

Franklin Regional Council of Governments  
**2020 ANNUAL REPORT**  
**HEATH**

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# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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## FRCOG PROGRAMS:

- Administration and Special Projects
- Collective Purchasing
- Cooperative Public Health Service
- Economic Development
- Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program
- Homeland Security
- Land Use Planning
- Natural Resources Planning
- Partnership for Youth
- Regional Preparedness
- Town Accounting
- Transportation Planning

## ON THE COVER

A view toward Deerfield from Sachem's Head in Highland Park, Greenfield.



*Annual Report design & production:  
Lynne Rudié Graphic Design, Turners Falls*

## Introduction

**I**t seems unnecessary and somewhat trite to exclaim that 2020 was an unusual year, and yet 2020 was definitely an unusual year. We had already made a decision to change the FRCOG's 2020 Annual Report to match the categorization many readers are already familiar with: the categories used in our quarterly updates to FRCOG Council members and municipal officials. This change made us aware of how many of our projects have diverse and multiple goals and benefits. We are proud that it is sometimes hard to silo a project into a category – to us it's a sign of creative and regional thinking! We encourage you to read the whole report because you will find transportation projects in Climate Resiliency, and a project funded with Homeland Security funds in Financial and Municipal Services, and other such unusual categorizations. We are also proud that the FRCOG was able to meet its regular obligations during a trying year and also provide a vast and critical array of new services to help our region cope with, contain, and prepare to recover from COVID-19. We have added a new section on FRCOG COVID response and recovery activities to highlight this work. Here's hoping for a vaccine-filled and healthy 2021.



## LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY AND FUNDING

It became clear that the ability of Massachusetts boards of health and health departments to respond to the COVID pandemic was hampered by a fractured and underfunded system. Currently, unlike nearly every other state, each Massachusetts municipality operates its own board of health and receives no direct state funding for core functions. The FRCOG has been a statewide leader in advocating for legislation and funding that will strengthen local public health:

- Staff spoke at a Senate Listening Session on Coronavirus and the healthcare and local public health system.
- FRCOG has a seat on the Coalition for Local Public Health, a statewide network representing all the membership organizations of the local public health workforce, and serves as one of the co-chairs of the coalition working to pass legislation known as the Statewide Accelerated Public Health for Every Community (SAPHE 2.0) Act (SD3063/HD5306). This coalition respond to the lessons learned in the pandemic by accelerating investment in, and the modernization of, the local public health infrastructure in MA, as recommended by the Special Commission on Local and Regional Health.

## PASSENGER RAIL ADVOCACY

Staff reviewed and responded to the East-West passenger rail feasibility study conducted by MassDOT and led the effort to change (and dramatically increase) the ridership projections used by MassDOT and its consultant team. The FRCOG also worked with MassDOT on the draft scope of work for a Northern Tier passenger rail feasibility study that will hopefully be underway in 2021. More on passenger rail, and specifically the Valley Flyer, can be found in Transportation.

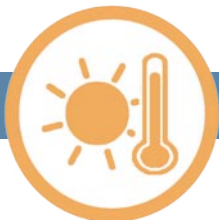
## RURAL POLICY ADVISORY COMMISSION (RPAC)

The FRCOG continues to chair and staff the RPAC. In 2020, the rollout of the Massachusetts Rural Policy Plan continued with presentations at several meetings, conferences and other events. The Plan generated an enormous amount of attention, and recommendations are already being acted upon.

- Thanks to Senators Hinds and Comerford, the IT Bond includes a provision to study cell phone service coverage in Berkshire and Franklin Counties, and includes significant funding for capital improvements.
- The state's economic development plan, Partnerships for Growth, included creation of a rural infrastructure fund that the Governor also included in his Economic Development Bond that was enacted by the Legislature in January, 2020. The Rural Jobs Act, championed by Senator Hinds, was also included in the recent Economic Development Bond but, unfortunately, vetoed by Governor Baker.
- Transportation improvements included the issuance of the MassDOT Small Culvert Study and the inclusion of a rural pavement program in the Transportation Bond.
- Auditor Bump's Office issued the report "The Impact of the State-Owned Land PILOT and Solar Taxation Policies on Municipalities" that outlines the inequities of PILOT payments to rural towns and a series of recommendations to resolve them.

## TRANSPORTATION AND CLIMATE INITIATIVE (TCI)

TCI is a regional consortium of 12 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states and the District of Columbia working together to improve transportation, develop the clean energy economy, and reduce greenhouse gases from the transportation sector. Transportation emissions make up 40% of the carbon emissions of the TCI area. To achieve these reductions, TCI is investigating the use of a "Cap and Invest" program that generates revenue through "caps" on emissions, and "invests" the revenue in ways that reduce emissions. The FRCOG monitored TCI to ensure that the initiative benefits rural areas, and worked with other advocacy groups to ensure that rural voices are heard. In December, 2020, Governor Baker signed an MOU formally joining TCI, along with Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Washington, D.C. Development and launch of the cap and invest program will take place over the next two years, while additional work will seek to bring other states and jurisdictions into the program.



## Climate Resilience

### AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO REGIONAL COORDINATION (AARC) GRANT

The FRCOG was awarded a grant of \$107,850 from the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) to increase local knowledge of clean energy opportunities for low-income households, and to create and expand resources for residents, landlords and regional partners working with low-income households. FRCOG staff attended trainings and workshops to build knowledge of available technologies and incentives, and coordinated outreach to low-income residents and landlords with Community Action, Franklin Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, LifePath, senior centers, municipalities, town energy committees, and others. FRCOG will also provide direct assistance to low-income residents, landlords, and affordable housing developers on available incentives and clean energy technologies, with help from a clean energy consultant. The overall goal of the program is to build and sustain local and regional capacity to increase adoption of clean energy technologies for low-income households in order to reduce energy costs and GHG emissions, and to improve the health, safety, and comfort of housing in the region.

### MOHAWK TRAIL WOODLANDS PARTNERSHIP (MTWP) REGIONAL ADAPTATION & RESILIENCE PROJECT

The Commonwealth's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program awarded a \$1.5M Action grant for this regional project, and in Franklin County the participating towns are Ashfield and Conway. The towns prioritized projects that address failing culverts, flooding and erosion, and repairs to the Ashfield Lake Dam in their joint MVP Resiliency Plan.

In 2020, staff:

- Prepared bid documents for 3 phases of repairs for the Ashfield Lake Dam
- Conducted an inventory of drainage culverts in Conway
- Conducted an inventory of drainage culverts in Ashfield
- Began preparation of bid documents for up to 5 priority flood resiliency projects to protect critical infrastructure and improve habitat
- Began outreach to the Planning Boards and interested landowners on the use of a River Corridor Protection Overlay Zoning District and a River Corridor Easement Restriction
- Began development of a right-sizing protocol for drainage culverts that do not cross a perennial stream and identify climate resilient standardized culvert replacement sizes
- Began developing 30% design plans that meet MA Stream Crossing Standards for 10 culverts, 5 in each town



*FRCOG staff assessing culverts in Ashfield and Leverett.*

# Climate Resilience

## **MULTI-HAZARD MITIGATION PLANS**

Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans identify natural, climate-related and human-related hazards that may impact a community, such as floods, winter storms, and spills of hazardous substances; assess risks to infrastructure from these hazards; evaluates current Town hazard mitigation policies, programs, and regulations; and identifies action steps to prevent damage to property and loss of life. Having a FEMA-approved plan makes a community eligible for state and Federal funds for pre- and post-disaster mitigation projects that reduce the impact of future natural and human-caused disasters. This multi-year effort concluded in 2020 with Staff submitting updated Multi-Hazard Mitigation plans for Ashfield, Buckland, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Greenfield, Leverett, Montague, and Whately to MEMA/FEMA for review and approval. Plans for Bernardston, Colrain, Monroe, Shelburne, Sunderland, and Orange will be submitted in 2021.

## **FRANKLIN COUNTY STORMWATER PLAN**

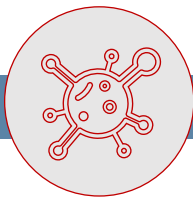
The FRCOG received funding from the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to identify suitable locations and opportunities to use stormwater best management practices (BMPs) in our rural region. The BMPs look at ways to manage stormwater, and identify existing funding opportunities and priorities for towns so that future transportation and development projects can be leveraged to include more sustainable stormwater management practices. The benefits of this approach include reducing the amount of polluted stormwater entering our rivers and streams; increasing groundwater recharge; alleviating stresses on our towns' aging drainage and transportation infrastructure; and mitigating flooding. This multi-year project assessed the vulnerability of Franklin County rivers and streams to uncontrolled stormwater runoff from paved and unpaved roads in rural areas, and conducted outreach to identify three categories of pilot communities to partner with on the project, for a total of nine pilot towns. Staff worked with Highway Superintendents in the selected pilot towns to map localized flooding and wash-out problems, maintenance practices and needs, prioritize locations for funded road maintenance, and identify opportunities for BMPs on paved and unpaved rural roads to improve resiliency. The project will conclude in 2021.

## **MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS (MVP) PROGRAM**

The Commonwealth's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program is a competitive grant program that helps towns build projects and advance work to become more resilient and prepared for the lasting effects of climate change. MVP plans examine both the strengths and vulnerabilities in a community, focusing on infrastructure, people, and natural resources. In 2020, staff assisted numerous communities with the planning process to become designated as a MVP community. This work included conducting community engagement to gather critical information on how businesses, residents, and municipal departments have already been impacted by climate change, and identifying specific projects and actions that will increase the climate resiliency of these communities. Work will continue in 2021, and soon 22 of the 26 cities and towns in Franklin County will be designated as MVP communities.

