



## Welcome to the 2024 Housing Choice Designation Application

The Housing Choice Community (HCC) designation has been in place for 6 years and is part of the Housing Choice Initiative. The designation period lasts for 5 years. New designees in 2024 will remain designated until 2029. This designation application will continue to open in the beginning of each year to allow municipalities to apply for designation.

**Currently designated communities, whose designation does not expire in 2024, do not need to apply until the year of their designation expiration. Verify your community's designation period at [Housing Choice Designation | Mass.gov](#)**

To complete this application, you will need information about your community's total year-round housing units from the 2020 Census and the cumulative net increase in year-round housing units from January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2023 (referred to below as "additional" units). You may use either **A) BUILDING PERMIT** data from the US Census Building Permit Survey **or B) BUILDING PERMIT** records from your municipality as the primary source to document net new housing units in your community. The application must be e-signed and certified by your local Building Official as to the accuracy of the additional unit information. The Chief Executive Officer must also e-sign and certify the application.

This application CAN be saved, and you may save your work and return to the form later. IF you use the "Save and Resume" feature, please note that uploaded files will not be saved. Please gather and keep files needed for uploading and only upload them when you are ready to hit the "SUBMIT" button at the END of the application. If you are qualifying based on an increase of 300 units/3% increase in year-round housing stock, you will also need to document your municipalities Best Practices related to housing. Please be sure to upload all documentation needed to demonstrate these best practices at the time you plan to "SUBMIT."

While there are no maximum file sizes per file, the maximum file size for ALL uploads is 25 MB per submission (not per file upload field). If you try to submit a form with files totaling more than 25 MB, you will get an error message and you will have to start over. If your total file size is greater than 25 MB, please consider submitting evidence of zoning code only once, highlighting the relevant sections, and noting in the best practices narrative sections of the application where to find the evidence in the submitted document. Finally, **only if you continue to have problems uploading files due to large sizes**, please notify [mckenzie.bell@mass.gov](mailto:mckenzie.bell@mass.gov) to request to submit files by email.

Once your application is submitted, a review panel will evaluate your application for the facts and evidence submitted and evaluate whether your community meets the designation criteria. If additional materials or evidence are needed, the panel may request additional information be submitted by email to complete application review.

Access application online at [Housing Choice Designation Application | Mass.gov](#)

**Applications are DUE no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 26, 2024.**

To avoid last minute problems submitting this online form, we suggest that you submit as soon as possible and not wait until the last minute.

If you have questions, contact McKenzie Bell, Senior Community Grants Coordinator, at [mckenzie.bell@mass.gov](mailto:mckenzie.bell@mass.gov).

## SAMPLE APPLICATION FORM -- NOT FOR OFFICIAL APPLICATION SUBMISSION

### Contact & Community Information

1. Submitting Municipality\*

*Choose your City or Town from the drop-down list*

2.a. Contact Name\*

First Name\*  Last Name\*

2.b. Contact Mailing Address\*

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City

State

ZIP Code

2.c.  Contact Email\*

2.d.  Contact Phone Number\*

3. Does your community have any ACTIVE housing restrictions such as a moratorium or limitations on the number of new housing units?\*

Yes  No

*Zoning moratorium makes your community INELIGIBLE for Housing Choice designation*

**IF YES TO 3 THEN ANSWER 3.A.**

3.a. If YES, please provide a copy of the ordinance(s) or bylaw(s) that restrict or limit the number of new housing units here. \* **Upload file here**

*If the restrictions limit new housing to less than 5% growth per year, you will likely be ineligible for Housing Choice Designation*

4. Has your community conducted a Self-Evaluation or Transition Plan related to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?\*

Yes  No

*More information on ADA requirements for local governments can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/housing-choice-designation-application>*

**IF NO TO 4 THEN ANSWER 4.A.**

4.a. If NO, is your community willing to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Massachusetts Office of Disability and EOHLIC, immediately upon receiving the designation, to conduct such study within the next five (5) years?\*

Yes  No

*Housing Choice Communities must have conducted this ADA review as required by Federal law or agree to conduct such review. A copy of a template MOU and more information about ADA planning can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/housing-choice-designation-application>*

## Information about your Community's Housing Production

The Housing Choice Designation is based on **PRODUCTION OF NEW YEAR-ROUND** housing units over the last 5-years. The threshold for qualifications is a 5% increase (or 500 units), or a 3% increase (or 300 units) and best practices. This section describes how to calculate and demonstrate the increase in new year-round housing units.

