

MVP Community Liaison Model Overview and Lessons Learned



MVP Winter Webinar Series 2025

MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs



Agenda

- MVP Program Updates
- Community Liaison Model
- Community Spotlight: Medford
- Q&A

Other notes:

- Recording
- Please use the Q&A box for questions



Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program



A state and local partnership to build resilience to climate change by building capacity to respond to climate effects at the local level and pilot innovative adaptation practice.

MVP Planning 1.0

99% participation

349 communities

MVP Planning 2.0

FY24 Pilot: 32
municipalities & 1 Tribe

Action Grant Projects

FY 18: 37

FY 19: 36

FY 20: 53

FY 21: 41

FY 22: 66

FY 23: 73

FY 24: 79

FY 25: 71 (\$52.4M)

Total Awards

Planning & Action

\$180M to date

Berkshires &
Hilltowns Regional
Coordinator:

Emma Sass

MVP Director: Kara Runsten

MVP Deputy Director: Marissa Robertson

MVP Program Coordinator: Elder González Trejo

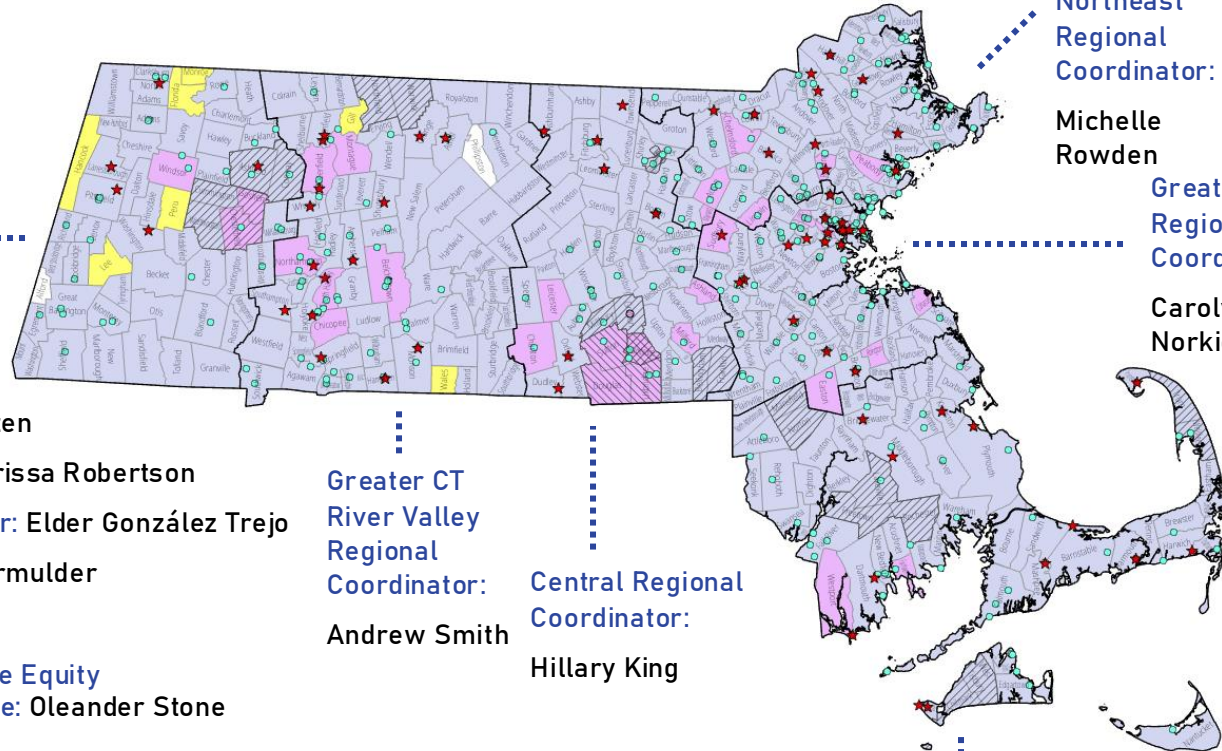
GIS Specialist: Sula Watermulder

MVP Fellow: Emily Murad

Deputy Director of Climate Equity
and Environmental Justice: Oleander Stone

FY25 MVP Program Status (9/17/2024)