## **REGIONAL ENERGY PLANNING ASSISTANCE (REPA) GREEN COMMUNITIES ACTIVITIES**

FRCOG staff assisted five communities with applying for Green Communities Competitive Grants for municipal energy projects including LED streetlight conversions, HVAC improvements in municipal buildings, hybrid police cruisers, and an EV charging station. In September 2020, grant announcements were made, with all five communities receiving funding – Deerfield (\$165,754), Leverett (\$17,192), New Salem (\$35,000), Northfield (\$162,303), and Warwick (\$86,564). FRCOG staff will support these communities with implementation as needed. Staff also assisted the Town of Ashfield with applying for a Municipal Energy Technical Assistance (META) grant of \$12,500 to study a heating system conversion to air source heat pumps in the large meeting rooms at the Town Hall. Finally, Staff assisted Green Communities with completing their Annual Reports to the Department of Energy Resources, required to maintain their good standing as a Green Community.



## Covid Response

The COVID-19 pandemic required the FRCOG to adjust, accommodate and react. We worked hard to provide immediate, direct assistance to our municipalities and other stakeholders while also tending to the everyday work and obligations of the organization. This section specifically highlights the COVID response work conducted by the FRCOG primarily between March and June, 2020.

### ADVOCACY

- Early on, staff worked closely with our state legislators to quickly identify laws and regulations that needed to be changed to accommodate remote municipal and regional government operations.
- Early advocacy also included working to change the timelines, scopes and/or deliverables of grants and projects that were hampered by remote work and early inability to conduct fieldwork and public meetings.
- Staff worked with the state and federal delegation to ensure that rural regional and municipal needs were built into state and federal stimulus and recovery packages. The suggestions spanned the topic areas of Food Security, Housing, Infrastructure, Municipal Government, Rural Policy, Small Business Development and Workforce.
- Staff participated in regular statewide and regional calls to advocate for the testing, economic recovery strategies, contact tracing, and general response and recovery needs of Franklin County, including having the only western Massachusetts representative on the COVID Vaccine Distribution Commission.

### BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY AND RESOURCES, AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

In April and May, FRCOG staff led the creation of a COVID-19 impact survey for businesses/organizations based in Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden counties. Survey results were used to determine how emergency funding was distributed to impacted small businesses and how grant funds, like CDBG, was reallocated to help small businesses in our county. Additional economic response work included:

- Resources and guidance materials to support businesses/organizations were quickly posted on FRCOG website that continues to be updated.
- The FRCOG received a 2-year, \$400,000, CARES Act-funded grant from the federal EDA to focus on economic recovery.

*More detail on these projects can be found in Economic Development.*

### COOPERATIVE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (CPHS) EFFORTS

Fifteen Franklin County municipalities are members of the Cooperative Public Health Service municipal service program that provides public health and nursing services. CPHS, with grant funding, accelerated its service to its member town with the following COVID-related activities:

- Increased staffing and monitored all confirmed cases and conducted contact tracing in 19 Franklin County towns and managed the municipal responsibility of reporting to the state's infectious disease reporting system (MAVEN).
- Ensured businesses in the district were aware of, and complying with, new state public health orders as they were issued, e.g. business operations, social distancing requirements, rental of lodging.
- Participated in numerous weekly statewide briefing calls, and facilitated regional calls with municipal and school officials and staff, to disseminate information.



*Franklin County resident receiving a flu shot at a drive-thru clinic.*

# Covid Response

## FRANKLIN COUNTY MULTI-AGENCY COORDINATING CENTER (MACC)

The Franklin County Multi-Agency Coordinating Center (MACC) became operational for the first time. Facilitated by the FRCOG's Emergency Preparedness Program, MACC activities included:

- Transported Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that MEMA was distributing to public safety departments from Agawam to Greenfield so that each town wouldn't have to travel far to access their allotment.
- Provided a daily presence in the Greenfield Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to ensure regionally coordinated emergency response and to identify regional-scale response priorities.
- Issued situation reports twice a week to municipal officials, human service agencies, public health, emergency management, and public safety officials, and created a data dashboard that provided information on cases by municipality.
- Ensured a regionally coordinated response by organizing meetings with regional stakeholders to identify regional-scale response priorities.
- Assisted in securing Medical Reserve Corps volunteers to staff a phone hotline created by the City of Greenfield.

## FRCOG OPERATIONS IN THE TIME OF COVID

Like the rest of the world, all FRCOG programs and many projects had to adjust to remote working and social distancing requirements in a matter of days. Fortunately, the FRCOG was well poised to adjust quickly.

- The FRCOG's computer network was designed to enable remote working so staff moved from office to home relatively easily.
- Collective Purchasing quickly adapted its Highway Products and Services bids by:
  - ◇ Encouraging vendors to send proposals by mail.
  - ◇ Holding bid openings outside.
- The FC Cooperative Inspection program discontinued interior inspections from March to May but continued doing outside inspections and changed in-person meetings to Zoom.
- Planning projects transitioned its in-person public meetings and forums to Zoom. Interestingly, this change generally resulted in greater attendance and public participation.
- Data collection on planning projects was discontinued initially and then resumed using safety protocols. We anticipated discontinuing the annual traffic counting program but instead did several speed counts- instead of volume counts throughout the summer to monitor speed and safety on low volume roads.
- The FRCOG Executive Committee held its first remote county road layout by viewing a video of the roads that required new layouts.

## PARENT AND STUDENT SUPPORTS

The Communities That Care Coalition collaborated with the Greenfield Safe Schools Safe Streets Coalition (4SC) and the Gill-Montague Community-School Partnership to launch a weekly e-newsletter with resources for parents and caregivers of school-aged kids that highlighted useful resources about topics such as family connection, youth mental health promotion, and parental stress management. The newsletter was made available directly to parents and service providers, as well as to schools, towns, and partner agencies who wanted to include all or some of the information in their own communications.



*A weekly e-newsletter with resources for parents and caregivers of school-aged kids helped support families during the challenges of COVID and remote learning.*

# Covid Response

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) ACQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION

The FRCOG's Emergency Preparedness Program (EPP) led efforts to acquire and distribute PPE.

- In early days, the Emergency Preparedness Program's Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC) distributed the county's cache of Personal Protective Equipment to hospitals, other healthcare facilities, and first responders, and then processed PPE requests for the direct medical care providers in the 4-county region by making connections between regional donations of PPE and those who needed it.

**625**  
PPE REQUESTS for  
frontline workers  
fulfilled and  
distributed by FRCOG



*Personal Protective Equipment ready for distribution from the COG to area municipalities.*

- Through mid-May, EPP worked primarily on obtaining PPE from the Strategic National Stockpile and distributing it across western Massachusetts to frontline workers who needed it to continue their work with patients. Through the end of the calendar year, EPP processed 625 PPE requests.
- Once the normal supply chain started rebounding, EPP began helping our local businesses and towns get the PPE they needed to reopen their doors through a bulk PPE purchasing program. Working with the Franklin County Community Development Corporation, Communities Involved in Sustaining Agriculture, and the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce staff supplied PPE for 24 farms, 14 municipalities, 7 schools or school districts, 16 non-profits, and 41 for-profit businesses for a total of 100 different organizations.

## RESOURCES FOR BOARDS OF HEALTH

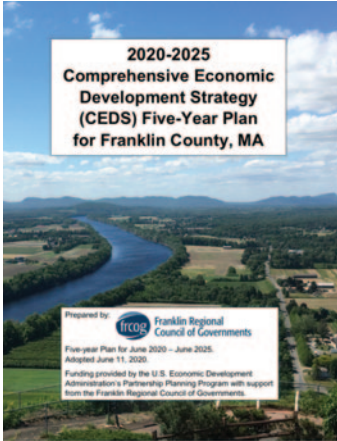
Through the combined efforts of the Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCO), and the Cooperative Public Health Service, resources were made available to local Boards of Health including:

- Managed and distributed \$150,000 in emergency funding for all local Boards of Health in Franklin County to support the work of isolation and quarantine.
- Provided sample risk messaging to towns for their outreach regarding the importance of social distancing, proper hygiene, travel restrictions, and contact tracing.
- Created and maintained a COVID-19 Municipal Resources page on the FRCOG web site.
- Developed a Board of Health messaging exchange page on the FRCOG web site.
- Convened weekly coordination meetings of all public health nurses managing COVID cases in Franklin County to ensure smooth information flow and consistency across communities.
- Printed signs for distribution (e.g. mask use, social distancing promotion).

*Thank you for*  
**WEARING A MASK**



*One of the public information signs developed and distributed to Franklin County Towns.*



## 2020 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) PLAN

The new 2020-2025 Franklin County CEDS Plan was created under the guidance of the CEDS Committee, using a framework from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA). The Plan includes a review of current economic conditions (including economic impacts due to COVID-19), strategic goals, and a list of key local and regional projects seeking public investment. The projects were identified through an invitation to over 60 local governments and non-profit organizations. The status of the region and activities to meet these goals will be reported on annually.

## REGIONAL BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

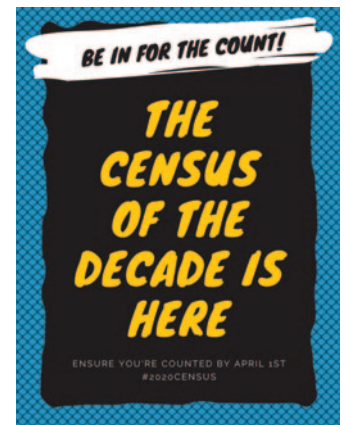
Through an EPA brownfields grant, the FRCOG hired Weston & Sampson to conduct environmental assessments on sites potentially impacted by hazardous substances at no cost to the town or property owner. As requested by the towns, the Brownfields Steering Committee reviewed and prioritized these former commercial and industrial sites for the available funding. The result is that in 2020, environmental assessment activities were conducted on ten sites in seven Franklin County towns, a value of over \$63,000 of services.



