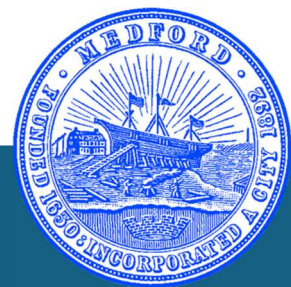


MCH Photo 2025

# Medford Affordable Housing Trust Action Plan and Guidelines, 2025-2030

October, 2025



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## Acknowledgements

The Medford Affordable Housing Trust Fund (AHTF) Board extends its sincere gratitude to all who offered their time and input to contribute to the vision of this Action Plan. We are grateful to our colleagues on the City Council for approving the establishment of the AHTF and on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for their role in providing funding to the AHTF Board. Many thanks to all who generously provided their support in holding two public community meetings, including the Medford Department of Public Works who provided a meeting space for the first community meeting.

Finally, we appreciate the feedback and guidance from stakeholders and members of the public who participated in the process of drafting this Action Plan.

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## Introduction

The Medford Affordable Housing Trust Fund (MAHTF) was established by the Medford City Council in 2024 in response to the city's growing affordable housing crisis. The MAHTF is overseen by a volunteer Board, appointed in July 2024, and supported by staff in the Medford Office of Planning, Development, and Sustainability (PDS). The structure of the MAHTF follows the provisions of the state's Municipal Affordable Housing Trust legislation, MGL c.44 s.55C. The primary purpose of the MAHTF is to pool funding and other resources to address Medford's affordable housing needs. The MAHTF can also play a role in advocating for affordable housing policies or being a liaison to affordable housing developers.

Members of the MAHTF Board have prepared this Action Plan to guide their activities over the next five years. The Board first evaluated socio-economic data to develop an assessment of housing needs and then gathered input from stakeholders and the public. The Board then developed goals and priorities based on an understanding of the context and the city's needs and opportunities.

## Background

The establishment of the MAHTF responds to strategies identified in planning efforts undertaken over recent years. This Action Plan also builds upon these previous plans.

- In 2015 Medford adopted the Community Preservation Act (CPA) through a ballot initiative. Under MGL c. 44B, CPA enables the City to establish a revenue stream that funds affordable housing along with two other program areas. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) prepared a Community Preservation Plan in 2017 with community and stakeholder input and conducts continual outreach to gather input on community needs and priorities and to identify potential partners who might apply for CPA funds to meet community needs. Stakeholder feedback highlighted the need for a housing plan and zoning to articulate the City's vision for housing development that would be welcomed, as well as additional funding and cost-saving strategies to support the construction of new affordable housing by nonprofit developers.
- Medford's first Housing Production Plan was adopted by City Council in 2021. This plan included a market analysis and articulated goals and strategies to help Medford produce more affordable housing. The Housing Production Plan identified rising housing costs and constrained housing supply as the most critical issues for Medford, in particular, noting a disproportional unmet demand for smaller housing units (resulting in a high proportion of unrelated people living together), as well as geographical inequity across

Medford neighborhoods. The Housing Production Plan articulated the following goals for housing in Medford:

1. Address local housing needs and meet production goals. Work to meet the 40B goal to have at least 10% of housing units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) and then continue to promote initiatives to address local housing needs. The plan set a target of 120 homes being added to the SHI annually, or 600 SHI units by 2025.
2. Promote a welcoming, diverse, intergenerational, and inclusive city with an ideal mix of housing choices that offer diverse options to residents with varying needs and preferences.
3. Foster safe, well-designed, and sustainable housing. Ensure new homes of all types are sensitive and compatible in scale, siting, and design to neighborhood context.
4. Integrate affordable and diverse housing options throughout the city at a scale that is compatible with the built environment.
5. Preserve the affordability of existing affordable homes.
6. Expand local capacity to implement housing initiatives.
7. Promote transparency and engagement and increase awareness of fair housing issues.

Housing Production Plan strategies included zoning amendments to increase housing supply and to promote fair housing, to leverage City resources to meet affordable housing needs including City-owned property and funding, and to build capacity through staffing and partnerships with the Medford Housing Authority, nonprofit organizations, and government entities in the region. Establishment of the Affordable Housing Trust was a strategy recommended in the Housing Production Plan.

- The Medford Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2023 following a broad multi-year public process. The Comprehensive Plan envisions future land use organized around institutional anchors, centers and squares, multi-use corridors, residential neighborhoods with varying density, along with green corridors, highlighting transformational focus areas that may accommodate increased density and commercial growth. Five overarching themes include Open and Engaged Communication, Climate Resilience, Access for All, Vibrant Places, and Welcoming & Supportive Neighborhoods. The plan identifies goals, objectives, and actions under each of these themes, along with benchmarks to serve as a point of reference against which progress can be tracked. While all the themes are interrelated, affordable housing is most directly addressed under Welcoming & Supportive Neighborhoods, for which benchmarks include total housing units, total multifamily housing units, percentage of population that is housing cost burdened, and number of first-time homebuyers among other metrics. The Comprehensive Plan articulates the following goals related to housing:



- Create, expand, and protect mixed-income housing options throughout the city to create a minimum of 600 units by 2025 as called for in the 2021 Housing Production Plan.
  1. Update zoning to allow for multifamily dwellings of different typologies in different zoning districts, such as APT-1, APT-2, C-1, and C-2.
  2. Actively pursue mixed-income and mixed-use residential development opportunities for vacant and underutilized lots in Medford's business districts, such as existing surface parking lots and property owned by state agencies.
  3. Identify appropriate housing types between four-family and more recent large developments to address a missing segment of housing size and affordability.
  4. Consider allowing smaller, infill housing on nonconforming lots to add to housing stock
  5. Review impact of inclusionary housing ordinance and consider changes, such as cash-in-lieu for units or partial units.
  6. Enable smaller and more diverse housing options through zoning updates.
  7. Update zoning to foster affordable infill development.
  8. Continue to foster partnerships and relationships with mission-driven and non-profit developers to amplify the work of the City, Housing Authority, and existing local housing organizations.
  9. Create neighborhood or area specific design guidelines for the Community Development Board to use at site plan review that consider history/development patterns.

## Methodology

To prepare this Action Plan, MAHT members and staff from Medford's Department of Planning, Development and Sustainability (PDS) undertook an assessment of Medford's housing needs and opportunities through data collection and consultation with public and stakeholders to inform the following goals, actions, and guidelines.

- In [Section 1](#), a Market Assessment identifies Medford's current conditions and housing needs. The analysis incorporates data primarily from public sources such as the American Community Survey (2018-2022), US Census, and Medford Assessor's Database. Some information was provided by staff of PDS and Medford Housing Authority or was obtained from proprietary sources such as The Warren Group and Multiple Listing Service. The market assessment also includes a summary of recent/ongoing development activity and policy initiatives provided by PDS staff.
- [Section 2](#) reports on input received through the process of preparing this plan. Stakeholder input was obtained through two focus group meetings held in December 2024 and January 2025. Over 30 organizations including affordable housing developers,

nonprofit housing service providers, and public entities that support affordable housing in the surrounding region were invited to provide input, and 21 participated in the stakeholder meetings. Highlights from these meetings are provided in Section 2, and a list of participants is provided in Appendix 1.

- Section 2 also includes a summary of findings from public engagement. A hybrid public workshop was held on March 12, 2025. Members of the MAHT presented findings from the market assessment and facilitated a conversation with residents about housing needs, goals, and potential strategies for the MAHT to address housing needs. Public comments were also gathered through a multilingual online community survey. The draft Action Plan will be presented in a second public meeting in July 2025, before the Action Plan is finally presented to City Council. Further information about survey results and participation in public engagement is provided in Appendix 1.
- [Section 3](#) envisions a mission, goals, and actions to guide the MAHT. Members of the AHT worked together to develop the Action Plan, incorporating the market assessment and input from stakeholders and public, along with guidance from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

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# Executive Summary

## Housing Market Assessment

### Who lives in Medford?

- **Medford gained over 4,000 young adults (ages 20-34) between 2010 and 2020.** All other age groups stayed the same or lost population during this time.
- We are experiencing a significant increase in non-family households – i.e., roommate situations. Fewer families, seniors, or people living alone.
- Medford is gaining in diversity – currently one third of residents identify with a racial or ethnic minority and one quarter were born outside the US.
- Medford has a smaller share of people with disabilities than state average. (This might reflect a lack of accessible housing.)

### What does Medford's housing look like?

- 35% of Medford units are in 2-3 family buildings, while 39% are single family. 47% are renter-occupied.
- **Most of our 2-3 family housing is around 100 years old.** The rate of all home construction sharply declined after 1940 and has mostly been single families and larger multifamily and condos ever since.
- Average assessed values of single families and condos have increased by 50-60% since 2017. Newer units are increasingly larger and more expensive, with an average assessed value of over \$1M for single family homes built after 2000.
- **Housing has a lower value per unit as the number of units in a building increases.**
- Medford lacks smaller-sized units – only 15% have one bedroom, while 28% of households have only one person. Moreover, many roommate households would likely prefer living alone in smaller units.

### Who is struggling with housing costs in Medford?

- **Around 5,500 households (25%) are below 50% AMI.** Two-thirds of these are housing-cost burdened, with a significant share spending more than half of their income on housing.
- **Medford has a significant share of low-income homeowners.** Seniors (over age 65) comprise 33% of all homeowners, and the median income for senior households is only \$44,000.
- The median household income for all households is \$115,000 (2018-2022 ACS). Young adults, renters, and nonfamily households have lower median incomes, but the disparity is less than the county or state-level data.
- **Median household income for renters has increased rapidly,** reflecting the income that it requires to move into most apartments in Medford and the loss of lower income households being displaced by rent escalation.

- **Seniors are experiencing the highest rate of housing cost burden**, both among renters and homeowners.

### **Existing Resources:**

- **Medford SHI as of 11/12/24: 8.12% - 2,089 units** which includes public housing, project-based Section 8 housing, and mixed-income development. This includes one 40B site which has received a Comprehensive Permit but is not yet constructed. A second 40B site will be re-added to the SHI count when building permits are issued.
- **CPA annual revenue about \$2M** annually. Over 6 years City has spent roughly \$4M on affordable housing
- Part of North Suburban HOME Consortium which shares \$2.3M (PY24) among 8 communities
- Medford receives approximately \$1.4M (PY24) annually from CDBG

## Recent Housing Strategies and Initiatives

Housing Production Plan & Comprehensive Plan Themes	Status	Initiatives
Amend zoning to allow more density, diverse housing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MBTA Communities: Wellington Station Multifamily Overlay District (WSMOD) with affordable incentive adopted in 2023</li> <li>• Zoning overhaul – currently underway. Mystic Ave Corridor District and Salem Street Neighborhood Corridor District have already been adopted; additional mixed-use corridors, Medford Square, West Medford Square Neighborhood and Urban Residential districts, and Tufts Institutional District Zoning under discussion</li> <li>• Proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance amendment to be more permissive than required by the Affordable Homes Act.</li> <li>• Affordable Infill Zoning under consideration.</li> </ul>
Leverage City-owned lots to create affordable housing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust to work with City Staff and City Council to convey small City-owned lots for affordable Housing</li> <li>• Developer selected through RFP for redevelopment of Medford Square City-owned lots</li> <li>• Future RFP for air rights over MBTA at Wellington; potential 350-1,440 units</li> </ul>
Foster partnership with mission-driven and nonprofit developers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City staff is establishing connections with area nonprofits</li> <li>• Feasibility study to establish a Community Land Trust</li> <li>• Identify potential partnership to create senior housing</li> </ul>
Support MHA Housing Developments		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saltonstall nearly completed; Walkling Court ready to start redevelopment; LaPrise Village potentially next in queue</li> </ul>
Preserve affordable units		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42 Water St. affordability restrictions extended until 2044</li> </ul>
Establish/expand programs to support low-income households		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Rehab Program - up to \$50,000 per property for approx. 4 homeowner occupied properties</li> <li>• HOME funds for Down Payment Assistance budgeted \$80,000 (\$10,000 per applicant)</li> <li>• CPA and CDBG-funded stability programs through Housing Families &amp; ABCD</li> </ul>
Expand resources to support affordable housing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Planner position increased to full time</li> <li>• Medford Affordable Housing Trust (MAHT) established in 2024</li> <li>• Update linkage fee and inclusionary zoning ordinances to generate more revenue for MAHT; requires nexus study</li> </ul>
Fair housing, tenants rights and housing displacement prevention		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform tenants of their rights and responsibilities</li> <li>• Develop tools to prevent displacement</li> <li>• Promote renting to voucher holders</li> </ul>
Enhance community education and advocacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with Housing Medford and Abundant Housing MA, CHAPA technical assistance</li> </ul>

Complete		In Progress		Not Initiated	
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## Housing Trust Action Plan Summary

### Mission Statement

To create and preserve community housing, including affordable homeownership and rental opportunities and other forms of housing assistance for low- and moderate-income residents in Medford.

### Goals

- Promote a welcoming, diverse, intergenerational, and inclusive city with a mix of housing choices that offer diverse options to residents with varying needs and preferences.
- Use financial and property resources to address local housing needs and meet production goals established in the housing production plan, and to preserve the affordability of existing affordable homes.
- Foster safe, well-designed, accessible and sustainable housing. Integrate affordable and diverse housing options throughout the city.
- Expand local capacity to implement housing initiatives by building partnerships with mission-driven organizations and developers seeking to build affordable housing.
- Increase communication about housing resources across the community.

