



FY 2025 Regional Agency Mitigation Fund Grant Application

Application Instructions:

- I. All applications must be received by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission by January 31st, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. to be considered for funding for the FY 2025 grant round.
- II. Each Agency may only submit ONE application as a Word Document.
- III. Each project must have its own form within the appropriate category. All attachments should directly follow the relevant project form.
- IV. Be sure to fill in all the information requested on the application. Applications that are left incomplete will not be accepted.
- V. The application must be signed by the agency's CEO or an individual with signatory authority.
- VI. The Regional Agency Grant is broken into three segments. Please only fill out the section relevant to your application.
 - a. Part A – Regional Planning
 - b. Part B – Regional Public Safety
 - c. Part C – Regional Workforce Development
- VII. Submit this completed form as well as any relevant attachments to MGCCMF@Massgaming.gov or as a response to the COMMBUYS BID- BD24-1068-1068C-1068L-95061.

For more detailed instructions as well as the full FY 2025 Application Guidelines visit

<https://massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/>

Grant Manager Information:
Applicant: Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Vendor Code: VC6000161316
Name: Travis Pollack
Title: Senior Transportation Planner
Email Address: tpollack@mapc.org
Telephone: 617.933.0793
Address: 60 Temple Place, 6 th Floor, Boston, MA 02111

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Budget Summary

Use the below space to provide an overview of all projects to be covered by this funding. You may add as many items as is pertinent to your application (you can add rows by right clicking on the row and selecting “add row”). Please provide a category, name, brief description, and amount for each item. Please use the appropriate category below for your agency.

Category	Project Name	Description	Amount
A. Regional Planning	Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector	Develop plan the extension of the Chelsea Greenway shared-use path from its current end point in Chelsea to connect to Encore Casino and to the Northern Strand Trail in Everett.	\$90,000
A. Regional Planning	Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A and Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations	Create a small business regional planning initiative to explore and recommend strategies to better support small business in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries, i.e., industries impacted by casino operations; and organize, develop content for and hold a half-day supplier diversity conference for business support organizations.	\$85,000
A. Regional Planning	Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues	Integrate arts and culture entertainment venues into existing digital regional marketing tools to increase marketing and awareness of venues in competition with the Encore Casino.	\$75,000
B. Regional Public Safety			
C. Workforce Development			
Total Request			\$250,000

I. Are you requesting a waiver for any program requirement?

Yes ☐

No ☒

II. If yes, you must fill out a CMF Regional Agency Waiver Form. The waiver form can be found as Appendix F to the RFR on COMMBUYS or online at

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<https://massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/forms/>. Applications without a completed waiver form will not be considered for a waiver.

Applicant Certification

On behalf of the aforementioned applicant, I hereby certify that the funds that are requested in this application will be used solely for the purposes articulated in this application.



Signature:

January 31, 2024

Date:

Elizabeth (Lizzi) Weyant, Deputy Director

Name and Title of Signatory:

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Part A-Regional Planning

Project Name: Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact (if applicable)
Name: Eric Bourassa	Name: Travis Pollack
Title: Transportation Director	Title: Senior Transportation Planner
Department: MAPC Transportation Dept.	Department: MAPC Transportation Dept.
Email Address: ebourassa@mapc.org	Email Address: tpollack@mapc.org
Telephone: 617.933.0740	Telephone: 617.933.0793
Address: 60 Temple Pl., 6 th floor, Boston, MA 02111	Address: 60 Temple Pl., 6 th floor, Boston, MA 02111
<p>I. Please use the space below to identify the impact of the gaming establishment on your region. You may use the impacts identified in the FY 2025 Guidelines relevant to this category. Please provide documentation or evidence that gives support for the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact and that the issue is regional in nature (i.e., surveys, data, reports, etc.)</p> <p>The area around the Encore Casino in Everett and Chelsea continues to evolve from one dominated by freight, logistics and industrial uses to a more mixed-use area with new retail, housing, and office, and entertainment options. The existing transportation networks, however, have not kept up with this changing landscape, particularly east-west connectors from Chelsea to Everett and the Casino area. Vehicular traffic has increased on the same congested streets and highways, and there is limited safe bicycle and pedestrian access from much of Chelsea to Encore. This safety challenge is particularly difficult during peak morning and afternoon periods and during major events at the Casino, when Routes 16 and 99 are congested, and the only other local east-west connector (Beacham Street) is heavily used by freight vehicles. Moreover, transit options from Chelsea to the Casino can take over an hour, sometimes with multiple bus connections.</p> <p>This project will help mitigate the below negative impacts listed in the MGC CMF Guidelines by advancing a safe cycling and pedestrian path that will reduce vehicular/bicycle/pedestrian conflicts, as well as reduce traffic congestion, vehicular accidents, and air pollution by shifting some auto trips to bicycle trips.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may cause increased congestion on the major routes leading to/from the gaming establishment. Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may result in increased vehicular accidents on major routes leading to/from the gaming establishment. Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may result in increased vehicular/bicycle/pedestrian conflicts. Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may cause localized 	

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increases in air pollution due to congestion.

II. Please describe the project in detail and how the proposed project will address the impact indicated above. Please include a breakdown of the proposed scope of work, the scope should be sufficiently detailed to allow the review team to understand the steps required for project completion.

Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector

The objective of the project is to plan the extension of the Chelsea Greenway shared-use path from its current end point in Chelsea to connect to Encore Casino and to the Northern Strand Trail in Everett. Having safe bicycle and pedestrian connections from Chelsea will help local employees at Encore connect to their jobs without driving and contributing to local traffic congestion. Furthermore, some patrons may access the Casino by foot or cycling if there is a safer connection.

Despite being less than two miles away, currently there are no safe east-west connections from the heart of Chelsea to Encore Casino. For example, anyone without a car who needs to reach the Casino from Chelsea must either take one or more MBTA buses, or walk/bicycle along Route 16/Revere Beach Parkway and navigate Sweetser Circle, or use Beacham Street which is heavily travelled by trucks accessing the warehouses and other industries in the area.

MAPC will procure and manage an engineering consultant to conduct an alternatives analysis to identify a preferred alignment or routes from the end of the Chelsea Greenway at Chestnut Street in Chelsea to Broadway (Route 99) in Everett and on to the Northern Strand Trail. The final product will be a preferred alternative that has documented community support, a feasibility analyses, and cost estimate for a high-quality cycling facility that can increase cycling access to the Encore Casino for employees and patrons from Chelsea and points east of the Casino. This analysis and plan for a preferred alignment will be documented in a final PDF report available online via the MAPC website, with clear next steps that MAPC, Everett, Chelsea, and others can use to advance design and construction.

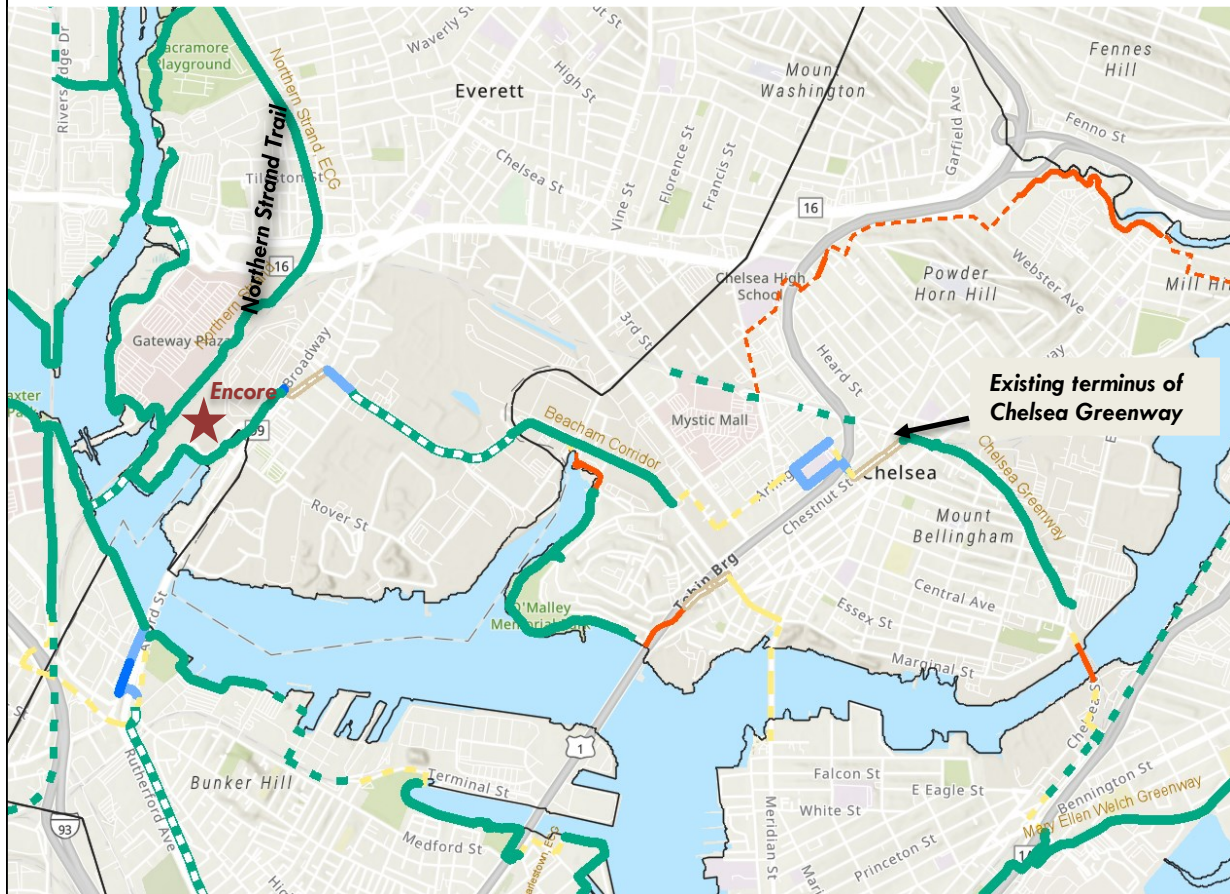
MAPC will lead and undertake this project plan via four integrated tasks:

- Task 1: Project Existing Conditions and Administration, including data collection, coordination with partners, and site visits.
- Task 2: Alternatives Analysis, including identifying route and design options, determining right-of-way and ownership, and other factors, analyzing the alternatives, and presenting the initial findings to project partners.
- Task 3: Public Engagement, which includes public meetings, and surveys in multiple languages and other targeted engagement in a variety of locations and formats, as well as meetings with community-based organizations throughout the process.

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- Task 4: Alignment Selection and Implementation Plan, which includes documenting the preferred alternative and steps needed for implementation, conceptual design, and planning-level cost estimates.

Below is a map showing the limits of the proposed project.



Map illustrating incomplete trail network in Chelsea and Everett. The existing Chelsea Greenway ends east of Route 1, over 2 miles from Encore Boston and the Northern Strand Trail. Solid lines show existing trails and pathways (green and red), bicycle lanes (blue), and urban sidewalks (yellow); dashed lines illustrate proposed or potential facilities, design and exact locations to be determined.

Evidence of Support

In developing the project concept described here, MAPC held conversations with The City of Everett and the City of Chelsea. We provide the following documentation of local support:

- Attachment – Letter of Support from the City of Everett
- Attachment – Letter of Support from the City of Chelsea

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For this project, MAPC is requesting \$90,000 from the Gaming Commission for consultant services and will match this funding with \$38,760 of MAPC resources to manage the study and support the public engagement tasks.

A more detailed scope of work is attached as *Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector Scope of Work*.

Proposed MGC Grant Budget

Please use the following table to outline the project budget. Please include as an attachment any requests for proposals, quotes, or estimates that would quantify the costs associated with the mitigation.

Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
Task 1. Existing Conditions & Administration	July 2024-Sept. 2024 (Admin. throughout)		\$29,160
Task 2. Alternatives Analysis	Oct. 2024-Feb. 2025		\$33,600
Task 3. Public Engagement	Oct. 2024-June 2025		\$39,560
Task 4. Alignment Selection & Implementation Plan	Mar. 2025-June 2025		\$26,440
	TOTAL:		\$128,760 (\$90,000 MGC request + \$38,760 MAPC match)

Part A-Regional Planning

Project Name: Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A and Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations

Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.

Project Contact:	Additional Project Contact <i>(if applicable)</i>
Name: Angela Brown-Jones	Name: Camille Jonlin
Title: Manager of Economic Development	Title: Economic Development Planner
Department: MAPC Land Use Dept.	Department: MAPC Land Use Dept.
Email Address: Abrown@mapc.org	Email Address: CJonlin@mapc.org
Telephone: 617.694.3764 (m)	Telephone:
Address: 60 Temple Pl., 6 th floor, Boston, MA 02111	Address: 60 Temple Pl., 6 th floor, Boston, MA 02111

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- I. Please use the space below to identify the impact of the gaming establishment on your region. You may use the impacts identified in the FY 2025 Guidelines relevant to this category. Please provide documentation or evidence that gives support for the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact and that the issue is regional in nature (i.e., surveys, data, reports, etc.)

