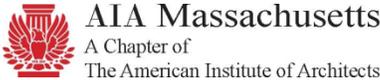




American Planning Association
Massachusetts Chapter
Making Great Communities Happen



MEMORANDUM

To: Secretary Maeve Valley Bartlett, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Cc: Secretary Glen Shor, Executive Office of Administration and Finance

From: American Institute of Architects – Mass Chapter, American Planning Association – Mass Chapter, Association to Preserve Cape Cod, The Boston Harbor Association, Citizens’ Housing and Planning Association, Inc., Climate Action Liaison Coalition, Conservation Law Foundation, Environmental League of Massachusetts, Mass Audubon, Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors, Inc., Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies, Massachusetts Municipal Lawyers Association, Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District, Transportation for Massachusetts, Zoning Reform Working Group

Date: September 23, 2014

Re: Smart growth and climate change planning funds

The Environmental Bond recently signed by Governor Patrick authorizes many important environmental protection activities. We applaud the leadership provided by the Patrick Administration and by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) in helping to create a robust Environmental Bond. We are disappointed, however, that two critical programs lack funding for the current fiscal year in the five-year capital investment plan. We respectfully ask that funding be dedicated this fiscal year to the smart growth planning program (line item 2000-7051) and the climate change adaptation management plan grant program (line item 2000-7070).

Historically, the smart growth planning grants were an invaluable source of funding for technical assistance to municipalities. It allowed them to plan for their sustainable development and preservation and to change zoning and other regulations in order to realize the type of development that is consistent with the Commonwealth’s Sustainable Development Principles. We were very pleased that the Patrick Administration included this program for renewal in the bond bill the Governor filed, as there is large unmet demand for planning and zoning updates across the state. As you know, current development practices are not producing a sufficient amount of housing, nor are they protecting our farmlands, forests, critical habitats, or our water quality. The Regional Planning Agencies (RPAs) and scores of municipalities

recognize these problems, and they are eager to modernize their zoning and permitting practices to produce better results.

Therefore, for the current fiscal year, we would like to see at least \$500,000 in smart growth planning funds released, allowing important projects to begin this year. This funding, while well short of the approximately \$2 million per year in authorization, could fund important and timely work such as:

- Establishing Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) in additional parts of the state, following up on successful efforts such as Metro North, the I-495 corridor, and communities near the proposed South Coast Rail;
- Transit-oriented development planning and zoning updates around station areas;
- Open space and recreation plans; and
- Establishing stormwater utilities and training municipal officials and private land owners on the advantages and use of such utilities.

Similarly, the climate adaptation grants are designed to help address one of the greatest challenges that we are facing. Despite the serious threats posed by climate change, resources are severely limited that would help regions and municipalities fully understand potential impacts, prioritize actions in response, and implement measures that will protect life and property. This work is too important to wait another year to get started. Again, we ask that the Administration allocate at least \$500,000 in FY15 to the climate adaptation grant program.

We understand that resources are constrained, but we feel strongly that these two programs fill a vital need and will directly advance the Patrick Administration's priorities on preparing for climate change and supporting regional and municipal smart growth planning. We would be happy to discuss this further with you or to help EEA think about criteria or priorities for these programs. Please let us know if that would be beneficial to you.

Thank you for considering our request and we sincerely hope that the Administration will allocate funds to these programs in the current fiscal year.