*Aerial image of site in Warwick. Photo by Weston & Sampson.*

## 2020 CENSUS PREPARATION AND RESPONSE

Information from the US 2020 Census will be used to help determine legislative districts, and state and federal funding formulas for the next ten years. Due to these reasons and more, an accurate count of all Franklin County residents is essential. Starting in March, the US Census Bureau asked respondents for the first time to complete the decennial census survey online. Respondents also had other options such as telephone or mail-in paper ballot, but all were strongly encouraged to do it online. To support the Census Bureau in this effort, local municipalities, health and human service organizations, and others were asked to spread the message about the 2020 Census. This became particularly important as in-person events and the timing for the 2020 Census were disrupted due to the pandemic. With funding from the MA Census Equity Fund, staff worked with key partners, like Community Action Pioneer Valley and local Census Bureau staff, to broadly distribute the most accurate information available. In the end Franklin County had 73.3% self-response rate, which was higher than the state (69.4%) and national (67%) rates. The households that did not respond were contacted directly by official Census Bureau staff.



# Economic Development

## CARES ACT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

In its role as an U.S. EDA designated Economic Development District, the FRCOG was awarded a supplemental planning grant from the federal CARES Act. The two-year, \$400,000 grant is funding the following activities:

- Business Technical Assistance Services – Contracted with the Franklin County Community Development Corporation to provide direct business technical assistance to entrepreneurs, businesses, and organizations in Franklin County that need support in responding to changing conditions due to the pandemic through June, 2022.
- CEDS Project Technical Assistance – Provide assistance to municipalities, non-profits, and other stakeholders to support the development, securing of resources, and implementation of transformative projects consistent with the 2020 CEDS Plan.
- Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan – Begun the creation of a plan with strategic partners that focuses on experiences from the current crisis and prepares the region to withstand and recover quickly from future economic shocks.
- Public Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Study – Hire a contractor in 2021 to inventory public water & wastewater infrastructure and related systems across the county to identify gaps and barriers to development, and make recommendations.

## Finance & Municipal Services

### COLLECTIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM

The Collective Purchasing Program entered 2020 with the challenge of expanding its collective bids to Hampshire County towns after the former Hampshire Council of Governments collective bid participants joined the FRCOG's Purchasing Program. Add the impacts of COVID to the process of receiving bids at a closed building, and holding socially distanced bid openings, and the challenge was even greater. Despite that, the Program secured great pricing and contracts, expanded its collective offerings and expanded its specialized contract and procurement services.



- The Collective Highway Bid Program added another 25 Towns from Hampshire, Hampden and Berkshire Counties, resulting in the volume purchasing power of 51 Towns, which benefited all Towns. All contracts were in place as of July 1.
  - ◊ As an example, the FRCOG's 2020 pricing for Road Salt beat the statewide procured price. The average low price per ton for regular salt awarded to Primary Contractors under our contract was \$52.70 vs. the State price of \$55.89; and the average for Treated Road Salt with FRCOG Primary Contractors was \$64.74 vs the State price of \$71.59. Based on expected usage, the Program saved participants \$287,593 over the State bids.
- Fire Alarm and Sprinkler Testing services bids were issued in February with additional participation from Hampshire and Hampden counties.
- A Fire Extinguisher Collective bid formerly under the HCOG umbrella is now a FRCOG program, and 26 Towns, Schools and Non Profits in Western Massachusetts participated in 2020.
- The Collective Fuel Bid program grew from 20 to 33 Towns in 2020, and the fuel prices that were secured rivaled pricing from a decade ago (both because of lower U.S. fuel market pricing, and the increased volume).
- Additional staff capacity allowed the Program to take on more individual bids for Towns, including bids for building and bridge construction; feasibility study proposals; building system repairs; school building upgrades; energy efficiency projects; Small Bridge replacements; electrical upgrades; water tank upgrade; site, sidewalk, roadway and parking lot improvements; roof repairs, solar installations; and truck purchasing.



### **DLTA**

In 2020 the FRCOG received approximately \$200,000 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development to help municipalities with the following priorities:

1. Regional sharing of services to achieve and/or enhance efficiency.
2. Planning for housing and growth – housing production and economic development.
3. Implementation of Community Compact best practices.

This funding allowed the FRCOG to assist Towns on numerous projects. Planning projects included assisting with hazard mitigation plans, open space & recreation plans, flood risk management planning, and culvert assessments. Regionalization projects included the ongoing workshops for local officials series, a feasibility study for a regional IT and cybersecurity service, and continued work on regional solutions to water and sewer infrastructure and staffing challenges.

### **FRANKLIN COUNTY COOPERATIVE INSPECTION PROGRAM (FCCIP)**

The FCCIP provided building, zoning, plumbing, wiring and code enforcement services to 16 Towns, issuing a total of 2,235 building, electrical and plumbing/gas permits. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Massachusetts, Governor Baker declared a state of emergency and deemed inspectors to be essential workers. Consequently, staff worked non-stop during the pandemic and kept regular hours in office, conducted all inspections as required by law, and held meetings with applicants and contractors by appointment. The FRCOG online permitting system allowed for the efficient processing of all permit applications electronically without the need for direct human interaction during the pandemic.



### **REGIONAL IT AND CYBERSECURITY SERVICES FEASIBILITY STUDY**

The IT firm *Novus Insight* was hired in 2020 to conduct a feasibility study of regionalizing municipal IT systems. *Novus Insight* personnel conducted onsite interviews with representatives from 10 Franklin County Towns in order to assess and identify opportunities for shared municipal IT services and cybersecurity enhancements. The interviews involved Town administrators, police chiefs, and department heads, and included hands-on observations of existing systems, policies & procedures, and overall IT infrastructure. The study maps out a 3-phase approach to building a regional IT and cyber-security program that begins with working with Towns to develop IT policies and procedures, cybersecurity plans, and other foundational documents that ensure town hall operations are secure and high functioning. Late in 2020, the FRCOG secured additional funding from the Western Region Homeland Security Council to conduct this capacity building work.

### **TOWN ACCOUNTING PROGRAM**

The Town Accounting Program provides municipal accounting services to 12 Towns including Ashfield, Bernardston, Buckland, Conway, Gill, Leverett, New Salem, Shelburne, Sunderland, Wendell, Whately, and Williamsburg. The program provides participating Towns with qualified, professional accounting staff, access to shared software at a greatly reduced cost, and a service product completed in adherence to the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws and the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System. In 2020, staff worked to create a partnership with Greenfield Community College to develop an online municipal accountant training course to help sustain the Town Accounting Program, and to fill a serious statewide training need identified in the Commonwealth's Local Government Workforce Skills Gap Report.

## Finance & Municipal Services

### WAGE AND SALARY SURVEY

Staff surveyed each Franklin County town and city for its FY20 municipal officials' compensation and benefits packages figures, compiled the results, and published the data in the annual *FRCOG Municipal Wage and Salary Survey*. The *Survey* provides salary numbers for common core municipal positions – elected, appointed, and contracted – including Town officials and administration, public works, health and inspection, library, fire, police, and others. Benefit information includes leave time (vacation, sick, personal, longevity); health insurance eligibility; dental plan eligibility; retirement health insurance; inclusion in a retirement system; and percentages of these benefits funded by the municipality. Select boards, finance, and ways and means committees, and personnel committees, among others, use the annual survey for comparison and decision-making when drafting budgets and hiring personnel.

### WATER OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

The FRCOG worked with MA Department of Environmental Protection and the UMass Water and Energy Technology Center to address the regional shortage of water operators by increasing access to pre-certification trainings. Ten (10) Franklin County residents received a fee waiver to attend a virtual training in June, 2020, and additional trainings are planned post pandemic.

## Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness



### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM ACTIVE IN REGION'S RESPONSE

We are extraordinarily proud of the work and response of our Emergency Preparedness Program in 2020, which focused almost exclusively on COVID response. *Their work in response to the coronavirus pandemic is highlighted in the COVID section of this Report.*

### FRANKLIN COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (FCECS) UPDATE

At the request of member towns in the early 2000s, the FRCOG became owner of the Franklin County Emergency Communication System (FCECS). The FCECS is a 13-tower, 450 MHz radio communications network that provides emergency communication services to first responders in Franklin County towns, and was built with Homeland Security grant funds. The FCECS infrastructure is well past its expected life of 7-10 years. Replacement parts are no longer manufactured or vendor-supported, and used parts are increasingly unavailable. In 2020, the FCECS Oversight Committee maintained the existing system while moving towards migration to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS). This work included completing a microwave link between New Salem and Royalston, installing a new antenna at Royalston, and completing a system wide battery replacement.

### MOHAWK AREA PUBLIC HEALTH COALITION (MAPHCO) AND THE FRANKLIN COUNTY REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE (REPC)

The Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition worked closely with the Cooperative Public Health Service to plan and execute flu clinics throughout the fall. These clinics provided further opportunity for local boards of health to practice mass vaccination skills for the eventual distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021. Emergency Preparedness Program staff used these flu clinics to develop a drive-through dispensing annex to add to regional emergency dispensing plans. Both MAPHCO and the REPC are working together on COVID response as they work toward merging the two committees in 2021.

# Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness

## PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO SYSTEM MIGRATION TO CoMIRS

Significant progress was made in 2020 in the effort to migrate emergency communications to the state's system, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS), before our regionally owned system becomes defunct. The FRCOG and the FCECS Oversight Committee maintained consistent contact with representatives from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS), MA State Police technicians, and representatives from the chiefs' associations of Franklin County to advance this migration. EOTSS invested nearly half a million dollars into their current system to increase the number of channels in the regional system (adding a channel is like adding a phone line) to ensure adequate capacity before the migration of Franklin County users. EOTSS also provided an approximate \$60,000 grant to the FRCOG to make needed upgrades to the Greenfield and Montague dispatch centers. The inventory of equipment needed by all Franklin County fire, police and EMS personnel completed in 2019 will be used for EOTSS to provide a one-time approximate \$3 million grant to the FRCOG on behalf of our municipalities and progress was made toward execution of that grant. EOTSS also expanded the funding to Franklin County to support radio programming and installation. EOTSS required that the FRCOG be its single point of contact in Franklin County so Memorandums of Understanding between EOTSS and the FRCOG, and the FRCOG and each municipality, were created and formalized. FRCOG staff continue to oversee the migration, and in early 2021 will explore other funding sources and opportunities to enhance the communications system.

