



Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

Plan • Innovate • Promote

ANNUAL REPORT

2025

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About the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) is a regional planning agency created in 1959 with a goal of consistently planning, developing, and promoting not only the sustainable development of the Merrimack Valley through responsible and efficient use of regional resources, but to also rally and unify the communities to perpetuate the region’s vision. A 16-member Board of Commissioners governs the MVPC, which serves 15 member communities, including the cities of Amesbury, Haverhill, Lawrence, Methuen, and Newburyport, and the towns of Andover, Boxford, Georgetown, Groveland, Merrimac, Newbury, North Andover, Rowley, Salisbury, and West Newbury, along with one representative for the minority population in the Valley.

Our Mission

The mission of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission is to foster a cooperative effort among its communities in resolving common, regional problems, to allow its communities to plan jointly, and to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated and orderly development of the region and the general welfare of its residents.

Cover Photo: Autumn Pond at Kenoza Lake, Haverhill MA

MVPC’s annual photo contest first place winner, taken by Environmental Planner, Macklen Weir

A Message from Our Leadership

As we look back on 2025, it's clear that this was another strong year for the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. We made meaningful progress across all our programs, helping our communities tackle complex challenges, prepare for the future, and find new opportunities to grow and thrive. It was a year grounded in collaboration, technical work, and regional impact, and it wouldn't have been possible without the energy and commitment of our staff, municipal partners, and community stakeholders.



Robert Snow
Chairman



Jerrard Whitten
Executive Director

This year, our Community & Economic Development Program helped every MVPC community reach compliance with the MBTA Communities law, providing direct assistance to navigate the new zoning requirements. We also completed Housing Production Plans for all 15 communities, giving local leaders tools to assess needs and plan for new housing. Regionally, we finalized the Merrimack Valley Priority Growth Strategy and completed a detailed Industrial Zone Profile, both important steps toward supporting sustainable, balanced growth across the region.

MVPC's environmental work focused on helping communities plan for climate resilience and manage natural hazards. We completed Hazard Mitigation Plans for 10 communities, keeping them eligible for FEMA funding and better prepared for extreme weather. We supported MVP grant applications and developed projects to address heat and flooding risks. And with the launch of the Merrimack River Cleanup Initiative, we're now funding local, on-the-ground efforts to reduce pollution and improve water quality. We also continued providing planning support on Open Space and Recreation Plans to help communities align with state and regional goals.

Our GIS team continued to deliver innovative tools and support across the region. A major highlight was the launch of an upgraded Merrimack River Early Alert Tool, a real-time system that uses machine learning to predict bacteria levels for safer recreation. The new version offers better accuracy and a more intuitive user experience. MVPC also continued its leadership in statewide data coordination through the Massachusetts Geospatial Information Coordinating Council (MaGICC), helping improve how geospatial data is shared and used.

MVPC's transportation staff continued managing the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO), ensuring federal planning processes remain locally driven and technically sound. This year, we completed the MVMPO's Federal Certification Review with strong marks from the Federal Highway Administration. We also advanced the FFY2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which directs investment toward regional priorities like road improvements, trail connections, and transit access. Beyond planning, we partnered with communities to move projects from concept to implementation, supporting safer, more connected options for travel across the Valley.

Looking Ahead

The work we do at MVPC is grounded in service, to our cities and towns, and to the people who call the Merrimack Valley home. This year, that meant advancing housing solutions, investing in resilient infrastructure, improving data systems, and shaping long-term plans for growth. It also meant listening, showing up, and working alongside all of you to make progress, together.

We're excited to share this annual report with you, and even more excited about the work ahead. Thank you for being part of it.

Administration Program Impact Report

21

MVPC Staff

Average tenure - 7 years

6

New staff onboarded

2

New Commissioners

Average tenure - 5 years

133

Meetings hosted by MVPC

110

Grant awards and contracts administered

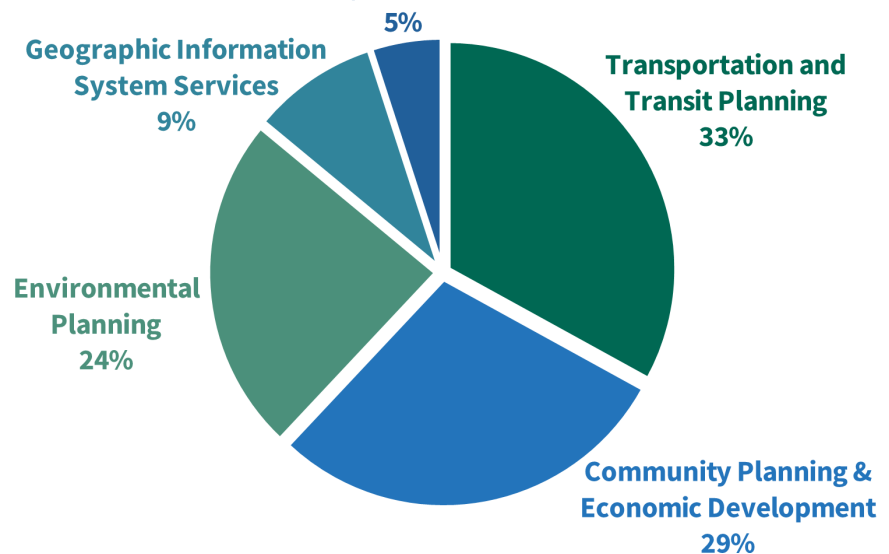
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Long-term strategic planning efforts completed this year

The Administration Team at the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission provides the leadership, operational support, and communications backbone that keeps the organization running smoothly. Led by the Executive Director, the team serves as the foundation of MVPC's operations and ensures that the agency remains focused and fiscally responsible while advancing strategic priorities for the region.

Administration Program Focus Areas

Local Assessments/Local Technical Assistance

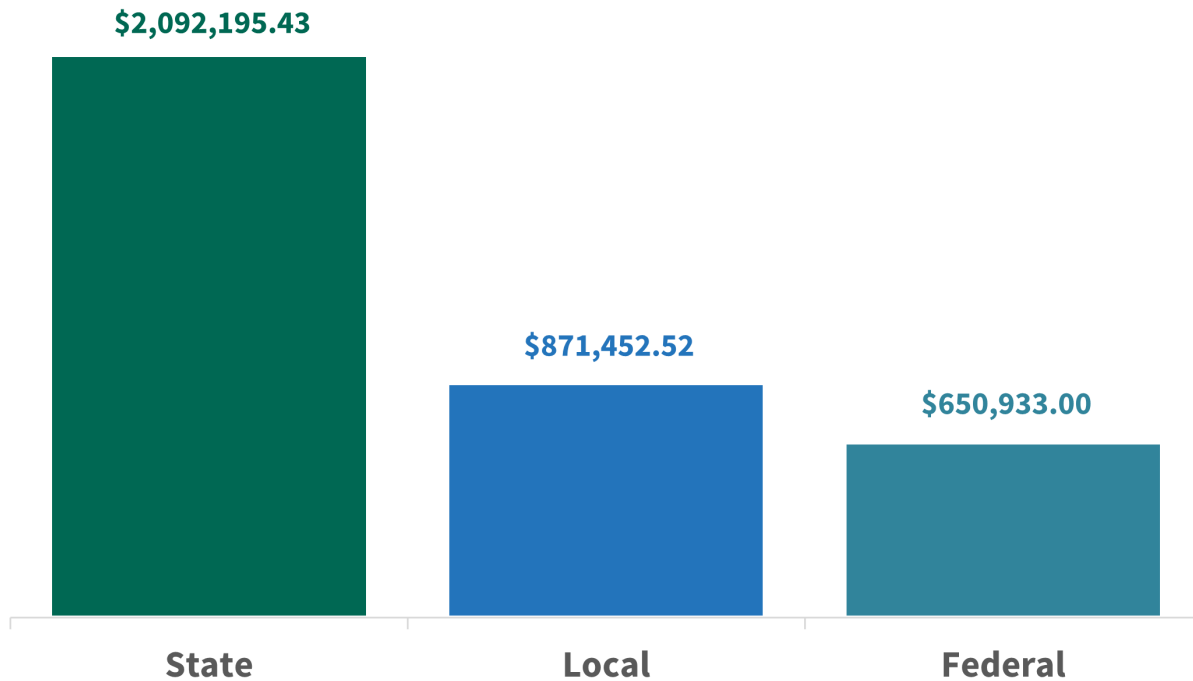


MVPC's operating funds for FY2025 supported a broad range of planning and technical services in the five major functional areas shown in the image above.

95% of our budget comes from a variety of largely non-local sources, including state and federal grants as well as contracts with selected non-profit organizations and businesses that support MVPC's mission. Local assessments from our member communities make up the remaining 5%. MVPC used these local funds as a match to leverage the 95% of outside funding brought into the region by the MVPC staff.

Administration Program

Revenue Sources in Fiscal Year 2025



MVPC had a healthy mix of revenue sources in FY2025, with State funding making up the largest portion at 58%. Local funding accounted for 24%, and Federal funding made up the remainder at 18%.

The FY2025 independent audit is in progress and scheduled to be completed by March 2026.

Administration Program

MVPC Welcomes New Staff in 2025

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission is pleased to announce the expansion of its staff in 2025 and is excited to welcome to the MVPC team: Janin Duran, Economic Development Specialist; Kay Emery, Environmental Planner; Christina Herrick, Transportation Data Analyst; Brendan Linard, Transportation Planner; Kendall Traveis, Staff Accountant; and Sophie Ulik, GIS Analyst. Together, they will contribute across several key areas of the agency's work, including transportation planning, GIS and data services, community and economic development, and environmental initiatives. Their combined experience will support the agency's regional initiatives and community partnerships.

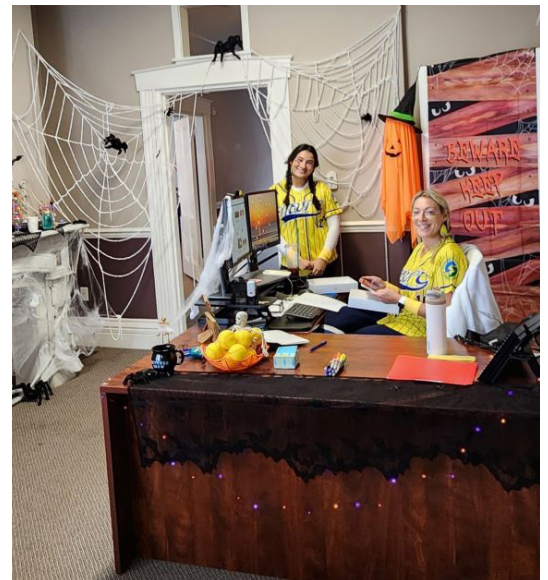
Check out <https://mvpc.org/our-staff/> to learn more about the newest members of the MVPC team.



