

Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development 495/MetroWest Development Compact

Project Summary

The 495/MetroWest region of the state has seen tremendous success in economic development and job creation over the past thirty years. There is every indication the region can continue its success in economic development and job creation for the next twenty years. In order to ensure that success, however, significant steps need to be taken to make the next twenty years of economic development more sustainable for the region.

The Patrick-Murray Administration proposes to partner with the 495/MetroWest Partnership, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the MetroWest Regional Collaborative and Mass Audubon in a development compact for this region. The compact is intended to create a shared framework for developing state, regional and local strategies for the growth, development and land preservation in the 37 cities and towns within the study area.

Within this region, there are six fundamental issues informing this framework. They are:

- *Continued new growth will likely require major transportation and other infrastructure upgrades, beyond what is needed to keep existing systems in good repair.*
- *New commercial and residential growth must occur in a manner that is respectful of open space resources, transportation networks, and water resources in the region.*
- *Land use and transportation decisions must take into account the principles established by the Global Warming Solutions Act and the transportation re-organization statute.*
- *Workforce housing must continue to be produced and preserved within the region at a scale that allows the number of workers living in the region to keep pace with the number of new jobs created in the region.*
- *Sustainable new growth will involve the creation and maintenance of an effective public transit system that will coordinate with existing transit.*
- *Coordinated planning and implementation efforts are necessary, particularly where jurisdictions and boundaries intersect.*

The Patrick-Murray Administration therefore proposes to engage the region in the preparation of a comprehensive land use and development plan for the 495/MetroWest

region, modeled on the award-winning South Coast Rail Corridor Plan. Like the South Coast Plan, the 495/MetroWest plan will be prepared in collaboration with regional and local participants and engage both public and private sectors to form the framework for public decision-making in land use regulation and infrastructure investment within the region over the next twenty years.

Preparation of the 495/MetroWest plan will begin in 2010 and be completed in 2011. The planning region will consist of the following 37 communities: Acton, Ashland, Bellingham, Berlin, Bolton, Boxborough, Foxborough, Framingham, Franklin, Grafton, Harvard, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Hudson, Littleton, Marlborough, Maynard, Medfield, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Norfolk, Northborough, Plainville, Sherborn, Shrewsbury, Southborough, Stow, Sudbury, Upton, Wayland, Westborough, Westford, Worcester and Wrentham.

The 495/MetroWest Partnership, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, the MetroWest Regional Collaborative, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and Mass Audubon will engage municipalities to define priority preservation areas, priority development areas, and regionally-significant priority transportation improvements consistent with the six fundamental issues identified above. The RPAs will produce a map that illustrates the regionally significant preservation and development areas, and critical transportation improvements, in a manner that is consistent with existing regional plans and development guidelines, as well as the state's Sustainable Development Principles. The state will undertake a final review of the proposed priority development and preservation areas, as well as the proposed transportation improvements, and develop a set of priorities for state funding and other forms of programmatic support.