



FY 2027 Regional Agency Mitigation Fund Grant Application

Application Instructions:

- I. All applications must be received by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission by January 31st, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. to be considered for funding for the FY 2027 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. All applications must submit a detailed scope of work and timeline for implementation of the project identified in the application.
- VI. All applications must contain appropriate backup materials that support the application.
- VII. The Grant Manager will be responsible for compiling the information for the quarterly reports and the submittal of the quarterly reports.
- VIII. The application must be signed by the agency’s CEO or an individual with signatory authority.
- IX. 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
- X. Submit this completed form as well as any relevant attachments to

MGCCMF@Massgaming.gov or as a response to the COMMBUYS **BD-26-1068-1068C-1068L-121911**.

For more detailed instructions as well as the full FY 2027 Application Guidelines visit

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

Grant Manager Information (Person responsible for Quarterly Reports, etc.):
Applicant: Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Vendor Code: VC6000161316
Name: Josh Fiala
Title: Land Use Director
Email Address: jfiala@mapc.org

Telephone: 617-933-0760

Address: 60 Temple Place, 6th Floor, Boston, MA 02111

Budget Summary

Use the space below 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.

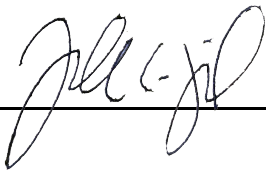
Category	Project Name	Description	Amount
A. Regional Planning	Business Friendly Policies for More Competitive Communities	MAPC will work with 2-3 municipalities surrounding Encore Boston Harbor to conduct a study to advance small business-friendly land use and development policies to support economically resilient small businesses in industry sectors impacted by reallocated spending from the Encore Boston Harbor establishment.	\$75,000
B. Regional Public Safety			
C. Workforce Development			
Total Request			\$75,000

Are you requesting a waiver for any program requirement? Yes No

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

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: _____



Josh Fiala, Director of Land Use

Name and Title of Signatory:

01/27/2026

Date:

Part A-Regional Planning - The application should include sufficient backup information for the review team to fully understand the project(s). This information could include locus maps, requests for proposals, detailed scopes of work, drawings etc.

Project Name: Small Business Stabilization Land Use Policies	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact (if applicable)
Name: Angela Brown-Jones	Name: Camille Jonlin
Title: Manager of Economic Development	Title: Senior 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
<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 2026 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>Through this project, MAPC will address negative impacts on small businesses near the Encore Boston Harbor gaming establishment. The project falls under the Eligible Projects category of “Projects to provide economic development opportunities for local businesses” as listed in the Community Mitigation Fund’s FY 2027 grant guidelines. The project will identify specific strategies to mitigate the negative impacts felt by small businesses as per the grant guidelines:</p> <p><i>Negative impacts as listed in the grant guidelines:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Competition from the gaming establishment may have negative impacts on other businesses competing in the hospitality or 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.” <p>To remain economically competitive as the Encore Boston Harbor continues to operate and expand, it is essential that municipalities take preventative measures to maintain business districts and small businesses. Consumers are reallocating their spending away from local businesses when patroning the Encore Boston Harbor establishment, as documented and evidenced in a study titled <i>Encore Boston Harbor, First Three and a Half Years of Operation: Economic Impacts Report</i> which was</p>	

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

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. The report demonstrates negative impacts on small businesses due to *reallocated* consumer spending during 2019 – 2022 resulting from the Encore Boston Harbor 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 examines 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 specifies that these estimated impacts were concentrated in the metropolitan region near the casino (Suffolk, Essex, Middlesex, and Norfolk Counties).

The Chelsea Everett Small Business Needs Assessment, a 2020 study conducted by MAPC with MGC CMF funding, also aligns with the SEIGMA project. It shows that over 40% of small firms cite rising rents and regulatory costs in the region near Encore Boston Harbor as threats to business survival. These trends are amplified when combined with the loss of small business revenue from reallocated spending.

There are several reasons why this work is important for local business districts. By retaining and sustaining current small business enterprises, a municipality can enhance the competitiveness of the local commercial districts in areas near the Encore Boston Harbor to withstand the reallocated spending that is resulting from the gaming establishment’s operations and maintain economic viability of those districts. Commercial districts in these communities offer convenient access to goods and services and offer employment opportunities to people without college degrees or limited English abilities, which benefits a diverse range of residents and workers. Healthy business districts with well-rounded retail and business mixes also act as place-based environments for people to access culturally relevant and affordable goods and services, which is not only a quality of life factor but it also reduces the pressure on transportation infrastructure when people can access what they need in their local commercial districts instead of commuting to farther locations.

