BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES

Who We Are: The Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) is a statewide organization of the commonwealth's 13 regional planning agencies (RPAs). Each RPA, in turn, comprises representatives of the member cities and towns constituting its geographic region. Although Massachusetts' RPAs are public service agencies, they are not direct arms of the federal or state governments. Rather, they are consortia of local governments that have banded together under the provisions of state law to address problems and opportunities that are regional in scope. The regional planning areas delineated for each of Massachusetts' 13 RPAs are designated by state enabling legislation as special state districts.

Each RPA is governed by a board formed of representatives from its member communities. Planning professionals on RPA staffs work with their boards and with many public agencies and officials to define and direct solutions to area-wide problems that cannot be solved by member communities working alone.

What We Do: The regional planning agencies in Massachusetts are public organizations that encompass a multi-jurisdictional regional community. These RPAs serve the local governments and citizens within their planning districts by dealing with issues and needs that cross city, town, county, and even state boundaries through planning, policymaking, communication coordination, advocacy, education, analysis, and technical assistance.The 13 regional planning agencies that form MARPA are advisory bodies to member communities, private business groups, and state and federal governments, providing research and analysis services and helping to implement planning in areas such as economic development, community and rural development, infrastructure development and maintenance, environment and land use, regional and municipal services, solid waste management and recycling, historic preservation, transportation and transit, GIS mapping and graphics services, technical assistance to member communities, housing, bikeway planning and development, and regional information.

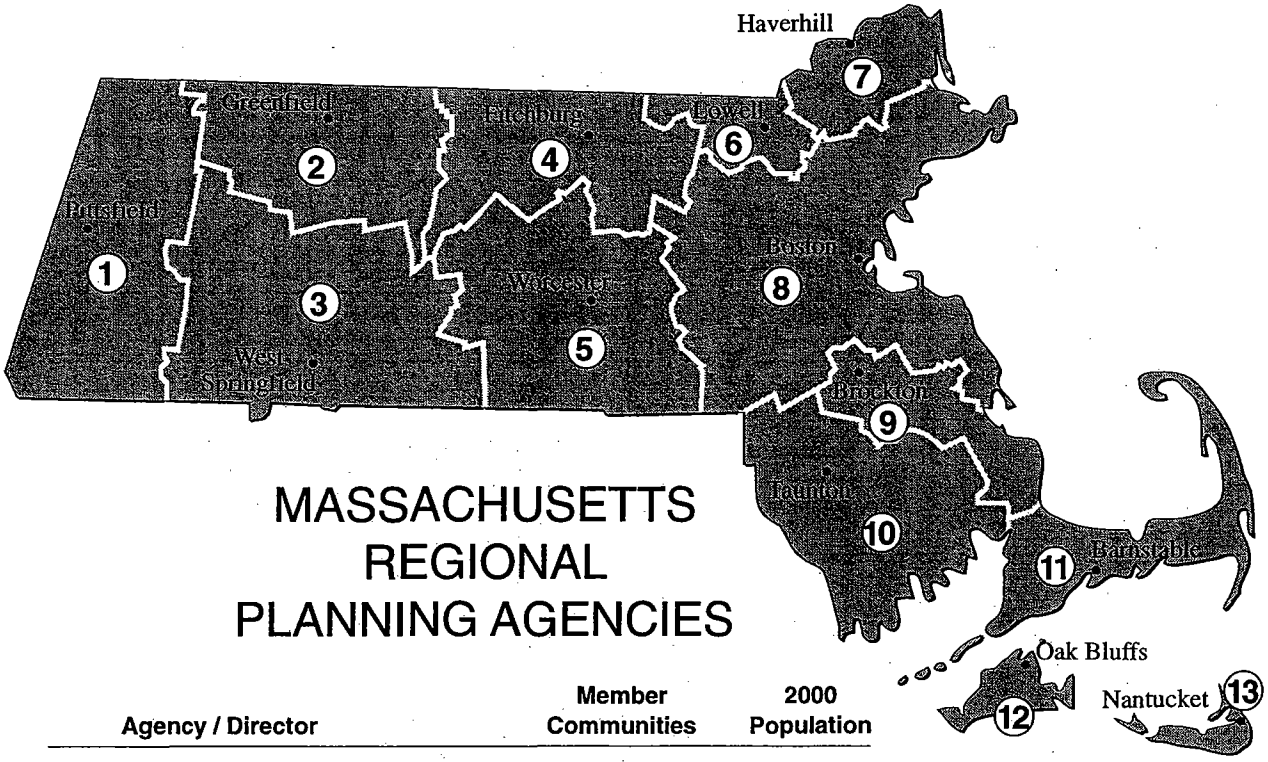
Where We Are: Massachusetts' 13 regional planning agencies cover the entire state with planning areas of varying sizes. There are approximately 600 similar planning organizations nationwide.