MAPC will employ the Community Mitigation Fund (CMF) funds to conduct community planning to address two negative impacts and one positive impact on small businesses associated with the Encore Boston Harbor (EBH) gaming establishment. The project will identify specific strategies to mitigate the impacts felt by small businesses in industry sectors identified in the CMF's FY 2025 Guidelines cited below.

Negative impacts.

- Competition from the gaming establishment may have negative impacts on other businesses competing in the hospitality and entertainment industries.
- The presence of a gaming establishment may result in reallocated spending. Reallocated spending is spending on goods and services which would have occurred had the casinos never opened, but which did not occur because an individual chose to spend their money at the casino instead. The main areas where monies are reallocated are transportation, retail items, hotels and travel, restaurants and bars, recreation, non-live entertainment, and live entertainment.

Positive impact.

- Gaming establishments typically purchase millions of dollars of goods and services each year, much of which is purchased locally. This provides the opportunity for local businesses to provide these goods and services.

Relevant documentation and evidence include a study titled ***Encore Boston Harbor, First Three and a Half Years of Operation: Economic Impacts Report*** which was prepared by the UMass Donahue Institute and others through the SEIMGA project. Specifically, this was conducted through the Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA) project, funded by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

This study provides findings in support of the determination that the operation of the gaming facility is causing the impact and that the issue is regional in nature. Report highlights includes the following. it estimates *reallocated* consumer spending during 2019 – 2022 resulting from EBH operations, stating that “....despite the economic benefits of recaptured and new (consumer) spending, \$818.9 million of patron expenditures were reallocated away from other businesses in Massachusetts and toward the casino.”

- The report takes a closer look at spending in the year 2022, the first normal year of casino operations at EBH. In previous years, EBH was open only for a partial year or was impacted by the pandemic-related shutdown.
- With respect to the year 2022, the report documents that EBH patrons spent an estimated \$137.9 million at area businesses outside the casino during their visits, but this

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was accompanied by estimated \$305.5 million in reallocated spending, i.e., a net shift of \$167.7 million of spending away from businesses providing other goods and services in the state. The study goes on to state that these estimated impacts were concentrated in the metropolitan region.

- II. Please describe the project in detail and how the proposed project will address the impact indicated above. Please include a breakdown of the proposed scope of work, the scope should be sufficiently detailed to allow the review team to understand the steps required for project completion.

Project Overview: Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A and Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations

Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A. The project will include a small business regional planning initiative to explore and recommend strategies to better support small business in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries, i.e., industries impacted by casino operations. The project will focus on small firms in these categories operating in Region A communities, including Everett, Cambridge, Chelsea, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Revere, Somerville, and Saugus. The planning effort will include preparing an inventory of business support organizations (BSOs) located in or serving these communities, with attention to the types of classes, counseling and other services being offered to small firms, identifying the activities by service category and, identifying BSOs which currently serve or have tangible plans to serve small businesses in the identified industries. Additionally, the project includes three focus groups and the fielding of surveys to BSOs and a sampling of small businesses in Region A communities. Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data will be employed in an assessment of the extent and quantity of services on offer, identifying in which categories the supply of services falls short of the need, particularly in relation to the needs of firms in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries, i.e., industries impacted by casino operations. The inventory, focus group discussions, and surveys will yield observations addressing the hypothesis that additional business support services are necessary to fill the needs and potential of small businesses and entrepreneurs in the target industries. The assessment will focus on services to small businesses in the retail, hotel, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries, i.e., industries impacted by casino operations. The deliverable will be a Regional Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan providing a written gap analysis of small business support provided by public and private institutions in and near Region A communities.

We use the term business support organizations (BSOs) to refer to the types of organizations including small business development centers (SBDCs) supported by the US Small Business Administration, select local and minority chambers of commerce, and select community

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development corporations and CDFIs. As MAPC defines them, BSOs refers to organizations providing classes, training, counseling, and other supports to small business owners to establish, stabilize, and/or expand their business. BSOs offer free or low-cost training and counseling to small businesses in matters including business plan development, feasibility analyses, financial analyses, routine credit and financial operations, human resources, access to various forms of growth capital, and marketing. Examples of BSOs include the two SBA-affiliated SBDCs operating in the MAPC region in Newton and Salem. To build the inventory we will consult and add to the state Treasurer's inventory of small business support institutions with a focus on those within and serving the region A communities. Using this inventory, we will then survey the BSOs to identify those currently serving or with tangible plans to serve small businesses in the identified industries and to capture information on their service mix.

Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations. MAPC will organize, develop content for and hold a half-day conference geared toward representatives of business support organizations; municipal and state economic development professionals; and the staff, volunteers, and leadership of chambers of commerce, business improvement districts, and main streets organizations. The conference will orient them to the opportunities and process for doing business as vendors to Encore Boston Harbor, equipping them to inform and support their clients in pursuit of these business opportunities. The planning activities outlined in Task 1 are foundational to and will set the stage for an in-person Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations which MAPC will hold in the fourth quarter of the grant. Success in the second project element is highly dependent on MAPC's progress on the first.

Testing via Small Pilot. In the fourth quarter, we will work with one or more BSOs to implement a small pilot project chosen from the *Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A* recommendations for action.

Project Coordination and Administration. Throughout the project, MAPC will coordinate the team, administer advisory committee stipends, honoraria, and other financial administrative tasks.

Background. The project will build upon the *Bunker Hill Community College-Chelsea-Everett Small Business Needs Assessment*, the study conducted by MAPC in 2019-2020, which provided data analysis and suggested strategies for the new Bunker Hill Community College Enterprise Center for Entrepreneurship and Training (ECET) at the Community College's Chelsea campus. Established in October, Bunker Hill Community College's ECET has been offering multilingual business support services, including online consultations, workshops, and training in various business disciplines to bolster local small businesses affected by COVID-19. This new center serves small businesses and prospective entrepreneurs in Chelsea and surrounding communities.

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For this project, MAPC is requesting \$85,000 from the Gaming Commission to conduct the activities described here and to manage the study and conference-related tasks described here.

Scope of Work

For this project, MAPC will be the sole service provider. While the detailed scope is attached, the project will include the following tasks.

High Level Scope

Task 1. Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A

MAPC will

- Establish and meet with the project advisory group throughout the project
- Conduct existing conditions to include inventory of business support providers within/active in Region A
- Conduct existing conditions analysis of businesses of the target industries located in Region A
- Survey business support organizations
- Survey businesses in target industries from a sampling of Region A communities
- Conduct three (3) focus groups with business support and community-based organizations
- Analyze, compile, and summarize survey and focus group results, including through collaboration with the advisory committee
- Develop recommendations for action
- Compile a user-friendly writeup of the above Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A tasks and subtasks, i.e., create the main deliverables. Create a web-based version for use up, at, and following the conference described below

Task 2. Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations.

MAPC will

- Conduct one planning session with Encore Boston Harbor Purchasing Department, and one meeting with the project advisory group, for the 1/2 day Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations
- Prepare conference logistics and design the content
- Prepare final logistics for and host the half-day Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations

Task 3. Initial pilot

MAPC will

- Implement a small pilot project chosen from the *Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and*

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Entertainment in Region A Recommendations for Action.

Task 4. Project Coordination, and Administration.

- Conduct team coordination and administration
- Oversee and disburse \$6,000 in non-labor expenses, that may include Project Advisory member stipends, conference facilitator and speaker transportation, food, event space, printing, honoraria for conference speakers, and other items

Evidence of Support

In developing the project concept described here, MAPC held preliminary one-on-one conversations with representatives of the Cities and Towns of Malden, Melrose, Revere, and Somerville, MassDevelopment's Transformative Development Initiative, Bunker Hill Community College, Boston Impact Initiative, Center for Women and Enterprise, and Innovation Studio, the latter three of which are nonprofit business support organizations. All expressed strong support for the project described. We provide the following documentation of local support:

- Attachment – Letter of Support from the Mayor of Revere
- Attachment – Letter of Support from the President of Bunker Hill Community College

A more detailed scope of work is attached as *Small Business Support Planning and Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations Scope of Work*.

Proposed MGC Grant Budget

Please use the following table to outline the project budget. Please include as an attachment any requests for proposals, quotes, or estimates that would quantify the costs associated with the mitigation.

Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
Task 1. Small Business Support Planning in Region A	July 2024- April 2025		\$42,315
Task 2. Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations (BSOs)	April 2025- June 2025		\$19,110
Task 3. Implement a small pilot project chosen from the Recommendations for Action from Task 1	May 2025 - June 2025		\$4,975
Task 4. Project Administration and Reporting and Non-labor expenses	July 2024- June 2025		\$18,600
	TOTAL:		\$85,000

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Part A-Regional Planning

Project Name: Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact (if applicable)
Name: Annis Sengupta	Name: Abbey Judd
Title: Director of Arts and Culture	Title: Regional Arts and Culture Planner II
Department: Arts & Culture	Department: Arts & Culture
Email Address: asengupta@mapc.org	Email Address: ajudd@mapc.org
Telephone: 617-933-0774	Telephone:
Address: 60 Temple Pl., 6th floor, Boston, MA 02111	Address: 60 Temple Pl., 6 th floor, Boston, MA 02111
<p>I. Please use the space below to identify the impact of the gaming establishment on your region. You may use the impacts identified in the FY 2025 Guidelines relevant to this category. Please provide documentation or evidence that gives support for the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact and that the issue is regional in nature (i.e., surveys, data, reports, etc.)</p>	
<p>The Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues project will identify specific strategies to mitigate the impacts felt by arts, culture, and entertainment venues identified in the MGC CMF's FY 2025 Guidelines cited below.</p> <p><i>Negative impacts.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from the gaming establishment may have negative impacts on other businesses competing in the hospitality and entertainment industries. • The presence of a gaming establishment may result in reallocated spending. Reallocated spending is spending on goods and services which would have occurred had the casinos never opened, but which did not occur because an individual chose to spend their money at the casino instead. The main areas where monies are reallocated are transportation, retail items, hotels and travel, restaurants and bars, recreation, non-live entertainment, and live entertainment. • The marketing capabilities of the gaming establishments may put other competing local businesses at a disadvantage. <p>Casino impacts on arts, culture, and entertainment venues are felt at a regional level as much as a local level. Located in Everett, Encore presents live entertainment and events with significant advantages compared with regional independent venues for audiences, booking, and marketing since 2019. In partnership with Big Night Entertainment Group, Encore hosts live music, DJs, and entertainment, at times in direct competition with local venues.</p> <p>Regionally, entertainment venues have struggled to compete with Encore. Examples of this</p>	

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competition have appeared in multiple neighboring communities, including the City of Lynn, which documented these impacts in their 2021 Community Planning Grant Application for funding to support a marketing campaign for the Lynn cultural district:

The Lynn Auditorium attempted to book, however lost out on a variety of shows in 2019 such as Tony Bennett and the B52s. Just five lost shows translate into a loss of over 10,000 visitors to Lynn's downtown or approximately \$1,000,000 in ticket sales. The Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism indicates in their annual report that every \$1.00 spent by a visitor equates to 2.5 cents in local taxes.¹

In Beverly, the Cabot Theatre noted that in addition to directly competing with Encore for booking talent, Encore's performance bookings typically include a radius clause that prevents acts from performing within a specific geographic radius for a designated period. Encore's advantage over local venues is exacerbated by the fact that casinos do not rely on the revenue from ticket sales as part of their business model, which sets performance fee expectations among the talent they book for contract terms that stand-alone venues cannot match.

While there have been some attempts to protect local midsize venues through Encore's Massachusetts gaming license, which states it "shall only be permitted to build a live entertainment venue that has less than 1,000 seats or more than 3,500 seats" ², there have been multiple instances where this provision has not fully protected local venues, like the Chevalier Theatre in Medford, from being in direct competition with Encore's entertainment venues.

Since 2020, entertainment venues have struggled to recover due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the erosion of live events, some venues more than others. While the U.S. Small Business Association awarded Shuttered Venue Operators Grants (SVOG) to a hundred venues in greater Boston in June 2021 and July 2022 to support theater operators, concert venues, and other businesses shut down by social distancing rules that banned large crowds, multiple venues have since closed. Venues like Great Scott, Bull McCabe's, Wonder Bar, Thunder Road, Bella Luna and Milky Way Lounge, ONCE Somerville, TOAD, Good Life, and Atwood's have closed since 2020. The pandemic amplified the strain on the local entertainment industry, particularly for small and mid-sized independent venues and promoters.