Administration Program

MVPC Staff Events

Over the past year, MVPC staff events were designed to reflect and celebrate the Merrimack Valley. From axe-throwing at Haverhill's Wicked Axe to a staff hike at Old Town Hill in Newbury, each activity created opportunities for connection and collaboration while reinforcing a shared sense of place. MVPC also launched an ongoing, friendly competition of Merrimack Valley trivia, inviting staff to test their knowledge of the region each week. By grounding team-building experiences in the landscapes and communities that shape the agency's work, MVPC strengthened relationships among staff and deepened their appreciation for the region the agency proudly serves.



Community & Economic Development Program Impact Report

150

Acres re-zoned under 3A for multi-family housing

20+

Small business owners supported with direct technical assistance

25

Priority Growth Areas identified across the region

300+

Industrial acres analyzed for the Industrial Zone Profile

600+

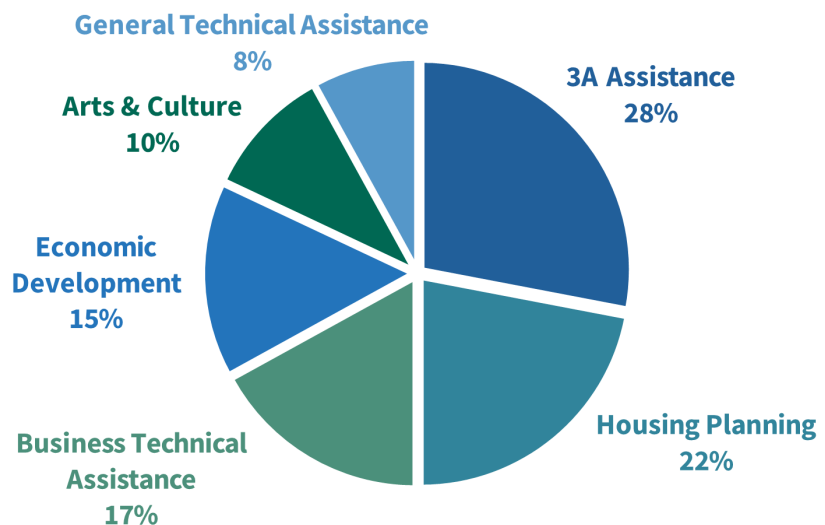
Hours of staff time dedicated to 3A compliance

45

Select Board, City Council, and Planning Board meetings attended

The Community & Economic Development (C&ED) Program at MVPC assists cities and towns with business development, housing development, comprehensive planning, and more. Guided by three key regional plans—the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy, and Priority Growth Strategy—C&ED aims to create regional conditions that lead to equity in access to housing, jobs, and economic mobility.

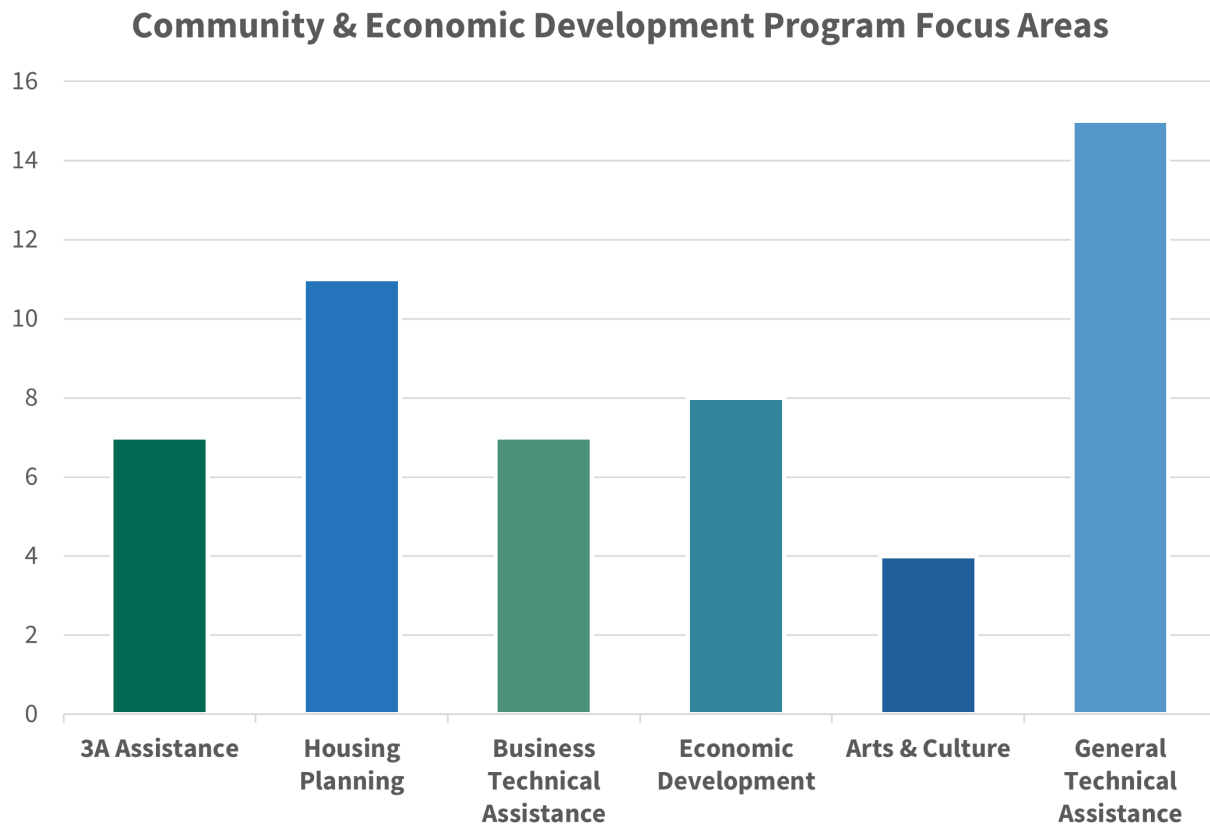
Community & Economic Development Program Focus Areas



In 2025, the C&ED team supported the cities and towns of the Merrimack Valley in all areas of housing, zoning, and economic development assistance. About half of staff time in the program was dedicated to housing-related assistance, such as MBTA Communities/3A support, housing production planning, or residential zoning changes. In addition to 3A, C&ED helped communities with zoning changes related to accessory dwelling units, inclusionary zoning, and starter homes.

The next largest area of work for the program involves economic development activities. This work provides one-on-one support for business leaders and business owners, supports municipal staff with local economic development planning, and provides long-term regional economic development planning.

Community & Economic Development Program



The C&ED program provided these services across the entire region, supporting all 15 cities and towns throughout 2025. Outside of general assistance such as minor zoning inquiries and requests for data, housing support touches the most communities across the region. This includes assistance with housing production plans, zoning changes to accommodate new housing, and zoning changes to comply with MBTA Communities/3A. For business technical assistance, 20 businesses across 7 communities benefitted from one-on-one technical assistance, where our staff met business owners to identify their needs and provide referrals to local, state, and federal resources. Our arts and culture projects are working regionwide in partnership with Meva transit, but we provided project-specific support in four communities. This included scoping public mural projects, connecting local artists with local government staff, and providing support to cultural councils and cultural districts.

Community & Economic Development Program

A Year of Regional Housing Policy Progress

This year marked a major milestone for housing planning in the Merrimack Valley, with every city and town advancing zoning reform and housing production strategies. Through sustained collaboration among regional and local partners, the region has positioned itself as a statewide leader in implementing the MBTA Communities Law and expanding housing opportunities across each community in the Merrimack Valley.



MVPC hosts regional housing summit

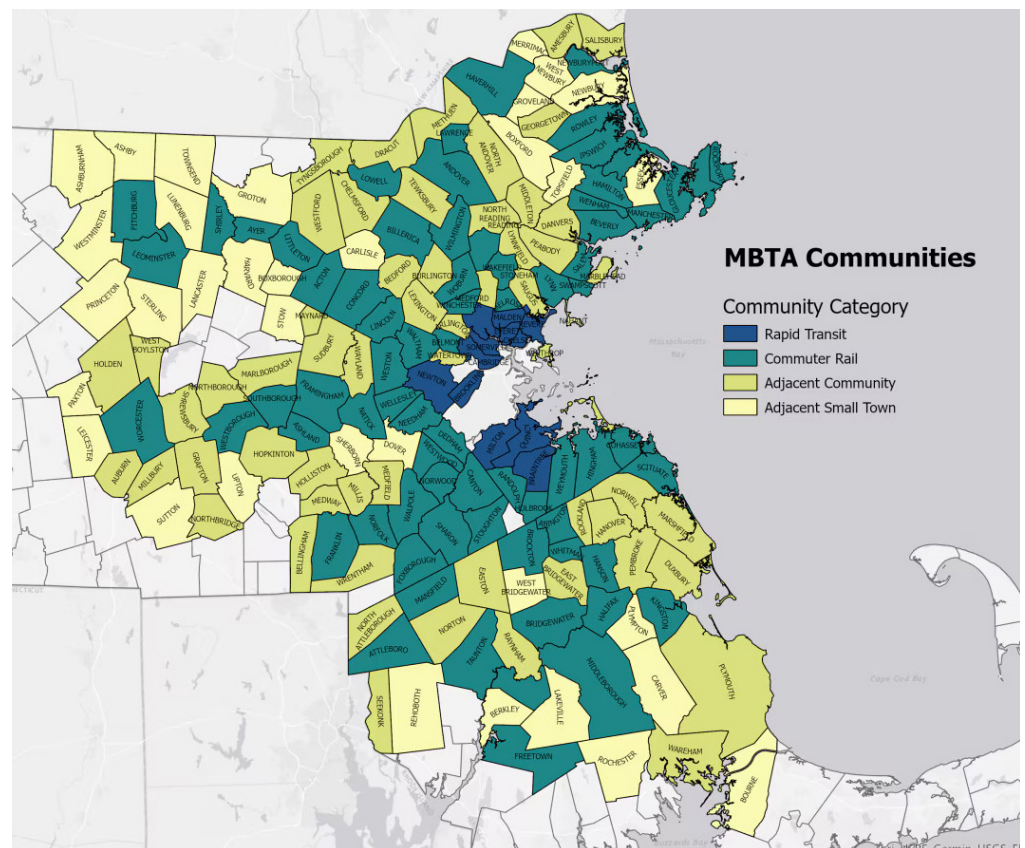
At the beginning of 2025, MVPC hosted a housing summit to officially launch the Housing Production Plans (HPPs) of all 15 cities and towns in the region. Elected officials, municipal staff, housing advocates, and community organizations gathered at North Essex Community College to discuss the state of housing in the region. Over the past two years, MVPC has worked with municipalities to develop Housing Production Plans tailored to the unique needs and goals of each town and city in the region. These plans provided actionable strategies for increasing housing production,

promoting affordability, and ensuring that the Merrimack Valley remains a vibrant and welcoming place to live. Several regional themes emerged from these local plans such as encouraging affordability, conducting community engagement, and developing regulatory changes. These housing initiatives highlight the importance of strategic planning and collaboration in addressing the region's housing challenges.