In addition, more businesses may fail and result in empty storefronts in previously thriving business districts due to the rising costs of real estate surrounding Encore Boston Harbor. In the Everett-Somerville commercial submarket, average retail property rents rose from \$29.11 per square foot in the first quarter of 2020 to \$33.05 in the last quarter of 2025, a 13.5% increase (according to CoStar, January 2026; not adjusted for inflation). The adjacent Charlestown/East Boston submarket saw an average retail rent increase from 32.96 to 37.24 in that same time period, a 12.99% increase (CoStar 2026). These are aggregate figures and include all sizes of retail property businesses, including large

chains; anecdotally, MAPC and our partners frequently hear stories of small, locally owned businesses struggling under the burden of rising rent costs in this region, causing them to move storefronts or close entirely.

Along with rising commercial real estate values, there are complex municipal regulatory processes like slow or complex sign and occupancy permitting processes that increase costs for small businesses, including the need for longer loan terms and lost business for the business owner. Small businesses lack the legal and administrative capacity of chain stores or investor-backed enterprises, further weakening the ability of small, local businesses to compete with Encore Boston Harbor and large franchises. This study seeks to identify strategies that mitigate these challenges.

Cultural vitality also helps keep communities competitive, but entertainment venues in the region directly compete with Encore Boston Harbor as shown in the MAPC Showcasing Local Venues project. The lack of definition on current policies, including zoning, needs to be addressed to incentivize cultural programming at local establishments. Examples of zoning policies to support cultural institutions has been demonstrated by the Making Space for Art project, also conducted by MAPC. Restaurants and bars have filled the gap in the absence of dedicated cultural venues, but the framework to maintain the presence of cultural spaces, including entertainment venues, still needs to be better defined in local policy.

The project will build upon three separate studies conducted by MAPC. First, the *Small Business Resilience Plan* funded by the MGC CMF in 2024 recommends over a dozen strategies to help small businesses stay in place long term and avoid displacement, given the quickly rising real estate prices and increased development pressure in business districts around Encore Boston Harbor. The Plan recommends conducting further research into zoning and other land use policies that lay the groundwork for municipalities to proactively support small businesses with policies that help small businesses survive and thrive long term. This was recommended by an Advisory Committee made up of nine small business technical assistance providers, business association leaders, municipal economic development representatives, and small business financial providers. This application and scope of work will implement that recommendation by conducting this additional research and tailoring it to 2-3 participating municipalities.

Second, MAPC conducted a Making Space for Art study in Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville in 2024 to assess and recommend land use policies that support arts and culture spaces, including makerspaces and presentation venues. Similar methods will be employed in the proposed scope of work that build upon the recommended land use policies, applying them to other business sectors impacted by the Encore Boston Harbor establishment and examining the utility of these policies in other municipalities.

Third, the Chelsea-Everett Small Business Needs Assessment by MAPC and Bunker Hill Community College, funded through the MGC CMF, details local challenges after the opening of Encore Boston Harbor. While taking into account the major economic disruption of COVID-19, some of these

challenges include: small firms (especially hospitality/retail/services sectors, of which there are over 1,000 in the area) face rising rents and office costs, complex permitting and regulations hindering operations, storefront displacement from development pressures, limited procurement access despite casino needs (such as PPE/supplies), and competition for customers and employees.

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: MAPC will employ the Community Mitigation Fund (CMF) funds to conduct a study to advance small business-friendly land use and development policies to enable economically resilient small businesses.

This project will examine the current municipal land use policies around Retail, Hospitality, Food Service, Recreation, and Entertainment Businesses in Region A, and recommend changes to policies and regulations to expand the ability of small businesses to stay in place and thrive over time. The purpose of these “small business-friendly policies” is to proactively prevent businesses from needing to close or leave the community, ensuring things like available and suitable storefront properties or simple permitting processes that allow a level competitive playing field against larger franchise businesses or the whole Encore Boston Harbor development district.

Example regulations that MAPC may recommend to municipalities, depending on the results of the research, include things such as: requirements or incentives for property owners to provide relocation assistance for tenants impacted by a development; municipal support for developers to find commercial tenants if the developer commits to the provision of some Tenant Improvement Allowance; locally-owned business requirements for new developments (often seen in Community Benefit Agreements outside of zoning); franchise restrictions that can leave retail space available for local businesses; density bonuses or other incentives in exchange for Tenant Improvement Allowances or other property expenses; store size caps that can help ensure appropriately-sized spaces are available in a district; vacancy ordinances; ease of permitting and licensing processes; municipal procurement; and more. MAPC will investigate local best practices and current restrictions, research national examples of when each strategy works or the optimal conditions for them, and speak with developers, property owners, businesses, and municipal staff about opportunities and challenges of implementing each potential strategy.