Another effort to address the impact of casinos on local arts communities in Massachusetts has been through the Gaming Mitigation Funds distributed through the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). These funds are awarded to nonprofits and municipal performing arts organizations whose primary mission is to promote access, excellence, diversity, or education in the arts, humanities, or sciences that commit 50% or more of their operating expenses to the performing arts. This funding is based on a formula calculating the percentage of performances featuring touring shows and artists and the total fees paid to touring shows and artists at eligible venues. Many small local independent venues do not qualify for funding because they are not nonprofits or municipal performing arts organizations. Yet, these venues play a critical role in

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Metro Boston's music ecosystem for local talent development and preserving local culture. While the Gaming Mitigation funds intend to mitigate the impact of resort-style casinos, these funds only address one of the challenges smaller venues face in the larger music ecosystem.

Additionally, the Gaming Mitigation Fund does not address the challenge of marketing the venues and building audiences for all programming in an ecosystem dominated by the casino. This challenge has only increased in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of local venues, the stakes of competition between local independent venues and promoters for talent, marketing and sales have heightened. Live entertainment behemoths like Live Nation and AEG's local arm, Bowery Presents, dominate today's live music and entertainment ecosystem. Similarly, Encore Casino and its venues also benefit from the national and international marketing capabilities of Encore's entertainment venues, which puts smaller independent venues at a disadvantage. Despite Encore's Regional Marketing Plan Campaign for its grand opening citing that the core component of their impact would be "sharing the best of Massachusetts with the world" ³ including local entertainment and culture, there is little support for strengthening the marketing of local entertainment and increased competition for local venues that nurture that culture.

While existing local venues are struggling to achieve financial stability, Encore is expanding and solidifying plans for an entertainment district that poses additional competition to regional venues. In 2023, Encore received approval for a new 999-seat theater and 200-seat comedy club as part of the East Broadway Encore expansion, which means that the competition for booking, marketing and visibility will likely increase for local venues.⁴ Today, the ability of local, independent venues to market themselves to visitors to Encore, the greater Boston region and local residents is extremely limited by a highly competitive economic landscape without the support of international companies that dominate Boston's larger entertainment ecosystem. Marketing and promotion are core challenges within the entertainment industry, and it is critical to invest in resources that support a broad base of local entertainment venues to support a vibrant, diverse cultural ecosystem in Metro Boston.

II. Please describe the project in detail and how the proposed project will address the impact indicated above. Please include a breakdown of the proposed scope of work, the scope should be sufficiently detailed to allow the review team to understand the steps required for project completion.

Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues

The importance of strengthening the regional ecosystem for arts and culture activities has been demonstrated through recent projects led by MAPC, including the [Somerville Arts Space Risk Assessment](#), the [Regional Tourism](#) project, and the Making Space for Art Project. In addition, the need for greater attention to audience development and more inclusive tourism planning is demonstrated in the audience research [completed](#) by Slover-Linnett and published in 2022. Marketing and awareness remain core challenges for local, independent venues and promoters. Additionally, municipalities consistently request support for generating events calendars to

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promote their arts and culture offerings, and there is a need to leverage existing calendars and directories to support marketing and promotion efforts more consistently. ArtsBoston has established the [ArtsBoston Calendar](#) and the New England Foundation for the Arts developed [CreativeGround](#) as a directory that feeds into a database to support the creative economy. However, the extent to which these resources meet the needs of the local entertainment industry, particularly small and medium-sized venues, is unclear. Viewing the full spectrum of entertainment offerings in metro Boston still requires attendees to search by venue or promotor websites. The local entertainment industry needs support in aligning efforts to market events, raise awareness and strengthen independent venues that remain critical components of the broader entertainment ecosystem.

Recent and upcoming updates to the ArtsBoston Calendar and Creative Ground present an opportunity to create a more effective digital platform that raises the visibility of the region's venues and live entertainment offerings. The creation of [ArtsHub Western Mass](#) demonstrates the potential for these resources to contribute to a more coordinated and user-friendly hub of information and promotion.

The Metro Boston Arts and Entertainment marketing and tourism project will support municipalities impacted by casinos to mitigate the impacts on their independent arts, culture, and entertainment venues. In partnership with ArtsBoston and Creative Ground, this project will build on an inventory of cultural facilities completed for Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville, expanded to include arts and entertainment venues in Everett, Medford, Malden, Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, and Melrose. The project will connect local venues and promoters with existing marketing assets through partner organizations and identify core marketing and promotion strategies to improve visibility within the local entertainment sector, support culturally resonant communications, increase the visibility of diverse cultural producers and artists, and expand language access in marketing. As a result of this project, Metro Boston's entertainment ecosystem will provide greater access and support for a diversity of audiences, local artists and venues.

The project will ultimately improve the marketing infrastructure to support local independent entertainment venues and promoters by providing a marketing and tourism resource to attract local audiences and highlight opportunities for casino patrons and employees to experience the best of what Metro Boston has to offer in local arts, culture, and entertainment venues, and support smaller entertainment venues compete with the gaming establishments for business.

Task 1. Inventory and Landscape Analysis (July – August 2024)

MAPC will create an inventory of arts, culture, and entertainment venues in Everett, Boston, Cambridge, Medford, Malden, Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, and Melrose in partnership with [ArtsBoston](#) and the [New England Foundation for the Arts' Creative Ground](#) program. This work will build upon an existing inventory of cultural facilities in Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. Venues identified for this study will be added to that inventory, which includes an online map and spreadsheet. NEFA and ArtsBoston will provide information about the extent to which identified venues are represented within their databases with a list of available data fields included in their respective databases. In addition, a landscape analysis will document additional

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stakeholders and technology platforms providing marketing and promotional support to venues in the study area.

Subtask 1.1 Arts and Entertainment Venues Inventory – MAPC will research venues and add data on arts and entertainment venues in study area to existing cultural facilities database and identify relevant contacts for stakeholder engagement.

Subtask 1.2 Documentation of Marketing and Promotional Resources – MAPC will document existing marketing and promotional resources, presence of arts and entertainment venues within existing resources, and identify relevant contacts for stakeholder engagement.

Subtask 1.3 Marketing Integration Analysis – MAPC will work with NEFA and ArtsBoston to analyze potential pathways to increase marketing integration for arts and entertainment venues across existing marketing and promotion platforms. **NEFA and ArtsBoston** will conduct internal review of platform capabilities and share findings with MAPC.

Subtask 1.4 Regional Technology Partner Landscape Analysis – MAPC staff will identify and analyze options for technology partners to develop an online tool, including a scenario in which MAPC functions as a technology partner.

Task 2. Case Study Research (August – September 2024)

MAPC will conduct an in-depth case study analysis of one or two successful examples of digital platforms that leverage existing resources to provide marketing and promotion support to arts and culture stakeholders or live entertainment venues.

Subtask 2.1 Interviews with Stakeholders – MAPC will conduct interviews with five to ten key stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of successful digital platforms that support marketing and promotion of the creative sector.

Subtask 2.2 Documentation of impacts and challenges – MAPC will document challenges, keys to success, and impacts of the digital platforms.

Subtask 2.3 Synthesis of Key Findings – MAPC will synthesize key findings into a case study write up to inform implementation stakeholder engagement and implementation (Tasks 3 and 4).

Task 3. Stakeholder Engagement (September – December 2024)

MAPC will conduct structured interviews with a sample of venues, cultural producers, municipal staff, potential partner organizations and other key informants to document opportunities and barriers for expanded audience development through a regional marketing and promotion resource, documenting potential impacts on revenue models, and key needs for marketing and promotional activities that would inform potential strategies, as well as challenges with accessing or utilizing existing tools and resources. Partner organization interviews will document existing marketing and promotion resources and opportunities for increased coordination.

Subtask 3.1 Key Informant Interviews with Municipal Staff and Key Partners – MAPC will conduct key informant interviews with municipal staff that interface with arts and

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entertainment venues or manage online calendars, as well as other key partners such as tourism bureaus, cultural districts, and regional entities that support marketing and promotion of arts and entertainment. MAPC will summarize key findings from interviews. MAPC and partners will attend one meeting to discuss key findings.

Subtask 3.2 Engagement with Venues and Cultural Producers – MAPC will engage venue operators and cultural producers to understand current use of marketing and promotional resources, challenges and opportunities for lowering cost and increasing reach of marketing and promotional activities. NEFA and ArtsBoston will participate in engagement activities to share information and awareness about their resources. MAPC will summarize key findings.

Subtask 3.3 Regional Technology Needs Synthesis – MAPC will synthesize and prioritize regional technology needs for marketing and promotion and meet with regional partners to present technology priorities alongside key engagement findings.

Task 4. Implementation and Assessment (December 2024 – April 2025)

MAPC will implement strategies to increase marketing and promotional value of existing tools and resources for live-entertainment venues in the study area. This may include one or more of the following:

- Working with venues to add their information to the ArtsBoston and Creative Ground platforms;
- Testing opportunities for Creative Ground API to be used for existing marketing platforms;
- Improving integration of platforms and system as part of ongoing maintenance and improvement activities.

After implementing the strategies that are most appropriate based on initial stakeholder engagement and case study research, MAPC will conduct structured interviews with venues to assess impacts and equity considerations. In addition, MAPC will review data available from partners about impacts on frequency of use. MAPC will synthesize the remaining unmet need after implementing initial strategies. This synthesis will inform recommendations for additional features needed for building out a regional marketing and promotional tool.

Subtask 4.1 Integrating Marketing and Promotion Resources – MAPC will work with NEFA and ArtsBoston to implement initial integration of marketing and promotion resources based on technology needs identified in Task 3. MAPC will connect with venues and will provide staff support for data entry and facilitate use of Creative Ground and ArtsBoston Calendar API across platforms and with additional partners identified during the project. NEFA and ArtsBoston will provide technical support for integration efforts and provide data on impacts to MAPC.

Subtask 4.2 Assessment of Impacts – MAPC will analyze data and generate summary of impacts.

Subtask 4.3 Assessment of Equity Considerations – MAPC will document integration process

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and assess equity considerations associated with implementation strategy.

Subtask 4.4 Synthesis of Unmet Marketing and Promotion Needs – MAPC will synthesize implementation findings and unmet needs and present findings and recommendations to stakeholders for feedback.

Task 5. Documentation (May – June 2025)

MAPC will document the findings and recommendations into a final report with a summary of opportunities for municipal and regional partners to provide more accessible and comprehensive marketing and promotion strategies to strengthen the regional arts and entertainment ecosystem. MAPC will develop parameters and recommendations for a regional online tool with guidance for identifying and onboarding a technology partner for a second phase of work.

Subtask 5.1 Report Draft – MAPC will compile a draft report on outcomes of project.

Subtask 5.2 Recommendations for Online Tool Development – MAPC will create an addendum to the report that provides recommendations for online tool development beyond integration of existing resources. NEFA and Arts Boston will inform recommendations based on the technology considerations of their platforms. Additional regional partners identified in Task 1 may also contribute recommendations.

MAPC staff will undertake **Tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5** with support from the New England Foundation for the Arts Creative Ground program and ArtsBoston.

Evidence of Support

In developing the project concept described here, MAPC held conversations with the New England Foundation for the Arts and ArtsBoston. Both expressed strong support for the project described, and provided the following documentation of support:

- Attachment – Letter of Support from the Senior Program Director, Research and Creative Economy from the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA)
- Attachment – Letter of Support from the Executive Director of ArtsBoston

A more detailed scope of work is attached as *Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues Scope of Work*.

Proposed MGC Grant Budget			
Please use the following table to outline the project budget. Please include as an attachment any requests for proposals, quotes, or estimates that would quantify the costs associated with the mitigation.			
Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
Task 1. Inventory and Landscape Analysis	July – August 2024		\$20,760
Task 2. Case Study Research	Aug – Sept 2024		\$5,170
Task 3. Stakeholder Engagement	Sept – Dec 2024		\$13,690
Task 4. Implementation and Assessment	Dec 2024 – April 2025		\$21,960
Task 5. Documentation	May – June 2025		\$7,795
Administration	July 2024 – June 2025		\$5,625
	TOTAL:		\$75,000

Part B-Regional Public Safety

Project Name:	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact <i>(if applicable)</i>
Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Department:	Department:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Telephone:	Telephone:
Address:	Address:
<p>I. Please use the space below to identify the impact of the gaming establishment on your region. You may use the impacts identified in the FY 2025 Guidelines relevant to this category. Please provide documentation or evidence that gives support for the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact (i.e., casino related crime statistics, other relevant data, reports, etc.)</p>	
<p>II. Please describe the project in detail and how the proposed project will address the impact indicated above. Please include a breakdown of the proposed scope of work, the scope should be sufficiently detailed to allow the review team to understand the steps required for project completion.</p>	

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Proposed MGC Grant Budget			
Please use the following table to outline the project budget. Please include as an attachment any requests for proposals, quotes, or estimates that would quantify the costs associated with the mitigation.			
Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
	TOTAL:		

Part C- Workforce Development

Project Name:	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact <i>(if applicable)</i>
Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Department:	Department:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Telephone:	Telephone:
Address:	Address:
<p>I. Please use the space below to identify the impact of the gaming establishment on your region. Please demonstrate the significance of the workforce need faced by the region, related to the operation of a gaming establishment. You may use the impacts identified in the FY 2025 Guidelines relevant to this category. Please provide documentation or evidence that gives support for the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact (i.e., surveys, data, reports, etc.).</p>	

For full guidelines please see www.massgaming.com/about/community-mitigation-fund/application-guidelines/

- II. Please describe the project in detail and how the proposed project will address the impact indicated above. Please include a breakdown of the proposed scope of work, the scope should be sufficiently detailed to allow the review team to understand the steps required for project completion. Please describe the deliverables, including the number of individuals to be served, number of hours, projected outcomes, location of program, cities and towns served.