Community & Economic Development Program

Over the course of the year, the Merrimack Valley communities that did not yet have compliant MBTA Communities zoning districts held several town meetings where residents had the opportunity to vote on their community’s plan to adopt the multi-family zoning. In the spring of 2025, Georgetown and Groveland overwhelmingly approved new multi-family zoning overlay districts intended to comply with the MBTA Communities Act. West Newbury and Merrimac also adopted multi-family zoning in the fall of 2025, and in December the Town of Boxford became the fifteenth and final community in the MVPC region to adopt a bylaw intended for compliance with the MBTA Communities Act. Entering 2026, all cities and towns in MVPC’s region are on a path towards full compliance with the law.

The past three years have represented a monumental effort in zoning reform across the Merrimack Valley, with state, regional, and local partners coming together to create multi-family zoning districts in each city and town across the region. MVPC assisted with compliance efforts in all 15 cities and towns and was the lead consultant in 11 communities. This accomplishment makes MVPC the only regional planning agency in Massachusetts where every member community has approved multi-family zoning districts to meet



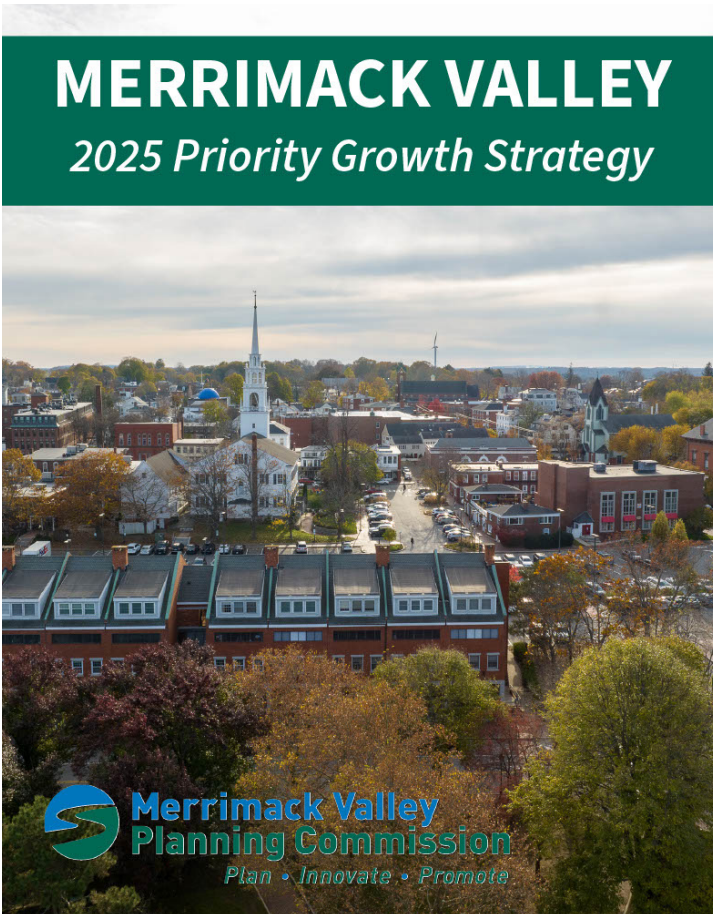
MBTA Communities Map

Section 3A requirements. Achieving full regional participation required sustained collaboration, public engagement, and leadership at the local level, demonstrating an exceptional accomplishment given the scope and complexity of zoning reform in each community.

Together, these initiatives reflect a coordinated regional approach to addressing housing needs and ensuring that the Merrimack Valley remains a welcoming and affordable place to live for current and future residents.

Community & Economic Development Program

MVPC Releases Updated Merrimack Valley 2025 Priority Growth Strategy



2025 Priority Growth Strategy Cover

This past year, MVPC completed the Merrimack Valley 2025 Priority Growth Strategy (PGS). The PGS serves as a guiding regional land use plan that identifies Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) across each community in the Merrimack Valley. The document highlights regional challenges that have shaped the region in the last ten years, as well as future opportunities that can help strengthen the region's economy in years to come. A breakdown of current conditions also examines demographic, housing, workforce, industry, transportation, and environmental data.

The 2025 PGS, an update from the 2015 document, was developed through a comprehensive planning process that incorporated input from MVPC's core program areas, along with guidance from municipal planning staff. Local and regional planning initiatives were reviewed to ensure the PGS aligns with shared planning priorities. Through this process, 25 PGAs were selected as the most promising locations for future housing,

economic development, and transportation investment. Environmental conditions for each site were also evaluated to identify potential concerns when considering future development. Each of these PGAs serve as key locations for future growth in the region and were ultimately chosen based on their proximity to existing infrastructure and transit access, potential to support additional housing, and their ability to advance regional economic and community development goals. An online application was also developed by MVPC's GIS & IT Program to provide an interactive experience for exploring these PGAs. This tool also features programmatic viewers to further understand the factors that contributed to the selection of each of the PGAs.

The Merrimack Valley 2025 Priority Growth Strategy provides a framework for potential growth in the region. By identifying key opportunities to concentrate growth, the PGS provides communities with guidance for future coordinated investment and development. Aligning local goals with regional priorities will ensure each community in the Merrimack Valley can plan for sustainable future growth.

Community & Economic Development Program

MVPC Completes Industrial Zone Profile



City of Lawrence

In the fall of 2025, MVPC completed an in-depth analysis of the region's industrial space as part of ongoing implementation efforts from the 2023-2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The Industrial Zone Profile provides a comprehensive look at the region's industrial landscape, including an analysis of each industrial zoning district in the region. The document also features data on industrial real estate trends as well as research on industrial employment.

The study ultimately provides recommendations to guide Merrimack Valley communities looking to strengthen their industrial base and support future economic growth.

The Industrial Zone Profile was developed to assess the region's current industrial capacity and provide recommendations for local and regional strategies to encourage future industrial growth. The report analyzed current and historical real estate trends, along with an examination of industrial employment in the region. The core of the Industrial Zone Profile analysis is a detailed review of industrial zoning across all Merrimack Valley communities. MVPC examined each zoning district's permitted uses and dimensional standards to determine how current regulations impact industrial capacity. Utilizing these parameters, a build-out analysis was conducted to estimate the amount of additional industrial development that could realistically occur under existing conditions as well as capacity projections based on recommended zoning changes. The study acknowledges there are also environmental and infrastructure limitations that impede development of industrial areas. Addressing infrastructure capacity, along with zoning reforms, will be critical to increase the potential industrial capacity of the Merrimack Valley.

To conclude this study, MVPC developed a series of best practices that communities can explore to encourage additional capacity in their industrial zones. MVPC also created targeted community-specific strategies to further align regional recommendations with local priorities. By modernizing zoning regulations and investing in critical infrastructure, the Merrimack Valley can position itself to meet future demand for industrial space and support long term economic stability.

Community & Economic Development Program

WeAreMV Has a Fresh New Look

In 2025, MVPC’s Community and Economic Development Department launched a redesigned WeAreMV.com to better serve entrepreneurs, small businesses, and the partners who support them across the Merrimack Valley.

The updated bilingual platform strengthens access to trusted resources by bringing funding opportunities, technical assistance, certification pathways, and local business success stories together in one accessible and easy-to-navigate location. Designed with the needs of our diverse business community in mind, the site ensures that both English- and Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs can connect to the information and support necessary to start, grow, and sustain their businesses.

A key feature of the platform is the 14 Steps to Open a Business Guide, a comprehensive and practical roadmap that helps entrepreneurs navigate the process of launching a business in Massachusetts. From registration and licensing to local permitting requirements, the guide simplifies what can often feel like a complex process.

Whether exploring loans and grants, seeking guidance, pursuing certification, or planning their next phase of growth, businesses can now more efficiently connect to the tools and regional partners that support their success. To further streamline support, businesses seeking one-on-one assistance are encouraged to complete the online Business Intake Form available through WeAreMV. The form connects entrepreneurs to appropriate programs, technical assistance providers, and regional resources across the Merrimack Valley ecosystem.

Through this redesign, WeAreMV continues to serve as the Merrimack Valley’s central hub for business support, strengthening regional coordination and making it easier for entrepreneurs to access the tools and connections they need to succeed.



Updated WeAreMV website

Community & Economic Development Program

Opening Doors for Minority and Women-Owned Businesses

In 2025, MVPC deepened its commitment to inclusive economic growth by continuing to grow the Merrimack Valley Minority Certification Cohort Program. This initiative supports minority and women-owned businesses in securing certification through the Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) and prepares them to compete for public and private contracts.

With support from NECTAR Community Investments, Archipelago Strategies Group, and the Eastern Bank Foundation, the program provided hands-on certification guidance, branding and pitch development, and procurement readiness training tailored to the needs of local entrepreneurs.

In October, MVPC celebrated the graduation of the first formal cohort, which included businesses such as Sazón Perú Fusion Bar and Grill, JVN Solutions, and RJ Installation and Design. These business owners are now better positioned to access new opportunities and grow their impact in the region.

New funding will allow the program to expand in 2026 to serve more businesses in Lawrence, Haverhill, and Methuen, supporting both new applicants and those already working toward certification. MVPC remains committed to building a more inclusive and resilient Merrimack Valley by investing in the success of local businesses.



Minority Certification Cohort presentation



Minority Certification Cohort Program graduates

Environmental Program Impact Report

\$750,000
Brownfields funds
authorized

524
Students educated through
Greenscapes “Keeping
Water Clean” program

40+
Culverts assessed within
the Merrimack Valley

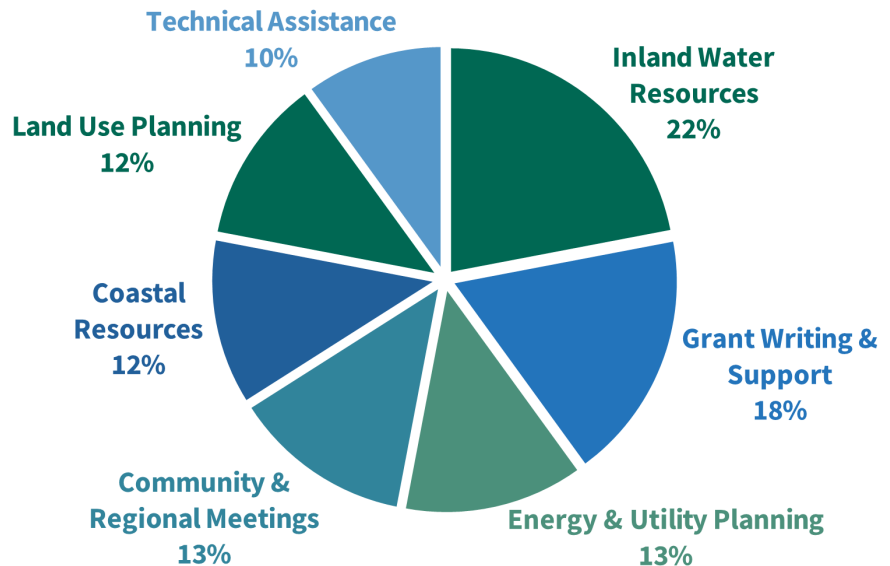
500+
Pounds of trash removed
from the Merrimack River

48
Merrimack River Water
Quality Roundtable
attendees

17.4
Acres monitored for coastal
erosion

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission’s Environmental Program supports the sustained management and protection of critical land and water resources with the objective of ensuring the long-term resilience and sustainability of the region. The Environmental team provides technical assistance in the service areas of natural resource protection, surface water and stormwater management, utility planning, coastal resilience, and land use planning, viewed through the lens of climate adaptation and environmental equity.

