



SERVICES TO WHATELY IN 2023

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND LAND USE

- Began working with the town to conduct a Visioning and Goal Setting exercise for the development of a comprehensive plan.
- Provided technical assistance, including GIS mapping, to the planning board regarding the wellhead protection areas for the Whately Water Department and Whately Water District wells.
- Completed a Whately Housing Production Plan, approved by the state.
- Prepared a memo summarizing known short-term rental numbers in Franklin County, revenues for towns that have opted to implement the lodging tax, and existing bylaws across the state related to short-term rentals. Towns can use that info to develop policies and bylaws, if desired.
- As part of a six-town Complete Neighborhoods “Greenfield Area” grant project, FRCOG worked on a zoning analysis of Greenfield and other area towns, with the goal of drafting recommendations to increase housing diversity.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

- Conducted the FRCOG Teen Health Survey to assess teen attitudes and behavior among middle and high school students. Staff reported to Frontier Regional School (FRS) administrators on results from 223 Frontier students, representing 76% 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.
- Worked with FRS District administration and staff to implement restorative practices school climate improvements.
- Provided resources and direct technical assistance to student groups for advancing racial justice in schools to the district.
- Supported the South County Senior Center and community members on Mass in Motion age- and dementia-friendly municipal planning initiative. Mass in Motion funded additional staff time for the South County Senior Center Director and Outreach Coordinator to hold focus groups on issues of transportation and food security; to fund a senior center postcard marketing effort aimed at residents over 55 and resulting in 48 new members; and to hold info/input sessions with the Franklin County and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authorities. Senior center staff leveraged this planning to apply for and receive digital literacy and transportation grants.
- Supported town officials with information and technical assistance on spending opioid settlement funds.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Held a meeting with new municipal staff to review planning programs and services.
- Provided assistance for the town’s request for local digital equity planning services from the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, and began working on Whately’s Digital Equity Plan.
- Prepared a site profile for the Whately Center School property that was featured at the FRCOG’s exhibitor table at the Western Mass Developer’s Conference in Springfield.

SHARED MUNICIPAL SERVICES

- Whately contracted with FRCOG to receive collective bid pricing for highway products and services, including rental equipment, vehicle fuel, and school district fire extinguisher services. Staff also assisted with a collective five-year bid for student transportation encompassing nine Franklin County School Districts, including the Franklin County Technical School.

- The FRCOG Cooperative Inspections Program issued 114 building permits, 70 electrical permits, 29 plumbing/gas permits, and nine certificates of inspection for Whately in 2023.
- FRCOG staff organized and facilitated educational information meetings for members of town energy committees.
- The FRCOG Town Accounting program produced biweekly vendor warrants, and provided monthly budget reports to all officials. Accountants certified free cash and submitted a schedule A at year-end; assisted in completing the recap for tax rate submission; and customized, developed, and distributed reports for committees and departments.

Emergency Preparedness

Child Emergency Assessment & Stabilization – 1

Public Health & Community Awareness

Mass in Motion Community Engagement – 1

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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

TRANSPORTATION

- Met with the South County Senior Center about public transit needs and issues.
- Helped advance the Haydenville Rd. project through the Transportation Improvement Program process.
- Engaged in a contract to install Franklin County Bikeway wayfinding signs in spring 2024.
- Completed a summary report for a Whately Electric Vehicle Charging Station survey.
- Conducted a survey of truck drivers at the Lindy's Diner/Nouria property and northbound/southbound rest areas on Interstate 91, and compiled a report of the results.