grants ranging from \$26,901 to \$60,000 were awarded to Growing Places (Leominster and Fitchburg), Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust, Salem Sound Coastwatch, Revitalize CDC (Chicopee and Holyoke), and Wildlands Trust (Taunton). ●

# Classified Advertisements

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### Driver/Laborer

#### Town of Holbrook

Title: Driver/Laborer – Department of Public Works. Location: town of Holbrook, 40 hours/week, Teamsters Local 653. Salary: Grade 2 – \$30.29/hr (fiscal 2026). Available Oct. 16. Description: The town of Holbrook DPW seeks a motivated Driver/Laborer to operate light and heavy equipment and perform general maintenance and construction tasks. Duties include snow and ice removal, street, sewer, and water maintenance, equipment operation, and routine inspections. Candidates must have a high school diploma (or equivalent), Massachusetts Class B license, and two to three years of experience with motor or excavation equipment. Physical strength, teamwork, and safety awareness are essential. Advancement opportunities exist with additional licenses. Holbrook is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Apply To: [RMCUE@holbrookmassachusetts.us](mailto:RMCUE@holbrookmassachusetts.us). How to Apply: Interested candidates should email a cover letter and resume to [RMCue@holbrookmassachusetts.us](mailto:RMCue@holbrookmassachusetts.us), or mail them to: Town of Holbrook – Human Resources, 50 South Franklin St., Holbrook, MA 02343. Deadline: Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

### Director of Finance and Operations Cohasset Public Schools

Director of Finance and Operations. District Overview: The Cohasset Public School District is committed to developing the whole child in a supportive atmosphere that helps students strive for academic and social-emotional excellence. Cohasset is a high-performing school district with dynamic students, hardworking and qualified educators, dedicated staff and a collaborative School Committee. The community values and supports our educational initiatives as outlined in our District Strategic Plan. Job Description: The director of finance and operations is part of the district leadership team and plays a critical role in developing and implementing the district's strategic plan, ensuring that resources are aligned with the district's priorities. The director coordinates and oversees the daily management of all of the business affairs of the schools and maintains records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The director also oversees the operations of various building and transportation services. This is a district level position, under the supervision of the superintendent and appointed by the School Committee. The director of finance and operations works collaboratively with the administrative team and the School Committee. Length of position: Full-time, full year. Salary: \$150,000 to \$160,000, based on experience. [www.schoolspring.com/jobdetail?jobId=5426066](http://www.schoolspring.com/jobdetail?jobId=5426066)

### Public Health Agent

#### Town of Dudley

The town of Dudley is seeking a qualified individual to serve as a full-time Public Health Agent. This position oversees department operations, programs, and grants; supervises staff and volunteers; enforces local, state, and federal public health regulations; conducts inspections; and serves as the technical advisor to the Board of Health. Working under the direction of the Board of Health, the Public Health Agent plans and manages departmental objectives

and budget, ensures regulatory compliance, and coordinates public health programs and emergency response efforts. The position also represents the town in interactions with state agencies, schools, housing authorities, and community partners. Key responsibilities include conducting inspections and investigations, preparing reports and enforcement documents, supervising public health clinics and staff, managing grants, overseeing emergency plans, drafting regulations, and responding to communicable disease and environmental health concerns. This is a Grade 4 position, with a pay range of \$33.18 to \$38.31 per hour, depending on qualifications and experience. Competitive retirement and benefits package. Attendance at Board of Health meetings, typically one Tuesday night per month, is required. Ideal candidates will have a bachelor's degree or equivalent experience, three to five years in public health, and a valid Class D driver's license. For the full job description, visit [dudleyma.gov/jobs](http://dudleyma.gov/jobs). To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume to: Olivia Antonson, Assistant Town Administrator/Human Resources Manager at [townadmin2@dudleyma.gov](mailto:townadmin2@dudleyma.gov).