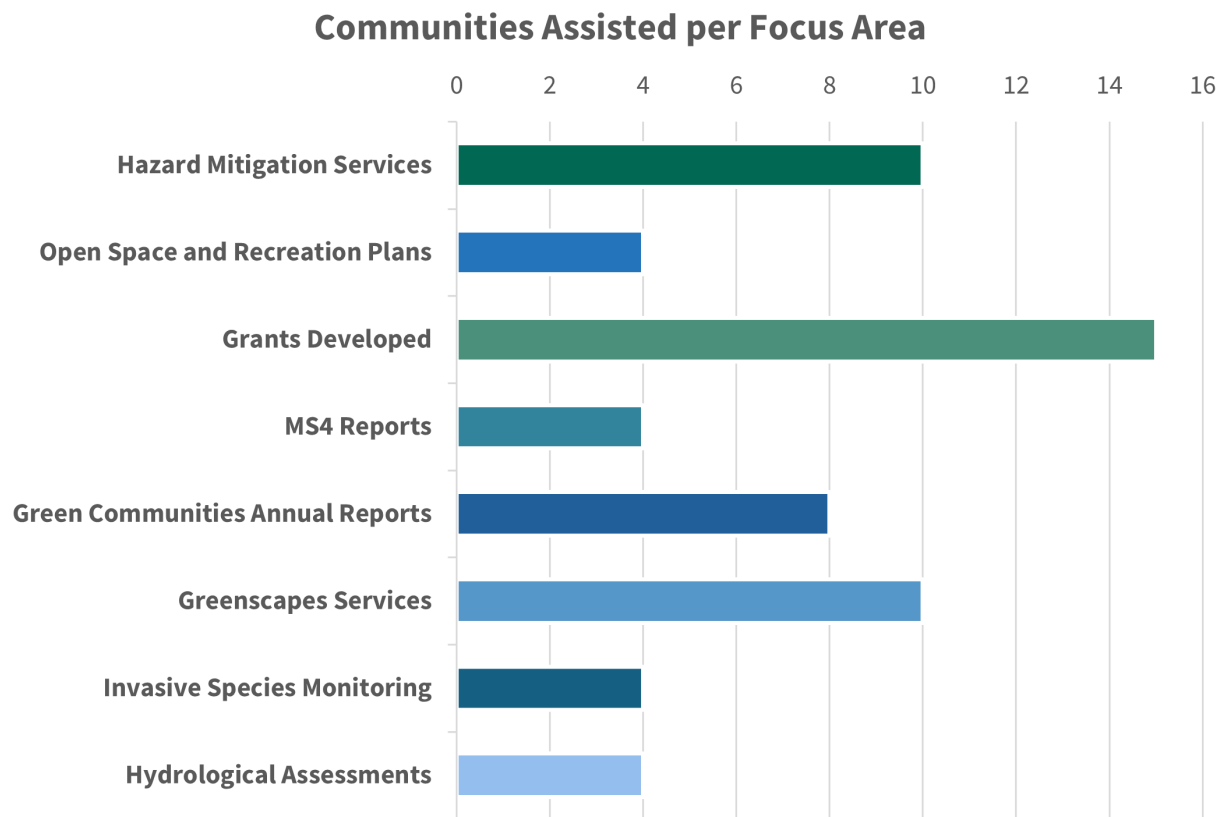
Environmental Program Focus Areas



In 2025, the Environmental team dedicated their time to a wide suite of services. A significant share of resources supported MVPC’s role as a regional coordinator for municipal projects. Grant writing and support, direct technical assistance, and hosting and attending community and regional meetings show our role in building municipal capacity, facilitating collaboration, and helping municipalities navigate funding opportunities and planning processes.

While MVPC provides a wide range of technical support to communities across our region, this chart highlights the balance of staff time between technical support functions and programmatic focus areas, such as inland water resource management, land use planning, energy and utility planning, and coastal resource management. Our team is able to provide these services while still maintaining attention to the region’s core environmental challenges.

Environmental Program



This chart illustrates the Environmental Program’s planning engagement in 2025 across our 15 member communities. Several core services offered by MVPC, such as grant application support, Green Communities regional services, and hazard mitigation planning, reach a majority of communities. Other services, such as Greenscapes support, MS4 reporting, hydrological assessments, and reviewing Open Space and Recreation Plans, are more targeted services which are delivered based on community needs and project readiness.

This distribution of services reflects MVPC’s regional coverage for support services where appropriate while also offering flexible specialized support to the communities which rely on it.

Environmental Program

Merrimack River Water Quality

For the communities of the Merrimack Valley, the Merrimack River is a resource prized for its natural beauty, ecological benefits, recreation, and, importantly, as a crucial source for drinking water. As such, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission has devoted time to working with municipalities to protect this resource. This year, MVPC launched two river-spanning projects and continued to advance others, all aimed at restoring and conserving the River. Additionally, MVPC has continued its work in raising awareness of river health and restoration best practices.



Aerial of the Merrimack River

Merrimack River Water Quality Roundtable: In April 2025, MVPC hosted its Fourth Annual Merrimack River Water Quality Roundtable in collaboration with MassBays. This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for regional partners to share watershed-wide monitoring updates and discuss opportunities for collaboration along the Merrimack River. This year, we heard about a variety of fantastic river projects from presenters such as the Nature Conservancy, both the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments and Merrimack River Watershed Council, and the United States Geological Survey (USGS); just to name a few! We had a total of 48 attendees join us virtually for the event!

Wastewater Grant: In 2025, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission allocated \$270,000 in Chapter 102 (Acts of 2021) earmark funding provided by Senator Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester, Minority Leader).

The funds were awarded to six projects focused on addressing combined sewer overflow (CSO) events and nonpoint source pollution across the region. Award recipients included the City of Methuen, the Greater Lawrence Sanitary District, the City of Haverhill, the City of Newburyport, the Town of Tyngsborough, and the Merrimack River Watershed Council. These projects are currently underway and all aim to better understand threats to regional water quality and advance practical solutions to improve local conditions. MVPC is proud to support these partners in working toward cleaner, safer waters for all.



Roundtable Event Invite

Environmental Program



Merrimack River Cleanup

Merrimack River Cleanup Initiative: In spring 2025, MVPC launched the Merrimack River Cleanup Initiative, a collaborative effort among five regional municipalities to capture floating pollution and debris before it travels downstream. Working with Tyngsborough, Andover, Lawrence, Methuen, and Haverhill, MVPC oversaw the installation of 10 river booms that collect plastics, Styrofoam, and other litter.

Each community also hosted a shoreline cleanup event in 2025, or has one planned for 2026, engaging volunteers and local leaders to remove trash along their section of the river. If you would like to learn more about these efforts, please visit our project website here: <https://mvpc.org/merrimack-river-cleanup-initiative/>.

Early Alert Tool: Also receiving funding for improvements from the Merrimack River Cleanup Initiative, the Early Alert Tool has been upgraded with new data sources and machine learning models that better capture the Merrimack River's dynamic nature. Real-time weather data now feeds the system, and model assumptions have been reviewed and strengthened using 2024 water quality samples from the Merrimack River Watershed Council. The river is modeled in more segments for localized predictions, and the final segment now uses Enterococcus as a more accurate indicator of fecal bacteria near the river's mouth. In the year ahead, we plan to expand analysis of water quality at the mouth and surrounding marshes to improve how the tool assesses illness risk after combined sewer overflow events. Learn more at: <https://mvpc.org/early-alert/>.

Merrimack River Collaborative: As part of its collaborative mission, MVPC continued to advance the goals of the Merrimack River Collaborative (MRC). The MRC, led by MVPC, the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, and the Merrimack River Watershed Council, serves as a regional resource, connecting Merrimack River communities with funding opportunities, technical support, public education, relevant data, and a forum for developing shared solutions to water quality challenges.

In its fourth year, the Collaborative continued to advance its work to serve as a regional convener, bringing together technical experts, planners, and elected officials to drive meaningful progress across the watershed. The MRC and its partners have continued to advance formal legislation with strong support from legislative champions Senator Bruce Tarr and Representative Dawne Shand (1st Essex District). The MRC remains committed to monitoring, improving, and restoring water quality across the Merrimack River.

Environmental Program

Coastal Resources

Over the past year, MVPC has continued to promote and protect our critical coastal resources. Through management, assessment, and restoration activities, MVPC has sustained and expanded its work in the Great Marsh through collaborations with MassBays and other local, state, and federal partners.

Integrating Drone Technology into Long-Term Saltmarsh Projects: Over the course of 2025, MVPC continued to advance its pilot project aimed at integrating UAV technology into several long-term salt marsh monitoring projects. Flights to assess marsh edge erosion, suitable eelgrass habitat, and chronic locations of marsh wrack were conducted across the Great Marsh. Preliminary results indicate clear success with using aerial imagery and LiDAR elevation measurements to improve data collection and aid in future monitoring and restoration work. The Environmental Program and GIS Program partnered on this pilot and anticipate a final report will be made available in 2026.



Healthy Estuaries Grant drone monitoring

Mitigation of Invasive Green Crabs: Efforts continued to advance green crab management solutions in 2025. In October, MVPC supported Senator Bruce Tarr's Green Crab Task Force in hosting a Green Crab Summit at Essex Technical Regional High School in Danvers, MA. The event gathered scientists, policymakers, educators, and community leaders to discuss existing and future market pathways for the harvesting and use of European green crabs. Topics included green crab uses in industries such as bait, animal feed, cosmetics, restaurants, and bioplastics. The day was led by Senator Tarr and featured six talks focused on market pathways for green crabs, a panel discussion, breakout conversations among attendees, and a keynote address from Brian Turner, Research Scientist with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Looking ahead to 2026, MVPC will continue to support efforts to maintain momentum in sustainable green crab management in the region.



