



HOUSING CHOICE BEST PRACTICES 2022

Housing Choice Communities are designated in two ways:

- 1) *At least 5% increase or 500 increase in new units over the previous 5 years;*
OR
- 2) *At least a 3% increase or 300 unit increase in new units over the previous 5 years AND demonstrate 7 of 14 of the following best practices, two of which must be affordable.*

For Housing Choice Community grants, applicants receive points including bonus points for implementation of these best practices. There is no minimum number of best practices required for the grants, however, points are awarded for demonstration of best practices.

The following list contains an array of techniques and methods to support housing production and affordable housing for Massachusetts Towns and Cities. There are many, many strategies not on this list, but we are highlighting these as a **baseline** of methods that we recommend to local governments. For more information about the Baker-Polito Housing Choice Initiative, see www.mass.gov/housingchoice. In the list below, those strategies particularly related to creating and maintaining affordable housing are in *italics*. These best practices are used to evaluate applicants seeking designation as a Housing Choice Community and also as scoring criteria in the Housing Choice Capital grant program.

1. Have at least one zoning district that allows multifamily by right (in addition to 40R districts) where there is capacity to add units and that allows for family housing that is not age restricted and does not restrict units with more than 2 bedrooms (or have a pattern of approving such developments over the last 5 years)
2. *Have Inclusionary Zoning that provides for reasonable density increases so that housing is not unreasonable precluded*
3. *Have an approved 40R Smart Growth or Starter Homes district that remains in compliance with the 40R regulations. Please note, that if your community repealed its only 40R district, it no longer qualifies for this best practice.*
4. Have zoning that allows mixed use or cluster / Open Space Residential development by right that is not part of a 40R district (or have a pattern of approving such developments over the last 5 years)
5. Have zoning that allows for accessory dwelling units by right (or have a pattern of approving ADUs over the last 5 years)



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6. *Designated local resources for housing such as established an Affordable Housing Trust, donated land, or spent substantial Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for community housing over the last 5 years.*
7. Reduced parking requirement for Multi-Family units within the last 5 years or require no more than 1 parking space per unit for multifamily units.
8. Provide evidence of education and training for a majority of members on a land use board (Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Select Board and/or City Council) from **Citizen Planner Training Collaborative**, Massachusetts Housing Partnership's **Housing Institute**, Community Development Partnership's **Lower Cape Housing Institute**, or Urban Land Institute's (ULI's) **Urban Plan Public Leadership Institute** over the last 5 years.
9. *Have units currently eligible for inclusion in the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) that equal or exceed 10% of total year round housing stock according to the DHCD subsidized housing inventory, where such 10% was not reached after local comprehensive permit(s) were denied or conditioned and had the denial or condition overturned by the Housing Appeals Court (HAC).*
10. *Have increased your community's SHI by at least 2.5% points in the last 5 years where such increase was not reached after local comprehensive permit(s) were denied or conditioned and had the denial or conditions overturned by HAC.*
11. Selected a housing best practice as part of a Community Compact
12. Participate in the Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP), have adopted an Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing district, approved District Improvement Financing (DIF) related to housing, have adopted an Urban Renewal Plan that includes a significant Housing element.
13. *Have adopted local option property tax relief programs for income eligible seniors either as provided for by statute (MGL c. 59 section 5) or through a home rule petition; OR have adopted a Community Impact Fee for short term rentals (MGL c. 64G, section 3D) where your community has committed in writing to using a portion of such revenues for affordable housing.*
14. *Have a CERTIFIED Housing Production Plan which means that you have an DHCD approved Housing Production Plan and have subsequently seen an increase of 0.5% or 1% in your year round housing units (see <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/chapter-40-b-housing-production-plan> for more information)*