### HR and Benefits Administrator

#### Town of Yarmouth

The town of Yarmouth is searching for an experienced HR professional to join our team. Working under the direction of the Director of Human Resources, performs varied and responsible duties requiring thorough knowledge of departmental operations. Communicates benefit plan information to employees during pre-employment, employment and in conjunction with employee terminations, retirement and throughout retirement. Assists in development of special projects/programs at a town-wide level. Administers employee benefits programs including multiple health insurance programs for current and retired employees, life insurance, dental insurance, FSA, retirement plans, disability insurance, special discount and payroll deduction programs, and other contracted benefit programs. Processes enrollments, changes and terminations; communicates with payroll

for required deductions. Reconciles and processes insurance invoices. Maintains accurate and up-to-date subscriber lists. Maintains retiree insurance records. Maintains personnel records for year-round, part-time and full-time employees relating to employment, compensation, benefits, leaves of absence, evaluation, discipline, and separation. Provides guidance/assistance to employees throughout organization on same. Plans and coordinates employee benefits events including annual Open Enrollment, Benefits Fair, Employee Recognition, and Cape Cod Municipal Health Group-sponsored Wellness Programs. Maintains records and processes paperwork for the Cape Cod Municipal Health Group and the Barnstable County Retirement Association. Performs similar or related work as required. Please complete an employment application form found on [www.yarmouth.ma.us/jobs](http://www.yarmouth.ma.us/jobs). Submit completed employment application form, resume and cover letter to [humanresources@yarmouth.ma.us](mailto:humanresources@yarmouth.ma.us) with "HR and Benefits Administrator" in the subject line and include your full name, address, phone number and email address on the cover letter and resume.

### Town Accountant

#### Town of Saugus

The town of Saugus is hiring a Town Accountant. The Town Accountant provides professional accounting work of an administrative, supervisory and participatory nature with responsibility for maintaining the town's fiscal health including but not limited to maintenance of the town's General Ledger, the processing of accounts payable, payroll, and overseeing and monitoring the expenditure of town funds versus budgetary amounts, classification of revenues and the preparation of various financial reports in accordance with applicable local, State (M.G.L. Ch. 41, Secs. 50-61), and/or federal laws and regulations, keeping financial records, auditing of all department financial records, reporting to the state on a yearly basis, and reporting to the town all receipts and expenditures of the town for the

■ CLASSIFIEDS *continued on 35*

## Classified advertising rates and information

The Beacon publishes classified ads from units of government, public agencies, and companies.

Classified advertising categories are: Employment Opportunities, Requests for Proposals, and Services. Only one job opening or RFP can be listed per ad. The MMA cannot assume responsibility for information or claims made in any advertisement.

### Classified advertising rates

Classified ad rates include publication in The Beacon and on [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org), though a discount is available for those who request placement of an ad only on the website.

### Member rates

- web only, 200 words or less: \$115;  
201-400 words: \$225
- web & Beacon, 200 words or less: \$165;  
201-400 words: \$325

### Nonmember rates

- web only, 200 words or less: \$175;  
201-400 words: \$285
- web & Beacon, 200 words or less: \$225;  
201-400 words: \$385

### Beacon deadlines and publication dates

The Beacon is published on the first business day of each month, except in the summer, when a combined July-August issue is published in mid-July.

### January (2026) Beacon

Deadline: December 29  
Publication: January 7

### February (2026) Beacon

Deadline: January 27  
Publication: February 2

### Placing an ad

You may use our convenient online form at [www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/add-listing/](http://www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/add-listing/).

For more information, call Owen Page at the MMA at 617-426-7272, ext. 135.

Missed the Beacon deadline for an employment ad? You can still get the word out – right away.

See [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org) for details.

# Classified Advertisements

## CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 34

past financial year. This role also supervises three subordinate staff. Minimum qualifications for the position include a bachelor's degree (accounting or related field); five years of progressively responsible accounting, budgeting and auditing experience; or equivalent combination of education and experience. Certified Governmental Accountant preferred; MUNIS experienced highly desired. This is a full-time position; current annual salary range is \$120,000 to \$150,000; offer at hire DOQ and experience. Candidates with prior municipal accounting experience preferred. To apply, email resume and cover letter to Shalini Malik, Human Resources Manager at [smalik@saugus-ma.gov](mailto:smalik@saugus-ma.gov); position open until filled. Please visit our Human Resources website for a complete job description: [www.saugus-ma.gov/human-resources/pages/town-employment](http://www.saugus-ma.gov/human-resources/pages/town-employment).