◆ Action Grant Project	■ MVP 2.0 Pilot Community
★ New Action Grant Project (FY25)	● MVP 2.0 Tribe
□ Not yet part of the MVP Program	▨ 1.0 regional partnership
■ MVP 1.0 In-progress	▨ 2.0 regional partnership
■ MVP Designated Community	□ MVP Regions



Northeast
Regional
Coordinator:

Michelle
Rowden

Greater Boston
Regional
Coordinator:

Carolyn
Norkiewicz

Greater CT
River Valley
Regional
Coordinator:

Andrew Smith

Central Regional
Coordinator:

Hillary King

Southeast Regional
Coordinator:

Courtney Rocha

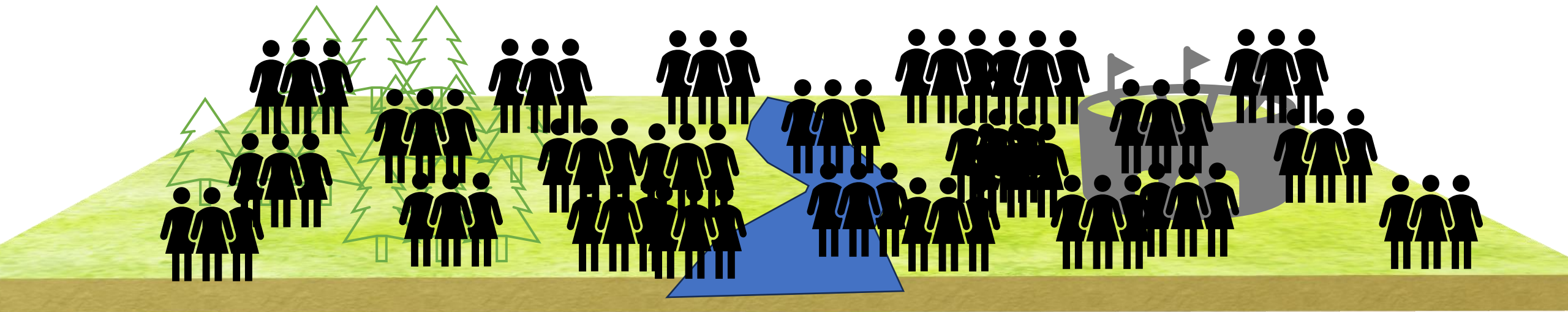
[Contact MVP Regional Coordinator | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/contact-mvp-regional-coordinator)

Program Updates

- **Apply for an MVP Action Grant**
 - Access the application through COMMBUYS
 - Questions due 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 10th, 2025, posted to COMMBUYS on Monday, March 17th, 2025.
 - Proposals due by 2:00 p.m. ET on Friday, April 4th, 2025.
- **EEA Climate Newsletter**
 - Stay up to date!
- **The Climate Resilience Playbook**
 - Developed in partnership with MAPC and PVPC
 - An online, interactive tool that local planners can use to identify and scope out resilience actions for their communities
 - Expected release this spring
- **MVP 2.0**
 - Getting ready to announce next round of awarded communities
 - Significant updates to the process based on pilot round feedback including:
 - Equity Partners to assist with items like Community Liaison recruitment and inclusive engagement.
 - Updates to the Guides for Equitable and Actionable Resilience (GEAR tool)
 - And more!

Introduction

- **Why does engagement matter in the planning context?**
- At some point, a decision will need to be made about the future that your community chooses
- ...and bringing a lot of people along on the decision-making journey can make a vision of the future more likely to occur.
- Not everyone will agree, but a broad, diverse coalition has the best chance of helping us choose outcomes that are fair, equitable and just.