## WRHSAC TRAININGS

The Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC) published two self-paced, interactive online trainings. The trainings accompany WRHSAC's Disaster Debris Management Template and the Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers Toolkit. The Spontaneous and Unaffiliated Volunteer (SUV) Training Toolkit was designed to provide the resources necessary to effectively plan for, and safely operate, a volunteer management system for both large and small scale emergencies. Unaffiliated, self-deployed volunteers will show up at emergencies, especially large-scale disasters. Managing these volunteers is essential to effectively coordinate response efforts. The SUV Toolkit helps officials learn how to manage volunteers. The self-paced, online training walks officials through the resources of the toolkit and how to use it. The interactive training for the Disaster Debris Management Template details concerns officials must consider and walks them through building their own Disaster Debris Management plan.

## WRHSAC EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION SHARING EQUIPMENT ENHANCEMENTS

The Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council enhanced regional communications and information sharing equipment resources.

- **Video Downlink Receivers** are now located in Franklin, Berkshire and Hampden County. The units receive live video feeds from Massachusetts State Police helicopters for coverage of emergency incidents such as industrial or wildfires and search and rescue efforts, or from planned events such as the Holyoke St. Patrick's Day Parade or other large gatherings. On the ground, incident commanders can use the information to direct fire response to hot spots, rescuers to a fallen hiker, or oversee areas of traffic congestion due to the planned event.
- **Radio Duplexers** were added to the Western Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (WMLEC) Rapid Communications mobile trailer housed in Monson. The duplexers allow the radios to act as repeaters, extending communications coverage for UHF, VHF and 800 systems radios.

The equipment is available to all first responder departments on a first-come, first-served basis. A full listing of all WRHSAC equipment available can be found online at [www.wrhsac.org/resources/](http://www.wrhsac.org/resources/).



### **BUCKLAND GREEN STREETS PROJECT**

The Buckland Green Streets project developed a set of stormwater resources to help the town be more resilient to increasingly frequent and intense storms that result in flood hazards in Shelburne Falls and the surrounding watershed. Staff conducted 9 stormwater site assessments and created a replicable methodology to assess opportunities for the use of Green Infrastructure stormwater management best practices (BMPs). Staff produced a “Road Map” for integrating Green Infrastructure BMPs into future roadwork projects. In addition, Staff worked with a consultant to develop 30% design engineering plans for several Green Infrastructure stormwater BMPs that can be included in future drainage and transportation projects for Crittenden Hill Road. The design repurposes two abandoned sites along the road, turning them into pocket parks for recreation that can clean large volumes of stormwater runoff from Goodnow Hill. If constructed, this project will also help improve water quality in the Deerfield River.

### **MOHAWK TRAIL WOODLANDS PARTNERSHIP (MTWP) PROJECT**

The Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership Project (MTWP) was established to bring recognition and additional financial and technical resources to 21 municipalities in Franklin and Berkshire Counties for the purposes of:

- Increasing natural resource based economic development
- Increasing forest land conservation and sustainable forestry practices on private lands, and
- Improving fiscal stability and sustainability of the municipalities

Formally designated by State legislation in 2018, the MTWP requires interested communities to opt in through a Selectboard, Mayor, or Town Meeting vote. Once opted in, towns may appoint a member to the MTWP Board (which formally took over management of the partnership in January, 2020), and have access to grant opportunities to implement projects that advance the goals of the MTWP. The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA) has offered grant funding for the past two years of up to \$20,000 per year to each community that has voted to participate in the partnership. To date, 16 communities have signed on, and 5 towns in Franklin County have received grant funding to implement projects ranging from feasibility studies to increase carbon storage, in town forests, to signage and access improvements at recreation sites supporting tourism.

### **OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLANS**

FRCOG staff are continuing to update Open Space and Recreation Plans (OSRP) for many towns in the County. Several have been submitted to the state for review and others are underway as staff meet virtually with town employees and committees. During 2020, staff worked on the following OSRPs: Buckland, Conway, Gill, Greenfield, Heath, Northfield, Shutesbury, Sunderland, and Whately.

### **REGIONAL POLLINATOR PLAN**

The FRCOG collaborated with eight Franklin County towns to establish a Regional Pollinator Habitat Corridor, the first of its kind in Massachusetts. Bernardston, Conway, Greenfield, Heath, Montague, Orange, Shelburne, and Wendell have all signed on to help create pollinator habitat maps, and update land-use regulations to include requirements for native plantings and the use of pollinator-friendly landscape management practices in development. Culminating in a Pollinator Habitat Corridor Implementation Toolkit for use at the local level, this work aims to respond to climate change, genetic modification, pesticide use, habitat loss and, in turn, support the sustainability of our food systems and local farms. A 2017 Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources plan identified a critical need to evaluate, sustain, and enhance pollinator populations in the state. The Pollinator Habitat Corridor plan will be expandable, so that other towns can join the effort and create additional regional pollinator corridors across the county. This project concludes in 2021.

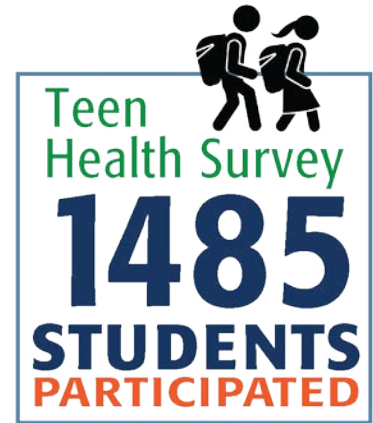


## ADVANCING RACIAL JUSTICE

The Communities That Care Coalition's *Racial Justice Workgroup*, with the support of their school partners, wrote and received a 5-year grant for Advancing Racial Justice in Schools. The workgroup also supported *Welcoming and Belonging Franklin County* receiving a 5-year grant for helping Franklin County workplaces become more welcoming to people of color.

## ANNUAL TEEN HEALTH SURVEY

All 9 public middle and high school districts in Franklin County/North Quabbin, collaborated with staff on the 2020 Annual Teen Health Survey. This survey asks all 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students various health-related questions to gather data on substance use, mental health, sexual health, racial justice, relationships with peers and adults, nutrition, physical activity, and screen time, to name a few. The Communities That Care Coalition, staffed by FRCOG employees, presented regional data at the Full Coalition Meeting in October, and is providing district-level reports to each school district involved. The Teen Health Survey has been conducted every year since 2003. Despite the pandemic and remote schooling, all 9 school districts also signed on to participate in the 2021 Teen Health Survey. This survey was updated to gather essential and current information on remote schooling, mental health and family functioning in quarantine, COVID risk-taking behaviors, substance use, physical activity and more.



## COMMUNITIES THAT CARE PARENT OUTREACH

The Communities That Care Parent Education Workgroup received several new grants that allowed them to create and launch a new PEER Community Ambassador program. PEER stands for Parent Engagement, Enrichment, and Support. This group of parent leaders from partner agencies developed a self-paced, self-directed training program through which future PEER Ambassadors can learn about online and community resources to share with their peers. The group is currently working to develop a set of videos that can introduce community members to essential community services.

## COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CHIP)

The Community Health Improvement Plan looks at the various factors that influence the individual health of people in a particular area, and then identifies ways to address these factors and improve health. During 2020, staff worked with a consortium of regional leaders and stakeholders in the fields of public health, healthcare, human services, education and planning to complete an update to the CHIP and identify priorities for the next three years (2021-2023). Three focus areas emerged as essential to improving the health of Franklin County and North Quabbin residents: Age at First Use of Addictive Substances, Anxiety and Depression, and Type 2 Diabetes. Working groups devoted to each focus area have been formed, and work to identify strategies, funding, programs and partners is underway.

## COOPERATIVE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE (CPHS)

The FRCOG's regional health department, the Cooperative Public Health Service, maintained its core functions while also expanding significantly to manage the COVID response for member communities. The CPHS district served as the comprehensive health department for the towns of Bernardston (except Title 5 work), Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Gill, Hawley, Heath, Leyden, Monroe, Rowe, and Shelburne. The towns of Conway, Deerfield, Erving, and Northfield are members of the district for public health nursing only. Staff attended over 145 Board of Health meetings, and continued to ensure public health and safety through 300 inspections of restaurants, campgrounds, hotels, septic installations, pools, camps and more. The district issued 240 public health permits during 2020, and conducted 50 COVID complaint investigations. With increased staffing, the District also provided direct COVID response, which is highlighted in the COVID section of this Report.