### Assistant Town Administrator

#### Town of Holbrook

The town of Holbrook is seeking an experienced and motivated professional to serve as Assistant Town Administrator. Reporting to the Town Administrator, the ATA assists in managing and coordinating town operations, procurement, budgeting, communications, and special projects. Responsibilities include overseeing procurement and vendor compliance, managing town communications and social media, assisting with budget development, supporting Select Board and committee functions, and overseeing HR administration. The ATA also serves as Acting Town Administrator when designated. The ideal candidate will be a collaborative leader with excellent communication, analytical, and organizational skills, and a strong commitment to public service. Open until filled. Applications received by Dec. 4 will receive first consideration. Additional information, including a full job description, is available at [www.holbrookma.gov/185/Employment-Opportunities](http://www.holbrookma.gov/185/Employment-Opportunities). To apply, submit a cover letter, resume, and references to: Anne Mahoney, Town Administrator, Town of Holbrook, 50 North Franklin St., Holbrook, MA 02343 or [amahoney@holbrookmassachusetts.us](mailto:amahoney@holbrookmassachusetts.us).

### Treasurer

#### Massachusetts School Building Authority

Job Title: Treasurer. Department: Finance. Reports To: Chief Financial Officer. FLSA: Exempt. Grade: 14. Salary: \$114,821 to \$129,174 annually. Hours: 37.5 hours/week (Hybrid schedule – two in-office days each week required). The Massachusetts School Building Authority is a quasi-independent government authority created to reform the process of funding capital improvement projects in the Commonwealth's public schools. The MSBA strives to work with local communities to create affordable, sustainable, and energy efficient schools across Massachusetts. Position Summary: Reporting to the Chief Financial Officer, the Treasurer is a senior member of the Finance Department. This role involves a high degree of responsibility and the opportunity to make a meaningful impact, with accuracy being essential due to the role's financial significance. The treasurer is responsible for all MSBA funds and investments, managing cash and investment activities, banking relationships, and cash flows in a fiscally prudent manner and in accordance with applicable state laws and MSBA policies. The treasurer reports on MSBA cash and investment balances, debt,

receipts and disbursement of funds and manages the MSBA's debt portfolio including overseeing the issuance of new debt and realizing debt savings by optimizing refunding opportunities. For more details and to submit your resume, visit [jobs.lever.co/massschoolbuildings/122af0a0-19e0-4a38-a877-1a60943d1859](https://jobs.lever.co/massschoolbuildings/122af0a0-19e0-4a38-a877-1a60943d1859).

### Part-Time Town Administrator

#### Town of Brookfield

The town of Brookfield is seeking an experienced Town Administrator to work 15 to 20 hours per week. The Town Administrator performs complex professional, administrative and management work in providing daily control over ongoing town activities, as well as assisting and advising the Select Board to discharge the duties of their office. Providing executive leadership in areas of policy formulation, fiscal affairs, labor relations, and organizational development, the Town Administrator acts as the agent for the Select Board. Salary range \$40,000 to \$60,000, depending on hours and experience. Candidate should have municipal experience. For a complete job description, log onto [brookfieldma.us](http://brookfieldma.us), and click on Employment Opportunities. Those interested should send a letter of interest and resume to [selectmen@brookfieldma.us](mailto:selectmen@brookfieldma.us). Resumes accepted until position is filled. Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

## CAREERS AT MMA/MIIA

### Senior Risk Management Trainer MMA/MIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association are seeking a Senior Risk Management Trainer to join the MIIA Risk Management Team. This is an excellent opportunity for someone who is passionate about safety and risk management and excels at training and developing tailored safety, health, and risk management programs for municipalities. About the MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association provides an array of services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, education and training, research and analysis, and publications and information programs. As the voice of local government in Massachusetts, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns. About MIIA: The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association provides property, liability, workers compensation, and group health insurance to cities and towns in Massachusetts. MIIA is a nonprofit organization and a membership service of Massachusetts Municipal Association. About the position: As Senior Risk Management Trainer, you will collaborate with the risk management and programming teams to deliver exceptional training experiences to members and peers. You will be responsible for creating, presenting, and revising training programs and materials for MIIA members and staff in a timely and consistent manner. Key responsibilities: Collaborate with the Senior Manager of Risk Management to set guidelines for the MIIA risk management training and program plan. Develop, implement, and evaluate MIIA's safety and health curriculum. Assist in developing and delivering training on other MIIA insurance coverages, including auto, property, general liability, professional liability, law enforcement, school board, and professional liability. Provide on-site and virtual training for