### Priority Actions

- Build a relationship with the CPC.
- Build affordable housing in partnership with mission-driven organizations and developers seeking to build affordable housing as well as Medford Housing Authority.
- Preserve and convert existing housing to long-term affordability.
- Support existing homeowners and first-time homebuyers.
- Fund housing stability programs.
- Prioritize funding for units affordable to households with lower incomes.
- Advocate for affordable housing development and policies that maximize the resources available to meet the city's housing needs
  - Explore and act upon funding opportunities for the Trust
  - Work with developers to build support and navigate approval process
  - Work with partner organizations to establish programs that meet local needs
  - Support initiatives to expand tenant protections and stabilize existing tenancies
  - Provide guidance on affordable housing projects funded through CPA program

Section 3 of the Action Plan further identifies potential sources of revenue for the MAHT to explore and advocate for, as well as guidelines and procedures for using AHT funds to support the construction of affordable housing.

# Section 1: Market Assessment

## Population and Households

Medford had a population of approximately 61,748 in 2022, with 25,359 households. The population has moderately increased over the past few decades, growing by 7 percent between 1990 and 2022. The most striking population growth has occurred among young adults. While all other age cohorts declined or stayed approximately the same between 2010 and 2020, the number of residents between the ages of 20-34 grew by 4,000 residents, representing a 28 percent increase. ACS estimates indicate that Medford has continued to gain another 1,000 young adults since 2020.

Table 1: Medford Population 1990 – 2050									
Ages	1990	2000	2010	2020 (Projected)	2020 (Actuals)	2022	2030	2040	2050
0-4	3,224	2,718	2,923	3,368	3,257	2,703	3,324	3,212	3,248
5-19	9,249	9,097	8,221	7,441	7,491	7,827	7,264	7,393	7,376
20-34	16,755	13,772	14,782	15,307	18,908	19,950	13,671	13,069	13,179
35-49	10,555	12,474	11,552	11,255	11,003	11,243	12,727	12,867	12,606
50-64	8,029	8,038	10,132	11,132	10,055	10,412	9,900	10,316	11,258
65+	9,595	9,666	8,563	9,578	9,468	9,613	14,776	15,952	16,055
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,407</b>	<b>55,765</b>	<b>56,173</b>	<b>58,081</b>	<b>59,659</b>	<b>61,748</b>	<b>58,486</b>	<b>58,821</b>	<b>59,513</b>
10 Year Rate of Growth		-2.9%	0.7%	3.4%	6.2%		-2.0%	0.6%	1.2%
Source: US Census (1990 – 2020), ACS (2022), MAPC Population Projections (2030-2050)									
Population change illustrated by color: Decline in Population Increase in Population Lower than Projected Higher than projected									

Related to the overall population change, Medford is also experiencing a shift in the composition of households. While average household size remains about the same between 2010 and 2022, the proportion of nonfamily households has increased relative to families. There are comparatively fewer households with seniors over age 65 or households with children. These trends may relate to the availability of housing suitable for households in these age groups. As the share of individuals living alone has also decreased, the additional non-family households represent a growth of unrelated people cohabitating as roommates. Medford stands out in comparison to Middlesex County and the state overall in terms of these household trends.

Table 2: Household Composition							
	Average Household Size	Families	Nonfamily Households	Individuals Living Alone	Seniors 65+ Living alone	With Own Children under 18	With Seniors over 65
Medford (2010)	2.35	60%	40%	29%	13%	22%	29%
Medford (2022)	2.35	55%	45%	28%	11%	20%	27%
Middlesex County	2.49	63%	37%	26%	11%	27%	29%
Massachusetts	2.46	63%	37%	29%	12%	26%	32%
Source: ACS Five-Year Estimates 2006-2010, 2018-2022							

Approximately one third of Medford's population belongs to a racial and/or ethnic minority group, on par with the average statewide. The most common minority groups are Asian (11 percent), and Black (8 percent), while 6 percent of Medford residents are Hispanic. One quarter of Medford residents were born outside of the US, and about 10 percent lack proficiency with English. About 9 percent of Medford residents have a disability, which is less than the average statewide. Again, this may be related to the relative age of Medford's housing stock and the lack of accessible housing suitable for people with disabilities.

Table 3: Social Characteristics					
	Medford	MA		Medford	MA
White, not Hispanic	67%	68%	Born in US	75%	79%
Asian	11%	7%	Proficient with English	90%	90%
Black	8%	6%			
Other	8%	6%	Have Disability	9%	12%
Hispanic (any race)	6%	13%	Over age 65 with Disability	12%	11%
Source: 2020 U.S. Census			Source: 2022 ACS		

Table 4 shows how social characteristics of Medford residents have been shifting over the past decade, in comparison to statewide population trends. The average age of Medford residents has declined while the state overall has grown older. Medford has also gained relatively more residents who are in a racial/ethnic minority and who are immigrants.

Table 4: Social Characteristics Change, 2010-2022				
	Medford 2010	Medford 2022	Medford Change 2010-2022	MA Change 2010-2022
Population	55,451	61,748	11%	8%
Median Age	37.9	35.4	-7%	3%
Racial/Ethnic Minority	24%	32%	33%	23%
Foreign Born	21%	24%	26%	15%
Source: ACS 2006-2010; 2018-2022				



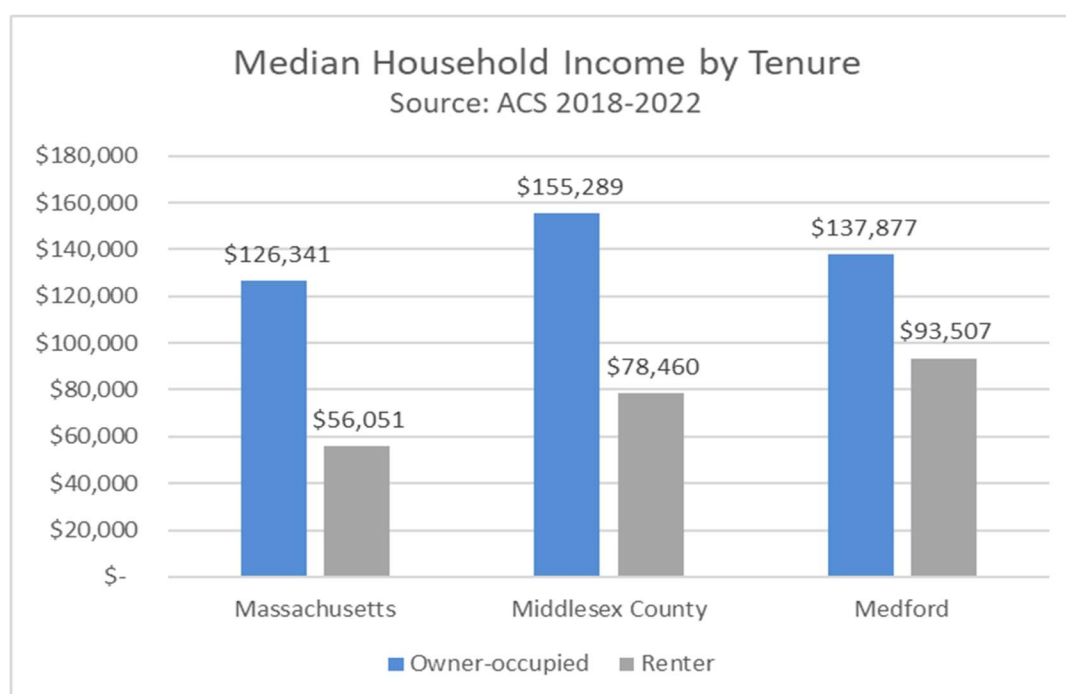
The rate of income growth in Medford has outpaced the state overall since 2015. At \$114,863, Medford's median household income is relatively high compared with the state and has increased faster than statewide. Incomes vary widely depending on household characteristics. While the median for families is nearly \$140,000, nonfamily households, who are largely young adults and individuals living alone, have a median income of \$84,248. Medford's nonfamily households have relatively high incomes compared to the state, which may reflect a larger share of roommates (i.e., multiple wage earners) relative to individuals living alone.

The median income for seniors over age 65 is much lower, at \$44,230 in Medford compared with \$61,624 statewide. The disparity between seniors and younger households reflects a rapid acceleration in housing costs in Medford, where newcomers require a higher income to move into Medford than people who secured homes here many years ago.

Table 5: Median Household Incomes					
	Median Income All Households	Change in Household Income since 2015	Median Family Income	Median Nonfamily Income	Median Income Senior Households
<b>Medford</b>	<b>\$114,863</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>\$139,636</b>	<b>\$84,248</b>	<b>\$44,230</b>
Massachusetts	\$96,505	41%	\$122,530	\$56,588	\$61,624

Source: ACS 2018-2022

Homeowners typically have higher household incomes than renters. In Medford the disparity between household incomes for renters and homeowners is less than for Massachusetts and Middlesex County. This may be due to older homeowners with lower incomes, combined with the accelerating cost of rent and the demographic composition of renter households.



As shown in Table 6, just over half of Medford’s households own their own homes. Renters are more likely than homeowners to have very low incomes, and less likely to have high incomes. Households with moderately-low or middle income are about as likely to be renters as homeowners. Renters are slightly more likely to live in 1-2 person households, while homeowners are more likely to have larger households. About half of renter households are headed by people under age 35, while 12 percent of renters are over age 65. A third of homeowners are over the age of 65, while the majority are aged 35-64.

<b>Table 6: Characteristics of Homeowner and Renter Households</b>			
	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Renter</b>	<b>Renters as % of all Households</b>
<b>Medford Households</b>	<b>13,520</b>	<b>11,839</b>	<b>47%</b>
Less than \$50,000	23%	31%	62%
\$50,000-\$99,999	20%	22%	51%
\$100,000-\$149,999	19%	20%	47%
\$150,000 +	38%	28%	35%
<b>1-2 person households</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>3 or more persons</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>44%</b>
Householder age 15-34	12%	49%	78%
Householder age 35-64	55%	39%	38%
Householder age 65 and older	33%	12%	25%

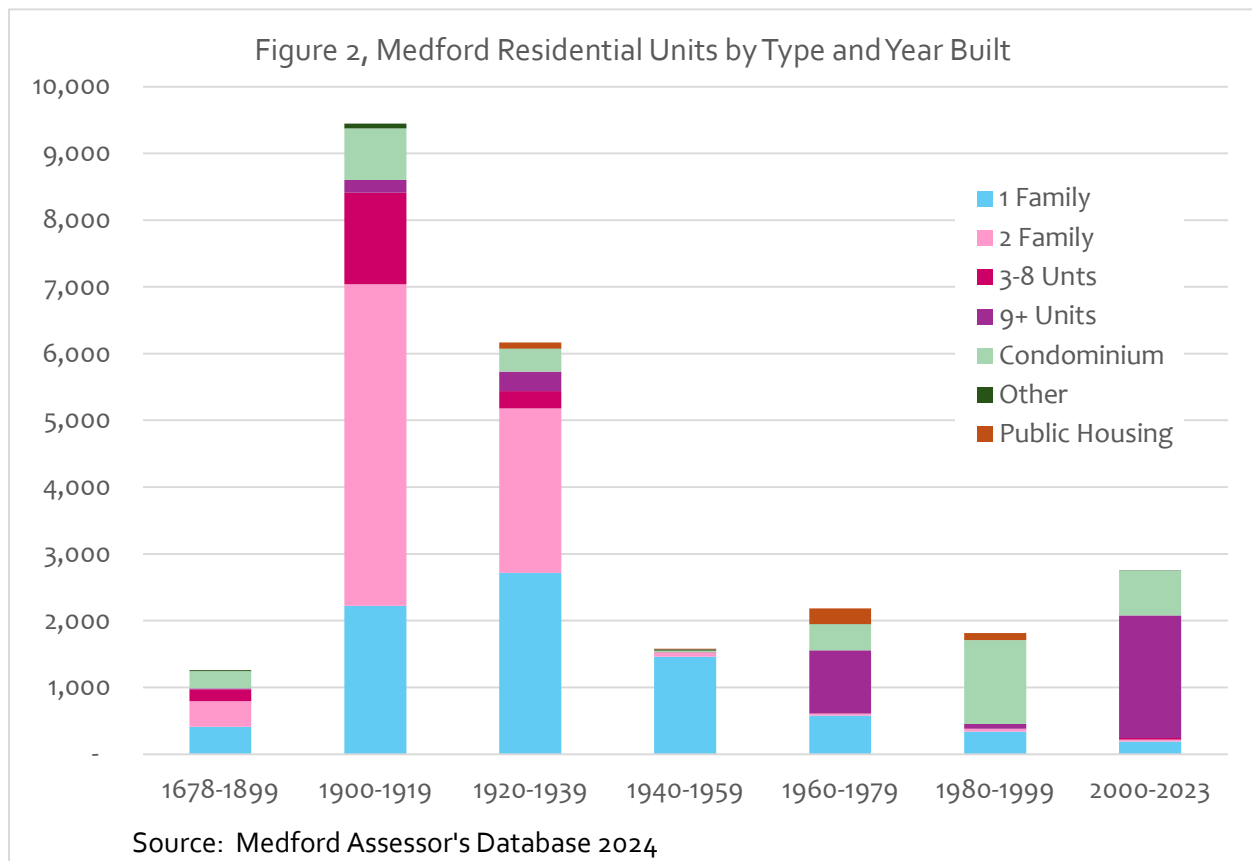
Source: ACS 2018-2022

There are approximately 5,800 households headed by people aged 15-34. Tufts reports that in 2024-2025 about 1,400 undergraduate students live off campus in Medford.<sup>1</sup> As many of these individuals are living in apartments with 2-5 roommates, undergraduate student households represent a small minority of young adult renter households.