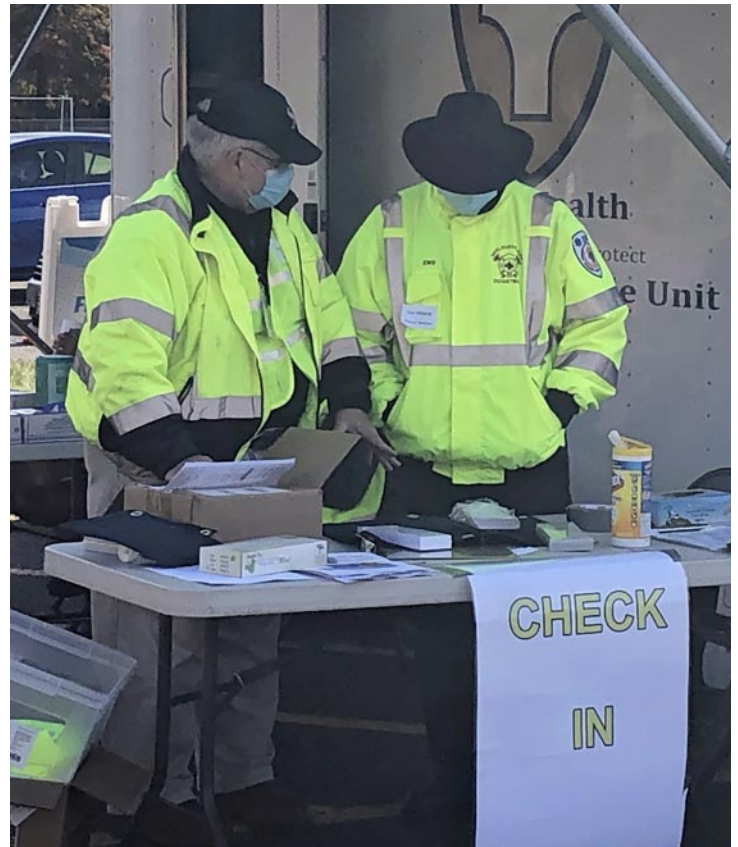
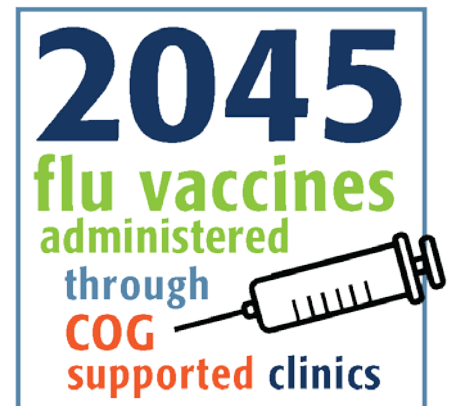
# Public & Community Health

## IMPROVING HOUSING TO IMPROVE HEALTH (IH2)

The regional Community Health Improvement Plan identified finding housing for local residents with a history of incarceration and substance use as a major health need in our region. People who cannot find safe and affordable housing are at high risk of relapse and homelessness. In 2020, The FRCOG was awarded a 5 year \$1M grant to improve access to housing for these residents, along with partners at the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Community Legal Aid, and the Citizens Housing and Planning Alliance (CHAPA). This multi-strand project strives to increase investment in affordable housing, provide personal support to those seeking housing, reduce barriers to housing due to a criminal record or history of substance use treatment, and improve municipal zoning. The project began in the fall of 2020.

## FLU CLINICS

The FRCOG, via the Cooperative Public Health Service and Emergency Preparedness Program, planned and implemented 12 flu clinics throughout Franklin County with an enormous team of board of health members, EMDs, EMS, police, Medical Reserve Corps and other volunteers. This resulted in double the number of vaccines usually provided to area residents. All of the clinics were COVID-safe, in either walk-through or drive-through style.



*Twelve flu clinics were held throughout Franklin County, doubling the number of vaccines administered to area residents.*



## LOCAL OFFICIALS WORKSHOPS

After opening 2020 with a workshop on safety for libraries & other lightly-staffed municipal offices, and a roundtable discussion for Town Moderators, a workshop entitled “It Takes a Village to Run a Town: Finding & Keeping Volunteers for Town Boards, Commissions, and other Town Needs” was scheduled (& enrolled to capacity!) for March 12th. That workshop was canceled at the last moment due to the unfolding pandemic. The majority of those registered did not wish to attend a virtual workshop, instead electing to wait until such a time that in-person workshops could resume. The Local Officials Workshop series then went on hiatus as towns, workplaces, and the FRCOG adjusted to remote work.

By the summer, workshops were back up and running virtually, which had the unexpected benefit of sometimes drawing audiences beyond Franklin County. Virtual online workshops were launched with the popular “Selectboard 101” session, followed by a panel and discussion about fall COVID testing capacity for Boards of Health, public health nurses, and school nurses. Additionally, staff collaborated with the Small Town Administrators of MA (STAM) and the Rural Policy Advisory Commission to host a webinar on CARES Act funding for small towns. The webinar drew over 100 attendees from across the county and the state.



## CHIP WORKPLACE DIVERSITY WEBINAR

The Community Health Improvement Plan Network hosted by the FRCOG held a workplace diversity webinar attended by leaders from many local organizations, including the CDC, Community Action, the Community Health Center, Life Path, the City of Greenfield, Clinical Support Options, and the Franklin Regional Housing Authority. Participants learned a great deal about the ways in which hiring processes and workplace practices can help build more a diverse workforce.

## THE 2017–2020 COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN:

Evidence-based strategies to address priority health issues in the Franklin County/North Quabbin region.

CLINICAL CARE STRATEGIES	HEALTH BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES	SOCIAL & ECONOMIC STRATEGIES
<b>ACCESS TO CARE</b> <b>DEPLOY COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Clarify definition</li> <li>b. Increase access to training</li> <li>c. Facilitate state certification</li> <li>d. Plan for sustainable deployment in region</li> <li>e. Explore consistency among local CHWs</li> </ul> <b>CO-LOCATION OF DENTAL AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Move CHFC downtown in Greenfield</li> </ul> <b>INCREASE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER SERVICES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consider West County satellite</li> <li>b. Increase number of providers</li> <li>c. Facilitate same-day appointments</li> </ul> <b>STRENGTHEN SCHOOL-BASED DENTAL PROGRAMS AND FLUORIDE ACCESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote in-class dental education</li> <li>b. Administer on-site screenings, cleaning, fluoride at schools and WIC offices</li> <li>c. Increase # pediatric offices offering fluoride varnish</li> <li>d. Increase # of schools offering fluoride rinse</li> </ul> <b>ADD FLUORIDE TO COMMUNITY WATER</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Expand use locally</li> <li>b. Advocate for reimbursement</li> </ul>	<b>DIET AND EXERCISE</b> <b>PROMOTE DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer DPP classes at worksites</li> <li>b. Offer DPP in Spanish</li> <li>c. Advocate for billable DPP</li> </ul> <b>OFFER FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR PREVENTIVE CARE AND EXERCISE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer DPP classes at worksites</li> </ul> <b>PROMOTE PRESCRIPTIONS FOR ACTIVITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer DPP in Spanish</li> </ul> <b>INCREASE ACCESS TO GREEN SPACES AND PARKS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Create new parks</li> <li>b. Create new walking trails</li> <li>c. Develop Town Open Space and Recreation Plans</li> <li>d. Increase community use of schools</li> </ul> <b>IMPROVE NUTRITION IN SCHOOLS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase local food offerings</li> <li>b. Improve food presentation practices</li> <li>c. Revise policies on vending machines, celebrations, and sporting events</li> </ul> <b>ENCOURAGE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide support program in North Quabbin</li> <li>b. Promote breastfeeding-friendly worksites</li> </ul> <b>PROMOTE BREASTFEEDING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide support program in North Quabbin</li> <li>b. Promote breastfeeding-friendly worksites</li> </ul> <b>IMPROVE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SAFETY</b> <b>STRONG DRIVER LAWS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pass Distracted Driver/Hands-Free Law</li> <li>b. Strengthen helmet law enforcement</li> </ul> <b>INCOME</b> <b>PASS PAID FAMILY LEAVE BILL AND PREGNANT WORKER FAIRNESS ACT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pass Distracted Driver/Hands-Free Law</li> <li>b. Strengthen helmet law enforcement</li> </ul> <b>EDUCATION</b> <b>PROMOTE FAIR SHARE AMENDMENT TO THE MA CONSTITUTION (aka Millionaire Tax)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pass Distracted Driver/Hands-Free Law</li> <li>b. Strengthen helmet law enforcement</li> </ul> <b>FAMILY &amp; SOCIAL SUPPORT</b> <b>OFFER NURTURING FAMILIES GROUP PARENTING CLASSES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. For parents of teens</li> <li>b. In rural areas</li> <li>c. In Spanish</li> </ul> <b>PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID</b>
<b>QUALITY OF CARE</b> <b>IMPLEMENT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT POLICIES FOR PRIMARY CARE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase # practices with OI Coaches</li> <li>b. Implement insurer OI incentives</li> <li>c. Identify pre-diabetic patients from EMR, refer to DPP</li> <li>d. Use CHWs to help implement treatment plans</li> </ul> <b>PROMOTE CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Offer groups: Diabetes, Chronic Pain, Chronic Disease</li> <li>b. Advocate for billable CDSMP programs</li> <li>c. Individual CDSM counseling</li> </ul> <b>INTEGRATE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND PRIMARY CARE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase # Rx for CDSMP programs</li> <li>b. Co-locate medical and behavioral practices</li> <li>c. Incorporate LICWs into medical practices</li> <li>d. Offer mental health screening, referral, and follow up at ER</li> </ul>	<b>ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE</b> <b>PROVIDE EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Implement Life Skills in all middle schools</li> <li>b. Deploy SBIRT in all schools, gather data</li> <li>c. Suicide prevention curriculum in all schools</li> <li>d. Pilot PreVenture curriculum</li> </ul> <b>TRAIN BEVERAGE SERVERS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Policy: Local regulations and regional MOU</li> <li>b. Offer server trainings</li> <li>c. Institute compliance checks</li> </ul> <b>REVIEW PUBLIC ALCOHOL AVAILABILITY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Municipal policies</li> <li>b. Event policies</li> <li>c. Involve young people and people in recovery in advocacy for policies</li> </ul> <b>FAMILY DRUG COURT</b>	<b>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIES</b> <b>HOUSING &amp; TRANSIT</b> <b>INCREASE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Add fixed routes</li> <li>b. Pilot van services for vulnerable populations</li> <li>c. Advocate for more funding</li> <li>d. Increase rail runs in Pioneer Valley</li> <li>e. Explore use of ride sharing to increase access to transportation</li> </ul> <b>IMPLEMENT HOUSING FIRST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Increase town Complete Streets plans, projects</li> <li>b. Increase schools in Safe Routes to Schools</li> <li>c. Create Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans</li> <li>d. Increase supports for active commuting</li> </ul> <b>EXPAND ON-DEMAND TRANSPORTATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review local zoning bylaws</li> <li>b. Identify funding for rehab of existing buildings</li> </ul> <b>INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING REHAB FUNDS</b>
<b>TOBACCO USE</b> <b>ENHANCE TOBACCO CESSATION EFFORTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Hold tobacco cessation groups in region</li> <li>b. Healthcare providers implement patient reminders</li> </ul>	<b>SEXUAL ACTIVITY</b> N/A	<b>AIR AND WATER QUALITY</b> N/A

● = likely to decrease health disparities

### OUR VISION:

All residents of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region have the opportunity to pursue healthy lifestyles and achieve social, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being; and to participate in shaping the systems that affect their health.