members. Review member training requests and create training descriptions and course flyers. Facilitate online training and track member evaluations. Provide monthly training updates and annual training reviews to management. Additional responsibilities: Analyze member loss data to identify training needs and create materials to address high-loss and topical areas. Review materials with the risk management team, create and update technical documentation, and provide guidance for incident review and remediation. Serve as a liaison with the risk management team, outside consultants, and members, and conduct outside inspections. Become knowledgeable about MIIA's cyber risk management program and explore educational opportunities. Program review and analysis then update, implementation and evaluation. Project work as required. Qualifications: The candidate must have a bachelor's degree in a safety-related field, preferably in occupational health and safety. Five years of work experience in safety or insurance related fields. Experience with adult learning principles and creating and implementing training curricula. Ability to work in a team setting and independently. Understanding of instructional design is a plus. Preference for an individual who is a current OSHA outreach trainer. Work environment: Our offices are located in Boston's Government Center neighborhood. The position offers a salary range of \$87,500 to \$116,500, terrific benefits, and a great collaborative work culture. Our office uses a hybrid work schedule. If you are ready to devote yourself to work on behalf of our member cities and towns, then this position may be for you. How to apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: [hr@mma.org](mailto:hr@mma.org).

### Driver Training Instructor - EVOC and Simulator MMA/MIIA

The Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association are seeking a full-time Driver Training Instructor (Simulator and EVOC) to oversee the driver simulator training program across the Commonwealth. The individual will also be a Certified Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) Instructor to train police officers in emergency driving scenarios. About the MMA: The nonpartisan Massachusetts Municipal Association provides an array of services to its member cities and towns statewide, including advocacy, education and training, research and analysis, and publications and information programs. As the voice of local government in Massachusetts, the MMA works to advance the interests of all cities and towns. About MIIA: The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association provides property, liability, workers compensation, and group health insurance to cities and towns in Massachusetts. MIIA is a nonprofit organization and a subsidiary of Massachusetts Municipal Association. About the position: The MIIA simulator is a state-of-the-art driving simulator available to MIIA member communities and offers a safe environment for driver operators to experience a variety of scenarios and conditions typical to emergency response situations. Simulator duties: The Driving Instructor will have knowledge of or ability to be trained in the use of the Doran simulator computer system, including police, fire, DPW and general municipal driving scenarios. They will be responsible for curriculum development, including vehicle and scenario updates. They will work with Doran to ensure a 24-hour customer support onsite visit with followup.

■ CLASSIFIEDS continued on page



# Classified Advertisements

## CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 35

They schedule and confirm training while maintaining the truck, trailer and simulator. They will track and communicate participant performance to their Police Chief/Fire Chief or Training Officer. EVOC Instructor duties: the Driving Instructor will train participants on vehicle pre-trip inspections, defensive driving, backing emergency response pursuit and vehicle limitations. They will also discuss the importance of attitude, skill, capability and driving conditions. They will be responsible for course development, including setup and breakdown of courses. They will handle the onsite training logistics and facilitate driving instruction while supervising a team of EVOC instructors. Qualifications: The candidate must have knowledge and fluency of Police/Fire response policies, a valid driver license and the ability to drive the truck while towing the simulator trailer. They must have an understanding of the interaction between dispatchers and officers. EVOC Certification or the ability to obtain certification is required. Knowledge of EVOC course design, statement of program objectives and understanding of vehicle dynamics are necessary. Knowledge of commercial vehicles, federal highway regulations and CDL licensing is important. They must possess a DOT medical card. Five years of public safety employment, training and supervisory experience is preferred. Simulator experience is a plus. The salary range for this position is \$75,000 to \$100,000. How to Apply: Please send a PDF of your cover letter and resume to: [hr@mma.org](mailto:hr@mma.org).