## Housing Conditions

The chart below shows the diversity of Medford’s housing stock by era of construction. From 1900-1939 there was a boom in housing construction which accounts for a large share of Medford’s overall housing supply. During this time, two-family homes were the dominant housing type, with a large number of single-family homes and a smaller number of 3 family and larger apartment buildings. The construction of all but single-family homes abruptly halted after 1940. Beginning in the 1960s, the volume of single family home construction declined while larger multifamily homes (rentals and condominiums) became more prevalent. Public housing was constructed mostly between 1960 and 1980.

<sup>1</sup> Tufts Director of Off-Campus Engagement, 1/10/2025



The average assessed value of single-family homes in 2024 is \$769,306. The quality, style, size, and cost of homes vary by age. For example, homes built between 1900-1980 tend to be smaller and less expensive. The mid-20th century saw the construction of relatively modest homes, while the average size has increased steadily since 1980. The average value of homes built since 2000 is over \$1M, with an average size of 2,400 square feet.

The average value of condos is \$548,252. The largest era of condo construction took place in the 1980s. About 660 condos have been built since 2000, with an average value of \$705,086. Condos in buildings constructed before 1940 are largely from the conversion of small multifamily properties. A comparison of Assessor's data from 2017 and 2024 shows a significant decline in the number of small multifamily properties, showing as many as 10 percent may have been converted to condos or some other use.

It is notable that the average value per unit decreases with additional units in small multifamily properties (2-8 units). These appear to be the most affordable housing stock in Medford, most of them being over 100 years old. It may be that larger multifamily buildings tend to have a larger cost per unit than smaller multifamily buildings because they tend to be in newer

buildings, with the average year of construction being 1984. Compared with newer condos, the value per unit is still considerably lower for rental versus ownership units.

<b>Table 7: Residential properties in Medford by Type and Year Built</b>				
<b>Use/Year Built</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Average Value</b>	<b>Average Living Area (Square Feet)</b>	<b>Value per Square Foot</b>
<b>Single Family</b>	<b>7,885</b>	<b>\$769,306</b>	<b>1,712</b>	<b>\$464</b>
before 1900	406	\$836,528	2,109	\$409
1900-1919	2,216	\$751,930	1,767	\$440
1920-1939	2,708	\$768,731	1,680	\$468
1940-1959	1,458	\$719,659	1,533	\$486
1960-1979	572	\$753,432	1,548	\$501
1980-1999	336	\$881,292	1,803	\$510
2000-2023	189	\$1,068,814	2,407	\$452
<b>Condominiums</b>	<b>3,704</b>	<b>\$548,252</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>\$466</b>
1800-1899	260	\$519,981	1,186	\$459
1900-1919	775	\$574,533	1,317	\$455
1920-1939	337	\$533,592	1,197	\$467
1940-1959	23	\$603,765	1,284	\$475
1960-1979	392	\$387,310	924	\$429
1980-1999	1,257	\$509,130	1,151	\$445
2000-2016	660	\$705,086	1,405	\$540
<b>Other Residential</b>	<b>Parcels</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Average Year Built (per unit)</b>	<b>Average Value per Unit</b>
Two-Family	3,911	7,834	1913	\$451,451
Three-Family	472	1,411	1906	\$343,534
Multiple Houses on Single Lot	21	34	1911	\$698,085
Multi-family Apartments (4-8 Units)	81	431	1912	\$291,828
Multifamily Apartments (9+Units)	55	3,346	1984	\$311,731
Specialized/Subsidized Housing*	38	973	1971	\$534,499
Source: <i>Vision Governmental Solutions</i> , City of Medford Assessor's Database, FY2024				
* Includes public housing, nursing homes, group homes, and housing owned by non-profit organizations.				

Between 2017 and 2024 assessed values have risen by over 50 percent for all housing types. The average value per unit of single and two-family homes and large multifamily apartments rose by about 50-60 percent over this time, while the average value per unit in small multifamily buildings (4-8 units) doubled.

<b>Table 8: Medford Assessor's Data Comparison 2017-2024</b>		
	<b>Approximate change in units*</b>	<b>% Change in average value per unit</b>
Single Family	-22	62%
Condo	404	52%
Two-Family	-990	63%
Three-Family	-55	51%
Multi-family Apartments (4-8 Units)	-5	101%
Multifamily Apartments (9+Units)	990	62%
* Some discrepancies in unit count may be caused by missing records in either of the two years' data sets. It is especially likely that the number of condos is under-counted in 2024.		

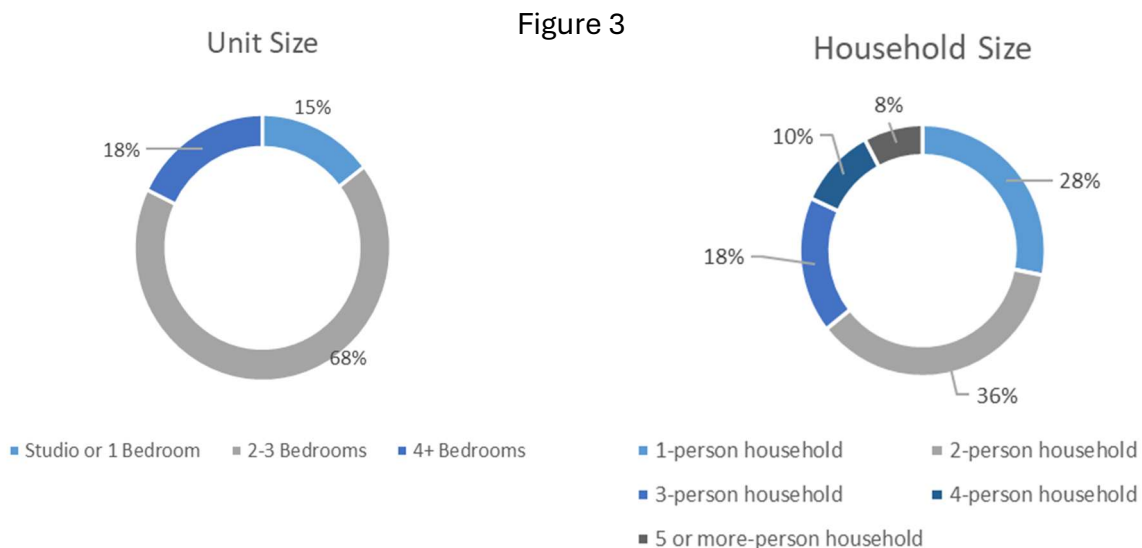
By US Census count, Medford added 1,743 housing units between 2010 and 2020, a growth rate of 7 percent. Among neighboring communities Medford had the third lowest rate of growth behind Winchester and Arlington. Somerville, Melrose and Everett had comparable, slightly higher rates of growth, while Malden was higher at 9.7 percent, and Cambridge was highest at 13.6 percent.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) maintains a list of units that it categorizes as affordable in every community in the Commonwealth, known as the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). EOHLC tracks the number of affordable units compared with the number of year-round housing units counted in the decennial Census with a goal that each community should have at least 10 percent of units listed on the SHI. Medford's SHI was at 7 percent of the housing stock in 2023, the year of comparison (which has now climbed to 8 percent in 2025). By comparison Winchester, Everett, and Arlington have lower proportions of affordable units at 3, 5, and 6 percent respectively. Melrose, Somerville, and Malden have 8-9 percent affordable units, while Cambridge is highest at 13 percent.

Of the surrounding communities, Arlington and Medford made the most advancement in adding affordable units between 2020-2023; Medford gained 47 SHI units and Arlington added 170 units, while Malden and Melrose also added some new affordable units. Some surrounding communities lost affordable units in the preceding five years due to expiring subsidies. Besides development or loss of affordable units, growth in year-round housing units between 2010 and 2020 has also impacted the percentage of SHI for Medford and all the surrounding communities.

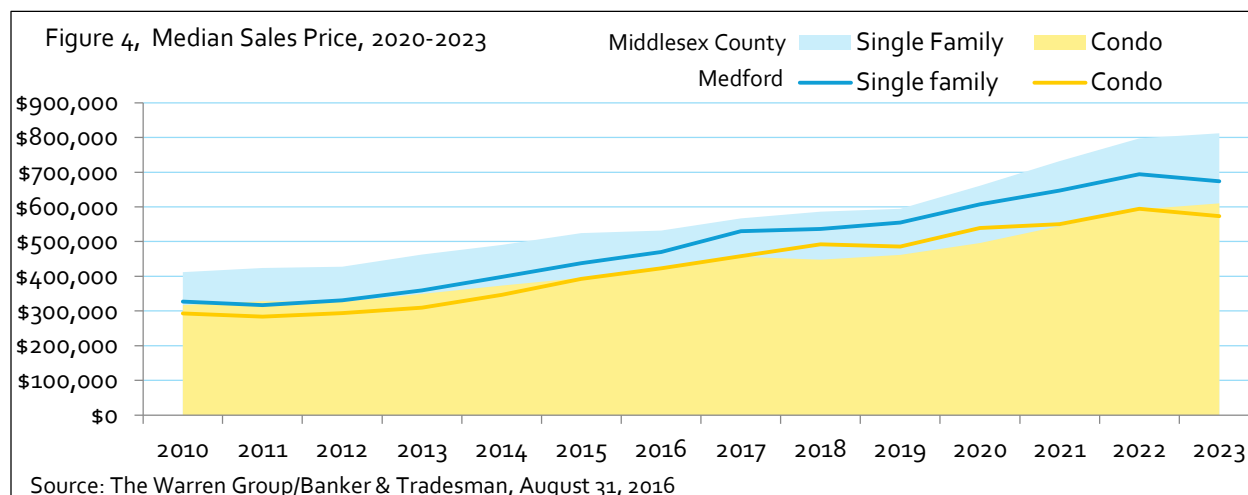
Table 9: Subsidized Housing Inventory					
Communities	Total year-round housing (2020)	SHI units as of June 29, 2023	Percentage of SHI units	Total Housing Growth rate 2010-2020	Change in number of SHI units 2017-2023
Medford	25,711	1,766	6.87%	7%	72
Cambridge	53,467	6,896	12.90%	15%	-15
Somerville	36,167	3,236	8.95%	8%	-14
Malden	27,676	2,594	9.37%	10%	52
Winchester	8,073	248	3.07%	2%	4
Arlington	20,400	1,299	6.37%	3%	178
Melrose	12,580	967	7.69%	7%	35
Everett	18,177	819	4.51%	9%	-242
Source: Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC)					

As pointed out in the Housing Production Plan, there is a mismatch between the size of housing units available in Medford and the size of households. Only 15 percent of units have one bedroom, compared with 28 percent of 1-person households. Moreover, as noted above, an increasing share of nonfamily households indicates a growing number of households who are living with roommates, many of whom would likely prefer to have smaller housing units by themselves rather than occupying larger units with roommates.



Median sales prices in Medford have doubled since 2010, closely following trends in sales prices across Middlesex County. Median prices for condos and single-family homes are almost the same, although condo prices have fluctuated more than single family prices. Homes in Medford

continue to be relatively affordable compared to all of Middlesex County, with single family homes averaging \$600,000 in Medford compared to \$800,000 county-wide.



There is no source of comprehensive data tracking rental rates over time. While many units are listed on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), a large segment of the rental market is marketed directly by landlords using social media platforms or by word of mouth.<sup>2</sup> Table 10 shows a snapshot of units listed on Craigslist.com and Facebook marketplace on January 11, 2025. The average rent for one-bedroom apartments is just over \$2,000 at this time, while two bedroom apartments are renting for \$2,600 to \$2,700 per month. MLS also reports that the average rent for 2-bedroom apartments was approximately \$2,700 per month in 2024.<sup>3</sup> For individual room rentals advertised on Craigslist and Facebook, the average asking rent was just over \$1,100 per month. The asking rent for all apartments with two or more bedrooms was comparable in price to individual room rentals. This means that larger apartments are priced with the assumption that they will be occupied by roommates, and not by family households.

	Advertised Rent	# or % of listings	Advertised Rent	# or % of listings
Rooms for Rent	\$1,142	24 rooms	\$1,122	37 rooms
1-Bedroom	\$2,078	15%	\$2,294	15%
2-Bedroom	\$2,755	52%	\$2,615	22%
3-Bedroom	\$3,466	18%	\$3,495	30%
4+ Bedroom	\$4,168	15%	\$4,724	32%
Average per bedroom (2+)	\$1,195		\$1,135	
Total Units Observed	Craigslist	33 apartments	Facebook	63 apartments

Source: Medford listings on Craigslist.com and Facebook Marketplace, observed 1/11/2025

<sup>2</sup> Medford recently joined Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, Arlington and Quincy in an MAPC collaborative that tracks rental prices in those communities, but the data was not available at the time of this report.

<sup>3</sup> MLS Property Information Network, Inc., 2024 Residential Rental Listings 2 bedroom/1 bathroom

Consistent with Assessor’s data, the American Community Survey indicates that owner-occupied homes have increased in value by 67 percent between 2015 and 2022. Over this time, homeowner household incomes increased by only 26 percent. The increase in value surpassed the state average, while the increase in income was below average for Massachusetts.

