



# Planning for Housing Production Program Guidelines

February 2023

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

MassHousing's Planning for Housing Production Program provides cities and towns with the technical capacity needed to implement local planning and transform priority development sites into new affordable homes.

The program assists municipalities in capitalizing on zoning changes for equitable, transit-oriented multifamily development; and progressing toward, achieving and exceeding Chapter 40B's 10 percent affordable housing goal. In disproportionately impacted communities, the program unlocks new opportunities for affordable homeownership development.

Successful applicants will identify compelling housing development opportunities and will demonstrate a commitment to working collaboratively to deliver on their housing goals.

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND USE OF FUNDS**

MassHousing's Planning for Housing Production Program provides grants of consultant services to municipalities that are working to increase their supply of affordable housing. The program does not make direct cash awards to grantees.

Grants will create new capacity to implement local housing planning, by facilitating partnerships between municipalities and mission-driven housing developers.

MassHousing will fund pre-development activities on priority housing development sites by contracting directly with third-party consultants then matching consultants with municipalities based on their respective expertise and local needs. The program prioritizes the reuse and redevelopment of municipally-owned properties; exceptionally positioned privately-owned sites may also be eligible for funding.

Grant funds will support predevelopment planning activities that create development-ready sites, including technical assistance with a municipally-led RFP process. Municipalities with exceptionally positioned privately-owned sites will receive assistance advancing sites through the development process, including, but not limited to, technical assistance related to site plan review and permitting. In all cases, technical assistance funding will prioritize the robust public engagement needed to build pro-housing constituencies.

Participating municipalities and consultants will meet regularly with MassHousing staff to discuss project progress.

The value of grant awards will vary depending on the level and scope of a grantee's self-identified needs. Grants will be awarded at a level commensurate with the level of new housing production being pursued. All awards will require a local cash match, equal to at least 10 percent of the value of the grant or technical services awarded.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Rental housing development: Preference will be given to municipalities for projects that create new affordable rental housing that results in progress towards meeting or exceeding local housing needs.

Homeownership development: MassHousing will support the creation of new affordable homeownership opportunities in municipalities that were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, regardless of the municipality's SHI percentage. The Commonwealth's disproportionately impacted communities are the 26 Gateway Cities, Boston, Framingham and Randolph.

Applicants should have already completed or be in the process of completing a locally-driven housing planning process, including but not limited to a comprehensive master plan, a DHCD-approved Housing Production Plan, or a housing visioning process.

Communities that currently have multifamily housing development moratoria are not eligible to apply.

Municipalities may partner with non-municipal entities, including regional planning agencies, on grant proposals. The municipality must be the lead applicant.

Preference will be given to applications that clearly document market demand for new mixed-income housing development and articulate a compelling vision for meeting that need. All applications shall demonstrate consistency with DHCD's fair housing principles, including the affirmative fair housing marketing requirements available [here](#), and the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles available [here](#).

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Grant applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- Documented local and regional housing need
- Clarity of the applicant's vision for meeting local and regional housing need
- Strength of the housing implementation proposal
- Feasibility and marketability of the applicant's housing vision
- Consistency of grant activities with previous local planning
- Consistency of grant activities with regional planning, where applicable
- Consistency of planning vision with [fair housing](#) and [sustainable development principles](#)

- Adequacy of local match and local support for the grant activities and planning vision

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

In addition to filling out the application available on MassHousing's website [here](#), please email the following documents to Monica Passeno, Municipal Technical Assistance Manager at [mpasseno@masshousing.com](mailto:mpasseno@masshousing.com) :

- 1) A cover letter signed by the municipality's chief administrative official,
- 2) Electronic copies of relevant planning documents, and
- 3) Any relevant letters of support.
- 4) For **privately-owned lots**, support from the owner and municipality and evidence of developer selection

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that its application is complete and is received by MassHousing. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and retained as public records.

MassHousing reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review.

As needed, MassHousing will consult a team of reviewers, to review pending applications and develop recommendations for funding. Final decisions will be rendered by MassHousing's Executive Director. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the Executive Director and are not subject to challenge or appeal.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Monica Passeno, Municipal Technical Assistance Manager  
MassHousing  
1 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
E: [mpasseno@masshousing.com](mailto:mpasseno@masshousing.com)  
P: 617-854-1271