



Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program Yearly Progress Report

Date: 4/24/2023

Municipality/Organization: Town of Natick

Local MVP Contact Name: Jillian Wilson Martin

1. Please list your municipality or organization's top priority actions, in order of priority, identified through the MVP planning process or other climate resiliency planning process.

Natick identified 45 priority actions through the MVP planning and progress reporting process spanning the following categories:

- *Water management*
- *Emergency response*
- *Low impact development*
- *Open space and land management*
- *Power*
- *Stakeholder engagement*
- *Vulnerable populations*

Of these, 25 actions are high priority, 12 are medium priority, and 7 are low priority. Tables detailing each action and the municipal lead responsible for pursuing each are attached.

These are taken from Natick's 2018 CRB report and FY20 MVP progress report, which are available on the Town's website at: <https://www.natickma.gov/1679/Resiliency>

2. Has your Core Team reconvened since your Listening Session? If so, describe the process and any revisions or updates your team made to the original MVP Report. Please list your MVP Core Team members and note any new members.

Natick's Core Team meets regularly on topics related to our MVP work and has collaborated on a number of different projects identified in the CRB report. In FY23, we met to review MVP priorities and discuss MVP Action Grant opportunities, and identified the program as a source

of potential funding for designing parks in conjunction with dam removal. No changes were made to our list of MVP priorities.

Members of Natick's Core Team did change over the past year. Current members include:

- *William McDowell, Town Engineer*
- *James Hicks, Police Chief*
- *Amanda Loomis, Community & Economic Development Director*
- *Michael Boudreau, Health Director*
- *Claire Rundelli, Planner and Conservation Agent*
- *Jillian Wilson Martin, Sustainability Director*
- *Jon Marshall, Deputy Town Administrator of Operations*

3. Discuss any other work related to the MVP process or climate change resiliency in the municipality/organization. In what ways has your municipality/organization used the outcomes of your workshop in other planning efforts (e.g., updating existing local plans)?

Addendums to Natick's Open Space & Recreation Plan and Net Zero Plan were developed in the past year as a result of the MetroWest Climate Equity Project, which is funded by an MVP Action Grant. These addendums will be published in spring 2023. Outcomes from the CRB workshop and subsequent priority actions are regularly considered in local planning and development decisions.

4. Please list any grants that your municipality/organization has applied for, or received, to implement climate resilience actions. Please note grant awards or applications that advanced priority actions.

Natick has applied for the following grants to implement priority actions from our MVP report:

- *MVP Action Grants, focused on:*
 - *LID zoning (awarded, completed in 2019)*
 - *Tree planting plan to mitigate heat islands (awarded, completed in 2019)*
 - *Water conservation project (awarded, completed in 2019)*
 - *Stormwater BMPs (2018, two projects, not awarded)*
 - *Climate Resilient Park Design (2019, not awarded)*
 - *Clean Energy Resiliency (2020, not awarded)*
 - *Regional Charles River Watershed modeling project (2020, 2021, 2022 awarded)*

