

**Merrimack Valley Planning Commission - DLTA Quarterly Report
March 18, 2011**

MUNICIPALITY	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT TYPE	SHORT PROJECT DESCRIPTION
			<i>MVPC has initiated the following Regional activities/projects using 2011 DLTA funds:</i>
Region Wide - one community (Lowell) is out of the region	DPW Services and Supplies Procurement	Regional Collaboration	Thirteen communities meet monthly and discuss best practices and challenges and have joined together for purchase and procurement of DPW services and supplies. Services bid to date include pavement marking, crack sealing, catch basin cleaning, street sweeping, and purchase of drainage and sewer pipe. Supplies bid include vehicle parts, chemicals, and building materials. A new IFB for Road Maintenance Services and Related materials is now out with bids due on 3/25/2011. Prioritization for future activity is underway.
Region Wide	Inspectional Services	Regional Collaboration	Bids to procure the services of certified inspectors (bld., plumbing, gas, health, etc.) to help member communities achieve cost savings by utilizing an "inspectional pool" as needed was opened 12/9/2010. Pool to be used to fill various levels of need from backfilling vacation and sick leave to augmenting existing staff to meet uneven demand for inspections. Unfortunately no bidders responded and MVPC is currently working to determine why no proposals were received.
Region Wide	Health Care	Regional Collaboration	Work has been underway towards the development of a "regional healthcare provider network" using a consortium of local hospitals in the MVPC region. The intent is to encourage municipal employees to use the health services of regional hospitals (which are the largest employers in their host communities) through the use of discounted fees for service thus saving cities and towns health care benefit costs. This can be an alternative to communities unable to join GIC. This activity has been dormant for several months, but may be resurrected in the months ahead.
Region Wide-Nine communities and two regional school districts participate.	Regional Energy Manager	Regional Collaboration	Several communities have been working together through the Merrimack Valley Regional Energy Management program established by MVPC with 2009 DLTA funds. Ameresco has been hired as the preferred vendor to provide regional ESCO services. Since 1/2011, Ameresco has met with several communities and, to date, seven have signed investment grade audit agreements.
Region Wide	Brownfields	Regional Collaboration	MVPC is providing technical assistance to help several communities consider retrofitting closed landfills into "brightfields" using the model created in Brockton. Over 100 acres of brownfields/landfills could be used in this fashion. An RFP was issued to perform "fatal flaw" analysis on landfills region wide and Meridian Associates was hired to perform this work. Meridian completed the analysis in February, 2011 on eleven sites in nine communities and has presented their findings in the form of an "action plan" which MVPC will help the towns to implement. Several sites have the potential to become solar farms or wind farms.
Region Wide	Purchasing	Regional Collaboration	Based on the cost savings analysis completed through DLTA, a regional purchasing agent was hired to assist communities. Several regional bids for various services have already been issued. In addition, Newbury will use the agent services to bid a town yard retrofit project.
Region Wide	DPW Coalition	Regional Collaboration	The DPW Directors Coalition is working to try and address, through a regional approach, pavement management issues and the new stormwater regulations. In addition, MVPC will assist these communities in review of "work order software applications". A committee of reviewers will be assembled to review presentations by software vendors and MVPC will explore the feasibility of regional procurement.
Region Wide	Electrical Energy Purchasing	Regional Collaboration	The Mayors/Town Managers Coalition met on 11/10/10 with Glacial Energy regarding the possibility of aggregate electrical energy purchasing. The coalition requested MVPC explore this idea in greater detail to determine cost savings benefits to the regions cities and towns and to develop an RFP if if feasible. MVPC arranged a meeting with the City of Lowell CFO to learn from their experience.
Haverhill	Reverse Auction	Regional Collaboration	Through MVPC's Mayor's/Manager's Coalition, a list of proposed changes to state law to improve municipal management, was packaged into a "Municipal Relief Proposal". One suggestion was to allow for "reverse auctions", and this idea was approved by the State Legislature. A recent Boston Globe article highlights how this one tool saved Haverhill thousands of dollars. MVPC is now proposing the use of this tool to other communities in the region.
Region Wide	Best Practices Guide	Regional Collaboration	DLTA funds will be used to inventory, categorize, describe, and disseminate relevant and useful information about regionalization best practices.
Region Wide	Facilitation	Regional Collaboration	MVPC convenes meetings with the region's decision makers on a regular basis and facilitates strategy sessions where regional solutions to municipal management problems are discussed in hopes of turning these ideas into "actions". Meeting are held monthly with the region's Mayor's and City/Town Managers; monthly with the region's DPW/Public Work's Directors; quarterly with the region's Planning/Economic Development Directors; quarterly with Town Administrators and Finance Directors; and an annual meeting is held with the state senators and state representatives from the region.