Proposed MGC Grant Budget			
Please use the following table to outline the project budget. Please include as an attachment any requests for proposals, quotes, or estimates that would quantify the costs associated with the mitigation.			
Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
	TOTAL:		

Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector Scope of Work & Letters of Support



MAPC Project Scoping Document for Mass Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Grant Application – Transportation

Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector Scope of Work

Table of Contents

1. Impacts of Gaming Establishment	1
2. Project Summary	1
3. Project Area Description and Context	2
4. Anticipated Outcomes	3
5. Project Work Plan and Major Milestones/Deliverables	3
6. Budget	6

1. Impacts of Gaming Establishment

The area around the Encore Casino in Everett and Chelsea continues to evolve from one dominated by freight, logistics and industrial uses to a more mixed-use area with new retail, housing, and office, and entertainment options. The existing transportation networks, however, have not kept up with this changing landscape, particularly east-west connectors from Chelsea to Everett and the Casino area. Vehicular traffic has increased on the same congested streets and highways, and there is limited safe bicycle and pedestrian access from much of Chelsea to Encore. This safety challenge is particularly difficult during peak morning and afternoon periods and during major events at the Casino, when Routes 16 and 99 are congested, and the only other local east-west connector (Beacham Street) is heavily used by freight vehicles. Moreover, transit options from Chelsea to the Casino can take over an hour, sometimes with multiple bus connections.

This project will help mitigate the below negative impacts listed in the MGC Guidelines by advancing a safe cycling and pedestrian path that will reduce vehicular/bicycle/pedestrian conflicts, as well as reduce traffic congestion, vehicular accidents, and air pollution by shifting some auto trips to bicycle trips.

- Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may cause increased congestion on the major routes leading to/from the gaming establishment.
- Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may result in increased vehicular accidents on major routes leading to/from the gaming establishment.
- Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may result in increased vehicular/bicycle/pedestrian conflicts.
- Increased traffic associated with the gaming establishment may cause localized increases in air pollution due to congestion.

2. Project Summary

The objective of the project is to plan the extension of the Chelsea Greenway shared-use path from its current end point in Chelsea to connect to Encore Casino and to the Northern Strand Trail in Everett. Having

safe bicycle and pedestrian connections from Chelsea will help local employees at Encore connect to their jobs without driving and contributing to local traffic congestion. Furthermore, some patrons may access the Casino on foot or cycling if there is a safer connection.

Despite being less than two miles away, currently there are no safe east-west connections from the heart of Chelsea to Encore Casino. For example, anyone without a car who needs to reach the Casino from Chelsea must either take one or more MBTA buses, or walk/bicycle along Route 16/Revere Beach Parkway and navigate Sweetser Circle, or use Beacham Street which is heavily travelled by trucks accessing the warehouses and other industries in the area.

MAPC will procure and manage an engineering consultant to conduct an alternatives analysis to identify a preferred alignment or routes from the end of the Chelsea Greenway at Chestnut Street in Chelsea to Broadway (Route 99) in Everett and on to the Northern Strand Trail. The final product will be a preferred alternative that has documented community support, a feasibility analyses, and cost estimate for a high-quality cycling facility that can increase cycling access to the Encore Casino for employees and patrons from Chelsea and points east of the Casino. This analysis and plan for a preferred alignment will be documented in a final PDF report available online via the MAPC website, with clear next steps that MAPC, Everett, Chelsea, and others can use to advance design and construction.

MAPC is requesting \$90,000 from the Gaming Commission for consultant services, and will match this funding with other MAPC resources to manage the study and support the public engagement tasks (see Budget Section below).

MAPC will lead and undertake this project plan via four integrated tasks:

Task 1: Project Existing Conditions and Administration, including data collection, coordination with partners, and site visits.

Task 2: Alternatives Analysis, including identifying route and design options, determining right-of-way and ownership, and other factors, analyzing the alternatives, and presenting the initial findings to project partners.

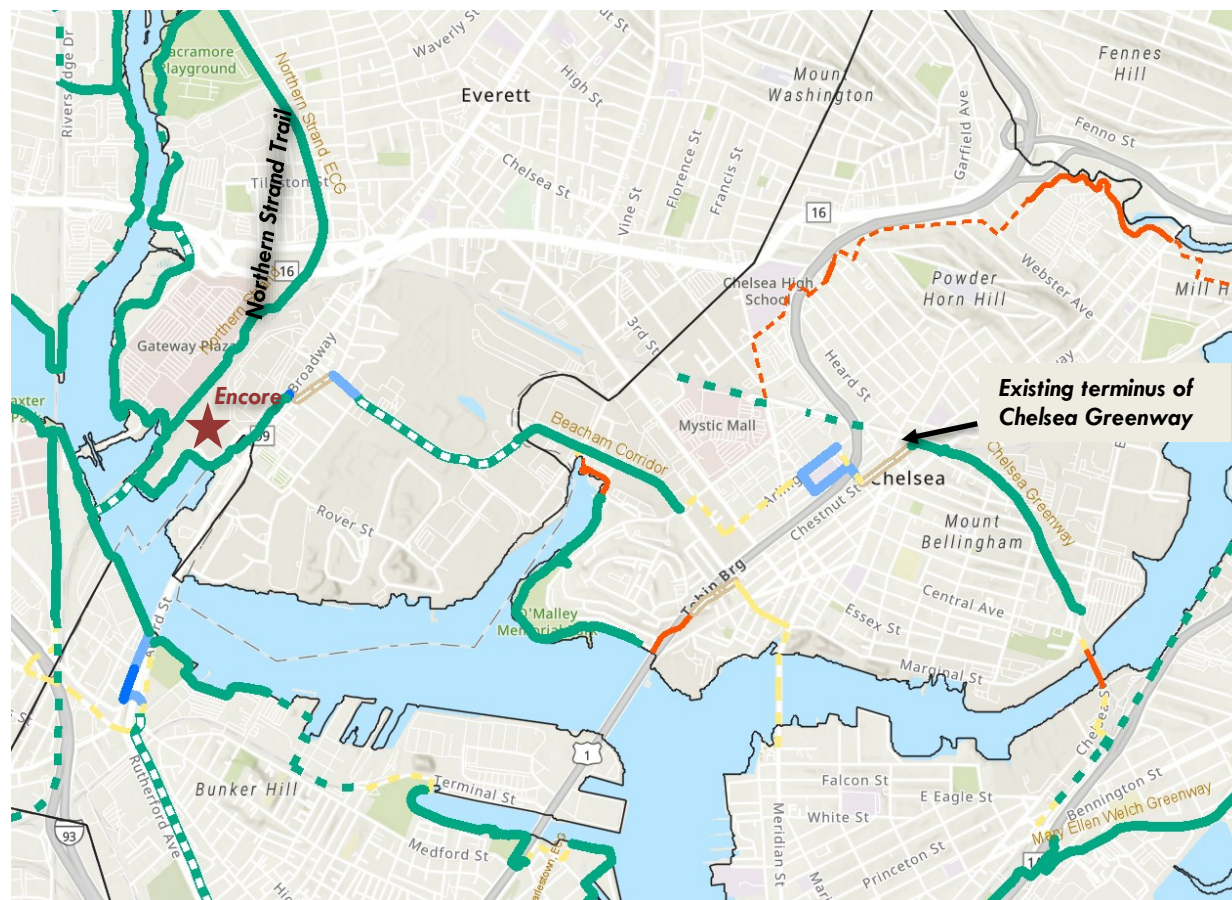
Task 3: Public Engagement, which includes public meetings, and surveys in multiple languages and other targeted engagement in a variety of locations and formats, as well as meetings with community-based organizations throughout the process.

Task 4: Alignment Selection and Implementation Plan, which includes documenting the preferred alternative and steps needed for implementation, conceptual design, and planning-level cost estimates.

3. Project Area Description and Context

The study area is from the current end of the Greenway east of Route 1 near Chestnut Street in Chelsea to the Casino and the Malden River (see map). Both Everett and Chelsea have Environmental Justice communities of historically marginalized populations, including majority non-white and lower-income, with some neighborhoods also having a majority of households where English is not spoken.¹ At least one in five households in these communities do not have access to a vehicle. The volume of vehicular traffic on major Chelsea-Everett connections is unsafe and unhealthy to those walking and cycling, with 31,500 vehicles per day on Route 16, and 23,500 vehicles per day on Route 99. The area also has poor existing transit options, with Casino employees and others in Chelsea needing to ride over an hour on one or more buses to reach the Casino. In some cases, walking the one or two miles may be faster than transit. With a safer, separated bicycle route, the trip could be made in under 30 minutes.

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2020-environmental-justice-populations>



Map illustrating incomplete trail network in Chelsea and Everett. The existing Chelsea Greenway ends east of Route 1, over 2 miles from Encore Boston and the Northern Strand Trail. Solid lines show existing trails and pathways (green and red), bicycle lanes (blue), and urban sidewalks (yellow); dashed lines illustrate proposed or potential facilities, design and exact locations to be determined.

4. Anticipated Outcomes

This final outcome from this project will be a preferred alignment, feasibility analysis, and cost estimate, for a safer bicycle and pedestrian network separated from car and truck traffic from the end of the Chelsea Greenway east of Route 1 in Chelsea to Broadway in Everett and on to the Northern Strand Trail. The preferred alignment should have broad community support for a high-quality facility that can create safe cycling and walking access to the Encore Casino for employees and patrons from Chelsea and Everett. Identifying this preferred alignment will then open the opportunity for the municipalities and others to reserve the right-of-way and secure local, state, and federal funding for construction of the new alignment. This trail and sidewalks will create an important missing link from the Northern Strand Community Path and the Chelsea Greenway and other regional trails.

5. Project Work Plan and Major Milestones/Deliverables

MAPC staff has developed this scope of work in coordination with staff from the City of Everett and the City of Chelsea. Both municipalities will be key partners in this effort. MAPC anticipates leading the overall

planning effort, community and stakeholder engagement, with assistance from the municipalities, community organizations, and others. MAPC also plans to procure a consultant to assist in reviewing alternatives and in developing concept plans and cost estimates for the preferred alternative.

Task 1: Existing Conditions and Administration

- **Subtask 1.1 Initial Meeting and Coordination** – MAPC, municipal planning staff, and the Consultant will have an initial meeting to discuss the project work plan, project schedule, project team members, and confirm project work products.
- **Subtask 1.2 Existing Conditions** – the Consultant will review previous completed work and existing conditions information to understand work done to date, including concurrent pedestrian and bicycle plans and proposed projects being undertaken by the municipalities, Casino, MassDOT, DCR, and others. The Consultant will provide a written summary of the existing conditions and previous work.
- **Subtask 1.3 Site Visit** – MAPC, municipal planning staff, and the Consultant will conduct a site visit to review existing conditions and identify areas of opportunity and potential challenges.

Task 2: Alternatives Analysis

- **Subtask 2.1 Alternatives Identification** – the Consultant will identify up to three alternative routes for a shared use path or separated bicycle facility, and provide a written summary and map.
- **Subtask 2.2 Data Collection** – the Consultant will collect data on property ownership, right of way space, and other factors impacting the ability to construct a shared use path or separated bicycle facility.
- **Subtask 2.3 Data Analysis** – the Consultant will analyze collected data for the three alternatives and determine the feasibility of each. The Consultant may develop a scoring criteria or other set of metrics to help identify the preferred alternative. MAPC will provide data for the Consultant's use.
- **Subtask 2.4 Present to Project Partners** – the Consultant will present the three alternatives and findings, to MAPC and the municipalities. If needed, the Consultant will revise the alternatives based upon feedback.

Task 3: Public Engagement

MAPC Community Engagement staff will develop an engagement plan early in the study process to document the goals of the study, detail the engagement tasks below, and help ensure that the input and feedback efforts are done equitably.