- *Future of Charles River community engagement project (2020, not awarded)*
- *MetroWest Climate Equity project (2021, awarded)*
- *SuAsCo Natural Based Solutions project (regional, Hudson lead, 2022 awarded)*
- *MAPC Accelerating Climate Resiliency Mini-Grant Program*
 - *Stormwater BMP projects (2018, not awarded)*
 - *Community Garden (2020, awarded)*
 - *Tiny Forest and Tree Planting Project (2022, awarded)*
- *MAPC Technical Assistance Program (TAP)*
 - *Regional Residential Climate Program (2021, awarded)*
 - *Climate Preparedness (2023, awarded)*
 - *Regional School Bus Electrification (2023, TBD)*
- *604b (awarded)*
 - *This water quality grant, submitted with the Charles River Watershed Association, focused on assessing green infrastructure opportunities using Pond St, a prominent street, as a demonstration project. The project also included development of a Town Green Streets Policy. (2019, awarded)*
- *DOER META grants focused on:*
 - *Microgrid feasibility study of Natick Center municipal complex (awarded, completed in 2020)*
 - *Retro-commissioning study of Wilson Middle School (awarded, completed in 2020)*
 - *Fleet electrification plan (2021, awarded)*
- *DOER Green Communities Grants focused on energy efficiency projects:*
 - *2018 (awarded \$245,000)*
 - *2019 (awarded \$150,622)*
 - *2020 (awarded, \$100,000)*
 - *2021 (awarded, \$25,000 in Block 1 and \$500,000 in Block 2)*
- *DOER REPA (awarded)*
- *EEA Planning Assistance Grant*
 - *Partnership with MAPC to develop community greenhouse gas emissions inventory tool and net zero action plan (awarded, completed in 2020)*
 - *Developed supplement to inventory tool to calculate carbon offsets from local tree canopy (2020, awarded, planned completion in 2023)*
- *DCR Community Forestry Grant*
 - *Invasive species management at Natick's Town Forest for two targeted species, meadow habitat restoration (2020, awarded)*
- *Dam and Seawall*

- *Feasibility study on potential breach of South Natick Dam (awarded 2020)*
- *Removal design and permitting funds (applied for in 2023, awaiting announcement)*
- *Hazard Mitigation Grant focused on replacement of Public Works generator (TBD)*
- *Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance Grant Program (not awarded)*
- *Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, CLEAR Program (2020, awarded)*
- *Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), Federal Reserve Bank of Boston (FRBB) and MAPC, Racial Equity Municipal Action Planning (2020, awarded)*
- *MEMA Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Pilot Program (2021, not awarded)*
- *Division of Ecological Restoration, Dam Removal Preliminary Design Services (2021, awarded)*
- *Community First Partnership (2021, awarded)*
- *MS4 Municipal Assistance Grant - Green Infrastructure Siting Tool (regional, MAPC lead, awarded 2022)*
- *MEMA HMGP 4496-09 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2023 awarded)*
- *National Association of County and City Health Officials (2023, awarded)*
- *Land and Water Conservation Fund Pickerel Pond Boardwalk Design and Construction (TBD)*

All of these projects are directly related to priority action items identified in Natick's MVP Plan.

5. Please list any other steps that your municipality/organization has taken towards implementing your priority actions.

In addition to the work identified in the above grants, Natick has also completed the following actions since publishing its MVP report in May 2018:

In FY19:

- *Adopted a non-binding resolution to reduce Natick's greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2050; adopted at Fall 2018 Town Meeting*

- *Increased the additional amount of required Class I Renewable Energy in Natick's electricity aggregation program from 5% to 10% beginning with July 2019 meter reads.*
- *Began requiring the use of NOAA Atlas 14 rainfall data for stormwater design review with Conservation Commission.*
- *Completed repairs to the Memorial Elementary School generator*
- *Approved capital funding to reconstruct/repair the South Natick Charles River Dam*
- *Received environmental bond funding to support the replacement of generators at the Town's water treatment plant*
- *Joined the Charles River Climate Compact, an initiative of the Charles River Watershed Association (May 2019)*

In FY20:

- *Passed, by majority vote, changes to Natick's Stormwater Bylaw and worked with the Conservation Commission to author accompanying regulations*
- *Developed a tool allowing residents to view where stormwater drains*
- *Contracted GZA to design rehabilitation of South Natick Dam; withdrew local permit request with Conservation Commission to assess breach alternative*
- *Assessed hydropower opportunities in conjunction with dam rehabilitation*
- *Explored feasibility of forest carbon sequestration project, similar to the Tri City Forest Project*
- *Explored goat-scaping pilot project with Natick Community Organic Farm to remove invasive species from public property*
- *Installed solar canopies at Natick High School*
- *Installed four additional electric vehicle charging stations in public lots*
- *Worked with Charles River Climate Compact communities to identify priorities across the watershed*
- *Revised Kennedy Middle School site plan to include battery storage solution*
- *Increased enrollment in Natick's water use tracking tool (WaterSmart); 28% of water customers are now enrolled*
- *Appropriated capital funds to study electrification of municipal buildings*