*The MMA and MIIA are committed to diversity in the workplace and are proud to be equal opportunity employers. Diverse candidates are encouraged to apply. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, genetics information, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, disability, age, or military or veteran status.*

## SERVICES

### Municipal Energy Services

Through the MMA's MunEnergy program, MMA members have access to an energy contract designed exclusively for Massachusetts cities and towns. The MunEnergy program offers access to energy experts at Constellation, a vetted municipal energy contract, and options for sustainability programs. Energy professionals at Constellation, the MMA-endorsed supplier for MunEnergy, work with municipalities to manage electricity costs for the long term. Constellation is also on the forefront of sustainability programs and provides financial support to the MMA for its promotional and marketing efforts. To learn more, visit [www.mma.org/munenergy](http://www.mma.org/munenergy). To be notified about MunEnergy events, send contact information for the person on your team who handles energy for your city or town to [energy@mma.org](mailto:energy@mma.org).

### AED System Services

Each year, about 356,000 sudden cardiac arrests (SCA) occur outside hospitals in the United States. Most happen in homes, offices, and community

spaces — places where AEDs are often missing or not maintained. When seconds matter, survival depends on one thing: whether an AED is rescue ready. Life Support Systems, a Massachusetts-based company, helps workplaces and communities stay prepared. We provide AEDs, training, and professional maintenance programs that keep your devices ready to save lives. Many organizations don't realize their risk. AEDs must be inspected, batteries and pads replaced, and logs kept up to code — yet one in five public-access AEDs are out of compliance. That means in an emergency, the device may fail. We take that burden off your plate. Whether you're starting a new program or managing existing units, we help reduce compliance burdens and liability risk. What sets us apart: Affordable AED programs, routine inspections and digital tracking, blended CPR/AED training, Local, on-site Massachusetts support. With 45-plus years of experience, Life Support Systems helps protect lives, reduce liability, and build safer communities. Reach out today and mention MMA for a special offer: [www.lifesupportsystems.com](http://www.lifesupportsystems.com) or call 781-320-0030.

### Municipal Accounting and Consulting Services

Our outstanding team specializes in municipal financial consulting and outsourced accounting. Since 2008, we have worked with many Massachusetts cities and towns with interim accounting, special projects, fraud risk assessments, financial forecasts, and budgeting. We also provide permanent outsourced accounting solutions, which have proven successful for many years. Please contact Eric Kinsherf at [eric@erickinsherfcpa.com](mailto:eric@erickinsherfcpa.com) or visit our website [erickinsherfcpa.com](http://erickinsherfcpa.com) for further information.

### General Consultant, Recruiting and Special Issues

Municipal Resources Inc. has been providing management solutions to New England municipalities since 1989. MRI is able to provide expertise when and where it's needed. Our services include executive recruitments, assessment centers and promotional testing; public safety organizational studies; finance operations; interim staffing; internal investigations; efficiency and regionalization studies. MRI has an extensive group of experienced subject experts who are able to provide the technical and management expertise that can help communities deliver quality services and resolve complex problems with real-world solutions. Contact us at 866-501-0352 or [info@mrigov.com](mailto:info@mrigov.com).

### Urban Economics Consulting

Strategy 5 Consulting LLC is a boutique urban economics firm based in Andover, with national experience in a wide range of challenging projects. Over three decades, Principal Ernest Bleinberger has completed successful economic development strategic plans, achieved tangible downtown revitalization, conducted financial feasibility and market analyses in many sectors, formed TIF districts, induced significant private sector investment, and excelled in high-profile assignments from coast to coast. Our work ethic and professionalism ensure a close working relationship with our clients that has proven beneficial in achieving real economic results. Please contact Ernest Bleinberger by phone at 978-984-7125 or by email at [eb@strategy5.net](mailto:eb@strategy5.net). [www.strategy5.net](http://www.strategy5.net).

### Municipal Support Services

Capital Strategic Solutions (CSS) is a Massachusetts-based, certified woman-owned, disadvantaged

business enterprise composed of municipal experts. We have hands-on experience that allows us to formulate and implement strategies tailored to the communities we serve. We specialize in public administration and municipal finance, human resources and policy development, emergency management services and public safety, public works and infrastructure operations, public relations and community engagement, project management and oversight, grant writing and administration, and onsite support services. For more information, visit [www.capital-strategic-solutions.com](http://www.capital-strategic-solutions.com), call 508-690-0046, or email [info@capital-strategic-solutions.com](mailto:info@capital-strategic-solutions.com).