- **Subtask 3.1 Public Meetings** – the Consultant will participate in and provide content for up to two public meetings, take notes, and evaluate feedback. MAPC will establish the time and location for the public meetings, in consultation with stakeholders including municipal staff from Everett and Chelsea. MAPC will be responsible for advertising the meetings and other outreach. MAPC staff will document the meetings. The primary audience for these meetings will be residents and workers within the study area, with the purpose of getting feedback on routing and alignment options as well as design concepts.
- **Subtask 3.2 Public Survey** – MAPC staff will develop a survey to learn about challenges employees and others face in accessing the casino and to receive feedback on alternative alignments. MAPC will have the survey translated into multiple languages and will lead on outreach for the survey. The Consultant will provide feedback on a survey MAPC develops, and will use the results to collect public input on a preferred alternative.
- **Subtask 3.3 Stakeholder Meetings** – the Consultant will participate in up to four stakeholder meetings with community based organizations, cycling advocacy groups, and property owners. MAPC staff will be responsible for organizing and documenting the meetings. These stakeholder meetings will likely be done at the beginning of the process in Task 1, during the alternatives analysis in Task 2, as well in Task 4.

Task 4: Alignment Selection and Implementation Plan

- **Subtask 4.1 Final Feasibility Report** – the Consultant will prepare a final feasibility report, summarizing data collected and analyzed, public feedback, and a recommended preferred alternative. The Consultant will provide both a draft for MAPC and stakeholder review, and a final version addressing review comments. MAPC will provide feedback on the draft report, and will be responsible for posting the final recommendations online.
- **Subtask 4.2 Concept Designs** – the Consultant will prepare a conceptual design for the preferred alternative, documenting the type of facility and key challenges.
- **Subtask 4.3 Final Cost Estimate** – the Consultant will prepare a cost estimate or range for the preferred alternative.

Unless otherwise noted, MAPC will be responsible for organizing all community outreach activities, including reserving space and public notification, as well as documenting meetings. The municipal partners will assist in providing data, field visits, and providing feedback. MAPC will also procure a Consultant to assist in the planning process. The first step in this process will be to create a more detailed scope of work that clearly outlines the efforts for the Consultant team, MAPC, municipal partners, and others.

The anticipated final outcome of the project will be a written (PDF format) and online report identifying a preferred alignment for a safer bicycle and pedestrian network from the end of the Chelsea Greenway east of Route 1 in Chelsea to Broadway in Everett. The report will include details on next steps for MAPC, the municipalities, and others to obtain funding and resources to construct the greenway connection from Chelsea to the Casino and the Northern Strand Trail, as well as to other local and regional bicycle networks in Chelsea, Everett, and East Boston.

To help ensure a more equitable process and outcome, MAPC will engage with local communities with materials in and meetings in Spanish and Portuguese, and hold outreach during non-traditional hours such as weekends and at existing community events. MAPC will also work with the Casino to connect with employees live in Everett and Chelsea to get their perspectives, particularly those who use transit, walk, or bicycle to get to work. Materials will be developed in plain language and with clear graphics, avoiding technical jargon with clear methods for residents to provide feedback in various languages.

The anticipated schedule is July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025. See project timeline below.

Project Timeline

Task	July 24	Aug 24	Sept 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25
Task 1. Project Exist. Cond.												
Task 2. Alternatives Analysis												
Task 3. Public Engagement												
Task 4. Alignment Selection / Plan												

6. Budget

MAPC is requesting \$90,000 in MGC funds for this project. MAPC will provide a match of \$38,760, which will primarily fund MAPC staff time for administering the project, selecting and overseeing the consultant, and leading the public engagement. The total project cost is \$128,760. MAPC developed this budget based upon estimates of staff hours, consultant efforts, and non-labor expenses such as reserving space and refreshments for public events, translation of meeting and survey materials, and meeting interpretation. A breakdown of the costs by Task and Subtasks is below.

Task 1. Project Existing Conditions & Admin	\$29,160
1.1 Initial Meeting and Coordination	\$4,960
1.2 Existing Conditions	\$7,100
1.3 Site Visit	\$4,300
Grant Administration throughout project (7.3% of \$90K)	\$6,600
Coordination Calls (throughout project)	\$6,200
Task 2. Alternatives Analysis	\$33,600
2.1 Alternatives Identification	\$8,880
2.2 Data Collection	\$8,880
2.3 Data Analysis	\$6,880
2.4 Presentation to Partners	\$3,720
<i>Initial concepts mapping/ technical memo findings to-date</i>	\$5,240
Task 3. Public Engagement	\$39,560
3.1 Public Meetings	\$16,660
3.2 Public Survey	\$8,300
3.3 Stakeholder Meetings	\$11,680
<i>Survey and Engagement Summary</i>	\$2,920
Task 4. Alignment Selection & Implementation Plan	\$26,440
4.1 Final Feasibility Report (draft)	\$10,640
4.2 Concept Designs	\$7,640
4.3 Cost Estimate	\$2,840
4.4 Draft and Final Review Meetings	\$2,480
<i>Final Report with alignment, concepts, cost estimates</i>	\$2,840
Total \$128,760	



CITY OF CHELSEA, MA
Executive Department

City Hall, 500 Broadway, Chelsea, MA 02150
Phone: 617.466.4100 · Fax: 617.466.4175



Fidel Maltez
City Manager
fmaltez@chelseama.gov

January 24, 2024

Massachusetts Gaming Commission
101 Federal Street, 12th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to you in strong support of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) application for a Regional Agency Grant from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's Community Mitigation Fund. The funding from this grant will allow the MAPC to study and investigate potential routes for connecting the Chelsea Greenway to the Encore Casino and onward to the Northern Strand Trail to Lynn and the future crossing of the Mystic River to Draw Seven Park in Somerville and Assembly Row.

Completing this important link in the regional bicycle and pedestrian transportation network will have real benefits for Chelsea residents, employees, and visitors. The future completion of this segment will complement other regional efforts and provide connections from the Casino through Chelsea to East Boston and Revere.

On behalf of the City of Chelsea and its residents, I enthusiastically support this application. The study of alternatives and the selection of a preferred solution for this critical regional connection for non-vehicular travel will help the commonwealth meet its climate goals and mitigate traffic to everyone's benefit. Beyond the study, we look forward to partnering with the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, MAPC, and the City of Everett in the future implementation of the preferred solution.

Thank you for the work that the Massachusetts Gaming Commission does and I ask that you give this application all due consideration.

Sincerely,

Fidel Maltez
City Manager





City of Everett
Department of Transportation and Mobility
484 Broadway, Room 25
Everett, Massachusetts 02149
(P) 617-544-6033 (F) 617-394-5002

Jay Monty, Executive Director

Joe Delaney
Chief of Community Affairs
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
101 Federal Street
Boston, MA 02110

Re: Support Letter – Chelsea to Everett Greenway Connector

Dear Joe,

On behalf of Mayor DeMaria, I would like to offer the City of Everett's support of MAPC's 2025 Community Mitigation Fund grant application to study the feasibility of a Chelsea to Everett Greenway. As you well know, the City of Everett, in partnership with MGC and others, spent considerable resources expanding the multi-use trail network in Everett. We view this as critical to meeting Everett's long-term goals of sustainability and reduced vehicle dependency. The Chelsea Everett Greenway represents the next major challenge and opportunity in developing this trail network. As Everett plans for, and experiences rapid growth east of Rte. 99, it is critical that this area become linked to the Northern Strand Trail and the rest of the regional trail network to the west and south.

The goal of a Chelsea to Everett Greenway is also consistent with planning efforts in Chelsea and East Boston where those communities are planning to link the East Boston Greenway and Chelsea Greenway. The culmination of this eventual build-out will link Everett and the entertainment district to destinations such as Logan Airport, Revere Beach, East Boston as well as important transit hubs in Chelsea and Boston.

We hope you will give this project positive consideration as the City of Everett commits to supporting MAPC and our neighboring communities in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Jay Monty

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Small Business Support Planning and Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations Scope of Work & Letters of Support



MAPC Project Scoping Document for Mass Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Grant Application – Economic Development

Small Business Resiliency and Growth Support Planning and Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations (BSOs) Scope of Work

Table of Contents

1. Impacts of Gaming Establishment	1
2. Project Summary	2
3. Project Area Description and Context	2
4. Anticipated Outcomes	3
5. Project Work Plan and Major Milestones/Deliverables	3
6. Budget	7

1. Impacts of Gaming Establishment

MAPC will employ the Community Mitigation Fund (CMF) funds to conduct community planning to address two negative impacts and one positive impact on small businesses associated with the Encore Boston Harbor (EBH) gaming establishment. The project will identify specific strategies to mitigate the impacts felt by small businesses in industry sectors identified in the CMF's FY 2025 Guidelines cited below.

Negative impacts.

- Competition from the gaming establishment may have negative impacts on other businesses competing in the hospitality and entertainment industries.
- The presence of a gaming establishment may result in reallocated spending. Reallocated spending is spending on goods and services which would have occurred had the casinos never opened, but which did not occur because an individual chose to spend their money at the casino instead. The main areas where monies are reallocated are transportation, retail items, hotels and travel, restaurants and bars, recreation, non-live entertainment, and live entertainment.

Positive impact.

- Gaming establishments typically purchase millions of dollars of goods and services each year, much of which is purchased locally. This provides the opportunity for local businesses to provide these goods and services.

Relevant documentation and evidence include a study titled ***Encore Boston Harbor, First Three and a Half Years of Operation: Economic Impacts Report*** which was prepared by the UMass Donahue Institute and others through the SEIMGA project. Specifically, this was conducted through the Social and Economic

Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA) project, funded by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

This study provides findings in support of the determination that the operation of the gaming facility is causing the impact and that the issue is regional in nature. Report highlights includes the following. it estimates *reallocated* consumer spending during 2019 – 2022 resulting from EBH operations, stating that “....despite the economic benefits of recaptured and new (consumer) spending, \$818.9 million of patron expenditures were reallocated away from other businesses in Massachusetts and toward the casino.”

The report takes a closer look at spending in the year 2022, the first normal year of casino operations at EBH. In previous years, EBH was open only for a partial year or was impacted by the pandemic-related shutdown.

With respect to the year 2022, the report documents that EBH patrons spent an estimated \$137.9 million at area businesses outside the casino during their visits, but this was accompanied by estimated \$305.5 million in reallocated spending, i.e., a net shift of \$167.7 million of spending away from businesses providing other goods and services in the state. The study goes on to state that these estimated impacts were concentrated in the metropolitan region.

2. Project Summary

The Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A and Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations project. The project will center a planning effort to include preparing an inventory of business support organizations (BSOs) located in or serving the Region A communities, with attention to the types of classes, counseling and other services being offered to small firms, identifying the activities by service category and, if applicable, the industry served. MAPC will survey the BSOs to identify those that are currently delivering services to small businesses in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries, i.e., industries impacted by casino operations, or with tangible plans to do so (the “impacted industry serving BSOs”). From this point forward, project activities will place an emphasis on impacted industry serving BSOs. The small business regional planning initiative includes data collection from 1) three focus groups comprised of impacted industry-serving BSOs and 2) survey responses from to identify the impacted industry-serving BSOs and their service offerings and from a sample of small businesses in select Region A communities. Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data will be used to assess the extent and quantity of services offered. The inventory, focus group discussions, and surveys will yield observations addressing the hypothesis that additional business support services are necessary to fill the needs and potential of small businesses and entrepreneurs in the impacted industries.

3. Project Area Description and Context

The small business regional planning initiative to explore and recommend strategies to better support small business in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries, will yield information on the geography of business support organizations (BSOs) in Region A communities, including Everett, Cambridge, Chelsea, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Revere, Somerville, and Saugus. It is unlikely that business support organizations (BSOs) are operating physically within each Region A community. The BSO inventory will identify those located in or serving these communities, yield information on their physical location, and provide information on the types of classes, counseling and other services being offered, identifying BSOs which currently serve or have tangible plans to serve small

businesses in the impacted industries. While Region A-serving BSOs and economic development practitioners will be the primary audience for the in-person Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations (see Task 2,) other BSOs serving impacted small business owners or similar demographic groups of small owners will also be invited to attend.

4. Anticipated Outcomes

The Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A will help identify the categories in which the supply of support services falls short of the need from these businesses. The deliverable will be a Regional Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan providing a written gap analysis of small business support provided by public and private institutions in and near Region A communities, with a focus on the retail, hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries. Completion of the plan sets the stage for the second element, an in-person Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations, that is highly dependent on MAPC's progress on the first. The in-person Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations which MAPC will hold in the fourth quarter of the grant equips area BSO's to work with small firms to pursue business opportunities with the Casino in an efficient and effective manner.