[www.frcog.org/chip](http://www.frcog.org/chip)





## HISTORIC COMMISSIONS

Staff continued to work with colleagues from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Massachusetts Historical Commission, and Preservation Massachusetts to facilitate the Western MA Historical Commission Coalition (WMHCC). WMHCC meets 3 times a year and offers opportunities for members of town historic commissions, local historical societies, and other interested individuals to learn about current historic preservation-related topics. The meeting locations rotate among the three planning regions of western MA and are planned with experts who speak about a chosen topic. The FRCOG hosted the spring 2020 meeting which was held virtually, and the topic of the meeting was "Local Preservation Success Stories". Two Franklin County preservation projects were highlighted: the rehabilitation of the village of Millers Falls and, using historic photographs as a guide, the rehabilitation of the former Greenfield Sears and Roebuck Store.



*Outdoor recreational facilities throughout Franklin County are being documented in a data base that will be used to develop an Outdoor Recreation Plan.*

## OUTDOOR RECREATION INVENTORY

Staff began compiling a database of outdoor recreational facilities in the County that will ultimately be used to develop a countywide outdoor recreation plan. This database will be accessible through an interactive online map in which users can click on points to learn more about those facilities and what is available in the region. The map will include facilities such as trail heads, parks, playgrounds, and boat ramps. In addition, there will be pictures for each site along with information about parking, restrooms, accessibility, and more. This work will continue in 2021.

## PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT

The FRCOG inspects the pavement condition of all Federal Aid roadways under municipal jurisdiction in Franklin County on a three-year rolling schedule. Roadways are visually surveyed and the results are input into the RoadManager Pavement Management System (PMS) program. This produces a report on each road's pavement condition and lays out repair options and cost estimates. This information supports regional transportation planning strategies and is useful to Towns in planning cost-effective pavement repair strategies. In 2020, the FRCOG surveyed all of the 27 miles of Federal Aid roadways in Montague.

## REGIONAL PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Staff developed a draft regional Pedestrian Plan, taking an in depth look at existing infrastructure, related concerns, and potential improvements to enhance walking in the region. Focused particularly on supporting short walking trips within communities, it highlights full assessments of pedestrian accessibility for schools and senior centers in the county, and identifies ways to make them more pedestrian friendly. The overall goal is to create an environment where walking is a practical and pleasant transportation option.

# Transportation

## SHARED STREETS AND SPACES

MassDOT launched the Shared Streets and Spaces Program as a COVID-19 relief initiative to provide cities and towns with funding to improve sidewalks, curbs, streets, on-street parking spaces, and off-street parking lots in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce. Eligible projects advanced one or more of the following



*Thanks to Shared Streets and Spaces, new pavement markings create a safer walking area in Turners Falls.*



goals: increase safety and enable social distancing while walking and/or biking; complete roadway, sidewalk, and/or street modifications to better support curbside/sidewalk/street retail and dining; support safer and more reliable bus transit; or create safer routes to school, daycare and/or programs for children. The FRCOG assisted the Town of Gill with an application for temporary pedestrian accommodations in the town center for which it was awarded \$20,023. The FRCOG also advised the Town of Montague on a successful application for \$35,300 for temporary traffic calming and pedestrian facilities on Third Street, L Street, and at Unity Park. Additional Shared Streets and Spaces grants were awarded in Franklin County to Buckland, Greenfield, Orange, and Shelburne.

## TOURISM ITINERARIES

The FRCOG worked on developing tourism itineraries for Franklin County that highlight regional scenic, historic, recreational, and natural assets while directing visitors to local businesses. The tours include options for traveling by bicycle, foot, or automobile, and are intended to be diverse and appeal to a wide variety of interests. For example, one tour is a drive through central and western Franklin County with stops at fiber stores, and for local candy, coffee and baked treats. Another excursion highlights shops with antiques and unique finds in central and eastern Franklin County. There are also several highlighted bike rides to fun destinations, and two provide itineraries for overnight stays. The project will include 10 different tours, and on-line maps will detail them with a list of stops.



*The Book Mill in Montague is one of the stops in the new Franklin County tourism itineraries.*

# Transportation



## TRAFFIC COUNTING

Traffic counts are often needed for municipal planning purposes and grant applications. Traffic data is also useful in understanding and addressing local road safety issues. Each year, traffic counts are offered free of charge to Franklin County member municipalities on a first-come, first-served basis. These counts include reporting of vehicle volume, vehicle classification (types of vehicles), and vehicle speeds. The FRCOG can also provide more detailed analyses of the vehicle data that is collected during traffic counts, including speed studies. In 2020, the FRCOG conducted 19 municipally-requested traffic counts with speed study analysis in the following six towns: Ashfield, Leverett, Northfield, Sunderland, Warwick, and Whately. In support of the ongoing program to monitor regional traffic volumes, the FRCOG also conducted 47 traffic counts on regionally-

significant roadways in the following 21 towns: Ashfield, Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Erving, Greenfield, Hawley, Heath, Leverett, Leyden, Monroe, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Rowe, Shutesbury, Sunderland, Wendell, and Whately. Information on historic traffic counts since 1993 can be obtained by contacting the FRCOG.

## VALLEY FLYER MARKETING

Expanded passenger rail service commenced in 2019 with a 2-year pilot program that provides two additional Amtrak-operated roundtrips per day during the week between Greenfield and Springfield, and one additional roundtrip on weekends and holidays. This new service makes it possible to travel to New York City and back in the same day during the week. At the beginning of 2020 staff was gearing up to launch a marketing campaign to increase ridership and connect western MA residents with attractions in New Haven and New York City, and bring people from that area to western MA. The campaign entitled "Making Stops At..." was developed collaboratively with local, regional and state stakeholders and "the watsons", a marketing consultant. Set to launch in April, 2020, everything was put on hold as COVID took hold and travel was restricted. The Valley Flyer is still operating, but at a reduced schedule of one roundtrip per day. Staff is currently studying the best time to launch the campaign, expected for some time in 2021 as vaccinations increase and consumer confidence returns.



*The Valley Flyer stopping at Greenfield Station.*

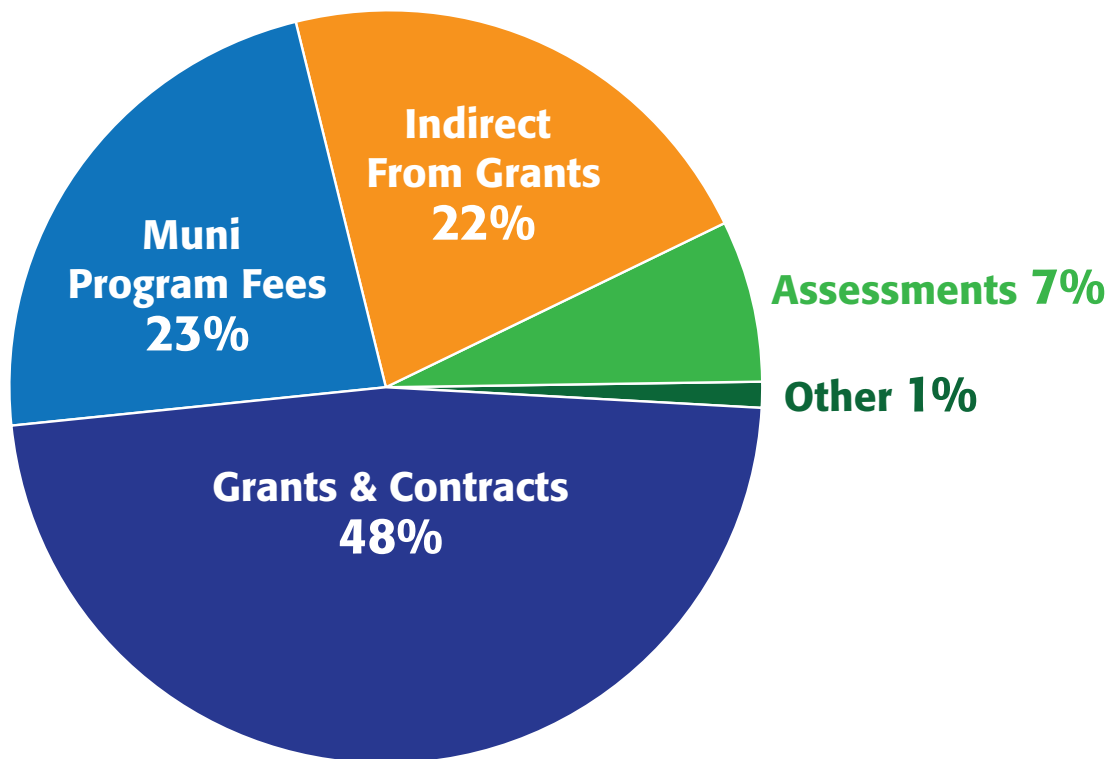
# Financial Report

## FRCOG FINANCES

The FRCOG closed Fiscal Year 2020 in a strong position. Over \$3.7 million of grant funds came into the area through the FRCOG, which allowed continued work on issues aimed at benefiting the people, economy, environment and local governments of Franklin County. Grant funding varies slightly from year to year, but the FRCOG has a demonstrated record of securing funds in multi-year programs to continue a steady work load. The FRCOG is also the designated Regional Planning Agency for Franklin County. Examining these grants by topic, the largest spending areas were Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Transportation Planning, Homeland Security, Substance Abuse Prevention, Local Technical Assistance and Economic Development.