Household incomes for renters in Medford grew faster than average rents over this time. This may be due to the higher income needed to rent in Medford and higher rate of turnover of renter households (which might be driven by the rate of rent increases). An increase in renter household incomes may indicate an increase in the number of wage earners in each household, consistent with a trend toward more apartments being shared by roommates rather than family households. Finally, higher renter household income may also reflect a trend toward more stringent standards for rental applicants, such as high credit scores. In contrast to homeowner incomes, which lagged behind the state, Medford rents *and* incomes grew faster than the state average.

<b>Table 11: Housing Cost and Household Income, 2015-2022</b>				
<b>Renter-Occupied</b>	<b>Median Rent 2022</b>	<b>Change in Rent 2015-2022</b>	<b>Median Income 2022</b>	<b>Change in Income 2015-2022</b>
Medford	\$2,305	56%	\$93,505	65%
MA	\$1,588	44%	\$56,051	48%
<b>Owner-Occupied</b>	<b>Median Value 2022</b>	<b>Change in Value 2015-2022</b>	<b>Median Income 2022</b>	<b>Change in Income 2015-2022</b>
Medford	\$669,600	67%	\$114,863	26%
MA	\$483,900	45%	\$126,341	37%
Source: ACS 2011-2015, 2018-2022				
Note: ACS estimates for median housing costs include both market rate and subsidized housing.				

A large number of both renters and homeowners are burdened with high housing costs (defined as paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing.) About 36 percent of homeowners and 42 percent of renters are housing cost burdened. Households with incomes below \$50,000 per year have the highest incidence of cost burden, while a high proportion of renters earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000 are also struggling.



Table 12: Housing Cost Burden by Income				
Renters Household Income	Pay 30-50% of Income	Pay more than 50% of Income	Total Cost-burdened Renters	Total % Cost Burdened
Less than \$50,000	591	1,808	2,399	66%
\$50,000-\$74,999	624	329	953	73%
\$75,000 or more	881	146	1,027	15%
Total	2,003	2,058	4,061	42%
Homeowners Household Income	Pay 30-50% of Income	Pay more than 50% of Income	Total Cost-burdened Homeowners	Total % Cost Burdened
Less than \$50,000	478	1,335	1,813	80%
\$50,000-\$74,999	314	193	507	35%
\$75,000-\$99,999	409	35	444	44%
\$100,000 or more	1,036	8	1,044	12%
Total	2,602	1,882	4,484	36%

Source: ACS 2018-2022 B25074 and B25095

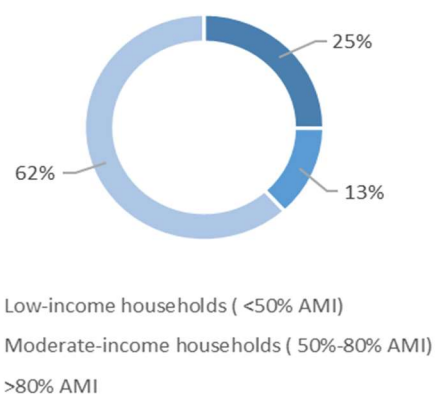
Young adult households (under age 25) and seniors are experiencing a higher rate of housing cost burden for both renters and homeowners. (There are very few homeowner households headed by persons under age 25.)

Table 13: Housing Cost Burden by Age of Householder				
Age of Householder	Renter households	% Cost Burdened	Owner households	% Cost Burdened
Under 25 years	653	48%	30	35%
25-34 years	1,198	27%	446	29%
35-64 years	1,860	41%	1,726	23%
65+ years	668	46%	1,606	36%
Total	4,397	37%	3,808	28%

Source: ACS 2018-2022

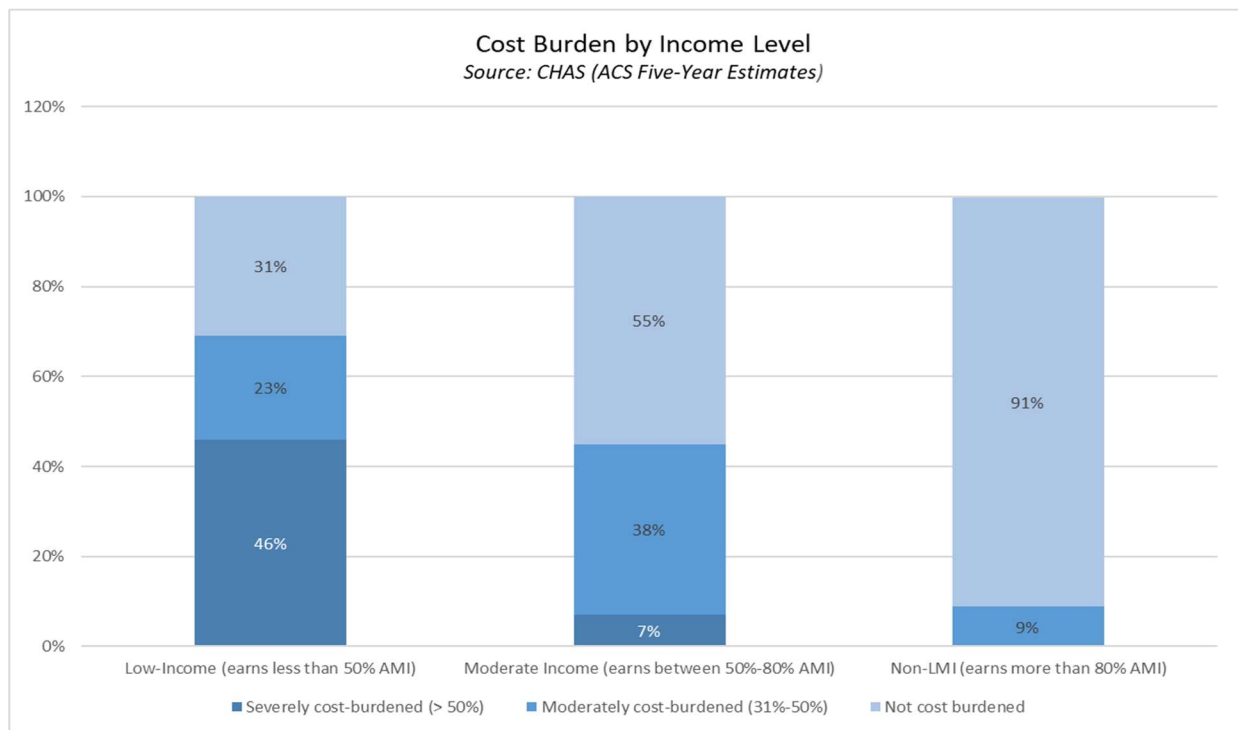
The Federal government provides a custom tabulation of Census and ACS data known as Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) to provide more detailed information about housing affordability. CHAS data identifies categories of households based upon household size and income. Households who earn less than 50 percent of Area Median Income (AMI), relative to the number of persons in the household are considered "Low Income", while those with an income between 50-80 percent of AMI are considered "Moderate Income". According to 2017-2021 CHAS estimates,

#### Household Income Levels (2017-2021)



about 38 percent (9,480) of Medford households earn incomes at or below 80% of AMI. Of these, about two-thirds have incomes below 50% of AMI.

Two thirds of households who earn less than 50% AMI are experiencing housing cost burden, a large share of whom are paying more than half of their income on housing. Among households who earn between 50-80% AMI, about 45 percent are paying more than they can afford for housing



The Area Median Income used to determine eligibility for various affordable housing and economic stability programs is updated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) each year. Various programs and service providers develop income limits for qualifying households that are pegged to different variations of the AMI, depending on specific program guidelines. Table 14 shows an example of typical income limits for common levels of affordable housing programs in 2025 for the greater Boston region, to which Medford belongs.

Table 14: Sample Income Limits, FY 2025						
Household Size	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six
30% AMI	\$34,300	\$39,200	\$44,100	\$48,950	\$52,900	\$56,800
60% AMI	\$68,520	\$78,360	\$88,140	\$97,920	\$105,780	\$113,640
80% of AMI	\$83,384	\$95,296	\$107,208	\$119,120	\$128,650	\$138,179
100% of AMI	\$104,230	\$119,120	\$134,010	\$148,900	\$160,812	\$172,724

## Affordable Housing Inventory

As mentioned previously, the state Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) maintains a list of housing units in every community that are affordable to low-income households called the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). To be included on the SHI, housing units should have a long-term deed restriction making them affordable to households earning up to 80% of AMI, and they must be rented or leased following state guidelines for a fair housing marketing plan. The state has set a goal that each community should have at least 10 percent of its housing eligible to be included on this list. Medford currently has just over 2,000 units listed on the SHI, or 8.12 percent of its 2020 housing stock (25,711 units).

Table 15: Medford SHI Inventory		
Type	Units	Description
Public Housing	851	100% are deeply affordable
Project-based Section 8 Housing	700	52% are deeply affordable in two all-affordable and one mixed-income development
40B Developments	289	25% are affordable at 80% AMI
Other Mixed-Income Developments	170	100% are affordable at varying levels
Non-profit Housing Organizations	28	100% are affordable at varying levels
DDS/DMH	49	100% are affordable; some likely duplication with units above
<b>Total SHI</b>	<b>2,089</b>	<b>1,548 income-restricted units</b>
Source: EOHLC SHI 11/2024; PDS		

- Public Housing. The largest provider of affordable housing in Medford is the Medford Housing Authority (MHA), which owns and maintains 851 units of deeply affordable housing at 9 sites across the city. These include 559 units for seniors and people with disabilities, as well as 292 family units. MHA is redeveloping two of its existing developments, Saltonstall (under construction) and Walkling Court (in permitting). The units created through these developments are not yet added to the SHI.

Table 16: Medford Housing Authority Sites	
Elderly/Disabled	
Tempone (Allston Street)	100 units
Walkling Court	144 units
Doherty Building (Fellsway West)	15 units
Phillips Building (Canal Street)	17 units
Weldon Gardens (Bradlee Rd)	75 units
Foster Court	8 units
Saltonstall (Riverside Ave)	200 units (will be 222)
Family	
Willis	150 units
LaPrise Village	142 units

Not counted on the SHI, MHA also administers 967 mobile housing vouchers and 15 Massachusetts rental vouchers. These vouchers may be used by very low-income households to live anywhere in the country. Reportedly, it has been very difficult for voucher-holders to find housing in Medford where they can use their vouchers due to

high market rents and discrimination.<sup>4</sup> In some cases vouchers are used by very low-income households to rent SHI-listed units that are affordable to households earning 80 percent of AMI.

- Project-based Section 8 Housing. In addition to MHA properties, Medford has three developments that participate in project-based section 8 program. These are private developments where the federal government, HUD, provides funds to subsidize the units for low-moderate income households, seniors and persons with disabilities. Two developments have 100 percent affordable units while the third development has 130 (27.9 percent) affordable units and 335 market rate units. Because it is a rental site with at least 25 percent affordable units, all the units count on the SHI, including the market rate units.
- Chapter 40B. To date, Medford has permitted two developments under M.G.L. Chapter 40B, which provides a streamlined permitting process for development which does not comply with local land use regulations if the proposed development includes at least 25 percent affordable units. If communities have less than 10 percent of their housing stock included on the SHI, Chapter 40B requires that Comprehensive Permits be granted to qualifying proposals. (Communities that have above 10 percent SHI units have discretion to grant Comprehensive Permits to developments that have local support.)

Although neither has been constructed yet, one of the sites, 970 Fellsway with 289 units, is currently included on the SHI because it has been recently approved, while the other, 4000 Mystic Valley Parkway with 350 units, will be restored to the SHI soon because they recently received their building permits. Where rental developments have at least 25 percent affordable units, the entire site is counted toward the SHI. Thus, the two sites combined will contribute 639 units to Medford's SHI when they are built, although they will have 161 affordable units affordable at 80 percent AMI and 478 market rate units.

- Other Mixed Income Development. Prior to adopting an Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance in 2019, Medford encouraged the creation of affordable housing units in major development projects through development agreements. A total of 170 affordable units were produced across 22 developments that also have market rate units. Only the affordable units in these sites are included in the SHI.
- Non-profit Housing Organizations. Medford has a small amount of existing affordable housing which is owned and managed by non-profit organizations including Medford Community Housing, Caritas Communities, Boston Ave Housing Corporation,

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<sup>4</sup> Qualified Renters Need Not Apply: Race and Voucher Discrimination in the Metro Boston Rental Housing Market; Suffolk University Law School and The Boston Foundation, July 2020

Cooperative for Human Services, and Tri City Housing Task Force (Housing Families). Some of this housing serves specific needs such as individuals or families who are at risk of homelessness. A total of 28 units are included in this category.

- An additional 49 units counted on the SHI are reported by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Department of Mental Health (DMH) which serves some people with disabilities. The locations of these scattered site placements of residents supported by DDS and DMH are not disclosed. In many cases they may be duplicated on the SHI, as they may be in sites counted within other categories.