Mitigation of invasive green crabs

Environmental Program



Eelgrass Restoration in the Great Marsh

Seeding the Future—Advancing Eelgrass Restoration in the Great Marsh: In collaboration with the Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Program (MassBays), MVPC received funding through Restore America’s Estuaries (RAE) National Estuary Program Watershed Grant Program to advance eelgrass restoration in the Great Marsh. Eelgrass is a subtidal marine plant that provides critical ecosystem services to communities, such as storm protection, carbon storage, improved water quality, and more. Although historically abundant across the Great Marsh, its span has been reduced by 50% (~19,000 acres) in the region over the last 30 years due to degraded water quality, climate change, and environmental stressors.

Through this funding, MVPC will collaborate with MassBays to test and implement various seed-based restoration approaches aimed at restoring eelgrass habitat and advancing restoration techniques for this important species. Work will kick off in spring 2026, with MVPC focusing on a restoration location in Gloucester, MA. By focusing our efforts on this site, we hope to find successful seed-based restoration techniques that can be applied more broadly, bringing this vital resource back to the Great Marsh system as a whole.

SEEDING THE FUTURE
RESTORING EELGRASS & BUILDING COMMUNITY

To combat eelgrass loss and ensure continued benefits for our communities and environment, restoration efforts are underway! With funding from Restore America’s Estuaries (RAE), a collaborative team is working to restore eelgrass at 4 locations across the Massachusetts coast! By advancing eelgrass restoration techniques using seed-based approaches, the group aims to bring eelgrass back to key sites across the state while piloting techniques that will inform and guide future efforts.

EELGRASS RESTORATION SITES

- Marblehead & Beverly, MA
- Gloucester, MA
- Nahant, MA
- Duxbury & Plymouth, MA

PROJECT GOAL: By working with local municipalities, neighbors, recreators, schools, and community groups, the team aims to restore 1 acre of eelgrass at each site between the spring of 2026 and the fall of 2027.

This project is led by the Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Partnership (MassBays) in collaboration with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, Salem Sound Coastwatch, Northeastern University, and the North and South Rivers Watershed Association, and funded through Restore America’s Estuaries (RAE) National Estuary Program Watershed Grant Program (Agreement #NEPWG24-MassBays). For more information, please contact MassBays at jillian.carr@umb.edu.



Project Informational Handout

Environmental Program

Climate and Renewable Energy

MVPC has grown to meet the clean energy needs of our municipalities and the goals set by the State. This year, MVPC convened clean energy and utility planning groups to meet these needs. Through the Regional Energy Planning Assistance (REPA) grant, MVPC convened a specialized working group around electric vehicles to discuss the needs and desires of the communities, possible electric vehicle supply infrastructure installation, and identified pathways for funding. This working group was bolstered by the conversations led by MVPC and its partner, the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments. Two workshops were held to review best practices and lessons learned for municipal electric vehicle deployment. MVPC also assisted six communities with their FY24 annual Green Communities reporting, also funded through the REPA grant. This report allows municipalities to track their municipal energy usage, enabling them to target specific buildings or energy users for energy conservation measures. This reporting is a requirement of the Green Communities designation, which allows for designated communities to apply for large amounts of Green Communities funding. Fourteen of the 15 MVPC communities are current Green Communities members. MVPC is proud to work with these communities and applauds the newest Green Community member in our region, the Town of Newbury.



EV Chargers at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge

As communities have a growing desire to electrify and decarbonize their municipalities, the number of staff members committed to this work has grown. As such, MVPC partnered with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to create a training curriculum for new Municipal Energy and Sustainability Managers (MEMS) across the State. Funded through the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), the initial planning grant allowed MVPC to meet with municipal staff currently engaged in the work to develop a training curriculum for new hires. After successfully receiving funding for implementation, this training curriculum has been brought to over 30 Energy and Sustainability Managers in the Commonwealth. As part of this curriculum, MVPC has led the Peer Learning Network, which allows the MEMS to develop power skills crucial to their roles and continue conversations started through the technical trainings.

Environmental Program

Land Use Planning

In 2025, MVPC's work continued to support the region's unique natural and cultural character through several land use planning efforts. Reclamation, resilience, and recreation are the pillars of MVPC's work in this area, providing assistance through several Federal and State land use initiatives.

Advancing Brownfields Projects: This year, MVPC was selected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to receive \$750,000 in supplemental funding through the EPA's Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program to support the remediation and redevelopment of underutilized and potentially contaminated sites in the Merrimack Valley. This award is part of a national investment of over \$42 million in supplemental RLF funds distributed to 34 successful grantees across the country. These funds have allowed MVPC to continue to identify and invest in the reclamation of abandoned, contaminated properties across the region and transform them into community assets.

Bolstering Local Resilience: Through state funded efforts such as Hazard Mitigation Planning, Open Space and Recreation Planning, and the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) programs, MVPC has continued to advance resilient and adaptive land use planning in the region. Following the Federal Emergency Management Agency's formal acceptance of the Merrimack Valley Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) in February 2025, MVPC has focused efforts on helping communities advance the goals identified in the regional plan as well as supporting individual municipalities as they complete mandatory updates to their HMPs. In 2025, MVPC began aiding North Andover in one such update and will continue this work in 2026. MVPC also directly supports projects in our region funded by Massachusetts' Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' MVP program, including one awarded to the Town of Salisbury in September 2025.

MVPC continues to support our communities through other land use planning efforts, participating in the development and review of Open Space and Recreation Plans (OSRP). OSRP documents support strategic, equitable growth and allow municipalities to apply for State funds to advance priorities highlighted through the OSRP development and update process. MVPC reviewed and supported updates to four of the region's communities this year: Salisbury, Haverhill, North Andover, and Georgetown.

Environmental Program

Inland Water

Inland water management remained a large piece of MVPC’s environmental work in 2025. MVPC continued to advance work in managing stormwater, sustaining biodiverse riverine and wetland habitats, building flooding resilience, and increasing public awareness of inland water issues through several initiatives, projects, and partnerships.



Assessing hydrological barriers

Assessing Hydrological Barriers: MVPC staff completed over 40 culvert assessments across the region in 2025. All Environmental Program staff members are certified to conduct these assessments in accordance with North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) protocol for structural integrity, aquatic passage, and terrestrial passage. Increased storm activity and flooding in recent years have begun to stress the Merrimack Valley’s numerous culverts. Conducting assessments allows communities to make informed decisions about where to invest in infrastructure improvements. MVPC also joined with the Merrimack River Watershed Council to support and review assessments of two dams in 2025. Assessments of the Johnson Creek dam in Groveland and Steven’s Pond Outlet dam in Lawrence provided each municipality with in-depth information about the current conditions of the structures and an overview of potential impacts of several different types of interventions. Addressing regional barriers such as culverts and dams supports the Environmental Program’s efforts to support public safety, biodiversity, and resilience.

Environmental Program

Stormwater Management: In December 2025, MVPC reconvened its regional Stormwater Collaborative under a new name: the Regional Infrastructure and Stormwater Collaborative (RISC). Initially convened in 2007 following new Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) requirements, the Stormwater Collaborative brought together representatives from our 15 municipalities to discuss regional challenges to effective stormwater management and changing needs as storm activity and intensity continued to grow. After meeting monthly for several years, the group took a break to reassess needs and restructure to better support participating communities. RISC is now meeting on a quarterly basis to encourage and enhance coordinated, intermunicipal approaches to stormwater infrastructure and management to protect clean water and safe environments for the residents of the Merrimack Valley. In 2026, RISC will continue to convene to support this goal and provide a valuable space for municipalities within the region to learn and work together.

In 2025, MVPC assisted the towns of Boxford, Georgetown, Rowley, and West Newbury with their annual MS4 reporting. This reporting, required by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, ensures that municipalities with separate storm sewer systems track, maintain, and document the condition and performance of their systems. MVPC also supports communities by inspecting municipal facilities for compliance, facilitating annual public engagement on stormwater management plans, and maintaining a stormwater mobile application through its GIS department.

In collaboration with Salem Sound Coastwatch and Ipswich River Watershed Association, MVPC continues to advance and support work under the Greenscapes Northshore Coalition. This work includes creating and supplying outreach materials to Greenscapes member communities within MVPC's region to help municipalities meet MS4 requirements. MVPC also assists with the planning and facilitation of Greenscapes' Keeping Water Clean (KWC) program, which provides stormwater education to 5th grade classes. In 2025, the KWC program educated 524 students across the region. MVPC remains committed to the important work that Greenscapes accomplishes.

Geographic Information Systems Program Impact Report

600+

GIS layers managed

85

Web-based GIS applications

13

MIMAP applications updated

38,000

Visits to MVPC.org

401,300

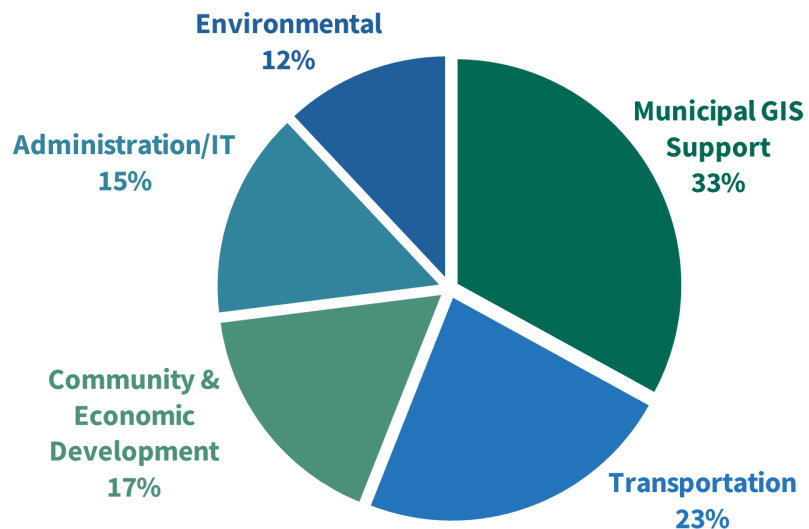
Views of Portal for ArcGIS content

184

Published web maps

MVPC's GIS and IT Program supports staff and communities by connecting data, systems, and people across departments. The program helps guide growth, protect the environment, and improve transportation by turning location-based and other digital information into clear, useful insights. Working closely with staff across all program areas, the team ensures that projects are informed by reliable data and responsive to local needs.