MVP Core Principles

A community-led project that:



Furtheres a **community identified** priority action to address climate change impacts.



Employs Nature-based solutions (NBS).



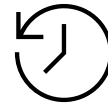
Increasing **equitable outcomes** for Environmental Justice (EJ) and priority populations and addressing the root causes of social vulnerability.



Achieves broad and multiple **community benefits**.



Builds **community capacity** for climate resilience.



Commits to monitoring project success and maintaining the project into the future.



Conducts robust **community engagement** and supports strong partnerships with EJ and other priority populations.



Utilizes regional solutions for regional benefit.



Utilizes climate change data for a proactive solution.



Pursues innovative, transferable approaches.

Background

- **What has MVP done in the past to encourage engagement?**
 - Prioritized funding for projects that center engagement
 - Structured MVP 2.0 around broadening the composition of a community's Core Team
 - Created toolkits, webinars and resources
 - [MVP 2.0 Tools and Resources | Mass.gov](#)
 - Engagement Plan
 - Social Resilience Roadmap
 - Mainstreamed Community Liaison Engagement Model

Community Liaison Model

- **Where did this idea come from?**
- Mostly from the public health world
- But... Seattle's Department of Neighborhoods integrated the model into local government
 - <https://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods>
- Today, we will learn from Medford's experience with a Community Liaison program
- Tips and techniques for:
 - Recruitment
 - Compensation
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Support Structures

City of Medford Community Liaison Program

2025 Winter Webinar Series
February 26, 2025



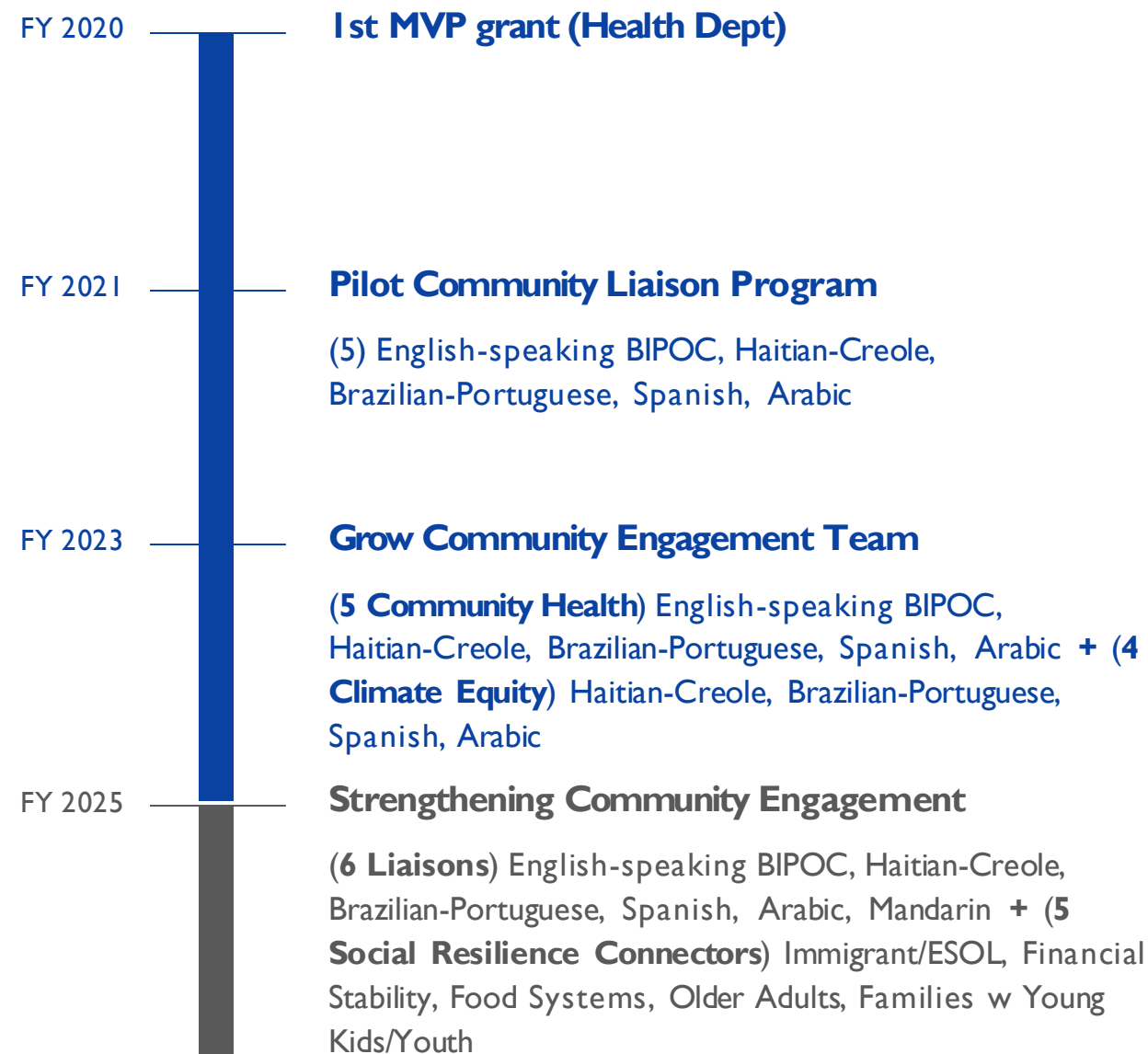
Follow Us @ [City of Medford Community Engagement Team](#)