## Homelessness

As with every community, many Medford residents have experienced homelessness or are at risk of losing their housing. Homeless families and individuals include victims of domestic violence, veterans, people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders, and unaccompanied youth, among others. The high cost of housing, scarcity of affordable housing options, and access to health care are challenges contributing to increasing homelessness in the region. There are also many residents in Medford whose housing is unstable due to doubling up with friends and relatives, or living in hotels or short-term room rentals, substandard habitations, or homes that have deteriorated in condition to the point of being unsafe. Enforcement of health, zoning, and building codes could lead to these residents becoming homeless due to their homes being condemned. There is little available data to quantify the extent of homelessness impacting Medford residents. While the closest available emergency and transitional shelter facilities are located in surrounding communities, there are unsheltered

### What does "unhoused" mean?

- An individual or family that lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- An individual who lived in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where (s)he temporarily lived (less than 90 days);
- An individual or family that will imminently lose their nighttime residence due to a court order to vacate, or insufficient resources to remain in a hotel or motel, or is no longer allowed to stay by the owner or renter of the housing with whom the individual or family is staying;
- Unaccompanied youth or homeless families with children who are considered homeless under any federal law, who have experienced long-term periods without permanent housing, or who have experienced persistent instability and are expected to continue without stability for an extended period; or
- An individual or family trying to flee domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or other life-threatening conditions in the person's nighttime residence, who has no other residence, and who lacks the resources to obtain permanent housing.

individuals and group encampments scattered about.

The City participated in the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count in January 2025. A preliminary count on a very cold night yielded approximately a dozen individuals visibly unhoused and living outdoors. This number is considered a low estimate because the cold weather likely drove some unhoused individuals to seek shelter in warming centers (like the Malden Warming Center, which serves residents from Malden, Medford, and Everett) or to stay with others, thus skewing the count. The actual number of unhoused individuals in Medford is significantly higher than the PIT count suggests, due to the transient nature of some individuals and the inability to account for those who doubled up with others or who may be sleeping in structures unsuitable for habitation.

Medford School District provides services to children and families in the Medford School District who are experiencing homelessness or housing instability through the McKinney-Vento program which guarantees access to education. The school district's McKinney Vento liaison supports children by arranging transportation and referrals for housing, mental health, or other services to enable them to succeed in school. In the 2024-2025 school year there were 48 children (pre-kindergarten through grade 12) who received McKinney Vento services.

While homelessness resources are limited, City's partnerships with Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), Housing Families and Eliot Community Human Services provide services to address homelessness in Medford. ABCD's homeless outreach team provides mobile outreach services offering immediate aid such as boots, socks and jackets, and connects individuals with broader services using a harm reduction approach. Housing Families offer pro bono legal services and mobile street outreach which has a broader geographic coverage comprising 8 cities/towns in the region. The mobile street outreach offers triage for individuals that need mental health care and provide transportation to the warming center in Malden. Eliot Community Human Services provides mental health counselling services. However, Medford lacks crucial resources like shelter beds or a warming center, forcing residents to seek help in other communities like Malden, Salem, or Chelsea. The inconvenience of accessing services in other cities is a significant barrier for those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity in Medford.

There are many more resources offered by agencies in Somerville, Cambridge, and Boston, where Medford residents may seek the services they need. Medford is part of the Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) which coordinates services to people experiencing homelessness within the greater eastern MA region. Many of the services operating in surrounding communities have limited capacity and offer preference to people originating from communities that fund their programs.

## Current Affordable Housing Initiatives

Since the adoption of CPA in 2015 and Inclusionary Zoning in 2019, Medford has been accelerating efforts to address local housing needs. Including the establishment of the MAHTF, several initiatives have been undertaken to implement recommendations of the Housing Production Plan and Master Plan to increase housing production, increase the supply of affordable housing, and to assist households who are struggling with housing costs.

### *Housing Production*

Over the past five years Medford has seen primarily multifamily developments. Table 16 highlights the net new units permitted from 2020-2024. Five accessory dwelling units have been permitted. There has been less production of single-family units, as a significant number have been converted to two-family units. Additionally, small multifamily units have been converted to student dormitories. A total of 245 units has either been constructed or under construction as part of large multifamily developments, including 93 deed restricted affordable homes with affordability restrictions in perpetuity.

Table 16: Housing Units Permitted 2020-2024*	
Type	Units
ADU	5
Single Family	13
Small Multifamily (2-4 units)	38
Large Multifamily (5+ Units)	245
<b>Total units</b>	<b>301</b>
Deed-restricted affordable units permitted	93
* Developments that have received building permits and are either completed or under construction.	

In addition to the new development that has already been permitted or constructed, several significant projects are in the pipeline which are described below.

### *Affordable Housing Development*

Since Medford approved its Housing Production Plan in 2021, the City has issued Comprehensive Permits for (40Bs) for two development projects, 4000 Mystic Valley Parkway and 970 Fellsway. The two developments combined will create a combined total of 639 units, of which 25 percent will be affordable to households earning below 80 percent of Area Median Income. (Because the site will be rental housing with at least 25% affordable units, EOHLIC counts all the units toward the City's SHI, including the market rate units.) Based on this rate of housing production, the City received a two-year certification on the Housing Production Plan and a two-year safe harbor for producing affordable housing units that contribute to 1 percent of the year-round housing. "Safe harbor" in this context means that the City can use discretion to deny Comprehensive Permit applications that it does not support, as if the City meets the Chapter 40B 10 percent SHI threshold. The certification and safe harbor are effective from June 2024 to June 2026. Both developments are expected to apply for building permits in 2025.

The first affordable housing project funded by the Medford CPA program is a three-unit expansion of a duplex owned by Medford Community Housing. This project is currently under construction and is expected to be completed in summer, 2025.

The Medford Housing Authority is repositioning some of its sites to carry out renovations and increase its inventory of units. Nearly completed, renovation of the Saltonstall building at 121 Riverside Ave will create 22 new units. The next major project will be redevelopment of the Walkling Court site. This will replace 144 units of state-funded senior/disabled housing with 198 units of senior housing in two connected 4-5 story elevator-accessible buildings, as well as 24 units of family housing in an elevator-accessible building, and 16 family townhouse units. The development will yield 94 net new units overall. Medford has committed approximately \$1.8M in CPA funds to facilitate this redevelopment project. After redevelopment the units will be subsidized with place-based vouchers. The first phase, comprising the senior housing, is nearly ready to start construction. LaPrise Village, a family site with 141 townhouse units, has been identified as a next possible site for repositioning.

Since the adoption of the Inclusionary Housing (Zoning) in 2019 Medford has had two large development projects in the pipeline, but thus far no inclusionary units have been created. A 65- apartment unit residential building at 100 Winchester Street received Special Permit approval for a Planned Development District. The development is subject to the City's Inclusionary Housing ordinance requiring the project to provide 10 affordable units. Similarly, a 40-unit residential development at 590 Boston Ave received Special Permit approval and includes 6 affordable units. Neither has pulled building permits yet. The status and timeline for both projects to be completed is uncertain as both developers have indicated that redesigns are necessary to reduce higher than expected construction costs.

### *Disposition of City-owned Property*

Two major sites described below have been identified where the City may be able to facilitate housing development on City-owned lots. The MAHT is working with the City to identify additional surplus city owned parcels that might potentially be developed to create affordable housing.

#### Medford Square

The City has accepted a proposal from Transom Real Estate to develop city-owned properties which include three parking lots located at Clippership Drive and Riverside Avenue. Transom has proposed to develop a mixed-use project consisting of affordable and multifamily housing, a 13,500 square foot urban grocery store compliant with the City's Comprehensive Plan, a 2,500 square foot ground-floor local café that offers community gathering space, and a 273-stall parking garage, in addition to 294 parking spaces. The City will enter into a long-term ground lease with Transom to revitalize Medford Square.



Transom will develop 283 apartment homes that include a high proportion of studio and one-bedroom units which would accommodate young professionals, seniors looking to downsize, as well as families, and to provide a range of housing options including ownership.

Of the new apartment homes, 56 units will be affordable housing units which are deed-restricted at 80% of AMI. This development of affordable housing exceeds the existing inclusionary housing requirement where the maximum contribution to local affordable housing stock is 15 percent of the total units.

#### Wellington Station Air rights

The City of Medford is exploring potential developments on the City-owned air rights over the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) in the Wellington area of the city. The City issued a Request for Information (RFI) in 2022 from developers to inform the development of a possible solicitation for a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the future. The City received responses from eight developers. Developers proposed residential units ranging from 350 - 1,440 homes.

#### *Other Housing-Related Projects*

##### University Housing

Medford is home to Tufts University which offers on-campus housing for its students. According to Tufts University, there are over 25 residence halls at Tufts, and seven out of ten undergraduate students live on campus.<sup>5</sup> These residence halls are not listed in the housing inventory because they aren't classified as year-round housing units. However, the addition of dormitory space will impact Medford's housing market by enabling more students to live on campus rather than occupying neighborhood apartments. A new residence hall providing 677-bed dormitory with ground floor commercial was approved by the City's Community Development Board in February 2025.

##### Domestic Violence Shelter

A domestic violence facility is proposed to be developed at 21 St. Clare Road. The proposed development received approval from the Community Development Board in February 2025 to build 34 dedicated residential rooms and 3 flex rooms, educational space and other common areas.

## **Zoning**

Concurrently while the Comprehensive Plan was underway, Medford City Council initiated the first major overhaul of Medford's Zoning Ordinance in many decades. The first phase, adopted in 2023, was a limited recodification, focusing on cleaning up discrepancies in the existing zoning ordinance, with only minor policy changes (including a provision allowing accessory dwelling units.) Subsequent phases of the Zoning overhaul are now underway, sequentially covering various neighborhoods.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://admissions.tufts.edu/discover-tufts/life-at-tufts/housing/>

- The City adopted the Wellington Station Multifamily Overlay District (WSMOD) in 2023 to comply with the MBTA Communities Act.
- The second phase of a Zoning overhaul is currently underway. Key changes include the Mystic Avenue Corridor District (adopted in 2024), and the Salem Street Neighborhood Corridor District (adopted in March 2025). These geographic areas are to be followed by the creation of a new Neighborhood and Urban Residential Zoning framework, and then zoning for city squares by promoting commercial and residential developments (Medford Square and West Medford Square), and remaining additional corridors (Boston Ave, High Street between West Medford Square and Arlington line, Harvard Avenue, Main Street, and Broadway along Medford/ Somerville line). The zoning overhaul will also review the creation of a specialized institutional zoning to respond to the developments at Tufts University.
- Under the Affordable Homes Act State Law, ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) up to 900 square feet (or half the gross floor area of the principal dwelling, whichever is less) must be allowed by-right in all single-family zoning districts. As part of the zoning overhaul, proposed Neighborhood Residential sub districts, NR1, NR2, and NR3 reflect the State's requirement because they allow single-unit dwellings by-right. The current proposed UR 1 and UR2 would also allow Local ADUs for nonconforming single-unit units along with two-family and three family dwellings.

### Other housing strategies

Over the past five years the City has been increasing capacity to support affordable housing. A Housing Planner position was added to the Department of Planning, Development and Sustainability (PDS), initially part time and now increased to full time. The key role of the Housing Planner is to implement housing strategies outlined in the City's Housing Production Plan. Responsibilities include managing and providing staff support to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, establishing connections and fostering partnership with mission-driven and nonprofit developers, and administering a housing rehabilitation program for low- to moderate- income homeowners. The Housing Planner also participates in the HOME program through the North Suburban Consortium, ensures the preservation of affordable homes, monitors affordable rental and homeownership units, and conducts feasibility studies to support affordable housing such as the Community Land Trust study.

#### Preserved affordable units

An affordable housing site at 42 Water St consisting of 35 senior housing units recently had an expiring subsidy. These were re-subsidized through the project-based section 8 program, and the affordability period was extended till 2044.

#### Housing Rehab Pilot Program

In 2024, the City introduced Housing Rehabilitation Pilot Program for FY 24-25. The Program aims to expand the availability of decent, safe, and sanitary housing within the city by offering

low-interest, deferred payment loans of up to \$25,000 to eligible homeowners who live in owner-occupied homes in Medford. It is a pilot program with limited funds for the first year and aims to support two to four homeowners. The Program is funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

The City received 10 applications, but unfortunately none of the projects from 2025 moved forward for different reasons. The City aims to adjust the program going forward in the next round to improve participation and enable project success. The City through its consultant, Community Opportunities Group, is planning to release the next round of funding in late 2025.

### HOME Consortium

Medford is part of the North Suburban Consortium (NSC), which is a group of 8 communities that collectively apply for and administer federal HOME funds. Medford, Arlington, Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Melrose, Revere and Winthrop. The Consortium is led and managed by Malden. NSC provides financial support to construct, renovate and rehabilitate affordable housing development, make down payments, develop affordable housing through Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO). NSC funds are used to assist households with income at or below 80% AMI. The current HOME Program Budget for PY24 is approximately 2.3 million dollars.

The consortium funds three main programs: homeownership and rental affordable housing developments, down-payment assistance, and operating assistance for a Community Housing and Development Organization (CHDO). In FY24, one Medford household received down-payment assistance to purchase an affordable unit in a condominium. Medford's long-time CHDO, Medford Community Housing, recently did not have their designation renewed, and the City will likely work with other CHDOs in the NSC region.

### Rental Housing Stabilization Program

Since 2020 the Community Preservation Act (CPA) program has funded housing stability programs through ABCD and Housing Families. Medford was one of the first communities to respond to the Covid-19 crisis in spring of 2020 by dedicating \$250,000 toward emergency rental assistance, administered by ABCD. Subsequent housing stability funding has gone toward a Move-in Assistance program with ABCD which is available to low- and moderate-income households who are moving into or within Medford, as well as a rental arrears fund to support households receiving legal assistance from Housing Families.