The FRCOG works diligently to pair expenses to the programs in which the expense occurs so that programs can be self-supporting whenever possible. General fund expenses are limited to the administrative costs of running the organization and benefits for all employees. Administrative and benefit costs are recovered from grant funding sources whenever possible. In FY20, our member towns and the City of Greenfield paid \$535,680 in assessments to fund the work for the COG's administration, out of a total income of \$7,905,655.

The budget that is approved by the governing Council constitutes 53% of the FRCOG's total budget, as grants and contracts are outside of the Council's budget appropriating responsibilities. The general fund, the orange part of the pie chart below, comprises 30% of the total FRCOG budget, while assessments from Towns, accounts for only 7%.



**Breakdown of The FRCOG budget and revenue.**

# Franklin County Legislative Delegation

## MASSACHUSETTS SENATORS IN CONGRESS

### SENATOR ELIZABETH WARREN (Cambridge)

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### SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY (Malden)

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## MASSACHUSETTS REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS

### FIRST DISTRICT

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### SECOND DISTRICT

#### JAMES P. MCGOVERN (Worcester)

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202-225-6101  
Find email form at: [mcgovern.house.gov](mailto:mcgovern.house.gov)

## MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COURT SENATE

### SENATOR ADAM HINDS (Pittsfield)

State House Address: District Address:  
24 Beacon St., Room 109-E 100 North Street, Suite 410  
Boston, MA 02133 Pittsfield, MA 01201  
617-722-1625 413-344-4561  
[adam.hinds@masenate.gov](mailto:adam.hinds@masenate.gov)

### SENATOR JO COMERFORD (Northampton)

State House Address: District Office Hours:  
24 Beacon St., Room 413C Isenberg School of  
Boston, MA 02133 Management  
617-722-1532 Rooms 101B & 101D  
Amherst, MA 01062  
413-367-4656

[jo.commerford@masenate.gov](mailto:jo.commerford@masenate.gov)

## MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COURT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### SECOND BERKSHIRE DISTRICT

#### REPRESENTATIVE PAUL W. MARK (Peru)

State House Address: District Mailing Address:  
24 Beacon St., Room 160 P.O. Box 114  
Boston, MA 02133 Dalton, MA 01227  
617-722-2304 413-464-5635  
FAX 617-626-0249  
[paul.mark@mahouse.gov](mailto:paul.mark@mahouse.gov)

### FIRST FRANKLIN DISTRICT

#### REPRESENTATIVE NATALIE BLAIS (Sunderland)

State House Address: District Mailing Address:  
24 Beacon St., Room 134 P.O. Box 450  
Boston, MA 02133 Sunderland MA 01375  
617-722-2400 413-362-9453  
[natalie.blais@mahouse.gov](mailto:natalie.blais@mahouse.gov)

### SECOND FRANKLIN DISTRICT

#### REPRESENTATIVE SUSANNAH WHIPPS (Athol)

State House Address: District Address:  
24 Beacon St., Room 540 352 Main Street  
Boston, MA 02133 Athol, MA 01331  
617-722-2090 978-895-9606  
[susannah.whipps@mahouse.gov](mailto:susannah.whipps@mahouse.gov)

## FRCOG Council Membership

### ASHFIELD

Jennifer Morse

### BERNARDSTON

Stanley Garland

### BUCKLAND

Zachary Turner

Heather Butler,  
alternate

### CHARLEMONT

Sarah Reynolds  
Marguerite Willis,  
alternate

### COLRAIN

Kevin Fox,  
Eileen Sauvageau,  
alternate

### CONWAY

Philip Kantor  
Erica Goleman,  
alternate

### DEERFIELD

Trevor McDaniel,  
**Council Chair**  
Kayce Warren, alternate

### ERVING

William A. Bembury  
Bryan Smith, alternate

### GILL

Greg Snedeker,  
**Council Vice Chair**  
John Ward,  
alternate

### GREENFIELD

Mayor Roxann  
Wedegartner  
Danielle Letourneau,  
alternate

### HAWLEY

Hussain Hamdan  
Robert Root,  
alternate

### HEATH

Brian DeVriese  
Gloria Cronin Fisher,  
alternate

### LEVERETT

Patricia Duffy

### LEYDEN

Michele Giarusso,  
**Chair**

### MONROE

Alice Houghtaling  
Carla Davis-Little,  
alternate

### MONTAGUE

Richard Kuklewicz  
Steve Ellis, alternate  
Michael Nelson,  
2nd alternate  
Chris Boutwell,  
3rd alternate

### NEW SALEM

Wayne Hachey

### NORTHFIELD

Barbara Jacque  
Alexander Meisner,  
alternate

### ORANGE

Jane Peirce,  
Gabriele Voelker,  
alternate

### ROWE

Janice Boudreau  
Paul McLatchy III,  
alternate

### SHELburnE

Robert Manners  
Andrew Baker,  
alternate

### SHUTESBURY

Ellen McKay  
Elaine Puleo, alternate  
Rebecca Torres,  
2nd alternate

### SUNDERLAND

Thomas D. Fydenkevez  
David J. Pierce, alternate

### WARWICK

Lawrence "Doc" Pruyne

### WENDELL

Michael Idoine  
Daniel Keller, alternate

### WHATELY

Lynn Sibley  
Brian Domina, alternate

### FRPB APPOINTEE

James Basford

### REGIONALLY ELECTED MEMBERS

Bill Perlman  
Jay DiPucchio

## FRCOG Council Committees

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Jay DiPucchio, Chair  
Bill Perlman, Vice Chair  
Jim Basford  
Kevin Fox, Council Appointee  
Roxann Wedegartner, Council  
Appointee

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

Lynn Sibley, Chair  
Kevin Fox, Vice Chair  
Jay DiPucchio  
Michele Giarusso  
Ellen McKay  
Kayce Warren  
One vacancy

### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Bill Perlman, Chair  
Kayce Warren  
Bryan Smith  
Jane Peirce  
One vacancy  
FRCOG Council Committees

### APPOINTMENTS TO THE FRANKLIN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

West County – Heather Butler, Buckland • Central County – Steve Ellis, Montague  
East County – Gabe Voelker, Orange

# FRCOG Staff

FRCOG expanded staffing in 2020 and now has 61 full and part-time staff equating to 46.5 full-time equivalents (FTEs). Approximately 50% of staff have worked at the FRCOG for 10 or more years and 15% for more than 25 years.

**Kat Allen**

*Partnership for Youth Coordinator*

**Teresa Allen**

*Town Accountant*

**Jessica Atwood**

*Economic Development Program Manager*

**Ellen Batchelder**

*Assistant Procurement Officer*

**Rebekah Boyd**

*Administrative Services Coordinator*

**Chris Brothers**

*FCCIP Online Permit Administrator*

**Raine Brown**

*Homeland Security Program Manager*

**Meg Burch**

*CPHS Nurse COVID-19*

**Lisa Danek Burke**

*Health Agent*

**Ryan Clary**

*Senior GIS Specialist*

**Randy Crochier**

*Regional Health Agent*

**Bob Dean**

*Director of Regional Services*

**Erin Degnan**

*Town Accountant*

**Amanda Doster**

*Regional Projects Coordinator*

**Bill Eрман**

*Alternate Electrical Inspector*

**Linda Dunlavy**

*Executive Director*

**Helena Farrell**

*Land Use and Natural Resources Planner*

**Kala Fisher**

*Town Accountant*

**Siobhan Fitzgerald**

*4SC Youth Engagement Facilitator*

**Andy French**

*Plumbing Inspector*

**Allison Gage**

*Land Use and Natural Resources Planner*

**Ilana Gerjouy**

*4SC Coordinator*

**Elizabeth Giannini**

*Senior Transportation Planner II*

**Linda Gross**

*Assistant Finance Director*

**James Hawkins**

*Building Commissioner*

**Herb Hohengasser**

*Alternate Plumbing & Gas Inspector*

**Keyedrya Jacobs**

*Community Engagement and Program Associate*

**Liz Jacobson-Carroll**

*Administrative Services Assistant*

**Debbie Jones**

*Town Accountant*

**Mike Kociela**

*Town Accountant*

**Stacy Langnecht**

*4SC Youth Engagement Facilitator*

**Dara LaPlante**

*Town Accountant*

**Alyssa Larose**

*Senior Land Use Planner*

**Paul Lemelin**

*Zoning & Software Support Assistant*

**Kimberly Noake MacPhee**

*Land Use & Natural Resources Program Manager*

**Mark Maloni**

*Senior Public Health Planner*

**Rachel Mason**

*Homeland Security Assistant*

**Thomas McDonald**

*Electric Inspector*

**Claire McGinnis**

*Director of Finance*

**Moon Morgan**

*Accountant*

**Brian Morton**

*Town Accountant*

**Maureen Mullaney**

*Transportation and GIS Program Manager II*

**Dan Nietzsche**

*Emergency Preparedness Coordinator*

**Megan Rhodes**

*Senior Transportation & Land Use Planner*

**David Roberts**

*Local Inspector*

**Tracy Rogers**

*Emergency Preparedness Program Manager*

**Laurie Scarbrough**

*Transportation Planning Engineer*

**Kurt Seaman**

*Radio System Manager*

**Sage Orville Shea**

*Coalition Technical Assistance and Evaluation Coordinator*

**Peggy Sloan**

*Director of Planning and Economic Development*

**Lauri Solomon**

*Emergency Preparedness Planner*

**Rachel Stoler**

*Community Health Program Manager*

**Xander Sylvain**

*Emergency Preparedness Program Assistant*

**Cathryn Thomas**

*Town Accountant*

**Phoebe Walker**

*Director of Community Services*

**Lisa White**

*Regional Public Health Nurse*

**Andrea Woods**

*Chief Procurement Officer*

**Kara Younger**

*4SC Youth Engagement Facilitator*

**Melanie Zamojski**

*CPHS Nurse COVID-19*

## Board, Committees, Commissions

FRCOG staff members sit on a variety of boards and committees representing the FRCOG, the region and Franklin County communities, either directly as part of their FRCOG responsibilities or on a volunteer basis. In 2020 these included:

