



PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Opens Two New Grant Programs Under Housing Choice Initiative

State will make up to \$5 million available for Housing Choice Communities and small towns to support housing production and economic development

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Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

Housing and Community Development

Housing Choice Initiative

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BOSTON - — The Baker-Polito Administration has opened two new grant applications as part of the Housing Choice Initiative to spur new housing production across the Commonwealth. The [Housing](#)

[Choice Initiative, introduced by Governor Charlie Baker in December 2017](#), is a comprehensive effort to support the creation of 135,000 new housing units by 2025 to meet the housing needs of Massachusetts families, workforce, and residents. The initiative includes *An Act to Promote Housing Choices* legislation filed by Governor Baker, new capital grant programs, and technical assistance grants from MassHousing. The Housing Choice Initiative provides incentives, rewards, technical assistance, and targeted legislative reform to encourage and empower municipalities to plan and build the diverse housing stock that the Commonwealth needs to continue to thrive.

“Massachusetts’ housing challenge will not solve itself, and we crafted our Housing Choice Initiative to make real progress towards an ambitious, but achievable, housing production goal,” **said Housing and Economic Development Secretary Jay Ash**. “We are proud of the investments our administration has already made, and our commitment to build more housing that meets the needs of our residents, and ensures our employers and businesses can attract a talented workforce.”

The two new, competitive grant programs will provide new resources to communities pursuing high-impact housing and economic development projects.

The Housing Choice Capital Grant Program makes up to \$4 million available for the 69 cities and towns designated as [Housing Choice Communities](#), which were announced by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito in May. These grants will enable communities to pursue capital projects which encourage new housing production and smart, forward-thinking planning.

The Baker-Polito Administration also introduced the [Housing Choice Small Town Capital Grant Program](#) for towns with populations less than 7,000 people, recognizing the unique needs of these communities. These capital grant awards will be made available for small towns to spur growth and move strategic planning efforts forward in communities. Grants may be used to support economic development efforts, design new infrastructure, update current housing stock, or tackle other capital improvement projects.

“These new grant programs enable Housing Choice-designated cities and towns of differing sizes to further provide their residents with increased housing options and spur economic development,” **said Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Janelle Chan**. “The extraordinary coalition supporting the Housing Choice Initiative shows that an equitable housing market, one that is affordable and accessible to families and residents across the income spectrum, is in the interest of a healthy Massachusetts and its various, dynamic communities.”

The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to meeting Massachusetts’ housing challenge through key investments, new initiatives, and program reforms. In May, [Governor Baker signed a \\$1.8 billion affordable housing bill](#) to ensure long-term support for the Baker-Polito Administration’s comprehensive efforts to increase the production of affordable housing, diversify the state’s housing portfolio, modernize

public housing, preserve the affordability of existing housing and invest in new, innovative solutions to address Massachusetts' rising demand for housing. With the addition of the FY19 capital plan, the Administration will have dedicated \$884 million to housing from FY16 to FY19, an increase of \$100 million over the previous four years' capital plans.

[Announced by Governor Baker in December 2017, the Housing Choice Initiative](#) is a comprehensive proposal to create 135,000 new housing units by 2025. The legislation, which is currently pending before the Legislature, includes a new set of incentives and rewards for municipalities committed to sustainable housing growth in their communities. The Housing Choice Initiative is a multi-pronged effort that includes a program to designate Housing Choice municipalities and new technical assistance opportunities through MassHousing, in addition to proposed legislative changes that will help deliver smart, effective zoning at the local level.

[Full details on the two competitive grant programs, including deadlines and applications can be found here.](#)

Additionally, the highly effective [MassWorks Infrastructure Program](#) continues to be a key catalyst for housing production, supporting the creation of more than 3,000 housing units. The [Open for Business Initiative](#) will drive the production of more than 2,200 units of housing on state land. MassHousing's \$100 million [Workforce Housing Initiative](#) has advanced the development of 2,374 housing units across a range of incomes, including 631 workforce housing units. And, the Baker-Polito Administration reformed the [Housing Development Incentive Program](#), which is on track to facilitate more than 900 new units in Gateway Cities.

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