These proactive and regulatory strategies will set the stage for success of small businesses and small business districts surrounding the Encore Boston Harbor establishment.

Recommendations will stem from research into national examples of small business-friendly policies and combine that with local priorities and needs. The project will be conducted in and with 2-3

participating municipalities in the region north of Boston that surrounds the Encore Boston Harbor establishment, called Region A. MAPC will work with multiple municipalities so that the municipalities can learn with and from each other, and so that recommendations have regional implications.

MAPC will conduct engagement activities with small businesses in the sectors that have been impacted by the opening/continuing operations of Encore Boston Harbor: entertainment venues, restaurant/food service, retail, hospitality, and recreation sectors. MAPC will focus on municipal policies that help stabilize small, local businesses that have a storefront in the participating municipalities. MAPC will NOT pass any funds to businesses themselves; this is a planning study that will recommend regulations that municipalities can enact to prevent closure of small businesses.

Project Coordination and Administration. Throughout the project, MAPC will coordinate the team and conduct other financial and administrative tasks.

For this project, MAPC is requesting \$75,000 from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund to manage the planning study and conduct the activities described here.

High Level 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.

- Coordinate with 2-3 municipal partners who will participate in this study
- Analyze existing zoning and other municipal policies, and analyze existing research on small businesses in the target geography and sectors
- Research small business friendly land use policies from national and local examples
- Engage stakeholders such as businesses, business support providers, and real estate developers to understand their needs and challenges
- Develop recommendations on business-friendly policies specific to each participating municipality

Evidence of Support

The Small Business Resilience Plan had an Advisory Committee of nine small business support providers and municipal staff who focus on small business success in Region A, the region surrounding Encore Boston Harbor. These Advisory Committee members, who are highly knowledgeable about small business needs, recommended this additional land use policy research as a strategy that *municipalities* can employ – rather than other types of business support providers like technical assistance providers – to help small businesses thrive in our communities. The Advisory Committee included the City of Revere; please see the attached letter of support from Revere. In addition, MAPC has had recent and similar discussions with the City of Medford about municipal policies that could support small businesses preemptively, such as incentives or regulations that Medford could enact to encourage or require developers to alert small storefront businesses of upcoming redevelopment that could impact their businesses. These regulatory solutions will help small businesses and community-focused business districts in Region A stay competitive to the

Encore Boston Harbor gaming establishment and survive long term.

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. Partnership Coordination	Months 1-14		\$8,400
Task 2. Existing Conditions Analysis	Months 2-4		\$15,750
Task 3. Small Business Friendly Land Use Policy Research	Months 4-6		\$12,075
Task 4. Stakeholder Engagement	Months 7-9		\$10,500
Task 5. Recommendation Development	Months 10-14		\$14,700
Task 6. Team Coordination & Non-Labor Costs	Months 1-14		\$13,575
	TOTAL:		\$75,000

Part B – Regional Public Safety - The application should include sufficient backup information for the review team to fully understand the project(s). This information could include locus maps, catalog cuts of proposed equipment purchases, quotes, training course syllabus, etc.-

Project Name: _____	
Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact (if applicable)
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 2026 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>			
<p>Proposed MGC Grant Budget</p>			
<p>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.</p>			
Description of Purchase/Work	Timeline	QTY	Budget
	TOTAL:		

Part C - Workforce Development- The application should include sufficient backup information for the review team to fully understand the project(s). This information could include other relevant workforce statistics and economic models.

<p>Project Name: _____</p>	
<p>Please provide below the contact information for the individual managing this aspect of the grant.</p>	
Project Contact	Additional Project Contact <i>(if applicable)</i>
Name:	Name:
Title:	Title:
Department:	Department:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Telephone:	Telephone:
Address:	Address:

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 2026 Guidelines relevant to this category. Please provide documentation or evidence that supports the determination that the operation of the gaming facility caused or is causing the impact (i.e., surveys, data, reports, etc.).