- (1) Look up your community's 2020 year-round housing units, also the denominator used in the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The designation application website has a list of 2020 year-round units for all communities [here](#).
- (2) Calculate the number of additional year-round housing units over the last 5-years using the number of **BUILDING PERMITS** issued to create the ratio of additional units added over the last 5-years, excluding housing units that replace demolished units at a 1-to-1 ratio. Demolition of one single-family unit and replacement with one single-family unit is an increase of 0 units. If a demolished single-family home is replaced with 3 units, the net increase is +2 units. If building permits for new units replacing a demolished home cannot be easily excluded from your data, please provide data about the number of demolition permits and total units demolished.
- (3) Data Sources: **BUILDING PERMITS** are the measurement of additional year-round housing units for this calculation. Your building official should have a record of new residential building permits for year-round housing issued between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2022. If your building official does not have ready access for this information, another source for this building permit data is information submitted by your community to the U.S. Census in the Building Permit Survey. A copy of the Building Permit Survey for all cities and towns in Massachusetts for 2019 through 2022 can be found on the Housing Choice web site [here](#). 2023 Building Permit Survey data is not yet available through the U.S. Census Building Permit Survey, therefore 2023 building permit data must be provided from your building official. If your community has reason to believe the current Census Building Permit Survey data does not fully reflect the number of building permits in your community, there is a place in the application to add comments and explanation.

**5. Provide your community's 2020 year-round housing units.\***

*INSTRUCTIONS: 2020 year-round housing units are available for download at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-the-housing-choice-designation>*

**6. Number of net new units that were issued building permits between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2023\***

*Note: please see the above description of qualifying net new units*

**7. Here is the percent increase in year-round housing units (net new units/2020 units\*100)\***

*Note: this field calculates the % increase automatically. Use this or the number of units over the last 5 years in Question 7 to complete Question 8 in the next section.*

## Housing Choice Designation

**8.** Based on the % increase in Question 7 **OR** the number of units produced over the last 5 years in Question 6, select the appropriate designation. If you do not meet the numeric standard to qualify to be a Housing Choice Community, visit the Housing Choice Web pages and review the many Technical Assistance opportunities available from many public, quasi-public, and advocacy organizations. You might also talk to your Regional Planning Agency about what steps your community might take to increase housing production so that you may qualify for the designation in the future.

**8.a.** Choose the Housing Choice Designation for your community based on Questions 6, 7 and 8 \*

- 5% increase OR 500+ units over the last five years
- 3% increase OR 300+ units over the last five years

**8.b.** Upload building permit data\* [Upload file here](#)

*You must provide detailed back up for all net new units. Please UPLOAD documentation of the building permits issued over the last 5 years as .pdfs of printouts from your building permit software, excel spreadsheets, or other information about building permits in your community. Remember, even if you use Building Permit Survey data for 2019 through 2022, you must upload your community's building permit information for 2023.*

**8.c.** Use the space below to provide information about additional housing units in your community that you believe are not captured by the Building Permit Survey

*Here you can let us know about the reasons why the Building Permit Survey does not accurately reflect housing production in your community (1000-character limit).*

## Housing Choice Best Practices

If your community has over 5% increase in housing production or 500 or more net new housing units, please go through all 15 of the best practices below and indicate by **checking the box** for each of your community's **BEST PRACTICES** to indicate which ones your City/Town has implemented. You do not have to submit or upload any documentation. While communities with 5%/500 growth in housing units do not need to demonstrate a certain number of best practices to qualify for Housing Choice designation, the best practices are a part of evaluating grant proposals.

For Production and Planning (3%/300), which Housing Best Practices do you have?

- You **MUST** select at least 7 of the 15 best practices below to qualify for the 3%/300 unit category.
- **TWO** Best Practices **MUST** be in the **Affordable Category**.
- You **MUST** upload documentation to demonstrate achievement of at least 7 of the 15 Best Practices that you select below.

**NOTE:** when uploading required documentation, only one file per upload box is allowed, please scan documents into a **SINGLE FILE** for uploading to each best practice.

### Zoning Best Practices

#### 9.a. Multi-Family allowed by right

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).