When We Were Created: In 1955, Massachusetts became one of the first states in the nation to enact statewide enabling legislation that allowed for the creation of regional planning agencies. Within a decade and half, all 13 Massachusetts RPAs had been legally established, encompassing a majority of the commonwealth's 351 cities and towns. Today, more than 40 years later, all but a handful of the state's municipalities are active members of their regions' RPAs and are fully engaged in a regional planning process that exists wall-to-wall across Massachusetts.

Why We Were Created: Massachusetts' Regional Planning Law, MGL Chapter 40B, was designed "to permit a city or town to plan jointly with cities or towns to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated and orderly development of the areas within their jurisdictions and the general welfare and prosperity of their citizens." In essence, city and town governments within each of the 13 state-designated regional planning districts were authorized to voluntarily join together in order to address problems as well as opportunities of regional scope. Regional planning agencies are the umbrellas under which these cities and towns have come together.

Massachusetts' RPAs promote regional collaboration among their member communities. They are also the primary agencies responsible for increasing communication, cooperation, and coordination among all levels of government as well as the private business and civic sectors in order to benefit their planning regions and to improve their residents' quality of life.

How We Operate: Massachusetts' RPAs are funded through modest annual assessments from their member communities, state and federal grant programs, private sector contributions, and service fees, among other sources.



MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES

Agency / Director	Member Communities	2000 Population
1. **Berkshire Regional Planning Commission** Nathaniel Karns - 413/442-1521	32	134,953
2. **Franklin Regional Council of Gov'ts.** Linda Dunlavy - 413/774-3167	26	71,535
3. **Pioneer Valley Planning Commission** Timothy Brennan - 413/781-6045	43	608,479
4. **Montachusett Regional Planning Comm.** Glenn Eaton - 978/345-7376	22	228,005
5. **Central Mass. Regional Planning Comm.** Lawrence Adams - 508/459-3318	40	518,480
6. **Northern Middlesex Council of Gov'ts.** Beverly Woods - 978/454-8021	9	281,225
7. **Merrimack Valley Planning Commission** Dennis DiZoglio - 978/374-0519	15	318,556
8. **Metropolitan Area Planning Council** Marc Draisen - 617/451-2770	101	3,066,394
9. **Old Colony Planning Council** Pasquale Ciaramella - 508/583-1833	15	321,515
10. **Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District** Stephen Smith - 508/824-1367	27	597,294
11. **Cape Cod Commission** Paul Niedzwiecki - 508/362-3828	15	222,230
12. **Martha's Vineyard Commission** Mark London - 508/693-3453	7	14,987
13. **Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission** Andrew Vorce - 508/228-7237	1	9,520

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MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES

1. **Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC)**
   1 Fenn Street, Suite 201
   Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201
   Telephone (413) 442-1521; Fax (413) 442-1523
   E-mail Address: nkarns@berkshireplanning.org
   Website: www.berkshireplanning.org
   Chair: Jack Hickey
   Executive Director: Nathaniel W. Karns, AICP (nkarns@berkshireplanning.org)