- Baystate Franklin Community Advisory Board
- Baystate Franklin Medical Center Community Benefits Advisory Council
- Creating Resilient Communities
- Coalition for Local Public Health Steering Committee
- Common Capital Board of Directors
- Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts Trustees
- Del Valle Institute Training and Exercise Advisory Committee
- Community Health Center of Franklin County Board of Directors
- Economic Development Council of Western MA Economic Development Partners; Infrastructure Committee
- Franklin Conservation District
- Franklin County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
- Franklin County Community Development Corporation Board of Directors
- Franklin County Food Council
- Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board of Commissioners
- Franklin County Resource Network
- Franklin Region Economic Development Initiative
- Greenfield Safe Schools Safe Streets Steering Committee
- Hampshire Group Insurance Trust Advisory Committee (IAC)
- Massachusetts Association for Floodplain Management
- Massachusetts Broadband Institute Board of Directors
- Massachusetts Statewide COVID Vaccine Advisory Group
- Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network
- Massachusetts Municipal Association Policy Committee on Municipal and Regional Administration
- Massachusetts Mutual Aid Plan (MassMAP) Advisory Board
- Massachusetts Rural Policy Advisory Commission
- Massachusetts Bureau of Substance Addiction Services Center for Strategic Prevention Support Steering Committee
- MassHire Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board Youth Career Connections Council
- Mayor's Taskforce on Domestic Violence (Greenfield)
- Mohawk Trail Regional School District COVID Task Force
- New England Public Media Board of Directors
- North Quabbin Childrens' Health and Wellness System of Care
- North Quabbin Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force
- Northwest Massachusetts Incident Management Team Executive Committee
- Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and North Quabbin Executive Council
- Opioid Task Force Prevention and Education Workgroup
- Opioid Task Force Building a Resilient Community Workgroup
- Opioid Task Force Housing and Workforce Development Workgroup
- Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress Board of Trustees
- Project Here Advisory Committee
- Public Health Institute of Western MA COVID Data Dashboard Advisory Group
- Rural Development, Inc. Board of Directors
- Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts
- Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Executive Committee
- United Way of Franklin County Board of Directors
- Western Massachusetts Health Equity Network Coordinating Team
- Western Massachusetts Public Health Association Executive Committee

# Town Services to Heath

## COVID

The FRCOG was active in COVID response and recovery for the region and each municipality in numerous ways including:

- advocated for changes to laws and regulations needed to run municipalities remotely
- conducted a business impact survey to understand how to allocate emergency funding to protect the regional economy
- monitored active cases and conducted contact tracing for 19 towns
- opened the Multi-Agency Coordination Center to disseminate situation reports to municipalities, responders and other stakeholders
- launched a weekly newsletter of resources and support for parents and guardians of school-aged children
- facilitated the distribution of PPE to area hospitals and responders, and facilitated a collective purchase of PPE for municipalities, non-profits and businesses
- managed and distributed emergency funding to local Boards of Health
- assisted the Board of Health in identifying contract tracing support for COVID case management
- secured \$4,728 in COVID emergency management funds to cover the cost of COVID case management, and \$1,000 in grant funds to support response expenses by the Board of Health
- provided mask order and social distancing signage for use at Town facilities and businesses
- served on the Mohawk Trail Regional School District COVID-19 Task Force

Refer to the FRCOG's 2020 Annual Report for a complete listing.

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- Staff prepared a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant application for the Town to become an MVP designated community while updating its Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Staff assisted the Town with drafting a supplemental Energy Reduction Plan to add the former Heath school building to the Town's Green Communities program.
- Staff assisted the Town with developing project narratives for Community Hall HVAC and insulation Green Communities designation grant projects.
- Staff assisted the Town Coordinator with completing the FY20 Green Communities Annual Report.
- Staff assisted the Town Coordinator with procuring a contractor to conduct a solar PV feasibility study for Town-owned properties.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Staff compiled an inventory and map of the recreational assets in the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership area.

## FINANCE AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES

- Heath contracted with the FRCOG to receive collective bid pricing for:
  - ◇ Highway Products and Services including Rental Equipment and Drone Services
  - ◇ Heating and Vehicle Fuel
  - ◇ Elevator Maintenance
  - ◇ Fire Alarm and Fire Extinguisher Services as part of their Regional School District
  - ◇ Dog Tags and Licenses
- Staff issued 50 building permits, 26 electrical permits & 18 plumbing/gas permits for Heath in 2020. One (1) Certificate of Inspection was issued.

## HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Staff worked with a consultant that produced a regional IT network and shared cybersecurity systems feasibility study in 2020, and secured funding for a series of capacity building workshops that will be conducted in 2021.

## LAND USE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Staff completed a draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan using District Local Technical Assistance funds and submitted it to the State for review.
- Staff provided technical assistance to municipal officials on Zoning Bylaw updates. Staff began developing a Pollinator Action Plan for Heath as part of the Regional Pollinator Plan for Franklin County.
- Staff reviewed and prepared potential revisions to the Town's Zoning Bylaws and Subdivision Regulations to create and protect Pollinator Habitat.
- Staff assisted Heath and other towns with the formation of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership (MTWP) Board that will assume responsibility for future activities of the MTWP in accordance with the State legislation.
- The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs offered grant funding of up to \$20,000 to each community that has voted to participate in the MTWP for activities supporting natural resource-based economic development or forest conservation.

# Town Services to Heath

## PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

- The Town is a comprehensive member of the CPHS, a health district based at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. See the COVID section above for information specifically related to COVID work. Other CPHS activities in Heath during 2020 included:
  - ◇ Staff completed state-mandated infectious disease surveillance and reporting for 332 communicable disease cases in district member towns. Six (6) cases were from Heath, and including Anaplasmosis, Lyme Disease, and Babesiosis.
  - ◇ Staff provided nursing services to attendees of 2 monthly "Good Neighbors" food distributions and 2 "Second Tuesday" walk-in wellness clinics at the Charlemont Federated Church. Residents visited with the nurse, and those who could not were visited at home. This work was paused with the onset of the pandemic.
  - ◇ Five (5) Heath residents received low-cost tick tests through a local Board of Health subsidy, a value of \$175. Staff provided tick prevention materials and helped residents access grant funded tick testing through an on-line system. Forty percent (40%) of ticks tested in Heath tested positive for the Lyme Disease Pathogen.
  - ◇ Staff coordinated vaccine availability, supplies and staff support for flu clinics held at community sites throughout the CPHS district with the help of Medical Reserve Corps members, GCC nursing students and community volunteers. All told, CPHS flu clinics vaccinated 2,045 Franklin County residents. For Heath, a Flu Clinic/Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) Drill held at the Charlemont Fairgrounds served 246 local residents. An additional EDS drill/clinic held in partnership with the Rowe and Heath Town Nurses at the former Heath Elementary School served 164 local residents.
  - ◇ Staff conducted 9 Title-5 Inspections prior to property transfers; 12 Soil Evaluations for septic systems; and 9 septic system plan reviews that included site visits, issuing Local Upgrade Approvals and DSCP (septic) permits, completing final inspections of installations, and preparing Certificates of Compliance.
  - ◇ Staff permitted 2 new wells, including determining compliance with Water Supply Standards, and provided technical assistance with review of the kitchen at the former Heath Elementary School.
  - ◇ Staff provided technical assistance to bring a long term housing case to a close in 2020.
  - ◇ Staff designed a Board of Health Handbook outlining relevant codes, and the roles and responsibilities of BOH members.
- Staff conducted a Teen Health Survey to assess teen attitudes and behavior among middle and high school students. Staff reported to Mohawk Trail Regional School administrators on results from 103 Mohawk students, representing 61% of the 8th, 10th, and 12th grade classes. Survey data meets federal requirements for the school and is valuable for grant-writing and program planning.
- Staff provided training, technical assistance, and evaluation for the evidence-based LifeSkills substance use prevention curriculum in the Mohawk Trail Regional School District.
- Staff provided materials and guidance on vaping prevention and intervention to the Mohawk Trail Regional School District.
- Staff provided a list of resources for advancing racial justice in school districts/schools to the Mohawk Trail Regional School District.
- Staff organized a community showing of the documentary *"I'm Not Racist...Am I?"* in which Mohawk Trail students and staff participated.
- Staff compiled and distributed the Coalition Connections Newsletter, which provides information and resources for families, human service providers and educators during the pandemic to support health and prevent youth substance use.

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The following list represents the FRCOG workshops and training sessions that Heath public officials, staff, and residents attended, and the number in attendance.

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & HOMELAND SECURITY

- Comm. of MA Interoperable Radio System (CoMIRS) Migration Public Safety Radio Vendor Exposition — 1

### PANDEMIC SUPPORT:

- Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition (MAPHCO) Emergency Dispensing Site Tabletop Exercise — 2
- Municipal Reimbursement for COVID-19 Expenses — 1

### PUBLIC HEALTH & COMMUNITY:

- *I'm Not Racist, Am I?* Screening and Discussion [est. 1500 region-wide]
- 3-in-1 Food Safety Training Certification — 1

## TRANSPORTATION

- Staff conducted a traffic count on Route 8A/Jacksonville Stage Road for the Regional Traffic Counting Program.



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