

# Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Quarterly Newsletter



## Fall 2020, Issue 4

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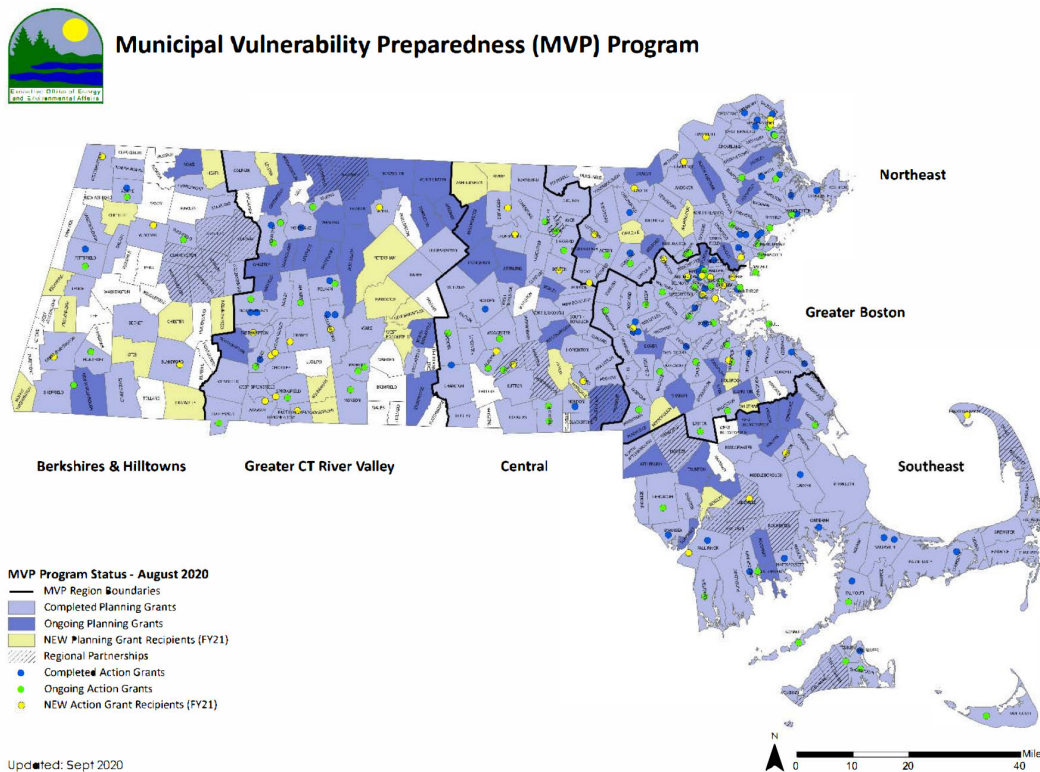
Welcome to the fourth quarterly issue of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Newsletter. The MVP grant program provides support for cities and towns in Massachusetts to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects. The Commonwealth awards communities with funding to complete vulnerability assessments and develop action-oriented resiliency plans. Communities who complete the MVP Planning Grant program become certified as an MVP community and are eligible for MVP Action Grant funding and other opportunities.

**The next MVP round for Planning and Action Grants is expected in Spring 2021.**

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## Press Release & List of Awardees

A new round of funding for Planning and Action Grants was announced by the Baker-Polito Administration in September 2020. A total of \$11.1 million was awarded in this round, with 26 new towns receiving funding to complete the MVP planning process and 41 communities receiving Action Grants. This brings MVP program participation across the Commonwealth to 89%.



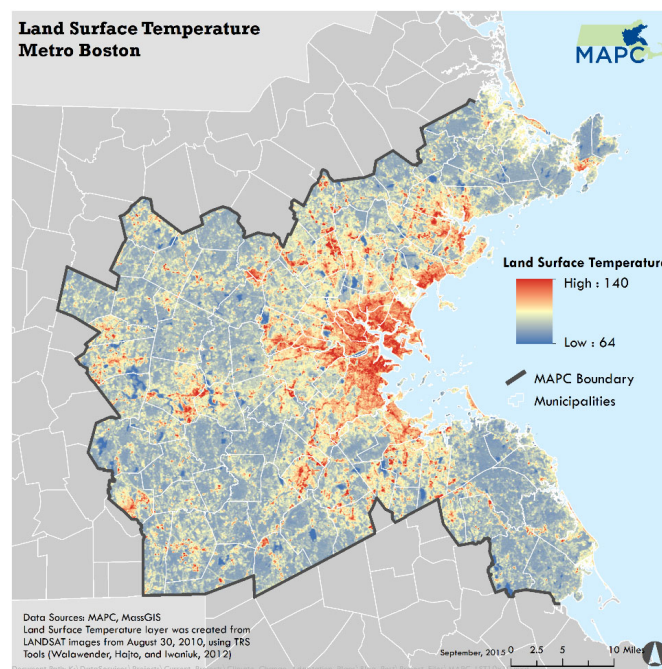
## **FY21 Action Grants Spotlight on Greater Boston & Extreme Heat**

Four Greater Boston area MVP Action Grants awarded in September 2020 are focusing on increasing temperatures and the urban heat island effect-- climate change impacts that were strongly felt across the region this past summer. While the four projects share similar goals and geographic areas, each project has a unique approach to studying urban heat and engaging residents.