Please refer to the MAPC Application for a summary of the project.

5. Project Work Plan and Major Milestones/Deliverables

The proposed project comprises four tasks with anticipated completion over a twelve-month period. Given the interrelated nature of certain tasks and subtasks, it is expected that some will overlap in time. In Tasks 1 and 2, MAPC will conduct project activities and develop the deliverables for the Regional Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A and implement the Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations. Two additional tasks are also described below.

Task 1: Create a Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A - (July 2024 – May 2025)

Subtask 1: Establish and meet with the project advisory group: Assemble an advisory group made up of small business support provider networks and leaders in the Greater Boston region, such as the Bunker Hill Community College Enterprise Center for Entrepreneurship and Training, Center for Women and Enterprise, Boston Impact Initiative, and/or other local business support organizations, and select municipalities. This group will meet regularly to provide ideas for and feedback on the Regional Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports plan, including how to prioritize recommended actions and advising which questions to ask in the survey and focus groups. Immediate items for discussion will include brainstorming what questions to ask business support providers either anonymously or identifiably, gaps in business support services the advisors anticipate finding, how business support providers tend to collaborate versus act independently, and differences in support needed between the impacted industries of food service/restaurant, hospitality, recreation, and live and non-live entertainment. Discuss with the group the three impacts on small businesses associated with Encore Boston Harbor as supported by research found on the MGC website: 1) competition in the hospitality and entertainment industries; 2)

reallocated spending in which the public spends money on retail, food, beverage, and other sectors at the casino rather than other local businesses (research shows that expenditures are being reallocated toward the casino and away from other Massachusetts businesses since the casino opened); and 3) opportunities at Encore Boston Harbor for local and diversity purchasing of goods and services.

Subtask II: Inventory the business support providers active in and adjacent to Region A: Assemble an inventory of all business support providers that support businesses in the target geography including traditional business support providers, incubators, accelerators, small business capital providers, main street organizations, municipal offices, and relevant community-based organizations (such as those with language support capabilities), with special attention to those working with small businesses and MWVBEs. Include those identified in any existing business services listings or other directories, showing how businesses in the restaurant, hospitality, and entertainment industries typically find and utilize the business support providers. In reference to those in adjoining communities, the inventory will list only those within a mile or two of a Region A community.

Subtask III: Survey core business support organizations: Develop and collect a digital survey to business support providers identified in subtask II that provide services to retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industry businesses. The survey may be targeted to the business support providers whose services are most inclusive of or targeted toward MWVBEs (support providers to be determined). The survey will ask questions such as what services the organization provides, how many businesses in the target industries they support in some way on an annual basis, which services are most requested and frequented by small business owners, what services business support organizations envision would help small businesses but are currently not offered by their organization or others, and trends they've noticed or concerns they anticipate for small businesses related to the opening of Encore Boston Harbor and its announced expansion. The respondents may choose to answer anonymously or identifiably.

Subtask IV: Assess of the number of businesses of the target industries located in Region A: Utilizing available datasets, conduct an existing conditions analysis to determine how many businesses exist in the impacted industries, i.e., ones that are affected by reallocated spending and/or business competition by the casino. The data assessment will yield information on businesses in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries located in Region A. Data analyses will include relevant details such as sub-location within the region and other characteristics to be determined.

Subtask V: Survey small businesses in target industries: Develop and collect a digital survey of businesses in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel services, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries in select Region A communities. Obtaining business owner contact lists and details from private, proprietary data sources can be cost-prohibitive. The survey will be fielded to firms where BSOs or municipal partners have assisted to create outreach lists. Enlist municipalities, local chambers of commerce, and BSOs in Region A communities to field the digital survey with their small business constituents in support of the project's public purposes and aims, with survey completion enabling business owners to 'opt in' to the project's contact list to receive future communications.

Subtask VI: Conduct 3 focus groups with business support organizations: Conduct focus groups to identify common themes and gaps in business support in Region A, and how to reach small businesses in the retail, hospitality, food service/dining, recreation, and entertainment industries most effectively and better support them. Participants will include 1) members of the project advisory group, who have been selected based on their expertise in business support function (rather than industry expertise), and 2) representatives of BSOs that are actively delivering services or have tangible plans to deliver services to the impacted industries. Focus groups will provide supplemental data to the survey and notes will be taken without the participants' identifying information. BSO focus group participants will be categorized

according to their services and specialties or experience with similar demographic groups, and whether they deliver in-person, virtual, or both forms of service offerings. One focus group will be a working session on mitigating adverse impacts of the casino via BSO support services and how to increase accessibility of these services to small businesses in the impacted industries.

Subtask VII: Analyze, compile, and summarize surveys and focus group results: Conduct an analysis of the survey responses and focus groups to identify the business support services offered for small businesses in the retail, hotel/hospitality, travel, food service/dining, recreation, live and non-live entertainment, industries in Region A. Compare these existing offerings to identified gaps and needs in business support that best address small business displacement that the Encore Boston Harbor may be amplifying in Region A. Present the noted gaps and needs, and potential recommendations, to the project advisory group to identify ones that are actionable in the short term and those requiring mobilizing of financial resources to implement.

Subtask VIII: Develop recommendations for action: Based on the quantitative and qualitative data analysis compiled in the preceding subtask, develop recommendations on how business support organizations can increase effectiveness and accessibility of their services and resources in the target geography, particularly for target industry businesses. This will include developing a prioritized list of potential business support actions or pilot projects with low resource intensity that business support providers may enact to address the resiliency, sustainability, and identified needs for businesses impacted by the casino, either for an industry type or a demographic group of business owners. For example, recommendations may include collaboration between or new service offerings by business support providers, specific services that municipalities can offer, e.g., site selection or relocation assistance within the local community, permitting assistance, and specific services other support providers can provide, all with an emphasis on services that directly address businesses impacted by the casino.

Subtask IX: Compile a writeup: Compile a user-friendly writeup of the results of the above Regional Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan subtasks. This will be in the form of a web page with links to relevant tables, data summaries, resources, and recommendations yielded by the Resiliency and Growth Plan, to be presented in a highly accessible format on an MAPC web page. The digitized material will serve as a virtual hand out for attendees of the Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for BSOs described at Task 2, below. On the day of the conference, attendees will be given the QR code and link to access the digital conference materials.

Task 2: Prepare Content and Logistics for and Hold Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations - (April 2025 – June 2025)

Subtask I: Conduct one conference planning session with Encore Boston Harbor Purchasing Department, and one with the project advisory group: Conduct background research on current supplier diversity practices and policies and meet with the Encore Boston Harbor Purchasing Department and the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) to understand the most pressing challenges faced by businesses when bidding or setting up business with the casino (like background checks or the digital divide), and how Encore Boston Harbor spreads the word about the opportunities, practices, and policies of doing business with the casino. This meeting will act as a consultation regarding conference content and to invite a representative(s) to speak at the conference. Also meet with the project advisory group about the key topics that they would like to have addressed at the conference and recommendations for how to encourage attendance and engagement of business support organizations municipal economic development professionals and of chambers of commerce, business improvement districts, and main streets organization representatives in Region A.

Subtask II: Prepare conference logistics and design the content: Establish a date, location, and incidentals of the conference. Identify goals and priority topics and design the session content and activities to help small businesses take advantage of opportunities at Encore Boston Harbor. An example convening topic may be supporting the small business owners' needs for digital literacy and internet access to explore and act on online bidding opportunities. Recruit and prepare experts to speak at the sessions, and conduct participant outreach to organizations listed in the inventory conducted for the Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A described at Task1.

Subtask III. Prepare for and host the Supplier Diversity Conference for Business Support Organizations: Develop a facilitator's guide for staff and speakers and develop supporting handouts or other materials for the conference. Host the conference including day-of activities and necessary event follow-ups, such as providing honoraria to speakers. Potential to record the conference for future reference by participating business support providers and their clients.

Task 3: Implement a small pilot project chosen from the Recommendations for Action of the Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A described at Task1 - (May 2025 – June 2025)

Conduct preliminary activities to set up a pilot project from the recommended actions of the Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A described at Task1, one with targeted benefits to a specific impacted industry or a demographic group of business owners. Working with the project Advisory Committee, identify a low-cost pilot with an identified benefit to small firms and few barriers to execution. An example project may be creating a map of business support organizations and options, in a format friendly to small business owners helping small businesses find BSOs in their community. Another example would be working with a BSO to pilot a workshop on how small firms can meet their day-to-day credit needs and streamline record keeping via the use of a business credit card vs. a personal credit card. Subtasks to be determined based on the pilot. Additional implementation of recommendations may be the subject of a subsequent funding request to the MGC and/or other funding sources.

Task 4: Project Management and Administration - (July 2024 – June 2025)

Conduct standard project management activities such as routine internal check-ins, the administration of confidentiality notices, invoices, reporting on grant funded activities, etc. Also includes administration of stipends to project Advisory Committee members and meeting expenses throughout the engagement and the administration of honoraria to conference presenters as applicable under Task 2.

See project timeline below.

Project Timeline

Task	July 24	Aug 24	Sept 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25
Task 1.												
Task 2.												
Task 3.												
Task 4.												

6. Budget

Task 1: Create a Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A	\$42,315
1.1 Establish and meet with the project advisory group throughout the project	\$5,355
1.2 Inventory the business support organizations within/active in Region A	\$3,150
1.3 Conduct survey of business support organizations (BSOs) located in Region A	\$3,675
1.4 Conduct existing conditions analysis to include compilation of data runs on small firms in Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment within Region A communities	\$4,200
1.5 Survey businesses in target industries from a sampling of Region A communities	\$6,825
1.6 Conduct three (3) focus groups with business support and community-based organizations	\$5,985
1.7 Analyze, compile, and summarize survey and focus group results, including through collaboration with the advisory committee	\$4,725
1.8 Develop recommendations for action	\$4,725
1.9 Compile a user-friendly writeup incorporating the above Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A subtasks, i.e., create the primary written deliverable	\$3,675
Task 2: Plan for and Hold Supplier Diversity Conference for BSOs	\$19,100
2.1 Conduct one planning session with Encore Boston Harbor Purchasing Department, and one meeting with the project advisory group, for the 1/2-day Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations	\$2,310
2.2 Prepare conference logistics and design the content	\$10,500
2.3 Prepare final logistics for and host the half-day Casino Supplier Diversity Conference for Small Business Support Organizations	\$6,300
Task 3: Implement a small pilot project chosen from the Recommendations for Action from Task 1	\$4,975
3.1 Implement a small pilot project chosen from the <i>Small Business Resiliency and Growth Supports Plan Focusing on Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment in Region A Report's</i> recommendations for action. Subtasks TBD based on assessment.	\$4,975

Task 4: Project Administration and Reporting and Non-labor expenses	\$18,600
4.1 Conduct team management/project oversight, e.g., routine internal meetings, the fielding of confidentiality notices to participants, workplan development, etc.	\$6,300
4.2 Conduct administrative tasks, i.e., grant invoicing, periodic grant reporting, financial tracking, including administering stipend and honorarium payments (just under 7.5% of \$85,000)	\$6,300
Non-labor costs: includes Project Advisory member stipends, and food, event space, printing, conference speaker honoraria associated with Task 2	\$6,000
Total	\$85,000

January 30, 2024

Joe Delaney
Chief, Community Affairs Division
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
101 Federal St., 12th Floor
Boston, MA 02110
617-979-8400 (Main Office)
617-725-0258 (Fax)

Dear Mr. Delaney,

I write on behalf of Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC) to strongly support the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC's) application for a small business regional planning initiative to explore and recommend strategies for small business support in the Region A communities, including Everett, Cambridge, Chelsea, Lynn, Malden, Medford, Melrose, Revere, Somerville, and Saugus. The planning effort will culminate with a Small Business Support Organizations and Casino Supplier Diversity Conference. MAPC is applying to the Gaming Commission's Community Mitigation Fund for funding support to the initiative. This initiative aligns seamlessly with our commitment to educational and economic development in the Greater Boston area.

Our experience working with MAPC, which serves as the regional planning agency serving the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston, includes creating the Chelsea-Everett Small Business Needs Assessment study in 2020. Given MAPC's mission of advancing smart growth, regional collaboration, and a resilient and inclusive region, we were pleased to collaborate with the agency in compiling the 2020 needs assessment for small businesses in the Chelsea and Everett communities. This study highlighted a set of goals and strategies that BHCC is working to advance in supporting local, BIPOC- and women-owned businesses. The insights gained from this collaboration have been instrumental in shaping our Enterprise Center for Entrepreneurship and Training (ECET), which provides critical support to diverse small businesses, especially those impacted by COVID-19. This partnership reflects our joint dedication to fostering a robust business ecosystem in our communities.