GIS & IT Program Focus Areas

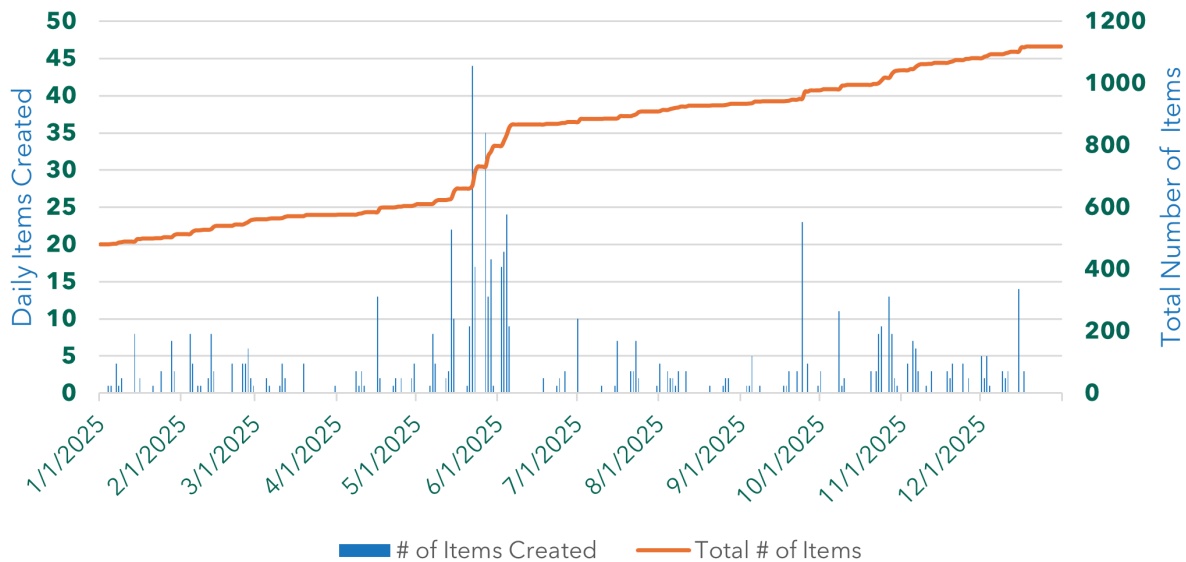


In 2025, MVPC's GIS and IT Program delivered targeted projects that directly supported regional planning, municipal decision-making, and agency operations. Key accomplishments included development of the Priority Growth Strategy and assistance with MBTA Communities GIS analysis to support economic development; continued advancement of the Early Alert Tool with a new machine learning model; and drone data collection funded through a Healthy Estuaries grant to support environmental monitoring and analysis.

Geographic Information Systems Program

The GIS Program also provided ongoing mapping, data management, and technical support for initiatives such as Valley Tally, transportation and land use studies, stormwater and infrastructure programs, and the Industrial Zone Profile, while maintaining and expanding MIMAP functionality for member communities. At the same time, IT staff upgraded systems, supported staff hardware and software needs, improved internal workflows, and maintained secure, reliable networks. Together, these efforts strengthened data access and improved efficiency, ensuring that MVPC staff and municipalities had dependable tools to support informed decision-making throughout the year.

Item Creation in Portal for ArcGIS



The graph above shows consistent growth in GIS resources published to MVPC’s Portal for ArcGIS during 2025, driven by expanded use of MIMAP and the development of shared datasets supporting MVPC program areas, including Transportation, Environment, Community & Economic Development, and GIS. These resources strengthen regional collaboration by providing consistent, accessible data that supports joint planning and informed decision-making across Merrimack Valley communities.

Published GIS resources more than doubled over the course of the year, with 1,475 items hosted in MVPC’s Enterprise GIS by year’s end. This growth was enabled by MVPC’s transition from ArcGIS Online to ArcGIS Enterprise Portal, which reduced long-term costs to communities and increased operational efficiency. The move to Portal supported expanded use of mobile GIS applications for asset management and field data collection, as well as the creation of web-based GIS applications. Together, these investments allowed MVPC to expand GIS services using existing staff capacity, advancing efficient, coordinated regional planning and supporting the general welfare of Merrimack Valley residents.

Geographic Information Systems Program

In 2025, MVPC's GIS and Information Technology Program (GIS & IT) continued to support the region by providing mapping, data, and technology services to communities. Program efforts focused on keeping technology secure, collecting and maintaining up-to-date data for the region, improving everyday software and tools, and helping communities meet state and regional planning needs with access to reliable information for informed decision-making across the region.

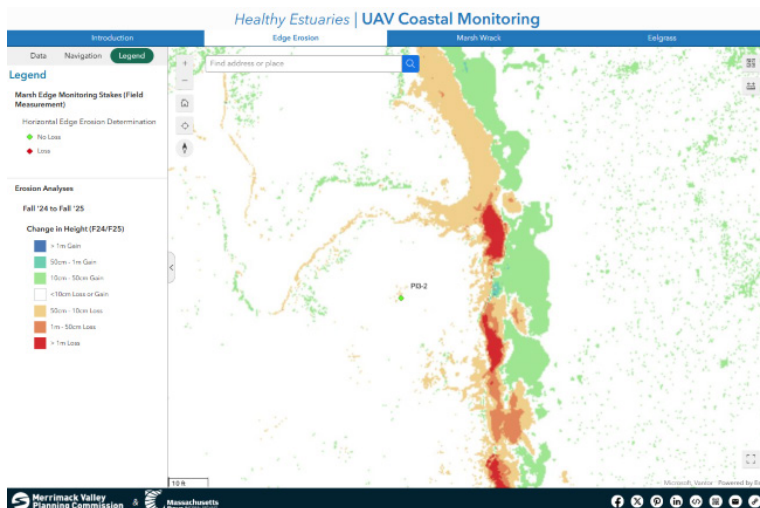
Building a Resilient Digital Foundation

The GIS & IT Program supported staff by providing essential IT resources and assisted with onboarding six new staff members. These efforts helped build internal capacity and resiliency across the agency. MVPC staff participated in the Office of Municipal and School Technology (OMST) Cybersecurity Awareness Program grant, strengthening everyday practices for protecting systems and data. MVPC is excited to report 100% successful completed training. This work supported MVPC's growing use of online platforms to manage sensitive municipal and regional information.



Cybersecurity training examples

Data Tools for Climate and Ecological Resilience



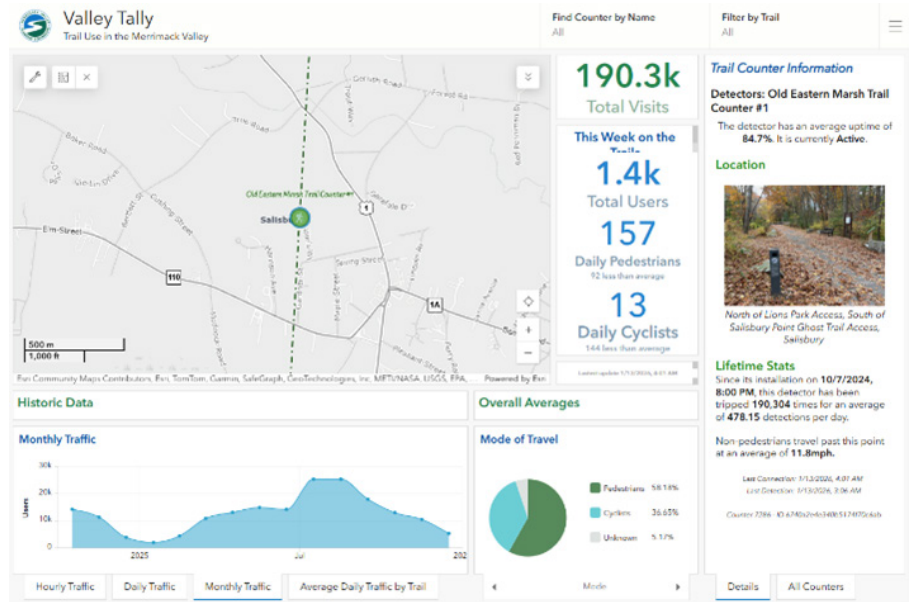
Analysis of bank edge erosion in the great marsh

In collaboration with the Environmental Program, GIS & IT staff advanced multiple initiatives supporting environmental assessment and resiliency planning. Work associated with the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) included collecting culvert and stream crossing assessment data and developing a web-based application to support data visualization. Additionally, through the Healthy Estuaries Grant, GIS & IT staff used drone-based data collection to assess marsh wrack accumulation, bank edge erosion, and eelgrass site suitability, producing spatial data to inform restoration planning and resiliency efforts.

Geographic Information Systems Program

Measuring Movement: Valley Tally in Action

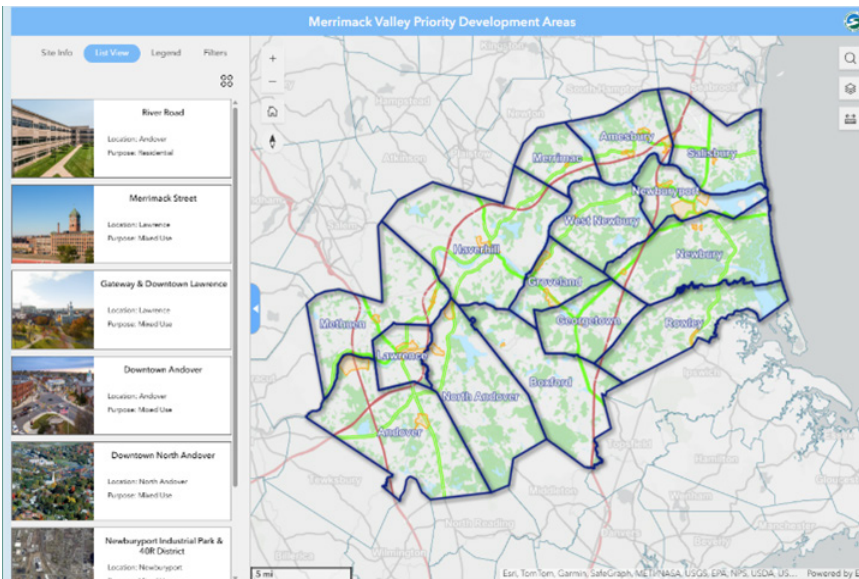
As part of its support for the Transportation Program's field services, the GIS & IT Program continued development of the Valley Tally data dashboard. This web-based tool allows users to explore trail count data in an interactive format. Since deployment in October 2024, Valley Tally counters have recorded over 3 million hits, with approximately 80 percent pedestrian and 17 percent cyclist activity. The dashboard supports data-driven trail planning,



Valley Tally dashboard

maintenance, system expansion, and grant justification, and is designed to accommodate additional counters and future datasets as the program continues to grow.

Tools to Guide Regional Growth



Priority Growth Strategy interactive tool

GIS & IT services continued to support community and economic development across the Merrimack Valley through mapping, analysis, and technical assistance. This work included development of an interactive tool for the Priority Growth Strategy, which allows users to explore priority growth areas to better understand regional planning opportunities. Additionally, a regionwide analysis of industrial zoning and development capacity was conducted as part of the Merrimack Valley Industrial Zone

Profile. GIS & IT staff continued to provide mapping, analysis, and technical support to municipalities working toward compliance with the MBTA Communities law, with GIS tools being used to evaluate zoning capacity, land area requirements, environmental constraints, and transit proximity.