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.A THEN ANSWER 9.A.1 AND 9.A.2**

##### 9.a.1 Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation about the best practice.*

##### 9.a.2 Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.a. (500-character limit).*

#### 9.b Inclusionary Zoning, with density bonus [**Affordable Category**]

Have Inclusionary Zoning that provides for reasonable density increases so that housing is not unreasonable precluded.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide a copy of the section in your current zoning ordinance or by-law that addresses inclusionary zoning with density increases for provision of affordable units.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.B THEN ANSWER 9.B.1 AND 9.B.2**

##### 9.b.1 Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here.*

##### 9.b.2 Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.b. (500-character limit).*

**9.c. 40R or 40Y Starter Home District [Affordable Category]**

- Have an approved 40R Smart Growth or 40Y Starter Homes district that remains in compliance with the 40R or 40Y regulations, as applicable. Please note, that if your community repealed its only 40R district, it no longer qualifies for this best practice.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a copy of the section in your current zoning ordinance or by-law that implements MGL chapter 40R or 40Y provisions.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.C THEN ANSWER 9.C.1 AND 9.C.2**

**9.c.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.c.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.c. (500-character limit).*

**9.d. Mixed-Use or Cluster Development**

- Have zoning that allows residential/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).

*INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a copy of the section in your current zoning ordinance or by-law that allows mixed use or cluster development by right. If you believe your community has demonstrated a consistent pattern over the last 5 years of approving such developments, please provide a table with the following information: project address/name, number of units, action taken (approve, deny, withdrawn, appealed) and date of final board decision. If there are questions about these projects program staff may follow up for additional information.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.D THEN ANSWER 9.D.1 AND 9.D.2**

**9.d.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.d.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.d. (500-character limit).*

**9.e Accessory Dwelling Units**

- Have zoning that allows for accessory dwelling units by right (or have a pattern of approving ADUs over the last 5 years).

*INSTRUCTION: Provide a copy of the section in your current zoning ordinance or by-law that allows ADUs by right. If you believe your community has demonstrated a consistent pattern over the last 5 years of approving ADUs, please provide a table with the following information: project address/name, number of units, action taken (approve, deny, withdrawn, appealed) and date of final board decision. If there are questions about these projects program staff may follow up for additional information.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.E THEN ANSWER 9.E.1 AND 9.E.2**

**9.e.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.e.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.e (500-character limit).*

**9.f. Multi-Family Parking Requirement**

- 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.

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a copy of the section of your current zoning ordinance or by-law that demonstrates no more than one (1) parking space per unit for multi-family developments and/or describe the reduction in parking requirements that occurred within the last 5 years.

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.F THEN ANSWER 9.F.1 AND 9.F.2**

**9.f.1** Upload file here

NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here

**9.f.2** Narrative

Provide additional narrative here for question 9.f (500-character limit).

**Other Best Practices**

**9.g. Local actions that support housing [Affordable Category]**

Designated local resources for housing such as established an Affordable Housing Trust, donated or surplus land for re-use or redevelopment of housing, or spent substantial Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for community housing over the last 5 years.

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a narrative description of designated local resources and upload documentation including but not limited to (1) meeting minutes from meetings of Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting or Affordable Housing Trust board awarding funding, designating CPA funds for Community Housing projects and a list of funds spent for community housing projects including number of units produced if applicable, (2) copy of deed conveying property for nominal value, or for reduced value if accompanied by evidence of value or approving conveyance of land for nominal or reduced value; (3) award letter or other documentation of funding award, or (4) copy of Affordable Housing Trust charter.

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.G THEN ANSWER 9.G.1 AND 9.G.2**

**9.g.1** Upload file here

NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here

**9.g.2** Narrative

Provide additional narrative here for question 9.g (500-character limit).

**9.h. Land Use Board Training**

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

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide evidence of education and training for a majority of members on a land use board (Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Select Board and/or City Council) from Citizens Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC), Massachusetts Housing Partnership’s (MHP’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. Comparable training will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.H THEN ANSWER 9.H.1 AND 9.H.2**

**9.h.1** Upload file here

NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here

**9.h.2** Narrative

Provide additional narrative here for question 9.h (500-character limit).

**9.i 40B pattern or approval [Affordable Category]**



Have a demonstrated pattern of working with 40B developers to achieve greater affordability by accepting 40B projects without imposing conditions that render the projects uneconomic.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Provide evidence of approved 40B projects in the community over the last 5 years.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.I THEN ANSWER 9.I.1 AND 9.I.2**

**9.i.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.i.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.i. (500-character limit).*

**9.j Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) at or above 10% [Affordable Category]**

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 EOHLC subsidized housing inventory, where reaching such 10% threshold was not the result of having a local comprehensive permit decision overturned by the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC).

*INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a copy of most recently published SHI for your community. If you believe there are additional units eligible for inclusion on the SHI, but not reflected on the SHI, documentation of those units must meet the standards applied by EOHLC under its regulations and guidelines in determining whether units are SHI-eligible. SHI units that are added after Housing Appeals Court (HAC) overturned a local denial or overturned local conditions will NOT COUNT towards your community's SHI totals. Most recent SHI numbers are posted on the EOHLC website [here](#).*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.J THEN ANSWER 9.J.1 AND 9.J.2**

**9.j.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.j.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.j. (500-character limit).*

**9.k. Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) increased at least 2.5% [Affordable Category]**

Have increased your community's SHI by at least 2.5% points in the last 5 years where such increase was not the result of having a local comprehensive permit decision overturned by the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC).