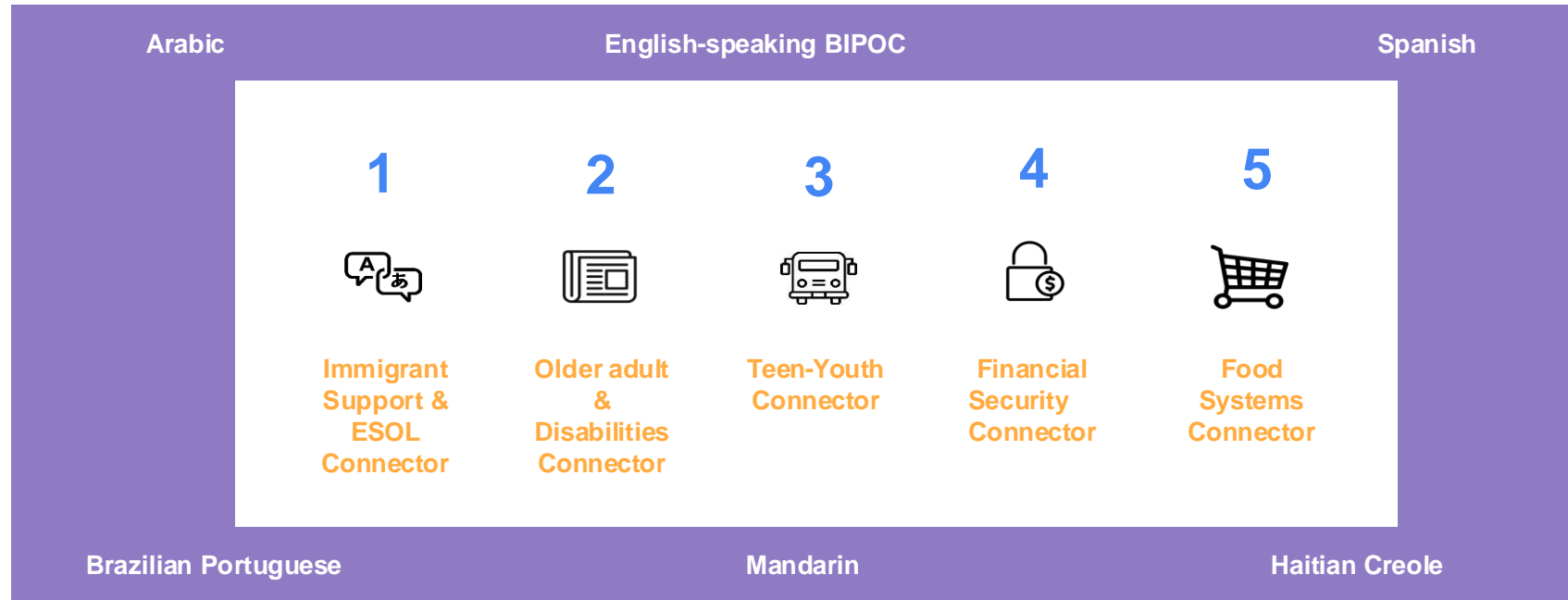
Health Department, Office of Prevention and Outreach