In FY21:

- *Explored adoption of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing mechanism*
- *Issued RFP for MetroWest Clean Energy Campaign targeting residents and small business owners*
- *Began formation of MetroWest Climate Coalition with Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Medfield, Sherborn, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough and Weston*

- *Signed alternative on-bill credit contracts for 50% of municipal electricity load with Clearway*
- *Subscribed to Demand Response program and began shedding load during peak events*
- *Began development of a local policy and green streets guide for use by the DPW as part of our 604b project with the Charles River Watershed Association. This should be completed later this calendar year.*
- *Piloted the goat-scaping project at the Natick Community Organic Farm Taylor Estate property. If successful, the initiative will be expanded to include Conservation Commission managed lands next year.*
- *Continued to work with Charles River Watershed Association and Climate Compact on development of Flood Model.*
- *Established a local advisory committee to deliberate on next steps for the Charles River Dam in South Natick. The community is considering repair and breach options. A recommendation will be provided to the Select Board by the end of this calendar year.*
- *Successfully updated the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan.*

In FY22:

- *Continued Dam Advisory Committee work, extending timeline and engaging area experts.*
- *Continued work on 604b project.*
- *Explored "tiny forest" initiative.*
- *Began process of assessing municipal fleet and planning for long-term electrification.*
- *Conducted solar + heat pump campaign with residents and small businesses to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions.*
- *Explored electric school bus opportunities; considering application for new EPA program.*
- *Began work on the MetroWest Climate Equity project with Framingham and Ashland to build relationships with Environmental Justice Communities.*
- *Started conversations with members of the Nipmuc tribe on increasing access to traditional resources and lands for harvesting and ceremonies.*
- *Began work with MAPC through their Technical Assistance Program to update the Stormwater and Erosion Control Bylaw and Regulations to better implement LID on private property and meet the requirements of the MS4 permit.*
- *Continued implementation of goat-scaping on Conservation Commission managed lands.*

In FY23:

- *Completed Dam Advisory Committee work, recommended dam removal; affirmed by Natick Select Board*
- *Applied for Dam and Seawall removal design and permitting grant*
- *Completed MetroWest Climate Equity Project*
- *Completed 604b project*
- *Applied for a received grant to pursue “tiny forest” initiative and private property tree planting*
- *Completed assessment of municipal fleet*
- *Completed solar + heat pump campaign with residents and businesses*
- *Continued work with Nipmuc tribe regarding harvesting of public lands*
- *Drafted updates to Stormwater Bylaw (most recent version developed through 2018 MVP Action Grant); to be voted on at the Natick Spring Annual Town Meeting*

6. Please list any potential next steps to advance priority actions during the next year. Are there any specific project ideas you would like to discuss with an MVP regional coordinator in relation to an application for a future MVP Action Grant round?

Natick is seeking funds to support all aspects of dam removal and improvements at that site, including a design of the riverfront parks. Natick does not have any specific questions beyond its MVP Action Grant application at this time.

7. Please note any difficulties or challenges the community has identified through the MVP planning process or while seeking to implement priority actions and any steps as identified to address these challenges.

The MVP Action Grant program is labor intensive to apply for and administer. Natick recommends the MVP program seek to further streamline the application process and reporting requirements. Natick also suggests MVP include an opportunity within the application process for municipalities to answer questions reviewers may have.

8. Please identify any data needs or information gaps that the state could help fill.

On the climate mitigation side of resiliency, Natick again encourages the Commonwealth to make its motor vehicle census more easily accessible to communities, given the importance of vehicle electrification. Reliable motor vehicle data from MassDOT is now almost 10 years old.