### Housing Advocacy

The City adopted the Housing Stability Notification Ordinance in 2023. As part of the Ordinance, the City developed the Notice of Tenant Rights and Resources to inform tenants of their rights and housing resources. The City also issued a letter in March of 2024 to Medford property owners notifying them of the new Ordinance and the need for landlords to provide

the Notice of Tenant Rights and Resources to new tenants at the start and end of any residential tenancy.

In 2019 the Citizens Housing & Planning Association (CHAPA) engaged with Medford through its Municipal Engagement Initiative to establish a local housing advocacy group. Housing Medford continues to mobilize Medford residents in support of policies that increase housing supply, support housing affordability, and protect housing consumers. While the group is volunteer led, Abundant Housing Massachusetts (AHMA) has sponsored a part time community organizer to help expand and sustain the group.

#### Cultivating Partnerships with Housing Nonprofits

The City has engaged with numerous nonprofit organizations to encourage them to develop affordable housing and/or provide housing programs. The City has helped Medford Community Housing to access CPA and HOME funding to build three affordable units at Fellsway West. (CPA funds were also awarded to Somerville Community Corporation for an affordable housing construction project in Medford which was cancelled, and the funds were not disbursed.) Housing Families Inc. and ABCD provide housing stabilization/homelessness prevention programs, also with CPA and CDBG funding. More recently, the City has encouraged Metro North to look at development options in Medford. The organization recently acquired a parcel in south Medford and working with PDS on a preferred permitting path.

#### Community Land Trust Feasibility Study and Development Strategy

The City is conducting a feasibility study and developing a strategic plan for a Community Land Trust (CLT) in Medford. Funded by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) through the Community Planning Grant Program, the study is expected to be completed by summer, 2025. The study is led by the City's consultant JM Goldson. A CLT working group was established to guide and review the study, and assist in drafting a mission statement, analyze financial models for CLT, and develop educational materials about CLT's for the community.

The project aims to:

- Build the capacity of a local, grassroots housing group to effectively organize, manage, and sustain a CLT
- Determine the type of CLT model that is the most suitable in Medford
- Provide insights into the economic viability of a CLT under different conditions to inform decision-making and strategic planning
- Identify and assess prospective parcels suitable for disposal of both municipal and private land
- Ensure that zoning regulations are conducive to affordable housing initiatives and community land trust models
- Develop educational materials and organize public engagement

## Section 2: Summary of Engagement Findings

The Affordable Housing Trust held two meetings with groups of stakeholders, including nonprofit organizations, affordable housing developers, and housing service providers from the surrounding region. Participants were asked how the City can best attract partners to create affordable housing in Medford or to support housing needs. Following are some key points made by participants:

### *Incentivize dedicated affordable housing developers to work in Medford*

- Provide clear zoning and permitting requirements and streamlining approvals to reduce regulatory burdens and expedite project timelines. Consider affordable housing overlay zoning to incentivize affordable housing. Draw regulations from existing state documents such as the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) and align with energy efficiency and environmentally sound design principles.
- Provide a regular, predictable revenue stream and identify additional sources of revenue besides CPA.
- Acknowledge the high cost of building affordable housing due to construction costs – a minimum of \$500,000 - \$700,000 per unit subsidy needed near Boston, perhaps higher. Rental housing development can be more cost-effective than homeownership because of the additional sources of funding available. Use MAHTF to leverage funding from other sources, particularly state and federal funds. A more significant local match early in the process can make projects more competitive in seeking state funds.
- Reduce land costs by utilizing City land or public housing authority land for new construction or higher-density redevelopment.
- Identify land suitable for affordable housing and prepare feasibility studies and Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Conduct community engagement to ensure project acceptance. Local knowledge can help to help navigate the approval process by providing insights into zoning regulations, community support, and potential challenges/opportunities. Provide developers with confidence and reduce risk associated with navigating local politics and zoning processes.
- Acquiring existing housing stock to preserve affordability is likely less expensive than new construction but still requires substantial subsidies. Down payment assistance or similar initiatives may be more impactful than funding outright acquisition.
- Partner with the local housing authority to build on its own sites or suitable privately-owned sites.
- Provide consistent and clear application timelines. Coordinate timing and process for MAHTF funding to align with state funding rounds and for local and state permitting processes. Rolling application cycle is preferable to fixed deadlines. Provide conditional commitments with flexibility for project details to emerge subject to review, underwriting, and obtaining necessary approvals.

### *Respond to community needs*

- Even affordable units are becoming unaffordable as the cost of living and AMI are increasing faster than residents' incomes, creating instability.
- The greatest and most challenging need is for the very low-income population (under 30% AMI). Organizations in the surrounding region have very little capacity to provide temporary or permanent housing support to Medford households and individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Many seniors struggle with downsizing or face displacement. Increasingly properties are being sold to developers, causing displacement through renovations and rent increases.
- Families have difficulty competing with groups of roommates for multi-bedroom units.
- There is also a need for homeownership assistance via expanding downpayment assistance, and housing rehabilitation assistance, and supporting the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
- Regional housing stability programs should be expanded and coordinated to avoid duplication, to serve Medford households with guidelines that optimize households' ability to access support in the current housing market. Collect feedback so that programs remain responsive to community needs.
- Consider a program to incentivize landlords to accept Section 8 Vouchers.
- Overly complex affordable housing application and recertification processes present a barrier for households to access affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Trust also gathered public input through a community workshop on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, as well as an online survey which was widely distributed in multiple languages. Following are observations and opportunities highlighted by participants at the public workshop.

### *Issues*

- Affordable housing application and recertification process is daunting for residents. This may especially be a barrier for seniors and people with developmental challenges.
- Increase in housing prices is a significant concern. Lack of housing supply is a key driver of escalating housing prices, and there is a disconnect between wages and housing costs. The cost of housing leads to the prevalence of renting apartments as roommates, which comes with a risk of liability in case a roommate fails to pay, which can lead to eviction.
- Housing preferences evolve with life stages, potentially moving from smaller units suitable for younger adults to larger ones to accommodate families.
- Providing housing that is affordable to households at the lowest income levels requires a larger share of public funding.
- Households can have difficulty using affordable housing vouchers in Medford due to high market rents. Households may have to leave Medford if they receive a voucher

from the Medford Housing Authority. Tenants may also be displaced if the property owners increase rents beyond what the voucher will pay.

- Utility costs can also increase the cost of affordable units.

### *Opportunities*

- Consider a program to fund the creation of Accessory Dwelling Units.
- A collaboration with the Medford High School CTE program and with adult education programs that work with refugees and career changers, could provide real-world projects for trainees while reducing labor costs. Perhaps there may also be funding opportunities from organizations like the Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Association.
- State advocacy for significant additional revenue sources such as a real estate transfer fee could have a greater impact on housing needs than small revenue streams.
- Community-owned housing could be a better model than providing subsidies to privately-owned housing to match increasing market rents. A Community Land Trust model would retain collective ownership of land to keep housing costs significantly lower.
- The need for parking to support the Senior Center and businesses in Medford Square should be considered in any proposal to develop the vacant lots behind Medford City Hall.
- City communication could be improved with a centralized, easily accessible source of information regarding housing initiatives in Medford.

An online survey was conducted, gathering 71 responses from community members. Detailed results from the Survey are in Appendix 1. While survey respondents indicated that all types of housing affordability are high priorities, building more rental housing received the strongest endorsement, along with constructing more accessible housing. Asked which types of households should be prioritized to receive assistance, people at risk of being displaced from Medford and people experiencing homelessness received the highest ranking, followed by seniors and families with children in Medford schools. People seeking to become homeowners in Medford and people who work in Medford were more frequently identified as medium priority. With respect to activities to address affordable housing needs, some respondents gave more specific suggestions for activities, including:

- Maximize impact through efficient use of funds
- Provide funds for owners of income-restricted units to make capital improvements
- Use City-owned property
- Support community housing
- Provide affordable housing for single adults
- Include accessible community spaces within affordable housing developments
- Create programs that support upward mobility

- Encourage landlords and property-owners to deed-restrict their units for permanently affordable housing, possibly through a Community Land Trust model
- Prioritize permanently affordable units over rental subsidies
- Prioritize lower-income households (deeply affordable)
- Provide support for households navigating application/recertification
- Housing advocacy and legal representation for low-income tenants
- Supporting households with poor credit or prior evictions to access housing they can afford
- Low or no-interest loans to create ADUs

Survey respondents were also invited to offer suggestions for sources of funding for the MAHT:

- Zoning to increase the tax base
- Linkage fees
- Inclusionary zoning fees
- Condo conversion fees
- PILOT funds from Tufts
- Budget appropriations
- Increase permitting fees to direct toward AHT
- Encourage individual donations of money or property/estates
- Local advocacy for state to enable Real Estate Transfer Fees and for state funding such as Small Properties Acquisition Fund

A final community meeting was held on July 30, 2025 to present the draft Action Plan and gather public feedback. Following are themes highlighted by participants at the public workshop.

- Housing Affordability & First-Time Homebuyer Support – Residents shared struggles affording housing in Medford despite living in affordable housing units.
- Addressing Discrimination & Inequities – Residents raised concerns about systemic housing discrimination, including subtle forms like extra deposits.
- Potential Partnerships – Suggestions included partnering with Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance (MAHA) to provide education and financial support for local residents.
- Employer & Institutional Support – Calls were made for major employers (e.g., Tufts University) to better support local housing affordability.
- Program & Support Awareness – Updates were given on CPA-funded move-in and rental arrears programs; residents raised concerns about bureaucratic barriers.



## Section 3: Action Plan

### Mission Statement

To create and preserve community housing, including affordable homeownership and rental opportunities and other forms of housing assistance for low- and moderate-income residents in Medford.

### Goals

- Promote a welcoming, diverse, intergenerational, and inclusive city with a mix of housing choices that offer diverse options to residents with varying needs and preferences.
- Use financial and property resources to address local housing needs and meet production goals established in the housing production plan, and to preserve the affordability of existing affordable homes.
- Foster safe, well-designed, accessible and sustainable housing. Integrate affordable and diverse housing options throughout the city.
- Expand local capacity to implement housing initiatives by building partnerships with mission-driven organizations and developers seeking to build affordable housing.
- Increase communication about housing resources across the community.

### Anticipated Funding

In 2025 the Affordable Housing Trust received two tranches of CPA funds totaling \$300,000.

Moving forward, the Affordable Housing Trust seeks to establish multiple streams of revenue that will provide resources to support affordable housing initiatives. Following are some of the most likely potential sources.

#### *Community Preservation Act*

The most reliable potential source of revenue for the MAHT is the Community Preservation Act. Over the next five years (FY26 through FY30), CPA is likely to generate an average of \$2.3M per year. According to the CPA enabling legislation M.G.L. 44B, the City must spend or reserve a minimum of 10 percent of CPA revenue each year on affordable housing, which would guarantee approximately \$250,000 per year that would be earmarked for affordable housing.<sup>6</sup> In practice, Medford's Community Preservation Committee has customarily contributed a larger share to affordable housing, depending on the requests for funding and the availability of funds. Between FY18 through FY24, 29 percent of CPA funds were spent on

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<sup>6</sup> Spending at least 25% of CPA funds on affordable housing is a criteria for the MA EOHLC's Housing Choice program. Communities that achieve Housing Choice designation are able to take advantage of new financial resources, including exclusive access to the Housing Choice Grant Program, and preferential treatment for many state grant and capital funding programs, including State Revolving Fund for Water and Sewer infrastructure, MassWorks, Complete Streets, MassDOT capital projects, and PARC and LAND grants.

affordable housing, while the FY25 distribution was 16 percent (including \$300,000 awarded to the MAHT, and \$100,000 for a housing stability program managed by ABCD.) These trends suggest that a likely range for CPA funding for affordable housing would be between \$350,000 and \$700,000 per year, at the discretion of the CPC. For the FY26 funding round the CPC voted to reserve 25 percent of projected revenue to affordable housing.

The Community Preservation Committee currently distributes funds through an annual grant application process, and in FY25, the MAHT received funds by applying under this process. Moving forward, a more direct relationship between the MAHT and CPC could facilitate stronger support for affordable housing initiatives by ensuring a consistent and predictable stream of revenue. More robust funding to the MAHT will empower the MAHT to facilitate successful housing projects with specialized expertise. Some communities allocate a fixed share of their CPA funds to their AHT automatically, without requiring an application from the AHT. Somerville, for example, distributes 50 percent of CPA revenue each year to affordable housing (increased to 55% in FY26), and the Somerville AHT allocates all CPA funding for affordable housing through its own application process.

Transitioning to a consistent funding allocation to the AHT may be complicated due to the limited available funds and the CPC's established practice of optimizing flexibility to support the highest priority projects across all three program areas each year. The question is whether applicants may continue to be able to apply for affordable housing funds through the CPA program that exceed the funding that was committed to the AHT in the annual budget, or if a duplicate or parallel application process is established through the AHT to access the full amount of CPA funds that could potentially be available. Over the next year the AHT and CPC should collaborate to agree on their respective roles and procedures.

### *Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance*

The Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance can be updated to provide an option for developers to make fractional payments, i.e., contribute funding for a portion of housing units if the formula determining the amount of required affordability results in a number of affordable units that falls between whole numbers. Including fractional payments in the Inclusionary ordinance can help to increase the amount of housing constructed overall because it reduces the incentive for developers to limit the size of their developments to round down the number of affordable units they are required to provide.

The Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance could also be amended to provide an option for developers to provide payments in lieu of affordable units, where the current ordinance requires affordable units to be integrated into development projects. An advantage to collecting payments in lieu of affordable units is that the ownership of the resulting affordable units will be held by a nonprofit or community land trust, which can provide a more stable housing option for low-income households. However, the challenge is that the full cost of constructing affordable units is so high that it can be difficult to get units constructed with the funds

developers contribute. A basis for determining the amount of funding to be donated under such a provision must be sufficient to realistically enable the development of the requisite number of affordable units. It will also be critical for the MAHT to work proactively with mission-based housing developers to facilitate affordable housing development opportunities.

### *Linkage Payments*

Medford currently has a Linkage Ordinance created under a special act of the state legislature through a home rule petition in 1989 which requires developers to contribute funds to offset the impacts generated by new development. As stated in the special act,

*“The linkage ordinance shall be used solely for the purposes of defraying the costs of capital improvements provided by the city caused by and necessary to support future development such as, but not limited to the following: capital improvements to school facilities, public facilities, roads, sewers, water supply lines, **affordable housing**, child care facilities, job training facilities, public safety service and facilities, and parks, playgrounds and other recreational facilities.”*

Although included in the enabling act, the local ordinance adopted in Medford at the time did not include affordable housing as a category of impacts that linkage fees address. Medford’s linkage fees currently address capital needs for parks and recreation, water and sewers, roads and traffic, and police and fire. The special act requires that linkage fees be updated every three years by the Community Development Board, however, the fees haven’t been updated since they were first enacted in 1990, and the amount they generate has been devalued by inflation. For Medford to update its linkage fee structure and to add affordable housing as a category, the City would need to undertake a nexus study which analyzes the impacts of development to provide the basis for determining the appropriate fees and then draft an amended ordinance. Funding to support the cost of updating our impact fee ordinance and adding affordable housing is estimated at \$120,000 while undertaking a study to only add affordable housing linkage and update the inclusionary zoning program is estimated at \$80,000. The City is working on identifying funds to support the study.

### *City-Owned Property*

Several City-owned properties have potential to support the development of affordable housing. These include the surface parking lots behind City Hall in Medford Square, as well as smaller lots scattered throughout the community. Conveying these properties to the MAHT could provide an opportunity for the MAHT to partner with nonprofit developers or a Community Land Trust to create rental or homeownership housing that is permanently affordable to low- and moderate-income households. The market-rate sale of such lots could generate proceeds for the MAHT; however, the market value of the lots may not always equate to the value of affordable housing units that could be added if they were donated to nonprofit developers.

### *Other potential sources*

Beyond the most common strategies listed above, there may be more creative opportunities to contribute funds to the MAHTF. Many suggestions were offered by participants who took the MAHT Action Plan public survey, while others are strategies that have been successfully implemented in other communities. The following strategies emphasize expanding available funds or capturing new revenue to contribute to the MAHT, rather than diverting existing funding that is currently used for other municipal purposes.

- PILOT: Tufts University could contribute to the Affordable Housing Trust through PILOT payments or a host community benefits agreement. Besides being one of Medford's largest employers, the university puts pressure on the local housing market due to the number of students living in off-campus housing.
- Appropriations: City funds could be appropriated from the General Fund Budget or from Free Cash. One-time payments could be tied specifically to new growth spurred by zoning changes that facilitate higher density development, or to provide seed funding for specific initiatives such as an acquisition revolving fund or the implementation of a linkage ordinance update.
- Special ordinance: An ordinance could be established allowing a density bonus for new development (on top of what is allowed under the base zoning) with a payment toward the MAHT.
- Negotiated developer payments: Payments negotiated with developers, through a community benefits agreement (CBA), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or other agreements that could be committed to the MAHT.
- River's Edge Project: This is a project managed by the Mystic Valley Development Commission (MVDC), a partnership among the City of Medford, Malden and Everett to redevelop 215 acres of brownfields along the Malden River. Residential mixed-use developments in this area are not subject to local zoning ordinances including inclusionary zoning. Negotiated developer payments in lieu of affordable housing could be executed through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and the payments could fund the MAHT. An MOU is underway for 600 River's Edge, a development under MVDC, for a negotiated developer payment of \$250,000 to the MAHT and provision of 12 affordable units with affordability restrictions in perpetuity.
- Voluntary donations and contributions: Under the housing trust statute, a housing trust has the authority to accept private donations as trust revenue. To solicit or encourage such private donations, the Board could broadcast the trust's ability to accept donations in press releases, at public events, on the application packet, and on their website.
- Loan payments and resale of affordable units: MAHT funds may be issued as repayable loans to facilitate the creation of affordable housing units, so that they can be recycled back into new projects as loans are repaid. Also, if a qualified buyer is unable to be

secured and a homeownership unit is sold at market rate, the MAHT could receive the difference between the affordable and market rate price.

- **Affordable housing resale fee:** The City is a covenant holder of deed-restricted homeownership units funded by HOME funds and is allowed to charge a processing fee for resale of these units. The fee collected could potentially be directed to the MAHT.
- **Other municipal revenues:** Fees from short-term rentals, hotel taxes, or lease payments for use of City properties could be designated to be directed to the MAHT.
- **Real Estate Transfer Fee:** Many communities across the Commonwealth have petitioned legislature to be able to impose a fee on real estate sales transactions to fund affordable housing initiatives. If the state allows, the City could establish a local ordinance that specifies a fee rate and price threshold so that the fee would only apply to high end property sales, by Medford's housing market standards. Enaction of real estate transfer fees could provide a significant amount of funding for the MAHT.

## Priority Actions

1. **Build a relationship with the CPC.** In addition to determining how much funding to commit to the AHT and the process for making funding distributions to the AHT, more discussion is needed about the roles of both entities in facilitating a transparent application process for affordable housing funds that takes advantage of the full share of CPA funding that is potentially available to support affordable housing, as well as the expertise of the AHT in facilitating housing development and housing support programs.

Through funding and/or advisory support to the CPC, the MAHT will support the completion of affordable housing projects in the pipeline that have received CPA funding in the past, most notably the Walkling Court redevelopment.

2. **Build affordable housing.** In partnership with mission-driven organizations, the Medford Housing Authority, and developers seeking to build affordable housing, MAHT will assist in development of affordable housing. Medford Community Land Trust, if established, would also be a potential partner. The MAHT should develop clear application procedures and guidelines to facilitate the distribution of funds for housing development. Assist in the development of affordable housing such as site acquisition, site improvements, predevelopment costs, or gap funding.
3. **Preserve and convert existing housing to long-term affordability.** MAHT funds can be used by partner organizations to preserve and expand the affordable housing supply through the acquisition of existing homes. Funds may also be used to acquire and/or rehabilitate affordable units at risk of being lost from the SHI.
4. **Support existing homeowners and first-time homebuyers.** Supporting homeownership programs to help first-time homebuyers was identified as potential

strategy in the Housing Production Plan. Moreover, the Market Assessment in Section 1 identified a significant number of low-income homeowners in Medford who are burdened with high housing costs. Examples of initiatives that could support existing and prospective homeowners could be a program to buy down equity of homes in exchange for a long-term deed restriction to enable existing homeowners to stay in their homes or to make a home purchase affordable to first time homebuyers.<sup>7</sup> Affordability restrictions could also be obtained by providing funds to existing homeowners to complete extensive housing rehab or the construction of accessory dwelling units.<sup>8</sup> MAHT could provide funding for homeownership programs through a community land trust, if established, or other nonprofit partners.

5. **Fund housing stability programs.** Since 2020 the CPA program has been funding housing stability programs provided by ABCD and Housing Families, Inc. Although the CPC has advertised the availability of funds, no other organizations have applied for housing stability programs over this time. The MAHT should coordinate with the CPC to facilitate a transition toward MAHT oversight of housing stability programs and request an appropriate level of CPA funding. MAHT should determine the level of funding to be offered for rental assistance programs, as well as program guidelines and procedures for awarding grants to provider organizations. At a minimum, MAHT should aim to provide at least \$150,000 annually, which would continue the level of funding currently provided to housing stability programs.
6. **Establish funding priorities.** The MAHT defines a soft target for the allocation of funding to different types of affordable housing projects as follows:
  - New construction: 50%
  - Acquisition/homeownership assistance creating permanently affordable units: 30%
  - Stabilization and homelessness prevention services: 20%

Over the first five years while the MAHT is establishing relationships with the CPC and affordable housing developers and service providers, the amount of funding available and the types of opportunities for supporting affordable housing are likely to evolve and these targets may be adjusted. While the MAHT retains the flexibility to respond to housing opportunities with the limited funds available, preference will be given to projects or programs that serve households with lower incomes. The MAHT aims to spend at least 30 percent of its funding for housing construction to support units that are affordable to households at or below 60 percent AMI.

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<sup>7</sup> For example the HomeBridge program in Cambridge offers substantial financial assistance to first-time homebuyers in exchange for an affordable housing restriction.

<sup>8</sup> For example, the City of Holyoke recently partnered with a local CDC, One Holyoke and the UMass DesignBuild to purchase a tiny home to be installed on property the organization owns.

7. **Advocate for affordable housing development and policies.** The MAHT can advocate for policies that maximize the resources available to meet the city's housing needs.
  - a. Explore and act upon funding opportunities for the Trust
  - b. Work with developers to build support and help navigate the planning and approval process to build affordable housing
  - c. Work with partner organizations to establish housing stabilization and/or homeowner support programs that meet local housing needs.
  - d. Support initiatives to expand tenant protections and to stabilize existing rental housing. MAHT supports the formation of and commits to recognize tenant unions.

## Guidelines and Procedures

The MAHT will provide the following type of assistance:

- Development Loans
- Individual Loans Closing Cost Assistance
- Grants

## Terms of Assistance

Development Loans are revolving. Loan payment may be annually, quarterly, month. They may be predetermined payment (P+I), Interest only, or Net Cash Flow. Loan matures in 40 years; however, extension may be requested provided the request is made 2 years before maturity. The Trust may defer to other lenders when determining terms of loan.

- Short-term development loans - financing for acquisition, predevelopment activities or development soft costs. These loans are due preferably at the close of the construction loan. May be due at the close of the permanent financing if approved by the board.
- Long term development loans - subordinate debt held by the proponent or organization. Payment terms are negotiable; however, it is the goal of the MAHT to recycle and reuse these scarce resources whenever possible. The MAHT will weigh the term, interest rate and ongoing debt service obligations with the length of affordability restriction, support to very low- and low-income households, and any other considerations regarding the specific application.
- Individual Loans (usually for 1<sup>st</sup> time homebuyers) are deferred forgivable.

All loans must be in the form of a mortgage against the real property or asset and may be subordinated to other known loans.

The interest rate will be set based on the needs of the property and are expected to range between 0% to 3%.

Grants: Any grant funding will be subject to a grant agreement. It will memorialize the purpose of the grant funding and any disbursement schedules or procedures required by the MAHT.

Deed Restriction: All affordable units will be deed restricted. The MAHT requires restrictions into perpetuity.

Any change in sponsor, general partner/managing member or majority ownership of the property must include a notification of such change to the MAHT 60 days prior to the change or transfer.

### **Application and Review**

Development project requests will be accepted on a rolling basis. The MAHT may periodically issue NOFAs and RFPs. The MAHT will generally evaluate projects based on criteria described in the funding application.

The proponent/sponsor is invited to present the application to the trust at the meeting and respond to questions from the board. The Trust will either vote at that meeting to approve the application and award a certain amount of funding or defer the vote until the following meeting to collect or review further information. The Board will consider an application during two sequential meetings. Upon an affirmative vote of the majority of the Board, the Board will issue a letter of conditional funding commitment. The conditional funding commitment will indicate the form of the funding commitment, i.e., a grant or development loan. If the proposal does not obtain an affirmative vote, the applicant may apply for future fiscal year funding proposals but will not be considered further for the current application cycle.

### **Project Monitoring:**

The Trust will work with EOHLC and the sponsor/organization to ensure all units are eligible for inclusion in the subsidized housing inventory.

The Trust or other staff will submit an annual request to the sponsor/organization for information summarizing income levels of tenants and the affordable rent levels. At the election of the staff or Trust additional confirmatory supplemental information can be requested.