### Municipal Financial Management Software: Accounting, Cloud, Utility and Collections

VADAR Systems provides financial management software to more than 100 Massachusetts municipalities. Our accounting, cloud, utility and collections applications are designed exclusively for Massachusetts municipalities by Massachusetts end users. The VADAR Cloud maximizes efficiency with 24/7 secure, remote access to all your applications from any device. Our user support offers unparalleled expertise. Proudly serving Massachusetts for 20-plus years. For a free on-site demonstration, please contact us at 877-823-2700 or [sales@vadarsystems.com](mailto:sales@vadarsystems.com). Learn more at [www.VADARsystems.com](http://www.VADARsystems.com). Locally owned and operated at 20 Main St., Suite G1, Acton, MA 01701.

### Human Capital Solutions

MGT provides executive recruiting, comprehensive interim staffing, and human capital consulting for local governments, school districts, businesses, and nonprofits. Drawing on decades of experience working across the country, our team collaborates with your organization to understand your unique needs, culture, and goals to deliver tangible results. We tackle immediate challenges, anticipate future workplace needs, bridge talent gaps, and enhance policies to foster lasting positive transformation within your organization. Visit us at [mgt.us](http://mgt.us), post to our job board at [govhrjobs.com](http://govhrjobs.com), or contact our team of experts at 847-380-3240.

### Tax Title Legal Services

KP | Law has been providing a full range of legal services to municipal treasurers and collectors for more than 30 years. Our experienced tax title attorneys draft collection letters and payment agreements; prepare all instruments relative to tax takings and tax sales; draft pleadings for Land Court foreclosures; and provide full representation of municipalities in Land Court actions. We also provide assistance with disposition or reuse of tax parcels. The breadth of our experience, volume, use of experienced paralegals, state-of-the-art computer and informational services, and close proximity to the Land Court enables us to provide prompt, cost-effective services. For additional information, please visit [www.k-plaw.com](http://www.k-plaw.com) or contact Lauren Goldberg, Esq. at 617-556-0007, or toll free at 800-548-3522, or at [lgoldberg@k-plaw.com](mailto:lgoldberg@k-plaw.com).

### Human Resources Consulting

Human Resources Services Inc. provides a full range of human resource management consulting services to Massachusetts local governments and other public agencies. Specialization includes compensation/classification, performance appraisal, job analysis

■ CLASSIFIEDS continued on 37

# Classified Advertisements

## CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 36

and evaluation, job descriptions, salary/benefits and total compensation surveys and analytics, personnel policies/handbooks, staffing and organizational management studies, HR audits and assessments, HR training services, recruitment and selection services, web-based HR services, and special projects. Please contact Sandy Stapczynski, President, Human Resources Services Inc., 9 Bartlet St., Suite 186, Andover, MA 01810; 978-474-0200; [hsrcounseling@comcast.net](mailto:hsrcounseling@comcast.net); or visit [www.hsrcounselinginc.com](http://www.hsrcounselinginc.com). WBE certified.

### Navigating Employment Law

Navigate the intricate world of public employment law with this indispensable guide, crafted to address some of the most challenging and pressing issues faced by public employers today. While it's impossible to cover every facet of employment law in a single volume, this resource focuses on providing practical guidance on key topics, including: Harassment in the Workplace; Combatting Disability Discrimination; FLSA; FMLA; Labor Relations; Management Rights; Freedom of Speech; IOD; Personnel Records. For more information or to purchase, visit [mpitraining.com/product/navigating-employment-law-a-practical-guide-for-municipal-leaders](http://mpitraining.com/product/navigating-employment-law-a-practical-guide-for-municipal-leaders).