*INSTRUCTION: Provide a copy of most recently published SHI for your community showing at least a 2.5% increase over the last 5 years. If you believe there are additional units eligible for inclusion on the SHI, but not reflected on the SHI, documentation of those units must meet the standards applied by EOHLC under its regulations and guidelines in determining whether units are SHI-eligible. SHI units that are added after Housing Appeals Court (HAC) overturned a local denial or overturned local conditions will NOT COUNT towards this best practice.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.K THEN ANSWER 9.K.1 AND 9.k.2**

**9.k.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.k.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.k. (500-character limit).*

**9.l. Participate in one of the following EOHLC Housing Programs**

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.



*INSTRUCTIONS: Provide evidence of participation in one or more of the EOHLIC programs.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.L THEN ANSWER 9.L.1 AND 9.L.2**

**9.l.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.l.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.l. (500-character limit).*

**9.m. Property tax relief / Community Impact Fee [Affordable Category]**

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.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a copy of local bylaw or ordinance establishing the tax relief program.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.M THEN ANSWER 9.M.1 AND 9.M.2**

**9.m.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.m.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.m (500-character limit).*

**9.n. Housing Production Plan**

Have a CERTIFIED Housing Production Plan which means that you have an EOHLIC approved Housing Production Plan and have subsequently seen an increase of 0.5% or 1% in your year round housing units within the required time frame (see <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/chapter-40-b-housing-production-plan> for more information).

*INSTRUCTIONS: There is a difference between a CERTIFIED Housing Production Plan (HPP) and one that has been APPROVED by EOHLIC. A certified HPP which means that you have an EOHLIC 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). Provide a copy of the EOHLIC certification letter.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.N THEN ANSWER 9.N.1 AND 9.N.2**

**9.n.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.n.2** Narrative

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.n (500-character limit).*

**9.o. Housing Plan Implementation**

Demonstrated implementation of at least two strategies identified in a Housing Production Plan, housing component of a Master Plan, Housing Needs Assessment, or other housing related plan or analysis, other than adoption of the best practices specifically listed above.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Housing plans should translate into housing policy. Communities who are implementing strategies of a housing plan and can provide evidence to their implementation should provide said evidence for 2 or more strategies from the most recent approved housing plan to meet this best practice. Please submit a copy of the Strategies section of the HPP.*

**IF APPLICANT SELECTS 9.O THEN ANSWER 9.O.1 AND 9.O.2**

**9.o.1** Upload file here

*NOTE: For 3%/300 cities and towns, if you choose this Best Practices you MUST submit documentation here*

**9.o.2 Narrative**

*Provide additional narrative here for question 9.o (500-character limit).*

SAMPLE

## Certification and Signatures

The Housing Choice application for Designation requires the e-signatures and attestation of signature of both the Local Building Official and the Chief Executive Officer (Mayor, Select Board Chair, or City/Town Manager). **Please complete the signature section below by having the respective signatories type their name, title, email address, and certify their e-signature.**

### 10.a. Local Building Official E-Signature and Attestation

<input type="text"/>	First Name*	<input type="text"/>	Last Name*
<input type="text"/>	Title*		
<input type="text"/>	Email*		

I hereby attest that the building permit data for additional year-round housing units over the last 5 years is true and accurate. The data includes **only additional year-round housing units**, where demolished units were replaced 1:1 the new building permits are not included (or if permits for units replacing tear downs cannot be excluded from other additional unit permits, then demolition data is being provided); and conversions of commercial property to housing are included (such as mill conversions).

### 11.a. Chief Executive Officer E-Signature and Attestation

<input type="text"/>	First Name*	<input type="text"/>	Last Name*
<input type="text"/>	Title*		
<input type="text"/>	Email*		

I hereby attest that I am duly authorized to submit this application. By entering my name in the space above, I further certify, under the pains and penalties of perjury, that the responses to the questions provided in this application, and the attached documentation, are true, accurate, and complete. I understand that the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) will rely on the information provided in this application to make decisions about whether to award the Housing Choice Communities designation. Also, that the Commonwealth reserves the right to take action against me, the applicant organization, and/or any other beneficiary of a grant, if any of the information provided is determined to be false, inaccurate, or misleading. I also affirm that, if designated, the applicant community has the capacity to comply with all applicable laws and regulations.