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## A Message from MAPC Executive Director Marc Draisen: Addressing the COVID-19 Emergency in Metro Boston

As the COVID-19 pandemic changes many aspects of our lives, one thing won't be changing: MAPC is committed to helping local officials and other allies and stakeholders address their needs, and we are encouraging a statewide, coordinated response to this virus.

With that in mind, I wanted to share what MAPC has done so far to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our workplace and in our communities:

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### Remote Work

MAPC staff are working remotely until the emergency subsides. We have moved meetings and smaller events to conference and videos calls, webinars, or online engagement opportunities. Where this is not possible, events have been postponed.

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### Municipal Communication

**MAPC has created a coordinated municipal communication channel among cities and towns, and with the Baker Administration.** Last Thursday, MAPC worked with Mayors Marty Walsh and Joe Curtatone to organize a presentation by epidemiologists on the status of COVID-19 in Massachusetts and the steps needed to slow the spread of the illness. Since that time, we have held three video calls, and we are allowing all municipal leaders from throughout the state to join in. The group has swelled to 190 people representing 120 municipalities.

We are sharing best practices, resources, templates, and information on how to keep residents safe, healthy, and informed while keeping city and town governments running. We are connecting with Baker Administration officials and assertively communicating municipal needs. We are also focused on helping cities and towns keep the needs of vulnerable groups front and center in the conversation.

If you are a mayor, city or town manager, or their designee and you wish to join this group, **please contact Lizzi Weyant, MAPC Director of Government Affairs at [eweyant@mapc.org](mailto:eweyant@mapc.org) and we will immediately place you in the group, add you to the video call group, and direct you to the resources we have online.**

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## Need Assistance?

MAPC is fully open for business on a virtual basis, and we ready to help cities and towns that are struggling with emergency management or coordinating a municipal response to COVID-19. Please, feel free to reach out if you're struggling with staff capacity: we can provide expertise and ease the pressure on small or overwhelmed municipal governments.

### If you need assistance with:

- Municipal governance; maintenance of operations; or remote governance issues during this emergency
  - Contact Mark Fine, Director of Municipal Collaboration, at [mfine@mapc.org](mailto:mfine@mapc.org).
- Public safety and security; emergency management
  - Contact Amy Reilly, Assistant Director of Municipal Collaboration, at [areilly@mapc.org](mailto:areilly@mapc.org).
- Public health issues; direct response to COVID-19
  - Contact Barry Keppard, Director of Public Health, at [bkeppard@mapc.org](mailto:bkeppard@mapc.org).
- Addressing land use planning, environmental issues, or transportation issues during the COVID-19 emergency
  - Contact Mark Racicot, Director of Land Use Planning at [mracicot@mapc.org](mailto:mracicot@mapc.org).

**Or you can just contact any of us: we'll get you to someone who can help, either at MAPC or elsewhere.**

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## Going Forward

In the coming days and weeks, we are committed to acting as a resource for cities and towns as they respond to COVID-19. We will continue to update [our website](#) and social media pages with relevant information, speak directly to our partners throughout the region, and send occasional emails with relevant updates.

### **Status of ongoing planning projects.**

Most of our cities and towns have been working with MAPC on ongoing planning projects in a wide variety of topic areas. Some of these projects can continue, even during the current emergency; others can continue with adjustments; others may need to be postponed. And of course, during the COVID-19 emergency, you may want us to shift and work with you on an entirely new project directly focused on the crisis.

**Next week, department heads and project managers will reach out to you to discuss every ongoing project and to figure out next steps.**

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Please know that MAPC stands ready to assist your community and the region during this time. This is a challenging, unprecedented situation for all of us, but we can make it easier by supporting each other, sharing resources, and continuing to collaborate.

We will continue to reach out with resources and information. I am always available to you at [mdraisen@mapc.org](mailto:mdraisen@mapc.org).

Be strong!

Marc Draisen  
Executive Director

