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## ISSUE BRIEF

### **495/METROWEST SUBURBAN EDGE COMMUNITY COMMISSION**

July 28, 2014

#### Authorization

On July 11, 2014, Governor Deval Patrick signed the Fiscal Year 2015 state budget into law as [Chapter 165 of the Acts of 2014](#).<sup>1</sup> While the \$36.5 Billion annual budget is a comprehensive document that touches on every area of state operations, it also included authorization for the *495/MetroWest Suburban Edge Community Commission*.

This Commission was created in outside section 233 of the budget, which originated in a successful House budgetary amendment filed by **State Representative Kate Hogan**, and cosponsored by **State Representatives Cory Atkins, Jay Barrows, Matt Beaton, Jennifer Benson, Tom Conroy, Shawn Dooley, Carolyn Dykema, John Fernandes, Danielle Gregoire, Kay Khan, David Linsky, George Peterson, Tom Sannicandro, and Chris Walsh**, supported by a Senate amendment proposed by **Senator Karen Spilka** and co-sponsored by **Senators Eileen Donoghue, Jamie Eldridge, and Michael Moore**.

#### Mission

The Commission is charged with making “an investigation and study relative to development challenges being experienced by edge communities, such as needs to address transportation, water, cellular, and energy infrastructure, transit services, residential development, reuse of former industrial facilities and historic mills, brownfields reclamation, downtown redevelopment and other such constraints....” and “shall develop policy responses and recommendations to ensure that edge communities can participate in state development initiatives and benefit from state resources.” The Commission shall “develop a pilot program to address the issues to be studied and investigated by the commission,” with certain municipalities partaking in the pilot, including the five municipalities represented by officials serving on the Commission.”

#### Geographic Reach of Commission

The thirty-four municipalities served by the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership.

#### Definition of Suburban Edge Community

A municipality with a population of not more than 35,000 ([the population threshold for a Gateway City](#))<sup>2</sup> that is not adjacent to a [Gateway City](#)<sup>3</sup>. Based on this definition, there are thirty-one communities eligible from within the Partnership’s service area:

*Acton*

*Hopedale*

*Norfolk*

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<sup>1</sup> Full text available online at <http://www.mass.gov/bb/gaa/fy2015/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> As defined in section 3A of chapter 23A of the General Laws at <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter23A/Section3A>

<sup>3</sup> More information on the state’s Gateway Cities initiative is at <http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/planning/gateway-cities-and-program-information.html> .

Ashland  
Bellingham  
Berlin  
Bolton  
Boxborough  
Foxborough  
Franklin  
Harvard  
Holliston

Hopkinton  
Hudson  
Littleton  
Maynard  
Medfield  
Medway  
Milford  
Millis  
Natick

Northborough  
Sherborn  
Southborough  
Stow  
Sudbury  
Upton  
Wayland  
Westborough  
Westford  
Wrentham

### Membership

There are a total of twenty seven members, representing a broad range of constituencies:

#### Legislature: (six seats)

- Three members of the Senate, one appointed by the Senate Minority Leader
- Three members from the House of Representatives, one appointed by the House Minority Leader

#### Executive Agencies: (five seats)

- Secretary of Housing and Economic Development or a designee (also chair)
- Secretary of Transportation or a designee
- Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs or a designee
- Executive Director of the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency or a designee
- Chair of the John Adams Innovation Institute (at MA Tech Collaborative) or a designee

#### Regional and statewide organizations: (seven seats)

- One member selected by the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership
- One member selected by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- One member selected by the Massachusetts Municipal Association
- One member selected by the Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors
- One member selected by NAIOP Massachusetts
- One member selected by Massachusetts Water Works Association
- One member selected by the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority

#### Gubernatorial Appointments: (nine seats)

- Five municipal officials who represent different municipalities served by the 495/MetroWest Corridor Partnership
- An academic focused on suburban development
- A real estate professional with experience working in edge communities
- A water resources expert with experience working in edge communities
- A transportation engineer with experience working in edge communities

### Timeline

By October 9, 2014, the Commission appointments will be made, within ninety days of the effective date of this act, which was July 11th.

By December 31, 2015, the Commission shall report the results of its investigation and study and its recommendations to the House and Senate Clerks, as well as the Legislature's Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies

For more information regarding the *495/MetroWest Suburban Edge Commission*, please contact the 495/MetroWest Partnership's Executive Director Paul Matthews at [paul@495partnership.org](mailto:paul@495partnership.org) and (774)760-0495 or State Representative Kate Hogan at [kate.hogan@mahouse.gov](mailto:kate.hogan@mahouse.gov) at (617)722-2692.