### Town Counsel Services

KP | Law is a municipal law firm. With offices in Boston, Hyannis, Lenox, Northampton and Worcester, we serve as town counsel to more than 125 towns throughout Massachusetts, from Provincetown to Williamstown, and as special counsel to another 90. For more than 30 years, we have devoted ourselves to municipal law and have become experts in the defense of all areas of municipal trial matters. We have specialists in all areas of municipal law and maintain an environmental and land use law department that is on the cutting edge of planning, zoning and conservation. KP | Law is highly sensitive to the

limited legal services budgets of Massachusetts communities and thus has highly competitive billing rates to give your town the best quality legal counsel in the most cost-efficient manner. There is never a need for special counsel. Our breadth and depth of experience helps keep our cost per opinion to a minimum and enables us to service our clients quickly and efficiently, and is consistent with our commitment to excellence. For additional information on the legal services that KP | Law provides, please visit [www.k-plaw.com](http://www.k-plaw.com) or contact Lauren Goldberg, Esq., at 617-556-0007, or toll-free at 800-548-3522, or at [lgoldberg@k-plaw.com](mailto:lgoldberg@k-plaw.com).

### Executive Recruitment and Municipal Management

Groux-White Consulting LLC is a full-service municipal management consulting firm specializing in executive recruitment, interim management, form of government studies, organizational effectiveness evaluations, strategic and financial planning and conflict resolution. Tom Groux and Rick White, One Pelham Road, Lexington, MA 02421; [rickwhite58@verizon.net](mailto:rickwhite58@verizon.net); 781-572-6332; [www.grouxwhiteconsulting.com](http://www.grouxwhiteconsulting.com).

### Executive Recruiting, Management and Governance Consulting Services

Community Paradigm Associates provides comprehensive professional services to public sector, private sector, and not-for-profit clients, including organizational and management studies, executive recruiting, operational analyses, personnel studies, compensation and classification plans, charter development, strategic planning, leadership training, and facilitation services. Community Paradigm Associates has a team of seasoned associates with expertise in all aspects of municipal government. For more information, contact Principal Bernard Lynch at 978-621-6733 or [BLynch@CommunityParadigm.com](mailto:BLynch@CommunityParadigm.com); [www.communityparadigm.com](http://www.communityparadigm.com).

### Public Management Consultants

MMA Consulting Group Inc. provides consulting

services to cities, towns, and other public agencies. We specialize in public safety/emergency response (police, fire, EMS) issues, the design and administration of assessment centers, structured oral panels, and recruitment of police and fire executives. For information, contact Mark Morse, President, MMA Consulting Group Inc., 101 Court St. #7, Plymouth, MA 02360; 508-746-3653; [mmacginc@gmail.com](mailto:mmacginc@gmail.com).

### Labor Counsel Services/Municipal Human Resources Specialists

Clifford and Kenny LLP provides quality representation to cities, towns and school districts in the area of labor and employment. Attorneys John Clifford and Jaime Kenny have many years of experience in representing clients for collective bargaining and personnel-related matters including discipline and discharge of unionized employees. We have extensive experience in the area of police and fire injured-on-duty cases, and have worked extensively with municipalities and insurers to resolve costly long-term claims. We offer training in sexual harassment, social media and the "just cause analysis" to municipal managers. We also serve as appointed hearing officers on a case-by-case basis. Many of our clients take advantage of a flat monthly rate for unlimited phone calls and emails, which encourages key managers to work with counsel prior to making critical personnel decisions. Check our website at [CliffordKennyLaw.com](http://CliffordKennyLaw.com) to see a complete list of our satisfied clients or call John Clifford or Jaime Kenny at 781-924-5796 for more information.

### Special Counsel, Public Construction and Infrastructure Services

Petrini & Associates P.C. (P&A) is a recognized statewide leader in representing public owners in public construction and infrastructure disputes and litigation. P&A has decades of experience, having represented public owners in numerous bid protests, delay claims, differing site conditions, disputes between design professionals and project owners, and a broad variety of other construction disputes. Since its founding in 2004, P&A has represented more than 40 cities, towns, school districts and water and sewer districts in public construction litigation. For further information, please visit [www.petrinilaw.com](http://www.petrinilaw.com) or contact Christopher Petrini at [cpetrini@petrinilaw.com](mailto:cpetrini@petrinilaw.com) or 508-665-4310.