BHCC's role as the largest community college in Massachusetts, with a diverse student body and extensive network, positions us as a vital contributor to regional economic initiatives. Our programs like the ECET, focusing on entrepreneurship and nonprofit management, underscore our commitment to supporting small business development.

This project would support several of BHCC's goals to achieve a more equitable, resilient, and connected region. Through coordinating a vibrant ecosystem of business support organizations including the ECET, the project would provide valuable opportunities for economic advancement and wealth building among lower-income and BIPOC entrepreneurs and business owners in Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Charlestown,

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Phone: 617-228-2101 TTY: 617-884-3293

ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

Chinatown • East Boston • Everett • Malden • South End • Quincy

bhcc.edu

and surrounding communities. Types of outputs and outcomes that may result from the project engagement include potential collaboration between regional business support organizations and BHCC's ECET, such as targeted business support to restaurants, hospitality businesses, and entertainment businesses, or increased access to business support for entrepreneurs who speak non-English languages. We would be pleased to work with the agency to compile the Small Business Ecosystem Gap Analysis and convenings described in MAPC's request.

The MAPC project promises significant contributions to revitalizing the local economy, particularly in the wake of pandemic challenges. It aligns with our mission to provide practical, accessible education and training to a diverse community. Through this collaboration, we can enhance our combined impact on small businesses in the local communities affected by the Encore Boston Harbor Casino.

We are confident that MAPC will successfully administer, implement, and sustain the activities outlined for this project. We are pleased to offer our support to this partnership as MAPC seeks this funding from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's Community Mitigation Fund.

Please let us know if we can provide any further information in support of MAPC's request.

Sincerely,



Pam Y. Eddinger, PhD
President

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ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS

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CITY OF REVERE

Patrick M. Keefe Jr.
Mayor

January 30, 2024

Joe Delaney
Chief, Community Affairs Division
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
101 Federal St., 12th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Mr. Delaney,

The City of Revere lends its support to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC's) proposal to the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) Community Mitigation Fund to conduct a Small Business Ecosystem Gap Analysis and Supplier Diversity Conference. The proposal reflects Revere's values of equity and inclusion and addresses the regional and local economic need for support to small businesses.

The proposed project will directly support Revere's current small business support initiatives. Revere has several initiatives underway including new mini-grants to support space costs for entrepreneurs, public realm improvements, and an upcoming façade program to increase accessibility of storefronts. However, the City's small business ecosystem continues to face challenges such as high space costs and the need for a District Management Agency to help the central commercial corridors (Shirley Ave and Broadway) sustain themselves over time.

The proposed project to the MGC will enlighten Revere to the business support opportunities and connections that are possible and highlight specific areas of need such as access to Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) that could support Revere's businesses. The regional small business support ecosystem will benefit from the Gap Analysis because it will serve as a high-level perspective and strategic guide to how business support organizations, including municipal governments, can assist small businesses in communities like Revere.

Please let us know if you would like to speak further about the proposal.

Regards,

Patrick M. Keefe Jr.

Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues Scope of Work & Letters of Support



MAPC Project Scoping Document for Mass Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Grant Application – Arts & Culture

Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues Scope of Work

Table of Contents

1. Identify Impacts of Gaming Establishment	1
2. Project Summary	3
3. Project Area Description and Context	3
4. Anticipated Outcomes	4
5. Project Work Plan and Major Milestones/Deliverables	4
6. Budget	7

1. Identify Impacts of Gaming Establishment

Casino impacts on arts, culture, and entertainment venues are felt at a regional level as much as a local level. Located in Everett, Encore presents live entertainment and events with significant advantages compared with regional independent venues for audiences, booking, and marketing since 2019. In partnership with Big Night Entertainment Group, Encore hosts live music, DJs, and entertainment, at times in direct competition with local venues.

Regionally, entertainment venues have struggled to compete with Encore. Examples of this competition have appeared in multiple neighboring communities, including the City of Lynn, which documented these impacts in their 2021 Community Planning Grant Application for funding to support a marketing campaign for the Lynn cultural district:

The Lynn Auditorium attempted to book; however, it lost out on a variety of shows in 2019, such as Tony Bennett and the B52s. Just five lost shows translate into a loss of over 10,000 visitors to Lynn's downtown or approximately \$1,000,000 in ticket sales. The Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism indicates in their annual report that every \$1.00 spent by a visitor equates to 2.5 cents in local taxes.¹

In Beverly, the Cabot Theatre noted that in addition to directly competing with Encore for booking talent, Encore's performance bookings typically include a radius clause that prevents acts from performing within a specific geographic radius for a designated period. Encore's advantage over local venues is exacerbated by the fact that casinos do not rely on the revenue from ticket sales as part of their business model, which sets performance fee expectations among the talent they book for contract terms that stand-alone venues cannot match.

¹ City of Lynn 2021 Gaming Commission Community Planning Grant Application, Appendix F.

While there have been some attempts to protect local mid-sized venues through Encore's Massachusetts gaming license, which states it "shall only be permitted to build a live entertainment venue that has less than 1,000 seats or more than 3,500 seats" ², there have been multiple instances where this provision has not fully protected local venues, like the Chevalier Theatre in Medford, from being in direct competition with Encore's entertainment venues.

Since 2020, entertainment venues have struggled to recover due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the erosion of live events, some venues more than others. While the U.S. Small Business Association awarded Shuttered Venue Operators Grants (SVOG) to a hundred venues in greater Boston in June 2021 and July 2022 to support theater operators, concert venues, and other businesses shut down by social distancing rules that banned large crowds, multiple venues have since closed. Venues like Great Scott, Bull McCabe's, Wonder Bar, Thunder Road, Bella Luna and Milky Way Lounge, ONCE Somerville, TOAD, Good Life, and Atwood's have closed since 2020. The pandemic amplified the strain on the local entertainment industry, particularly for small and mid-sized independent venues and promoters.

Another effort to address the impact of casinos on local arts communities in Massachusetts has been through the Gaming Mitigation Funds distributed through the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). These funds are awarded to nonprofits and municipal performing arts organizations whose primary mission is to promote access, excellence, diversity, or education in the arts, humanities, or sciences that commit 50% or more of their operating expenses to the performing arts. This funding is based on a formula calculating the percentage of performances featuring touring shows and artists and the total fees paid to touring shows and artists at eligible venues. Many small local independent venues do not qualify for funding because they are not nonprofits or municipal performing arts organizations. Yet, these venues play a critical role in Metro Boston's music ecosystem for local talent development and preserving local culture. While the Gaming Mitigation funds intend to mitigate the impact of resort-style casinos, these funds only address one of the challenges smaller venues face in the larger music ecosystem.

Additionally, the Gaming Mitigation Fund does not address the challenge of marketing the venues and building audiences for all programming in an ecosystem dominated by the casino. This challenge has only increased in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the closure of local venues, the stakes of competition between local independent venues and promoters for talent, marketing and sales have heightened. Live entertainment behemoths like Live Nation and AEG's local arm, Bowery Presents, dominate today's live music and entertainment ecosystem. Similarly, Encore Casino and its venues also benefit from the national and international marketing capabilities of Encore's entertainment venues, which puts smaller independent venues at a disadvantage. Despite Encore's Regional Marketing Plan Campaign for its grand opening citing that the core component of their impact would be "sharing the best of Massachusetts with the world" ³ including local entertainment and culture, there is little support for strengthening the marketing of local entertainment and increased competition for local venues that nurture that culture.

While existing local venues are struggling to achieve financial stability, Encore is expanding and solidifying plans for an entertainment district that poses additional competition to regional venues. In 2023, Encore received approval for a new 999-seat theater and 200-seat comedy club as part of the East Broadway Encore expansion, which means that the competition for booking, marketing and visibility will likely increase for local venues.⁴ Today, the ability of local, independent venues to market themselves to visitors to Encore, the greater Boston region and local residents is extremely limited by a highly competitive economic landscape without the support of international companies that dominate Boston's larger entertainment ecosystem. Marketing and promotion are core challenges within the entertainment

² <https://www.playma.com/news/massachusetts-gaming-statute-in-question-by-local-theaters/>

³ <https://massgaming.com/wp-content/uploads/Encore-Regional-Marketing-Tourism-Plan-5.27.19.pdf>

⁴ Independent Staff. (2023, October 11). *Everett Independent*. Retrieved from <https://everettindependent.com/2023/10/11/planning-board-endorses-development-for-east-of-broadway/>.

industry, and it is critical to invest in resources that support a broad base of local entertainment venues to support a vibrant, diverse cultural ecosystem in Metro Boston.

2. Project Summary

The importance of strengthening the regional ecosystem for arts and culture activities has been demonstrated through recent projects led by MAPC, including the [Somerville Arts Space Risk Assessment](#), the [Regional Tourism](#) project, and the Making Space for Art Project. In addition, the need for greater attention to audience development and more inclusive tourism planning is demonstrated in the audience research [completed](#) by Slover-Linnett and published in 2022. Marketing and awareness remain core challenges for local, independent venues and promoters. Additionally, municipalities consistently request support for generating events calendars to promote their arts and culture offerings, and there is a need to leverage existing calendars and directories to support marketing and promotion efforts more consistently. ArtsBoston has established the ArtsBoston [Calendar](#) and the New England Foundation for the Arts developed [CreativeGround](#) as a directory that feeds into a database to support the creative economy. However, the extent to which these resources meet the needs of the local entertainment industry, particularly small and medium-sized venues, is unclear. Viewing the full spectrum of entertainment offerings in metro Boston still requires attendees to search by venue or promoter websites. The local entertainment industry needs support in aligning efforts to market events, raise awareness and strengthen independent venues that remain critical components of the broader entertainment ecosystem.

Recent and upcoming updates to the ArtsBoston Calendar and Creative Ground present an opportunity to create a more effective digital platform that raises the visibility of the region's venues and live entertainment offerings. The creation of [ArtsHub Western Mass](#) demonstrates the potential for these resources to contribute to a more coordinated and user-friendly hub of information and promotion.

The Metro Boston Arts and Entertainment marketing and tourism project will support municipalities impacted by casinos to mitigate the impacts on their independent arts, culture, and entertainment venues. In partnership with ArtsBoston and Creative Ground, this project will build on an inventory of cultural facilities completed for Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville, expanded to include arts and entertainment venues in Everett, Medford, Malden, Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, and Melrose. The project will connect local venues and promoters with existing marketing assets through partner organizations and identify core marketing and promotion strategies to improve visibility within the local entertainment sector, support culturally resonant communications, increase the visibility of diverse cultural producers and artists, and expand language access in marketing. As a result of this project, Metro Boston's entertainment ecosystem will provide greater access and support for a diversity of audiences, local artists and venues.

The project will ultimately improve the marketing infrastructure to support local independent entertainment venues and promoters by providing a marketing and tourism resource to attract local audiences and highlight opportunities for casino patrons and employees to experience the best of what Metro Boston has to offer in local arts, culture, and entertainment venues, and support smaller entertainment venues compete with the gaming establishments for business.

3. Project Area Description and Context

The project will engage a regional perspective to meet the needs of live-entertainment venues in the focus area that encompasses Everett, Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Malden, Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, Melrose and proximate areas of Boston including the area of downtown around North Station and Charlestown. A preliminary list of venues of interest within the study area includes the following:

- Charlestown Working Theater, Boston
- The Sinclair, Cambridge

- The Lilypad, Cambridge
- Middle East, Cambridge
- Chelsea Theater Works, Chelsea
- Lynn Auditorium, Lynn (Mass Performing Arts Coalition)
- Neal Rantoul Vault Theater, Lynn
- Malden Center Stage, Malden
- Faces, Malden
- Chevalier Theater, Medford
- Deep Cuts, Medford
- Melrose Memorial Hall, Melrose
- The Jungle Community Music Club, Somerville

This area includes seven Metropolitan Core Communities, two Streetcar Suburbs and one Subregional Urban Center. With a combined 2020 population of 1.27 million residents, it encompasses 37% of the MAPC region's population.⁵ Compared with the larger region, this area has a higher percentage of working-age adults and a smaller share of children under 18 and adults 65 and older compared with the entire MAPC region. Half of the communities in the study area are Gateway Cities, which have historically been areas that attract large immigrant populations. This is reflected in the fact that the population of color is a higher share of the population in the study area (55%) compared with the region as a whole (36%). The study area also has a higher share of individuals living in poverty (15%) compared with the MAPC region (9%) and a higher share of individuals who do not speak English well or cannot speak English at all (9%) compared with the region (5%).

Within this context, there is a pressing need for cultural spaces and facilities to provide cultural programming that is responsive to the study area's diverse communities and to foster opportunities to bring communities together. Ensuring the long-term viability of these venues in the face of competitive pressures from the casino is important for maintaining the cultural vitality of the region.