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:		

Scope of Work: Business Friendly Policies for More Competitive Communities - MAPC MGC FY27 Grant Application

TASK	DESCRIPTION	HOURS	RATE	COST	MONTH
1	Partnership Coordination	80	\$105	\$8,400	1-14
a	Recruit 2-3 municipalities in Region A and onboard municipal staff partners in each	20	\$105	\$2,100	1
b	Determine most effective deliverables needed for each participating municipality	20	\$105	\$2,100	2
c	Meet regularly with municipal project partners throughout project	40	\$105	\$4,200	1-14
2	Existing Conditions Analysis	150	\$105	\$15,750	2-4
	Collect quantitative data on existing businesses in target sectors in the participating municipalities	50	\$105	\$5,250	2-3
a	Analyze the zoning bylaw and development review processes of participating municipalities to understand existing small business regulations	50	\$105	\$5,250	2-4
b	Analyze existing small business reports in participating municipalities to understand the common conditions and challenges faced by business owners (MassInc business survey, Asian Business Council survey, Small Business Resilience Plan, Coalition for an Equitable Economy reports, etc)	50	\$105	\$5,250	2-3
c					
3	Small Business Friendly Land Use Policy Research	115	\$105	\$12,075	4-6
	Research national examples of small business friendly policies, whether in zoning, development review, or other types of incentives or regulations	50	\$105	\$5,250	4
a	Interview small business friendly land use policy experts, including experts in policies to support entertainment-related businesses	25	\$105	\$2,625	5
b	Compile emerging land use policy recommendations in each municipality	40	\$105	\$4,200	6
c					
4	Stakeholder Engagement	100	\$105	\$10,500	7-9
	Speak with small businesses, especially in entertainment and food service sectors, about the emerging land use policy recommendations and what might help them stay in the community long-term	50	\$105	\$5,250	7-8
a					
	Speak with business support organizations and related community based organizations about local policy levers that may help them better support small businesses	25	\$105	\$2,625	7-9
b	Speak with real estate developers about the emerging recommendations and what they see as the implications or repercussions of those recommendations on development potential in the community	25	\$105	\$2,625	8-9
c					
5	Recommendation Development	140	\$105	\$14,700	10-14
	Compile land use policy recommendations in each municipality	40	\$105	\$4,200	10-11
a	Review the recommendations with each municipality	30	\$105	\$3,150	12
b	Write a final report of land use policy recommendations that can help small businesses in the target sectors stay in business in the community long-term and for the municipalities to set the conditions for successful and competitive commercial districts	70	\$105	\$7,350	13-14
c					
6	Team Coordination and Non-Labor Costs	80	\$105	\$13,575	1-14
	Conduct team management/project oversight, e.g., routine internal meetings, fielding of confidentiality notices to participants, work-plan development	40	\$105	\$4,200	1-14
a	Conduct administrative tasks, e.g., grant invoicing, periodic reporting, financial tracking, including administering honorarium payments	40	\$105	\$4,200	1-14
b	Non-labor expenses: may include transportation, food, event space, printing, stipend for nonprofit community-based organization engagement, etc			\$5,175	1-14
c					
	Total			\$75,000	

City of Revere, Massachusetts

Tom Skwierawski

Chief of Planning and Community Development

Department of Planning and Community Development

281 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151 781. 286. 8181



Patrick M. Keefe Jr.

Mayor

January 22nd, 2026

Massachusetts Gaming Commission

101 Federal Street, 12th Floor

Boston, MA 02110

Re: Letter of Support - FY 2027 Community Mitigation Fund Regional Planning Application

Project: Small Business Stabilization and Competitiveness Land Use Policies

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the City of Revere, I am writing to express our support for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's application to the FY 2027 Community Mitigation Fund for the "Small Business Stabilization and Competitiveness Land Use Policies" planning project.

Revere is one of the communities in Region A that has experienced both opportunities and challenges associated with the ongoing operations of Encore Boston Harbor. Our local business districts include many small, locally owned establishments in sectors such as food service, retail, hospitality, and entertainment, which can be affected by shifts in consumer spending and by rising real estate and operating costs. A focused planning effort to better understand and update municipal land use policies is a reasonable and useful step to help these businesses remain viable over time.

We see value in a regionally coordinated study led by MAPC that will:

- Review existing zoning and related policies that shape conditions for small businesses in participating communities.
- Research examples of small business friendly land use tools and assess which approaches may be appropriate in our context.
- Provide practical recommendations that Revere and neighboring municipalities can consider as we seek to keep our commercial districts active and competitive.

For these reasons, the City of Revere supports MAPC's proposal and looks forward to the opportunity to participate in and learn from this regional effort.

Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

Tom Skwierawski

Chief of Planning & Community Development

City of Revere