



## ***Memorandum***

**Date:** August 9, 2023  
**To:** CMRPC Planning Boards, Delegates, Town Planners, and Town Administrators/Managers  
**From:** Trish Settles, Deputy Director for Regional Collaboration and Community Planning  
**Re:** Local Planning Assistance

---

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) is pleased to remind its communities of the availability of Local Planning Assistance (LPA). LPA is a resource that CMRPC offers to its communities as a flexible planning resource. LPA “Hours” are CMRPC planning staff time. One LPA “Hour” may be used to request one “Hour” of a CMRPC professional planner’s assistance.

### **Available LPA “Hours” & Accumulation of Additional “Hours”**

Each community begins the fiscal year with an initial allocation of 12 LPA “Hours” that can be used to support municipal planning efforts. In addition to the 12 LPA “Hours,” communities can “earn” additional LPA “Hours” when municipal officials attend approved events. Approved events include, but are not limited to, the following:

- CMRPC Annual Meeting (June)
- Quarterly Commission Meetings (January, March, September, and November)
- CMRPC Executive Committee meetings
- Legislative Affairs Committee meetings or events
- CMRPC Physical Development Committee meetings
- CMRPC Transportation Committee
- CMRPC Rural Caucus
- Certain Regional Dialogues such as Town Managers/Administrator Meetings; Planners Forum; Economic Development Roundtables; Planning Board Gatherings

Going forward, we will make a concerted attempt to indicate if a meeting is designated as eligible to earn LPA “Hours” (LPA Eligible). A maximum of ONE LPA Hour per Municipality will be earned for each event, regardless of the number of individuals representing a Municipality and attending the event. Credit will only be given if a record such as a sign-in sheet or minutes indicates a town was represented. Communities may earn up to twelve (12) additional LPA “Hours” for a maximum of 24 LPA “Hours” per Fiscal Year. LPA “Hours” cannot be accumulated or rolled over from fiscal year to fiscal year.

## **Eligible Projects**

LPA “Hours” may be used for the following types of planning assistance. Please note, projects requiring 12 “Hours” or more must be submitted no later than March 31st:

- GIS Mapping Services;
- Data Requests;
- To offset the personnel costs of larger planning projects;
- Requests for Planning staff to provide expertise on a specific planning matter;
- Requests for Planning staff to prepare for, attend and provide planning services at a meeting not specifically related to an on-going project; or
- To request assistance with the development of a grant application or proposal.

LPA “Hours” may not be used for the following:

- Non-CMRPC staff planning assistance.
- Goods or services purchased by the town or other entity for a planning project.

## **Authorization of LPA “Hour” Usage**

CMRPC is a Regional PLANNING Agency. The first delegate for any municipality is always a member of the Planning Board. In the past, there has been much confusion on who determines what the LPA “Hours” may be used on. To be consistent going forward, we give the authority to allocate the LPA “Hours” to the Planning Board Chair.

Authorization should be provided by the Planning Board chair via email to Trish Settles [tsettles@cmrpc.org](mailto:tsettles@cmrpc.org). Additionally, the CMRPC delegate(s) should be made aware of the request.

## **Timing**

Due to previously scheduled projects and limitations on staff capacity, all projects requiring 12 “Hours” or more must be submitted to CMRPC no later than March 31<sup>st</sup>. LPA resources of greater than 4 “Hours” will only be entertained after June 1 as staff capacity allows. LPA resources (of up to 12 “Hours”) may be requested in June for projects with start dates after July 1. If LPA “Hours” are not drawn down by June 1, the LPA “Hours” may be allocated to other projects in that Town that may be in progress and those projects will be discounted/credited accordingly.

## **Project Scope**

Once a request is received, CMRPC staff will be assigned to work with the municipality to develop a brief scope of service or agreement on the use of the LPA “hours” and to determine the estimated number of “Hours” for the task or project.

## **Questions and Program Status Reports**

We will try to provide periodic updates on the usage of the LPA. Please feel free to send specific requests for updates and any questions to Trish Settles at [tsettles@cmrpc.org](mailto:tsettles@cmrpc.org).

Below is a listing of the LPA “Hours” available as of August 7, 2023. Please be aware that some municipalities have pre-authorized use as part of projects and those amounts are not indicated here.

as of 8/1/2023	
Auburn	12
Barre	12
Berlin	14
Blackstone	12
Boylston	13
Brookfield	12
Charlton	12
Douglas	12
Dudley	12
East Brookfield	12
Grafton	13
Hardwick	13
Holden	13
Hopedale	12
Leicester	12
Mendon	9.5
Millbury	12
Millville	12
New Braintree	13
North Brookfield	12
Northborough	13
Northbridge	12
Oakham	12
Oxford	12
Paxton	13
Princeton	13
Rutland	13
Shrewsbury	12
Southbridge	12
Spencer	12
Sturbridge	12
Sutton	13
Upton	12
Uxbridge	12
Warren	12
Webster	12
West Boylston	12
West Brookfield	12
Westborough	13
Worcester	12