Geographic Information Systems Program

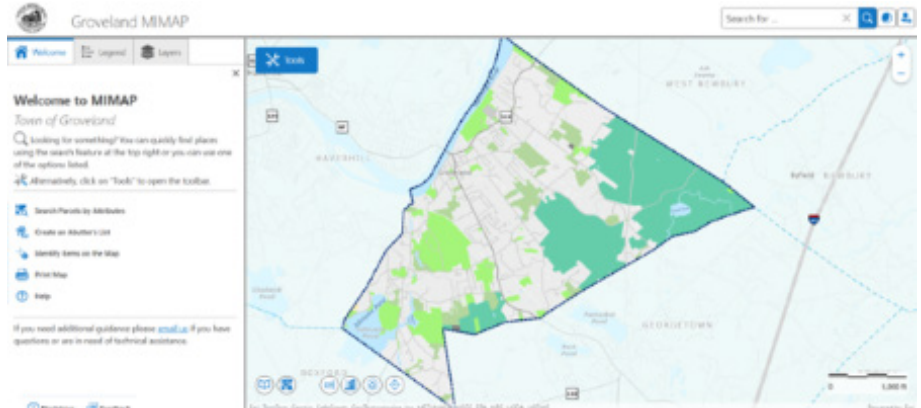
Advancing Regional Mapping Tools

Progress continued in 2025 with the rollout of MIMAP 3.0, the next generation of the region's most widely used mapping application. Built on a modern, actively supported platform, the updated MIMAP retains a familiar interface while enhancing security and functionality. By year's end, all participating communities had access to the new system.

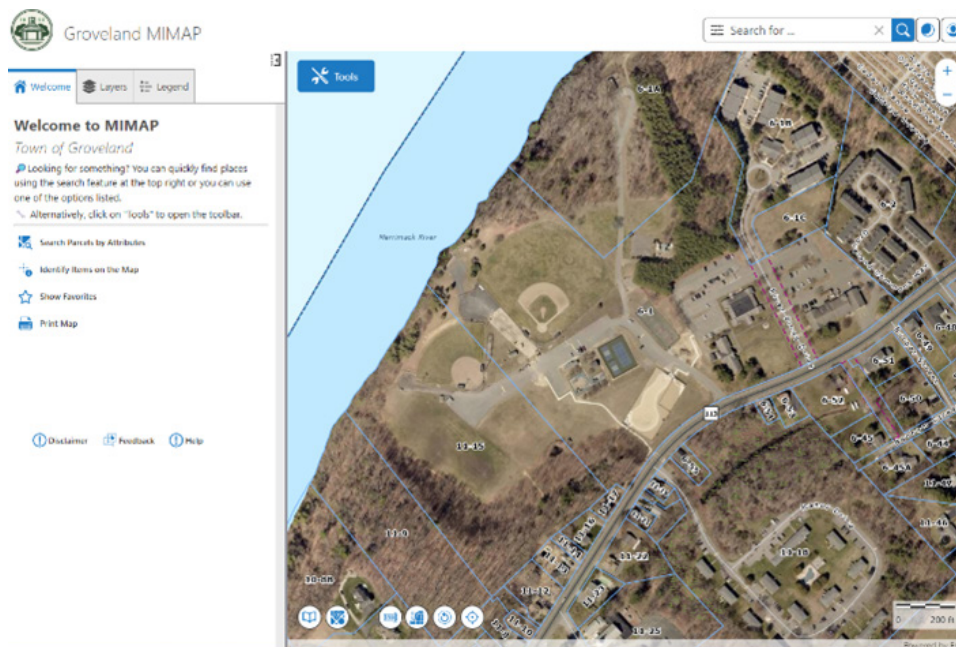
At the same time, GIS & IT continued investing in its Esri ArcGIS Enterprise environment, strengthening self-hosted infrastructure to reduce long-term costs and expand system flexibility. More than 50 applications were updated or optimized to improve usability across both desktop and mobile devices.



Previous MIMAP Version



MIMAP 3.0



Updated MIMAP interface

Geographic Information Systems Program

Regional Voices at the Statewide Table

MVPC maintained an active leadership role in statewide geospatial coordination through participation in the Massachusetts Geospatial Information Coordinating Council (MaGICC). As one of two regional planning agencies represented, MVPC helped elevate municipal and regional perspectives in discussions around data standards, coordination, and long-term geospatial strategy for the Commonwealth. Additionally, GIS & IT staff started participating in twice monthly meetings for the Massachusetts Integrated Land Use Strategy (MILUS) Technical Working Group helping to identify GIS data that will benefit the ongoing work of the GIS Tool.



Mass EOTSS

Looking Ahead

Looking forward, MVPC's GIS and Information Technology Program will continue advancing regional planning through secure, innovative, and data-driven solutions. Priorities for the coming year include expanding interactive dashboards such as Valley Tally, integrating new environmental and transportation datasets, and continuing to modernize core applications to improve performance and usability. The program will also remain focused on strengthening cybersecurity, investing in staff training, and supporting municipalities as they respond to evolving state requirements and regional challenges. Through these efforts, GIS & IT will remain a foundational resource for informed decision-making and coordinated growth across the Merrimack Valley.

Transportation Program Impact Report

3,000,000

Trail users detected
utilizing trail counters

\$300,000

MassTrails Grant funding
received

3

Submitted regional federal
aid grant applications

\$77,749,496

Regional target federal
aid programmed through
FY2030

4

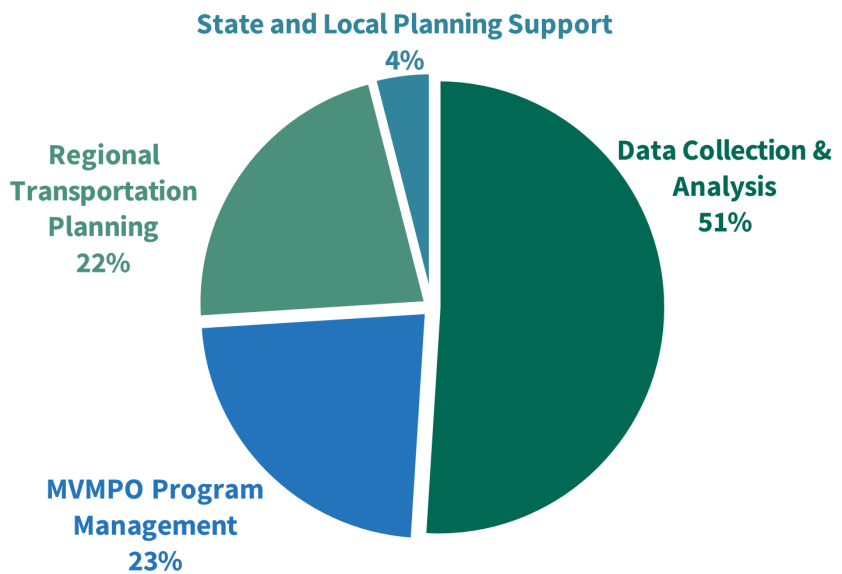
Walk/Road safety audits
supported by MVPC
Transportation staff

0

Corrective actions received
during federal certification
review

Per the region's current Metropolitan Transportation Plan, MV Vision 2050, the region envisions "a multimodal transportation system that is safe, accessible, sustainable, cost-effective, and ensures [livability] for people today and in the future." Transportation program staff advance this vision by aligning local, state, and federal resources with regional priorities.

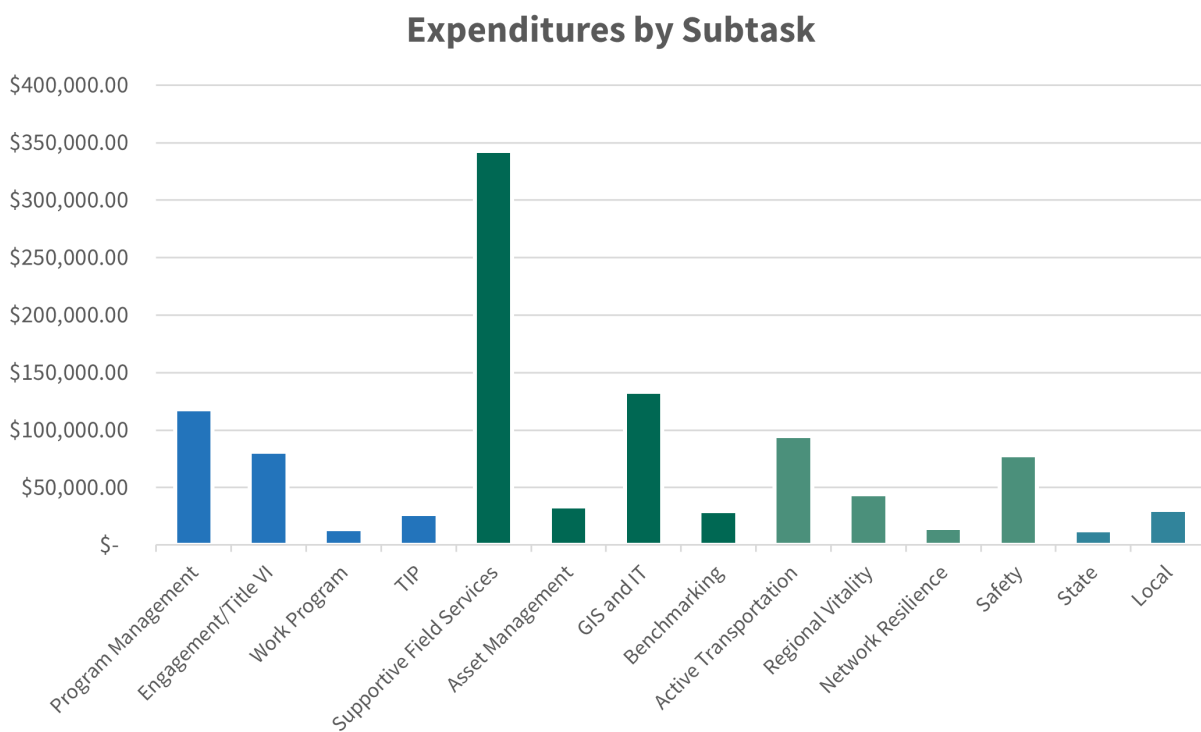
Transportation Program Focus Areas



Four tasks comprise the Commission's transportation 3C (Continuous, Comprehensive, and Cooperative) work program: MVMPO Program Management, Data Collection and Analysis, Regional Transportation Planning, and State and Local Planning. Each task includes specific subtasks and deliverables.

Transportation Program

The bar graph below displays level of resource expenditure by subtask, including staff time and direct costs. Field Services, including traffic data collection, Valley Tally maintenance, local data requests, and all fees associated with these efforts, continues to represent the largest expenditure. Beyond counting traffic, Field Services stood up a trail counting program and tracked results throughout FFY2025. MVPC also purchased additional trail counters using carryover funds, which increased the expenditure total of the Field Services subtask. In FFY2026, staff plan to perform additional Valley Tally data validation, including units' speed and mode split data.