MedfordxMVP History



Medford's Community Engagement Team (FY25)



5 Connectors support the core of climate & social resilience

6 Community Liaisons support wide community efforts (e.g. health & social services)

Medford's Community Engagement Team (FY25)

Medford Connects Community Engagement Team

Call us and leave a message in any language: 781-475-5644

We can help connect you to services, Mass Health enrollment, SNAP benefits, rental assistance, and more!



Natasha Barthe

Haitian-Creole Community Liaison
nbarthe@medford-ma.gov



Darline Raymond

Haitian-Creole Community Liaison
draymond@medford-ma.gov



Samia Bennett

Families & Youth Connector
sbennett@medford-ma.gov



Marileia Barroso

Brazilian-Portuguese
Community Liaison
mbarroso@medford-ma.gov



Lizette Carteiro

Climate Equity Connector
lcarteiro@medford-ma.gov



Jennifer Alvarez

Spanish Community Liaison
jalvarez@medford-ma.gov



Charbel Hayek

Financial Security Connector
chayek@medford-ma.gov



Samira Hayek

Arabic Community Liaison
shayek@medford-ma.gov



Barakatullo Ashurov

ESOL/Immigration Connector
bashurov@medford-ma.gov



Libby Lazar

Food Systems Connector
llazar@medford-ma.gov



Stacey Moore

African American
Community Liaison
smoore@medford-ma.gov



June Mackenzie

Older Adult Connector
jmackenzie@medford-ma.gov



Key Success Stories



Climate education @ City
events & festivals



MassHealth
enrollment
@ City Hall
(Resiliency
Hub)



ESOL classes at Medford
Library (Resiliency Hub)

Key Success Stories



City-sponsored cultural events



Multi-lingual Behavioral Health Initiative



Key Success Stories





تسجيل المدرسة

هل لديك طفل يبلغ من العمر 5 سنوات أو أكبر بحلول 31 آب 2024؟

سجل طفلك في المدرسة الآن!

قم بزيارة مكتب التسجيل: مدرسة Medford الثانوية
489 Winthrop Road, Medford, MA
من 8:00 صباحاً إلى 4:00 مساءً
قد تكون ساعات العمل الصيفية مختلفة*

للاستفسار: medfordregoffice@medford.k12.ma.us

مزيد من المعلومات وحزمة التسجيل:





عندنا موظفون يتحدثون البرتغالية والفرنسية والإسبانية والعربية!

Challenges Reviewing Today

1

Skills &
Capacity
Building

2

Maintaining
Momentum

3

Overcoming
Conflict

4

Payment
Structure

5

Building City
Buy-In

1. Skills and Capacity Building

Challenge: Mismatch in skills/abilities of CL and municipal work

- CLs take on many skills: event planning, community outreach, project management, city planning, etc.
- Learning on-the-job doesn't match every learning style. Training doesn't always match the task/deliverables timeline.

Solutions: project-based organization of tasks/deliverables rather than general community engagement. Debriefing after each event to integrate lessons learned.