### Town Counsel Services

Harrington Heep LLP provides Town and Special Counsel services to help build and implement local programs that serve community needs. We have the expertise you require, based on decades of real-world experience. We take the time to understand your situation. We inquire, listen and respond. We provide options that will work for you. We are committed to the values of democracy, to preservation and enhancement of natural resources and the built environment, and to excellence and care in support of municipal objectives. We offer competitive rates, personal service, diligent attention to our clients' needs, and good humor. Please contact us at [contact@harringtonheep.com](mailto:contact@harringtonheep.com) or 617-489-1600.

### Town Counsel/Legal Services

Brooks & DeRensis, P.C., is available to provide services to government entities at the state, county, city, town or regional district level. Legal services available include procurement law, contracts, eminent domain, labor relations and civil rights. Contact Paul DeRensis for all public law issues at 857-259-5200. ●



### Managers focuses on strategic planning

Allison Iantosca, executive coach and CEO of F.H. Perry Builder, discusses planning as a priority during the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association Fall Conference on Nov. 20 in Worcester. Iantosca focused on prioritizing long-term strategic planning while being responsive to short-term needs and goals.

# Calendar



# The Beacon

Massachusetts Municipal Association

3 Center Plaza, Suite 610, Boston, MA 02108

## DECEMBER

**5 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association**, newly elected training, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Cyprian Keyes, Boylston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**9 MMA webinar**, alternative response teams, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

**11 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, joint holiday meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., The Manor, West Boylston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker and MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

**17 MMA webinar**, local public health, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

## JANUARY

**14 MMA webinar**, digital accessibility, 12-1:15 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

**22-24 Connect 351**, MMA's annual conference, Menino Convention and Exhibition Center and Omni Boston Hotel. Visit [connect351.org](http://connect351.org) or contact MMA Assistant Director of Events Timmery Kuck.

## FEBRUARY

**3 MMA webinar**, Syncurrent grant funding platform, 12-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Education and Training Coordinator Kristianna Lapierre

**10 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association**, board meeting, 8:45-9:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**10 MMA Board of Directors**, board meeting, 10-11:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

**26 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, mini boot camp, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Middleborough Town Hall, Middleborough. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

## MARCH

**5 Women Leading Government**, conference, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Holy Cross, Worcester. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**11 MMA-Suffolk certificate program**, virtual information session, 10-11 a.m. To register, visit [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

**12 Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, boot camp, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Hotel Northampton, Northampton. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

**19 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association**, meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Cyprian Keyes Golf Club, Boylston. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**25 Massachusetts Mayors' Association**, meeting, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

**27 Women Elected Municipal Officials**, leadership conference, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Publick House, Sturbridge. Contact: MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

## APRIL

**10 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association**, regional meeting, 8-10 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**For more information, visit [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).**

**14 Massachusetts Municipal Councillors' Association**, board meeting, 8:45-9:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker

**14 MMA Board of Directors**, board meeting, 10-11:45 a.m. Contact: MMA Executive Assistant Elanienne Coste

**16 Massachusetts Municipal Management Association and Massachusetts Municipal Human Resources**, joint meeting, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Hawthorne Hotel, Salem. Contact: MMA Senior Member Program Coordinator Denise Baker and MMA Member Program Coordinator Martin Davis

**29 Massachusetts Mayors' Association**, meeting 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Contact: MMA Membership and Project Assistant Katherine Christy

*To list an event of interest to municipal officials in The Beacon, send information about the event, including date, location, sponsorship, cost, and whom to call for more information, to [editor@mma.org](mailto:editor@mma.org).*

### MMA contacts

**Denise Baker** can be reached at [dbaker@mma.org](mailto:dbaker@mma.org)

**Katherine Christy** can be reached at [kchristy@mma.org](mailto:kchristy@mma.org).

**Elanienne Coste** can be reached at [ecoste@mma.org](mailto:ecoste@mma.org)

**Martin Davis** can be reached at [mdavis@mma.org](mailto:mdavis@mma.org)

**Timmery Kuck** can be reached at [tkuck@mma.org](mailto:tkuck@mma.org)

**Kristianna Lapierre** can be reached at [klapierre@mma.org](mailto:klapierre@mma.org)

## CONNECT

Join your colleagues for the  
MMA's Annual Conference!

Full details & registration:  
[mma.org/connect-351](http://mma.org/connect-351)