4. Anticipated Outcomes

When completed, the project will expand an inventory of cultural facilities completed for Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville to include arts and entertainment venues in Everett, Medford, Malden, Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, and Melrose. In addition, the project will identify marketing and promotion strategies, including culturally resonant communications, increased visibility of diverse cultural producers and artists, and expanded language access in marketing with the goal of expanding access to entertainment offerings across a more diverse audience, reflective of the demographics of Metro Boston. The final part of the project will include recommendations for developing a coordinated regional marketing and promotion tool that builds on and leverages existing resources.

5. Project Work Plan and Major Milestones/Deliverables

Task 1. Inventory and Landscape Analysis (July – August 2024)

MAPC will create an inventory of arts, culture, and entertainment venues in Everett, Boston, Cambridge, Medford, Malden, Revere, Chelsea, Lynn, and Melrose in partnership with [ArtsBoston](#) and the [New England Foundation for the Arts' Creative Ground](#) program. This work will build upon an existing inventory of cultural facilities in Boston, Cambridge and Somerville. Venues identified for this study will be added to that inventory, which includes an online map and spreadsheet. NEFA and ArtsBoston will provide information about the extent to which identified venues are represented within their databases with a list of available data fields included in their respective databases. In addition, a landscape analysis will

⁵ American Community Survey estimate, 2020.

document additional stakeholders and technology platforms providing marketing and promotional support to venues in the study area.

Subtask 1.1 Arts and Entertainment Venues Inventory – MAPC staff research venues and adds data on arts and entertainment venues in study area to existing cultural facilities database and identify relevant contacts for stakeholder engagement.

Subtask 1.2 Documentation of Marketing and Promotional Resources – MAPC staff document existing marketing and promotional resources, presence of arts and entertainment venues within existing resources, and identify relevant contacts for stakeholder engagement.

Subtask 1.3 Marketing Integration Analysis – MAPC staff work with NEFA and ArtsBoston to analyze potential pathways to increase marketing integration for arts and entertainment venues across existing marketing and promotion platforms. **NEFA and ArtsBoston** conduct internal review of platform capabilities and share findings with MAPC.

Subtask 1.4 Regional Technology Partner Landscape Analysis – MAPC staff identify and analyze options for technology partners to develop an online tool, including a scenario in which MAPC functions as a technology partner.

Task 2. Case Study Research (August – September 2024)

MAPC will conduct an in-depth case study analysis of one or two successful examples of digital platforms that leverage existing resources to provide marketing and promotion support to arts and culture stakeholders or live entertainment venues.

Subtask 2.1 Interviews with Stakeholders – MAPC will conduct interviews with five to ten key stakeholders involved in the development and implementation of successful digital platforms that support marketing and promotion of the creative sector.

Subtask 2.2 Documentation of impacts and challenges – MAPC will document challenges, keys to success, and impacts of the digital platforms.

Subtask 2.3 Synthesis of Key Findings – MAPC will synthesize key findings into a case study write up to inform implementation stakeholder engagement and implementation (Tasks 3 and 4).

Task 3. Stakeholder Engagement (September – December 2024)

MAPC staff will conduct structured interviews with a sample of venues, cultural producers, municipal staff, potential partner organizations and other key informants to document opportunities and barriers for expanded audience development through a regional marketing and promotion resource, documenting potential impacts on revenue models, and key needs for marketing and promotional activities that would inform potential strategies, as well as challenges with accessing or utilizing existing tools and resources. Partner organization interviews will document existing marketing and promotion resources and opportunities for increased coordination.

Subtask 3.1 Key Informant Interviews with Municipal Staff and Key Partners – MAPC will conduct key informant interviews with municipal staff that interface with arts and entertainment venues or manage online calendars, as well as other key partners such as tourism bureaus, cultural districts, and regional entities that support marketing and promotion of arts and entertainment. MAPC will summarize key findings from interviews. MAPC and partners will attend one meeting to discuss key findings.

Subtask 3.2 Engagement with Venues and Cultural Producers – MAPC will engage venue operators and cultural producers to understand current use of marketing and promotional resources, challenges and opportunities for lowering cost and increasing reach of marketing and promotional

activities. NEFA and ArtsBoston will participate in engagement activities to share information and awareness about their resources. MAPC will summarize key findings.

Subtask 3.3 Regional Technology Needs Synthesis – MAPC staff will synthesize and prioritize regional technology needs for marketing and promotion and meet with regional partners to present technology priorities alongside key engagement findings.

Task 4. Implementation and Assessment (December 2024 – April 2025)

MAPC will implement strategies to increase marketing and promotional value of existing tools and resources for live-entertainment venues in the study area. This may include one or more of the following:

- Working with venues to add their information to the ArtsBoston and Creative Ground platforms
- Testing opportunities for Creative Ground API to be used for existing marketing platforms;
- Improving integration of platforms and system as part of ongoing maintenance and improvement activities.

After implementing the strategies that are most appropriate based on initial stakeholder engagement and case study research, MAPC will conduct structured interviews with venues to assess impacts and equity considerations. In addition, MAPC will review data available from partners about impacts on frequency of use. MAPC will synthesize the remaining unmet need after implementing initial strategies. This synthesis will inform recommendations for additional features needed for building out a regional marketing and promotional tool.

Subtask 4.1 Integrating Marketing and Promotion Resources – MAPC will work with NEFA and ArtsBoston to implement initial integration of marketing and promotion resources based on technology needs identified in Task 3. MAPC connect with venues and will provide staff support for data entry and facilitate use of Creative Ground and ArtsBoston Calendar API across platforms and with additional partners identified during the project. NEFA and ArtsBoston will provide technical support for integration efforts and provide data on impacts to MAPC.

Subtask 4.2 Assessment of Impacts – MAPC will analyze data and generate summary of impacts.

Subtask 4.3 Assessment of Equity Considerations – MAPC will document integration process and assess equity considerations associated with implementation strategy.

Subtask 4.4 Synthesis of Unmet Marketing and Promotion Needs – MAPC will synthesize implementation findings and unmet needs and present findings and recommendations to stakeholders for feedback.

Task 5. Documentation (May – June 2025)

MAPC will document the findings and recommendations into a final report with a summary of opportunities for municipal and regional partners to provide more accessible and comprehensive marketing and promotion strategies to strengthen the regional arts and entertainment ecosystem. MAPC will develop parameters and recommendations for a regional online tool with guidance for identifying and onboarding a technology partner for a second phase of work.

Subtask 5.1 Report Draft – MAPC will compile a draft report on outcomes of project.

Subtask 5.2 Recommendations for Online Tool Development – MAPC will create an addendum to the report that provides recommendations for online tool development beyond integration of existing resources. NEFA and Arts Boston will inform recommendations based on the technology considerations of their platforms. Additional regional partners identified in Task 1 may also contribute recommendations.

MAPC staff will undertake **Tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5** with support from the New England Foundation for the Arts Creative Ground program and ArtsBoston.

Project Timeline:

Task	Jul 24	Aug 24	Sep 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25
Task 1												
Task 2												
Task 3												
Task 4												
Task 5												

6. Budget

Task 1: Inventory and Landscape Analysis	\$20,760
1.1 Arts & Entertainment Venues Inventory	\$4,950
1.2 Assessment of Existing Marketing and Promotional Resources	\$2,200
1.3 Marketing Integration Analysis	\$4,070
<i>Regional Resource Partners</i>	\$8,000
1.4 Regional Technology Partner Landscape Analysis	\$660
Coordination Calls	\$880
Task 2: Case Study Research	\$5,170
2.1 Interviews with Case Study Stakeholders	\$1,650
2.2 Documentation of challenges and impacts on marketing and promotion	\$1,100
2.3 Key Takeaways to inform project	\$1,100
Coordination Call	\$220
Case Study Write Up with Key Findings	\$1,100
Task 3: Stakeholder Engagement	\$13,690
3.1 Key Informant Interviews with Municipal Staff and Regional Partners	\$2,200
3.2 Engagement with Venues and Cultural Producers	\$6,050
<i>Regional Resource Partners</i>	\$2,500
3.3 Regional Technology Needs Synthesis	\$880
Meeting #1	\$960
Meeting #2	\$440
Presentation	\$660
Task 4: Implementation and Assessment	\$21,960
4.1 Integrating Marketing and Promotional Resources	\$3,850
<i>Regional Resource Partners</i>	\$10,000
4.2 Assessment of Implementation Impacts	\$1,650
4.3 Assessment of Equity Considerations	\$1,650
4.4 Synthesis of Unmet Marketing and Promotion Needs	\$2,310
Meeting	\$440
Community Presentation	\$960
Draft Recommendations Presentation	\$1,100
Task 5: Documentation	\$7,795
5.1 Report Draft	\$1,650

MAPC – Massachusetts Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Program FY25 Grant Application

5.2 Recommendations for Online Tool Development	\$1,100
Regional Resource Partners	\$3,000
Meeting	\$945
Final Deliverable	\$1,100
Administration (7.5%)	\$5,625
Quarterly Reporting and Expense Processing	\$5,625
Total	
\$75,000	



January 26, 2024

Dear Massachusetts Gaming Commission,

I am pleased to be writing in support of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) application to the Massachusetts Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Grant for the Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues.

ArtsBoston is Metro Boston's largest nonprofit arts service organization. With a membership that spans theater and dance companies, music organizations, museums, multidisciplinary presenters, and more, ArtsBoston has served our members, the broader cultural sector, and the public since our founding in 1975. We help arts organizations build audiences, convene arts workers for professional development and learning, and lead research and advocacy that illuminate the value that the arts add to the economy and vitality of Metro Boston. Across all of our programs, we advance equity, inclusion, and accessibility for the arts workforce, arts organizations, and arts audiences.

The ArtsBoston Calendar, launched in 2009, is a unified online events listing platform that we offer for free to all Metro Boston arts organizations. It is the most comprehensive online compilation of performances, exhibitions, festivals, and free events in Metro Boston, profiling 3,000+ cultural organizations and thousands of events each year. In 2022-23, 2,576 events were uploaded to the Calendar by 1,127 organizations. Our email and social media promotions reach 180,000+ arts-attending households locally.

MAPC's proposed initiative presents an important opportunity to strengthen Metro Boston's entertainment ecosystem for local arts and culture venues, artists, and cultural communities. Local cultural spaces and facilities are still struggling to overcome the impact of the pandemic while also competing with entertainment venues at Encore that do not depend on ticket sales as their primary revenue source. These local venues are an essential part of developing regional talent and are much needed institutional anchors for arts and cultural communities. This initiative can significantly strengthen local venues' resiliency by facilitating stronger connections and communications and at the same time putting a spotlight on our region's cultural diversity.

In alignment with this project proposal, ArtsBoston is excited to contribute to the project offering, leveraging the resources of the ArtsBoston Calendar to help create a more robust marketing platform that better serves our region's local venues. This collaboration aligns with our goals to support the breadth of the arts ecosystem - especially smaller organizations that lack robust marketing budgets and platforms of their own - and will strengthen our work through collaboration with our regional arts and culture partners. We are committed to building a more diverse and representative arts and culture community. Improving the regional marketing infrastructure to better support local venues in publicizing and marketing their offerings is a concrete step forward.

ArtsBoston sees this collaborative initiative as essential support for Metro Boston's arts and culture community, and we enthusiastically give it our full endorsement.

Sincerely,

Catherine Peterson
Executive Director



NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

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www.nefa.org

January 25, 2024

Dear Massachusetts Gaming Commission,

I am writing to support the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC) application to the Massachusetts Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Grant for the Regional Marketing and Tourism Initiative for Arts & Culture Entertainment Venues.

The proposed initiative presents a critical opportunity to strengthen Metro Boston's entertainment ecosystem for local arts and culture venues, artists, and cultural communities. Local cultural spaces and facilities are struggling to recover from the pandemic while competing with entertainment venues at Encore that do not depend on ticket sales as their primary revenue source. These local venues are crucial for hiring and retaining regional talent and are essential institutional anchors for arts and cultural communities. This initiative can strengthen local venues' resiliency and sustainability by facilitating stronger connections and communications while sharing resources.

As stewards of the only region-wide database of arts and cultural entities in the U.S., New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA) is excited to contribute to the project offering, creating a more robust marketing platform to bring more resources to the region's local venues and artists. This sharing of data from CreativeGround.org aligns with our goals to provide visibility, connection, and knowledge building to all of New England and will strengthen the whole through collaboration with local arts and culture partners. We have created an infrastructure that is extensible to other data sets and websites, improving the local marketing infrastructure to better support venues in publicizing and marketing their programming.

Through this collaborative effort, we at NEFA/CreativeGround see this initiative as essential to support a more diverse and representative arts and culture community in Metro Boston.

Sincerely,

Dee Schneidman (she/her/hers)
Senior Program Director, Research and Creative Economy

Dig Into CreativeGround!
Connect with Creative New England.
www.CreativeGround.org