2. **Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)**
   425 Main Street
   Greenfield, Massachusetts 01301
   Telephone (413) 774-3167; Fax (413) 774-3169
   E-mail Address: info@frcog.org
   Website: www.frcog.org
   Chair: Ellen McKay
   Executive Director: Linda Dunlavy (lindad@frcog.org)

3. **Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)**
   26 Central Street
   West Springfield, Massachusetts 01089
   Telephone (413) 781-6045; Fax (413) 732-2593
   E-mail Address: info@pvpc.org
   Website: www.pvpc.org
   Chair: Henry A. Barton
   Executive Director: Timothy W. Brennan (tbrennan@pvpc.org)

4. **Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC)**
   R1427 Water Street
   Fitchburg, Massachusetts 01420
   Telephone (978) 345-7376; Fax (978) 348-2490
   E-mail Address: mrpc@mrpc.org
   Website: www.mrpc.org
   Chair: Victor Koivumaki
   Director: Glenn Eaton (geaton@mrpc.org)

5. **Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC)**
   35 Harvard Street, 2nd Floor
   Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-2801
   Telephone (508) 756-7717; Fax (508) 792-6818
   E-mail Address: cmrpc@cmrpc.org
   Website: www.cmrpc.org
   Chair: Robert Hassinger
   Executive Director: Lawrence B. Adams

6. **Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)**
   Gallagher Terminal, Floor 3B
   115 Thorndike Street
   Lowell, Massachusetts 01852
   Telephone (978) 454-8021; Fax (978) 454-8023
   E-mail Address: mail@nmcog.org
   Website: www.nmcog.org
   Chair: James Silva
   Executive Director: Beverly Woods (bwoods@nmcog.org)

7. **Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)**
   160 Main Street
   Haverhill, Massachusetts 01830
   Telephone (978) 374-0519; Fax (978) 372-4890
   E-mail Address: info@mvpc.org
   Website: www.mvpc.org
   Chair: Robert Lavoie
   Executive Director: Dennis DiZoglio (ddizoglio@mvpc.org)

8. **Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)**
   60 Temple Place, 6th Floor
   Boston, Massachusetts 02111
   Telephone (617) 451-2770; Fax (617) 482-7185
   Website: www.mapc.org
   President: Richard Dimino
   Executive Director: Marc Draisen (mdraisen@mapc.org)

9. **Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC)**
   70 School Street
   Brockton, Massachusetts 02301-4097
   Telephone (508) 583-1833; Fax (508) 559-8768
   E-mail Address: info@ocpcrpa.org
   Website: www.ocpcrpa.org
   President: Jeanmarie Kent Joyce
   Executive Director: Pasquale Ciaramella (pciaramella@ocpcrpa.org)

10. **Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD)**
    88 Broadway
    Taunton, Massachusetts 02780
    Telephone (508) 824-1367; Fax (508) 823-1803
    E-mail Address: info@srpedd.org
    Website: www.srpedd.org
    Chair: Susan Peterson
    Executive Director: Stephen C. Smith (ssmith@srpedd.org)

11. **Cape Cod Commission (CCC)**
    3225 Main Street
    Barnstable, Massachusetts 02630
    Telephone (508) 362-3828; Fax (508) 362-3136
    E-mail Address: frontdesk@capecodcommission.org
    Website: www.capecodcommission.org
    Chair: Robert Jones
    Executive Director: Paul Niedzwiecki (pniedzwiecki@capecodcommission.org)

12. **The Martha's Vineyard Commission (MVC)**
    P.O. Box 1447
    Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts 02557
    Telephone (508) 693-3453; Fax (508) 693-7894
    E-mail Address: info@mvcommission.org
    Website: www.mvcommission.org
    Chair: Doug Sederholm
    Executive Director: Mark London (london@mvcommission.org)

13. **Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission (NP&EDC)**
    1 East Chestnut Street
    Nantucket, Massachusetts 02554
    Telephone (508) 228-7237; Fax (508) 228-7236
    Website: www.nantucket-ma.gov/departments/npedc/npedc.html
    Chair: Barry G. Rector
    Executive Director: Andrew V. Vorce (avorce@nantucket-ma.gov)