- The Town of Arlington and the Resilient Mystic Collaborative will work with the Museum of Science to engage citizen scientists in collecting temperature data that will be used to create a detailed data layer for the Mystic River Watershed.

- The City of Chelsea will use on-the-ground temperature data collected this summer through a project with Boston University to identify ideal locations for green infrastructure and implement nature-based pilot projects.
- The City of Cambridge and the Metro Mayor's Climate Preparedness Task Force (run by MAPC) will work with temperature data on a larger scale, using satellite data to understand extreme temperatures across the MAPC region. This information will serve as the basis for a public-health oriented "Climate-Driven Heat Preparedness Plan" for the communities that participate in the Task Force.
- The City of Boston will use existing data to understand urban heat islands across the city, including temperature data collected by citizen scientists in 2019. The project includes a survey conducted by a youth street team and a series of public charettes focused on five particularly vulnerable neighborhoods to understand the residents' experience of extreme heat to inform a city-wide heat resilience strategy.

All four project teams have been meeting regularly to coordinate their data and community engagement strategies. We are excited to support this kind of collaboration between MVP projects as they seek to build climate resilience across their region.



Credit: MAPC; For more information about this project, contact [carolyn.meklenburg@mass.gov](mailto:carolyn.meklenburg@mass.gov)

## Mitigating the Impacts of Drought





Due to over six months of below normal rainfall and above normal temperatures, [the Commonwealth is currently in a drought](#). Projections indicate we can expect more droughts in the future due to climate change. Droughts will create challenges for local water supply by reducing surface water storage and the recharge of groundwater supplies. More frequent droughts could also exacerbate the impacts of flood events by damaging vegetation that could otherwise help mitigate flooding impacts. Droughts may also weaken tree root systems, making them more susceptible to toppling during high wind events.

Drought ranked as the fourth most common climate hazard of concern in a recent assessment of MVP Planning Grant reports received to date, and several MVP Action Grant projects have focused on reducing future vulnerability to drought.

- In our most recent FY21 funding cycle, Belchertown received a grant to upgrade a water storage tank to a version with increased storage capacity and resiliency to drought. The town also received funding for detailed design and permitting for a rainwater harvesting system at Belchertown High School to irrigate the athletic fields, which would reduce public water use during periods of peak demand.
- In our FY18 funding cycle, Natick implemented a new water utility software, WaterSmart, that uses data and behavioral science to save water. The Town used funds to support community outreach to achieve widespread adoption of the WaterSmart technology. Engagement included mailings, a main street banner, and "Water Week" community outreach activities.

If you are interested in exploring a potential drought-related MVP Action Grant application in our next round (expected Spring 2021) please reach out to your Regional Coordinator (contact information below).

Drought-related resources:

- Learn more about the current drought at <https://www.mass.gov/guides/drought-management-in-massachusetts>
- Learn more about projected changes to precipitation and impacts at <https://resilientma.org/changes/changes-in-precipitation>

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## Announcements

### MVP Feedback Survey: Respond by 11/20

[Survey Link](#)

The MVP Team is committed to providing you with MVP program support and guidance, and to continuously improving the program with each application round. To that end, we have put together a survey to gather community input into the program's current resources and action grant application process. We hope you're able to take some time to **respond no later than Friday, November 20th.**



# MVP

Municipal Vulnerability  
Preparedness

MVP has a new logo! We are excited to share it with you and hope it will assist in communicating about the program with others. Reach out to your Regional Coordinator if you need a high resolution version to use on MVP grant-related materials and deliverables.

## MVP Provider List Clean-Up

We are doing a clean-up of the MVP Planning Grant certified provider list to make sure it stays a useful resource for our communities. Our MVP intern Suriya ([Suriya.selvakumar@mass.gov](mailto:Suriya.selvakumar@mass.gov)) will be sending out an email with instructions this week, and we appreciate your prompt response.

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## Virtual & Remote Public Engagement during COVID-19 for MVP Grants

Over the past few months we've updated our [Virtual & Remote Engagement Toolkit](#) to provide additional information and resources for those completing MVP Planning and Action Grants during the Covid-19 pandemic. Regional Coordinators are standing by as a resource to brainstorm ideas and make sure all activities are consistent with the terms of your grant contract.