Work in Progress: Team Spirit, Communication & Upskilling

- CL members support one-another and attend each other's events
- Developing mechanisms for CLs to communicate in ways that will be well received by city leaders
- Asking what training or skills each CL is interested in

2. Maintaining Momentum

Challenge: Within tasks/deliverables CL can forget purpose

- Large project with many moving parts. CL can feel lost in the grant and forget purpose, lowering moral.

Solution: Continually connecting the dots between tasks/deliverables and how it supports the community. At each meeting, CLs share their elevator pitch

Success: City leaders come to CLs for help and advice

- Seeking council with CLs highlight the value of CL position and contribution to city

Success: Incentives

- Fun incentives to increase motivation and team spirit, e.g. team dinner if the FB page receives 100 followers.

3. Overcoming Conflict

Challenges: Larger team = more disagreement

- Disagreements between CL, disagreements between staff and CL, etc.

Solutions: Each member goes one-by-one to share the work they're doing or to share their thoughts rather than a couple members dominating the conversation. Regularly re-establish group norms and expectations. Now share agendas ahead of time.

Work in Progress: Transparency of feasibility and of constraints

- Attempting to be more transparent about task budget, procurement restrictions, timelines, and what is/is not in municipal powers, while allowing flexibility for CL input

4. Payment Structures

Challenge: Gift cards, contractors, part-time

- Gift Cards better suited for infrequent interactions and smaller amounts
- Invoices=tax withholding, deductions, insurance, etc. carry risk and burden
- MVP restricts funding for FTE/fringe. 15 h/w not feasible working FT elsewhere.

Solutions: CL now part-time EMPLOYEES of the city, demonstrating commitment and value. Flexibility between CL members to pick up or exchange hours.

Work in Progress: Timesheets

- Moved CL timesheet reporting from paper to digital for easier tracking and reimbursement for MVP

5. Building City Buy-In

Challenges: Sustainability of funding for the CL program

- Looking to city admin for sustain of funding for the CL program
- Some city departments do not understand the value of CLs

Solutions: CL program conducting outreach & engagement internally.

Work in Progress: Partnering with different departments

- Understanding community engagement needs and challenges of different departments
- Partnering with different departments (e.g. building, planning & development, public works, veterans) for CL program to be valuable to all of city hall (not just one group)

Thank you!

Catherine Dhingra, Manager
Office of Prevention & Outreach
City of Medford Health Department
cdhingra@medford-ma.gov

Andreanne Breton-Carbonneau, Principal
ACBC Consulting
andreanne@acbcconsulting.com



Health Department, Office of Prevention and Outreach



Questions?

Regional Coordinator:
Andrew Smith – DEP Springfield
andrew.b.smith@mass.gov
617-655-3874

Regional Coordinator:
Emma Sass – DEP Springfield
emma.m.sass@mass.gov

Berkshires & Hilltowns

**Greater CT
River Valley**

Central

Northeast

Regional Coordinator:
Michelle Rowden – DEP Lawrence
michelle.rowden@mass.gov
857-343-0097

**Greater
Boston**

Regional Coordinator:
Carolyn Norkiewicz – 100 Cambridge St.
carolyn.m.norkiewicz@mass.gov
617-894-7128

Southeast

Regional Coordinator:
Hillary King – DEP Worcester
hillary.king@mass.gov
617-655-3913

Regional Coordinator:
Courtney Rocha – DEP Lakeville
courtney.rocha@mass.gov
617-877-3072

MVP Director: Kara Runsten
kara.runsten@mass.gov

MVP Deputy Director: Marissa Robertson
Marissa.robertson2@mass.gov

MVP Program Coordinator: Elder González Trejo
elder.gonzaleztrejo@mass.gov

GIS Specialist: Sula Watermulder
sula.watermulder2@mass.gov

MVP Fellow: Emily Murad
emily.murad@mass.gov

**Deputy Director of Climate Equity
and Environmental Justice:** Oleander Stone
oleander.stone@mass.gov

Find your region by municipality: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/contact-mvp-regional-coordinator>