GIS and Information Technology expenditures comprise the second largest subtask; these are largely made by the GIS/IT Program and support the development and maintenance of online viewers, staff equipment, and website maintenance. Staff expenditures for Program Management, the third highest category, included updates to the region's MVMPO Memorandum of Understanding, Public Participation Plan, and the agency's certification review.

Transportation Program

MVPC Completes Three Major Federal Certification Review Documents

Over the course of 2025, MVPC updated three major certification review documents: the Congestion Management Process, the Public Participation Plan, and the Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO) Memorandum of Understanding. The development and upkeep of each document is required by the federal comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative regional planning process, as prescribed by federal statute.

Congestion Management Process

Urban areas with populations over 200,000 are designated as Transportation Management Areas and are required to implement a Congestion Management Process (CMP). As such, MVPC must develop a CMP to guide regional planning studies, performance measures, and programming decisions. To accomplish its 2025 update, transportation program staff analyzed congestion using location-based cellphone data, traffic volumes, and roadway capacity to map the region's most significant bottlenecks. The document also presents community-level data, including top congestion locations and commute mode shares across the Merrimack Valley.

Recognizing that congestion solutions extend beyond roadways, the CMP emphasizes multimodal strategies. It recommends new tracking measures such as transit ridership, non-single-occupancy vehicle commuting, and average commute times to understand how travel patterns are changing over time. The analysis highlights the potential of transit, walking, and biking—along with transportation demand management tools like telework and carpooling—to reduce congestion. Acknowledging induced demand, the document de-emphasizes roadway capacity enhancements.

Public Participation Plan

The Public Participation Plan (PPP) details how the MVMPO solicits public involvement and interest in regional transportation planning. MVPC strives to create accessible, comfortable, inclusive, and inviting forums to share information and collaborate for better transportation. In accordance with state and federal requirements, MVMPO's public processes must provide equal opportunity and prohibit discrimination. MVPC Transportation Program staff use the PPP to shape public participation for its MVMPO work program projects, processes, and products.

The PPP states MVMPO's participation values and goals and lists concrete strategies that further elucidate each goal's intent. Staff select appropriate methods based on context and scale. Importantly, the document provides guidance on participation approaches related to access for people with disabilities and people from historically marginalized communities.

Transportation Program



Updated Public Participation Plan and Congestion Management Process

Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO) Memorandum of Understanding

MVMPO endorsed an updated memorandum of understanding. This document enshrines the process and procedures of the board, including selection, representation, and roles. During the update, staff led a discussion about broadening representation, which resulted in the addition of a broader citizen advocacy academy—a program that is currently being developed as a component of the FFY2026 work program.

Transportation Program

MVPC Advances Local Demonstration Projects

MVPC’s MV Vision Zero calls for elimination of severe roadway injuries and roadway fatalities. One strategy cited by the plan encourages MVPC to “Work with municipalities to design and implement quick build safety demonstration projects.” MVPC has executed this strategy, advancing two demonstration projects in 2025.

Staff collaborated with MassDOT, the Town of Groveland, and contractor K5 to install recessed pavement markings on State Road 113 (Main Street) in Groveland. In the spring, following study of the markings’ impact on driver behavior, delineator posts will be added to tighten the roadway, helping slow through traffic near the recreation center and municipal complex.



Preparing Recessed Areas for Thermoplastic in Groveland



Completed Thermoplastic Markings in Groveland

Transportation Program



Public Engagement at Lowell and Margin Street in Lawrence

In Lawrence, staff have been working on a safety improvement project at Lowell Street and Margin Street in the Lower Tower Hill neighborhood, part of the city's Public Space Plan. This initiative will introduce traffic-calming curb extensions while also creating more public space for residents. MVPC created an improvement plan, facilitated an engineering review, and looks to implement change in spring of 2026.



Public Engagement at Lowell and Margin Street in Lawrence

Transportation Program

MVPC and MeVa – Moving the Region Together

MeVa and MVPC have historically partnered to improve regional mobility, and 2025 was no different. Staff from both agencies collaborated on two important transit planning initiatives.

In early 2025, MVPC worked with MeVa and contractor Stantec to identify the comprehensive bundle of benefits rendered by MeVa's Fare Free Transit program. This project developed a business case for the policy, and resulted in several key findings:



Low-Floor Buses, programmed in the FFY2024-2029 Transportation Improvement Program, delivered in FFY2025

- The quantifiable financial benefits of the fare-free program are over \$2,000,000 annually, exceeding the amount previously collected from fares.
- More people are patronizing more businesses in the Merrimack Valley, benefiting both tax revenue and employment opportunities.
- The time that it takes people to get on the bus has been cut in half, reducing idling and allowing buses to run more efficiently.
- People report high satisfaction with bus service, increased access to medical care, and decreased social isolation.
- Ridership grew at a faster rate than MeVa's service enhancements, suggesting the policy's increased ridership cannot be explained by increased service alone.
- Because ridership increased following the initiation of the policy, per capita operating costs decreased.

Transportation Program

MeVa is working to expand its portfolio of transit offerings beyond bus service. In 2022, MeVa Transit was awarded funding through the Low-No Emissions Federal Transit Authority (FTA) Grant for the construction of solar powered ferryboats that will provide service between Amesbury, Newburyport, and Haverhill. While ferryboat travel is not new to the Merrimack River—a steamship ran from Haverhill’s “Black Rocks” landing to Salisbury in the late 19th century—a publicly run transit service will be new to the region. MeVa and MVPC have collaborated to develop a business and operations plan for the service, with MVPC taking the lead on scope development, a situational analysis of context, and the procurement of a qualified operations-planning contractor with maritime experience. Work continues into FFY2026, with recommendations anticipated in April.



MeVa Ferryboat Prototype courtesy of Lyman Morse, 2025

Transportation Program

MVPC's Robust Field Services Program

Field Services continues to be a program asset, both from a local and regional perspective. In 2025, the Field Services Coordinator completed 54 traffic counts, including 17 MassDOT and 37 MVPC locations, and published the 2024 Traffic Count Report while beginning work on the 2025 edition. The program integrated 2023 counts into an online data viewer, which can be accessed directly from the transportation main page. 2024 and 2025 counts will be added in the coming months. The team also anticipates that this data viewer will house tabs for transit use, displaying boarding and alighting, and the region's Valley Tally trail counts, which are also available via a Valley Tally specific viewer.



Valley Tally Counter, Clipper City Rail Trail

Field Services continue to improve counter operation, learning more about the counters' back-end platform and diagnosis processes to troubleshoot operational issues. Field Services has applied new signage to each unit, proudly displaying the MVPC logo which directs traffic to our web offerings. Since deployment in October 2024, the counters have detected over 3 million distinct users, with a 79.8% pedestrian to 16.5% cyclist mode split (with 3.68% unknown). Staff have specific information about the mode split, days and hours of use, etc. at site specific

Transportation Program

levels, which can be used to plan maintenance, expansion, and justify grant requests. Staff used year-end funding to purchase 15 additional units, 7-9 of which will be deployed in FFY26 along other trails in the region, such as the Bradford Rail Trail and Groveland Community Path. Several of the 15 counters will be retained for integration into planned projects, such as Amesbury’s Carriagetown Connector and the Lawrence to Manchester Rail Trail.

Beyond the count program and Valley Tally, Field Services deployed its MioVision video counting hardware in 2025 in Methuen and Newbury. This hardware allows for the more efficient collection of turning movement counts (TMCs), which are necessary for delay, queuing, and signal warrant analysis. Counts taken at Boston Road and Route 1 in Newbury clarified conditions for MassDOT’s federal aid scoping process. Transportation staff used the data to perform a preliminary signal analysis for engineering review, which was shared with MassDOT. The effort advances work initiated during 2024’s Vision Zero planning process, which included a walk audit at the location.



Looking ahead, Field Services will expand staff training to improve program resilience, advance Valley Tally counter deployment, and explore additional data collection opportunities and technologies to strengthen regional data collection efforts.

“Road Hog” Field Services Truck with MioVision Counter in Newbury at Boston Road

2025 MVPC Staff

Administration



Jerrard Whitten
Executive Director



Jenifer Dunlap
*Deputy Director/
Finance Director*



Jodie Furey
*Office Administrator/
Communications
Specialist*



Cassandra Green
*Accounting & Finance
Assistant*



Kendall Traveis
Staff Accountant

Community & Economic Development



Ian Burns
*Community &
Economic Development
Program Manager*



Jennifer Arndt
*Arts & Culture
Specialist
Joint with ECCF*



Janin Duran
*Economic Development
Specialist*



Kayla Rennie
*Community &
Economic Development
Planner*

Environmental



Hanna Mogensen
*Environmental
Program Coordinator/
MassBays Regional
Coordinator*



Kay Emery
Environmental Planner



Macklen Weir
Environmental Planner



Peter Phippen
*Coastal Resource
Planner*

2025 MVPC Staff

GIS & Information Technology



Stephen Lopez, GISP
*GIS/IT Program
Manager*



Kelsie Belanger
GIS Analyst



Sophie Ulik
GIS Analyst

Transportation



Patrick Reed, AICP
*Transportation
Program Manager*



Christina Herrick
*Transportation Data
Analyst*



Brendan Linard
*Transportation
Planner*



Elizabeth Maldari
*Senior Transportation
Planner*



Daniel Ovalle
*Field Services
Coordinator*



2025 MVPC Commissioners



Keith Ratner
Amesbury



Lisa LaGrasse Schwarz
Andover
Treasurer



Jim Barnes
Boxford



Frank O'Connor
Georgetown



Annie Schindler
Groveland



Jacki Byerley
Haverhill



Dan McCarthy
Lawrence



Thomas Abisalih
Merrimac



Kathleen B. Colwell
Methuen
Secretary



Kristen Grubbs
Newbury



Rick Taintor
Newburyport
Vice Chair



Kate Kelly
North Andover



Robert Snow
Rowley
Chairman



Dan Welch
Salisbury



Brian Murphy
West Newbury



Frank Surillo
Rep-At-Large

2025 Funding Partners

Federal

EDA	Economic Development Administration
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services

Local

MeVa	Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority
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Non-Profit

ECCF	Essex County Community Foundation
	Greenscapes NorthShore
	Lawrence Partnership
	National Wildlife Federation

State

CZM	Coastal Zone Management
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection
DMF	Division of Marine Fisheries
DOER	Department of Energy Resources
EOAF	Executive Office of Administration and Finance
EOEEA	Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
EOED	Executive Office of Economic Development
EOHLC	Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities
EOTSS	Executive Office of Technology Services and Security
MassDot	Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MEMA	Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency

*Back Cover Photo: Downtown Amesbury
MVPC's annual photo contest winner, taken by GIS Analyst, Sophie Ulik*

Merrimack Valley Regional Map