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		Land-Use	<i>Land-Use/Sustainable Development Projects begun using 2011 DLTA funds are as follows:</i>
Region Wide	Master Planning/Growth Strategy	Land-Use	In 2009, MVPC completed the first master plan for the region in over 30 years. It has been well received by all the communities as well as state and local officials. The Plan also received a "best practice" recognition by the NADO Research Foundation in 2009. Many communities have requested MVPC assist them with plan implementation to include technical assistance to develop form based codes and other zoning initiatives as well as economic development analysis to insure communities properly develop their "growth districts", as well as assisting them in the preservation and protection of open space. That work is underway and will continue through 2011. In addition, the Plan forms the basis for completion of a EOHED funded Regional Strategic Framework Plan which is due for completion in April, 2011.
Region Wide	43D Technical Assistance	Land-Use	MVPC provides training and technical assistance on Chapter 43D to our communities. Amesbury, Haverhill, Andover, Georgetown, North Andover, and Lawrence have PDS sites. Andover has 9 PDS sites-more than any community statewide.
Georgetown	43D Technical Assistance	Land-Use	Work completed in 2010 includes an examination of the permit procedures in Georgetown and establishing formal procedures for permitting within their 43D district. MVPC will also work with the town in 2011 to identify and develop land use and zoning techniques which will be used to develop the 43D site as envisioned by the town. MVPC will also evaluate the existing properties in the 43D district and assist the town in obtaining brownfields technical assistance funding for qualifying parcels. A Development Guidebook was completed in June, 2010. Permit streamline recommendations were developed for the Town in July, 2010.
Haverhill	Permit Streamlining	Land-Use	MVPC completed an examination of the permitting process in the city's water/wastewater department and recommended ways to improve any confusing and duplicative elements that exist. This follows up on a city-wide permit streamline initiative conducted by MVPC last year.
Methuen	Open Space Plans	Land-Use	MVPC will assist the City of Methuen in the update of their open space, park and recreation plan.
Merrimac	Housing Production Plan	Land-Use	The 2005 Housing Plan for the Town of Merrimac expired in 2010 and MVPC developed a new Plan for the Town including a review of the existing plan, developing a comprehensive housing needs assessment, developing affordable housing goals, formulating implementation strategies, and working with DHCD for approval and certification. A draft Plan was submitted to the town and also forwarded to DHCD for their comments. In September, 2010 MVPC received feedback on the Plan from DHCD. Those comments have been incorporated into the Plan and in November the Plan was adopted by the Merrimac Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board. The Plan was approved by DHCD 12/12/2010
North Andover	Zoning	Land-Use	MVPC assisted the Town of North Andover with the update of their Zoning Map to include all recent zoning changes approved by town meeting.
Andover	Streamline Permitting	Land-Use	MVPC has been working with the Town of Andover and ViewPoint, LLC on the development and deployment of ViewPermit Permitting Software application in the Town of Andover.
Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, Merrimac, Newbury, Rowley, West Newbury	Stormwater Inventory and Mapping	Land-Use	MVPC provides technical assistance in the inventorying of stormwater choke-points and chronic flooding hotspots in seven of the region's smaller communities. The fieldwork component was completed in the summer of 2010, and staff has begun to incorporate this information into a standardized set of digital maps and companion data tables. When completed, these products will be an important new aid to the communities when developing their local 5 year stormwater management plans, natural hazard mitigation plans, and open space protection plans.
Region Wide	Stormwater Management/Low Impact Development Training	Land-Use	MVPC conducted a workshop on stormwater management held 11/17/2010. The workshop provided both a detailed step by step analysis of the new federal stormwater management requirements for communities which operate 'MS4s' as well as interactive panel discussions on opportunities for inter-municipal sharing of resources, costs, and experience. The workshop was well received and over 100 people attended.
Rowley	Open Space Plans	Land-Use	MVPC assisted Rowley in the update of their Open Space Park and Recreation Plan by utilizing revised inventory data and preparing a set of maps to reflect open space, water resources, open space action plan, soils, unique/special features, historic resources, and zoning.
Boxford and Georgetown	Stormwater Technical Assistance	Land-Use	Will prepare the new EPA mandated Notices of Intent and Stormwater Management Programs. Work will begin the summer of 2011.
			BUDGET AS OF 3/1/2011
			Contract Expended Balance
			DHCD Allocated: \$157,012 \$41,897 \$115,115
			MVPC Cash Match: 7,850.50 2,104 5,746
			MVPC Inkind Match: 7,850.50 2,289 5,561
			TOTAL \$172,713 \$46,290 \$126,423