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## Upcoming Dates, Events, and Other Opportunities

*Want to share details of your event or other related climate opportunities in our upcoming MVP newsletters? Submit to [kara.runsten@mass.gov](mailto:kara.runsten@mass.gov)*

### Webinars and Virtual Events

- **November 19, 1pm: Blueprint for Greening Affordable Housing.** Every affordable housing project can achieve the fundamentals of good green building design and practice and contribute to creating sustainable and resilient communities. Kim Vermeer, President and Founder of Urban Habitat Initiatives Inc., and Walker Wells, Principal with Raimi & Associates, share innovative practices, the latest affordable housing financing strategies, and examples of places and projects where these strategies have worked in practice. Find more information [here](#).
- **November 20, 10am: Climate Adaptation Forum Creating Connections: Resilience and Equity in Transportation.** Explore initiatives to improve transportation resilience and equity, and the resilience of the communities that rely on this infrastructure. Participants will hear from experts from around the country who work on various modes of transportation, who are thinking creatively about how to adapt and protect infrastructure and make it responsive to changing needs. Register [here](#).
- **November 20, 3pm: A Sea Change- Oceanographers Learn from Psychologists about Systemic Racism in America.** This event will bring four experts together who are conducting research about systemic racism in America and how to combat it. Register [here](#).
- **December 3, 10am: Mass ECAN Mainstreaming Joint Mitigation-Adaptation Workshop.** [Mass ECAN](#) (Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network) is hosting a webinar as part of their fall series for participants to learn about co-benefits for both carbon storage/sequestration and adaptation/resilience in different natural systems. Register [here](#).

### Grant Opportunities

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- The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) is soliciting a second round of Expressions of Interest from groups interested in participating in an energy resiliency needs analysis and system design study for their community under the Clean Energy and Resiliency Program ("CLEAR"). Community applicants are encouraged to apply under one of two categories: municipalities, who must have participated in the MVP program; or non-municipal communities, who must designate a lead organization, such as a business or non-profit, and whose facilities proposed for study must be located within a municipality that participated in the EEA MVP program. **All applications must be submitted to MassCEC by 11:59 PM EDT on Wednesday, December 16, 2020.** Find more Information [here](#).
- The National League of Cities [2021 Leadership in Community Resilience](#) program is now accepting proposals from cities seeking additional funding for resilience-related projects. Each city selected for the 2021 cohort will receive \$10,000 in financial support, and customized support from both NLC and the Resilient Cities Network (formerly 100RC). **The deadline for applications is December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.** Application and information available [here](#).
- DEVELOP is part of NASA's Applied Sciences division with the goal of addressing environmental and public policy issues through rapid, interdisciplinary research projects that last 10 weeks. This is done through NASA Earth observations and other datasets. If you have a project that you think could be a good fit for the program, reach out to your MVP regional coordinator. More information and project examples are available [here](#).

## Careers

- Director of Climate Resiliency, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation: The Director of Climate Resiliency will report to the Deputy Commissioner for Conservation and Resource Stewardship and is charged with developing an agency framework that ensures that climate change considerations are incorporated into agency initiatives and projects. Find more information [here](#).
- Assistant Director for Operations, MA Division of Ecological Restoration (DER): Works with DER's Director and Deputy Director to guide the Division. The AD oversees fiscal planning, budgeting, procurement, grant management, information technology, human resources, internal policy development, and office logistics. For more information and to apply, please see the [job announcement](#).
- Fiscal Manager, MA Division of Ecological Restoration (DER): Provides supervision, oversight, and guidance for the DER's fiscal activities, including operational, capital, and grant budgeting and management; procurement; DER's Priority Projects Program; and overall management and supervision of the Division's fiscal team. For more information, and to apply, please see the [job announcement](#).
- Openings at New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Office of Climate Change: Three openings are expected to be posted by the end of the week on this site: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/27863.html>

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## MVP Program Resources

Below is list of resources to assist communities on their current MVP grants and in thinking about future projects.

### Planning Grant:

- [MVP Planning Grant Municipal Training Grant Webinar Recording January 2020](#)
  - [Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness \(MVP\) program Planning Reports](#)
  - [resilient MA Climate Change Clearinghouse](#)
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## Action Grant:

[Learn More About Action Grant Projects](#)

- [Explore MVP Core Principles](#)
- [resilient MA Climate Change Clearinghouse](#)
- [Discover other grants to support your project](#)

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**Have a question? Reach out to our MVP Regional Coordinators.**  
*Not sure which region you are in? Click [here](#).*

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