## Development Guidelines

The Board will consider the following criteria in determining whether to support specific development proposals:

### **Development of housing that meets Medford's needs**

- Number of affordable units created or preserved
- Support provided for very low/low/moderate income households
  - MAHT encourages the creation of housing for a range of community needs, including families, seniors, veterans, small households, and people with disabilities.
- Length of affordability restrictions
- Accessibility considerations for in unit and other areas of the site/building
- Promotion of fair and equal access to housing, including a tenant selection plan that complies with 40B requirements

### **Capacity to leverage resources and complete the project**

- Capacity of sponsor or organization
- Reasonableness of budget and economic feasibility
- Completeness of application and readiness, or reasonableness of development timeline
- Past performance of funded activities and compliance with affordability restrictions and other housing programs or other state, municipal and federal agencies
- The debt coverage ratio should be at a minimum of 1.15 in the first few years and should over around the same through 20-year protection
- Proportion of other funds leveraged to amount of funds requested from the MAHT
- Agreements that provide for the cost of monitoring affordability restrictions and marketing requirements

### **Alignment with Medford's Housing and Land Use Planning**

- Alignment with plans as adopted and updated: Medford Comprehensive Plan, Community Preservation Plan, Housing Production Plan, and the Medford Affordable Housing Trust Action Plan

# Appendix 1: Community Engagement

## Stakeholder Participation

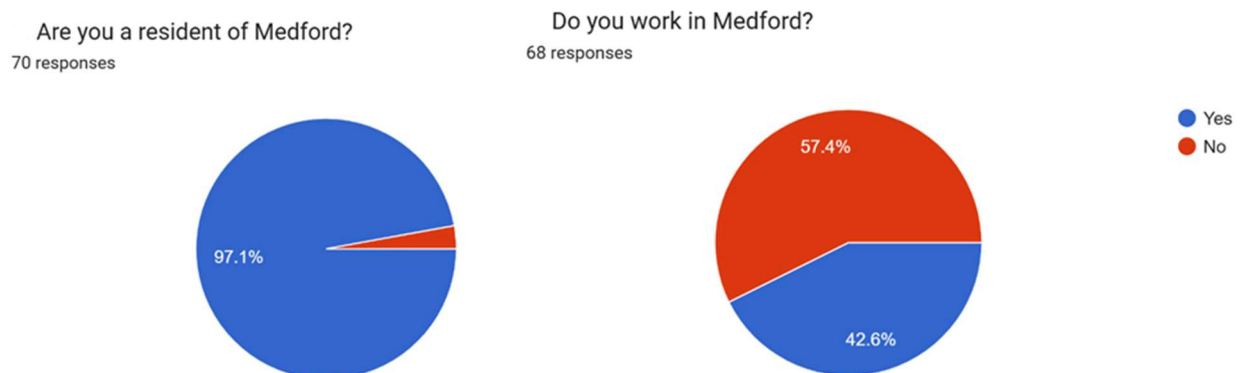
The following stakeholders participated in focus groups to provide input about community needs, opportunities, and best practices for supporting housing development and housing stabilization programs.

- Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)
- Affirmative Investments
- Caritas Communities
- Community Action Agency of Somerville
- Davis Square Architects
- De Novo
- E3 Development LLC
- Greater Boston Legal Services
- Housing Corporation of Arlington
- Housing Families Inc.
- Housing Medford
- Just A Start
- Metro Housing Boston
- Metro North Housing Corporation
- Medford Community Housing
- Mystic Valley Elder Services
- POAH
- Somerville Community Land Trust
- The Neighborhood Developers (TND)
- Medford Office of Prevention & Outreach
- Medford Council on Aging

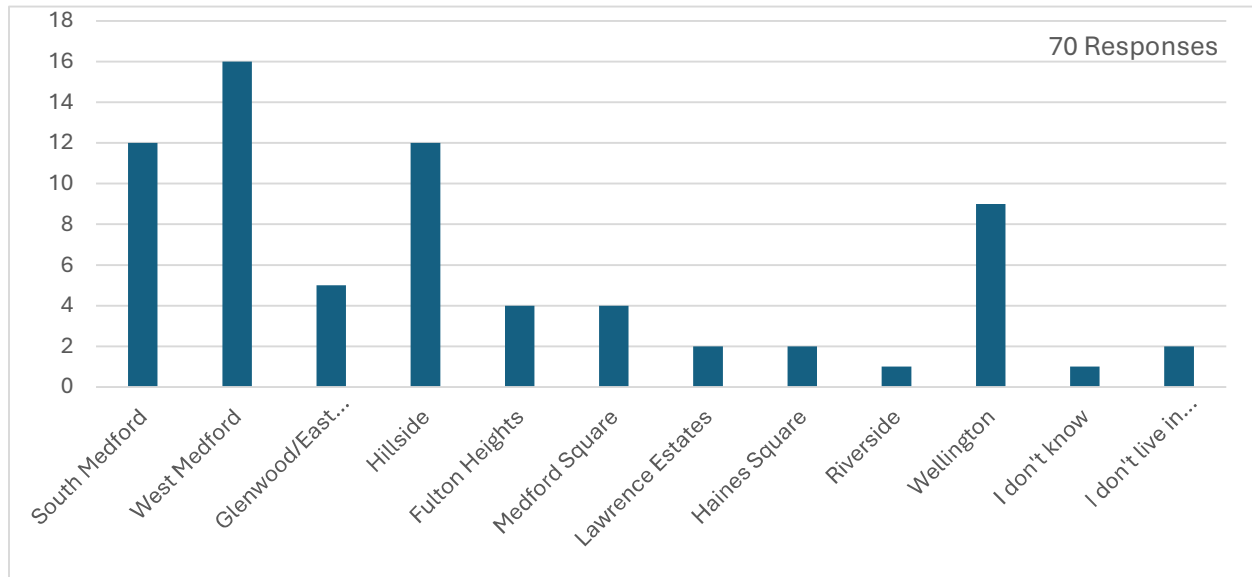
## Survey Responses

A public survey was conducted online, with options for people to respond in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Arabic. The survey was advertised through City media channels including the Mayor’s newsletter, PDS newsletter, and social media. Community liaisons who work with minority populations were also invited to provide input and share the survey with their networks.

There were 71 responses, including 70 in English and 1 in Spanish.

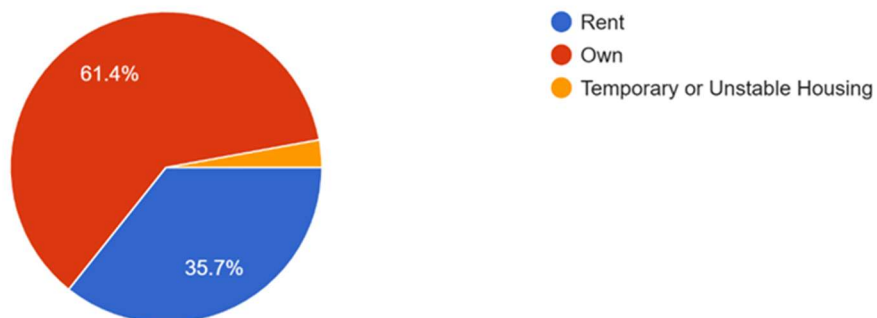


The largest share of survey respondents live in West Medford, Hillside, South Medford, and the Wellington area.



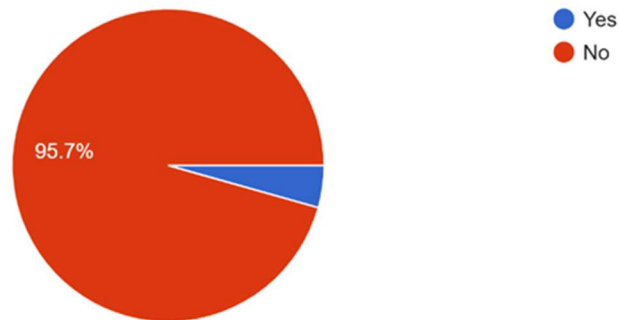
A higher proportion of survey respondents were homeowners (61%) than renters (35%). By comparison, 47% of Medford households rent. Two survey respondents indicated that they have temporary or unstable housing.

Do you rent or own your home?  
70 responses



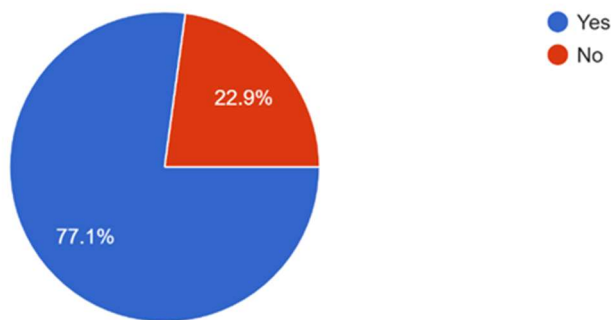
Do you currently live in housing that is reserved for households with low/moderate incomes?

69 responses



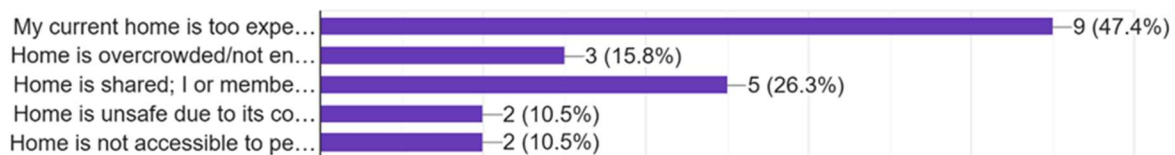
Does your housing currently meet your needs?

70 responses



If you answered "no", to the above question, why not? (Please check all that apply)

19 responses

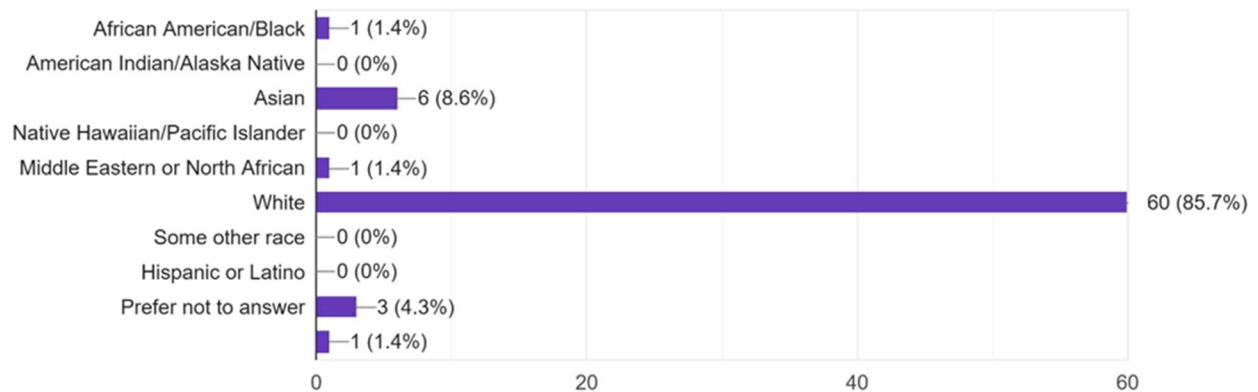


**Other:**

- Elderly access, needing updates
- Living in family home until I can find affordable housing of my own
- Housing is temporary (3-year maximum stay) and I would prefer permanent housing.
- We are 75 and 81 and need senior housing. We are at risk of eviction
- Rent is too high for substandard quality of housing
- Awful kitchen and shower facilities

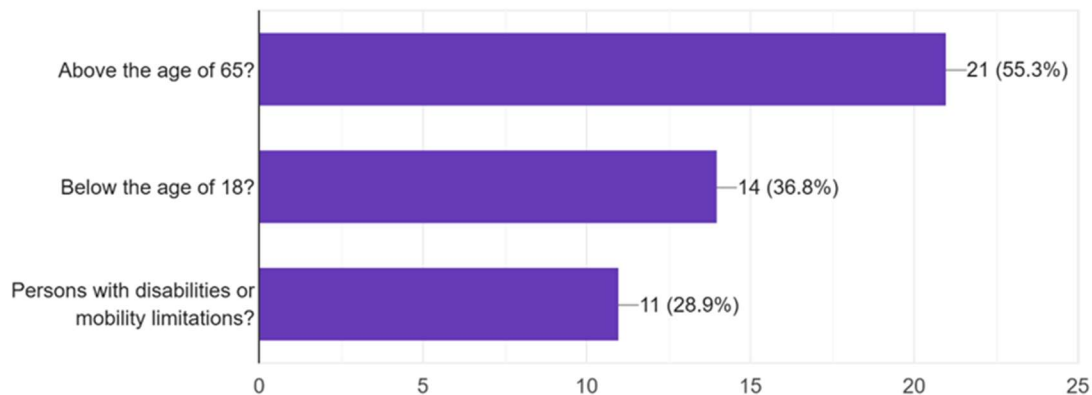
### What is your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply)

70 responses



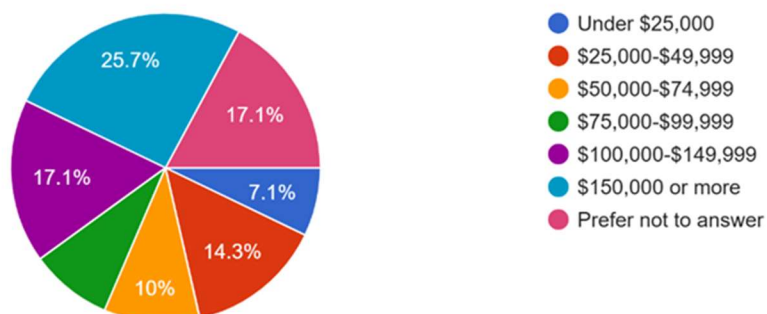
### Are any members of your household

38 responses



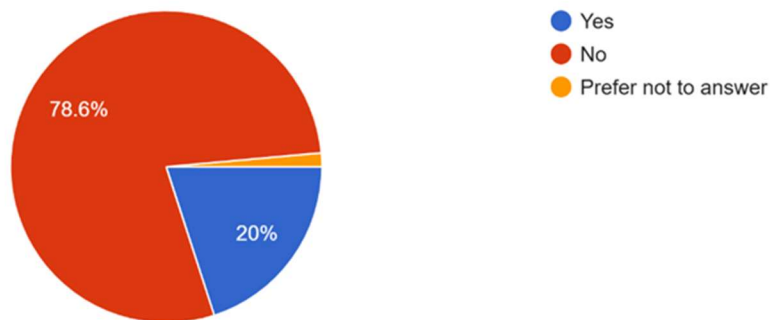
### Please indicate the category that most closely describes your household income:

70 responses



Do you receive any public benefits such as Mass Health, SNAP (food stamps), SSI, or fuel assistance?

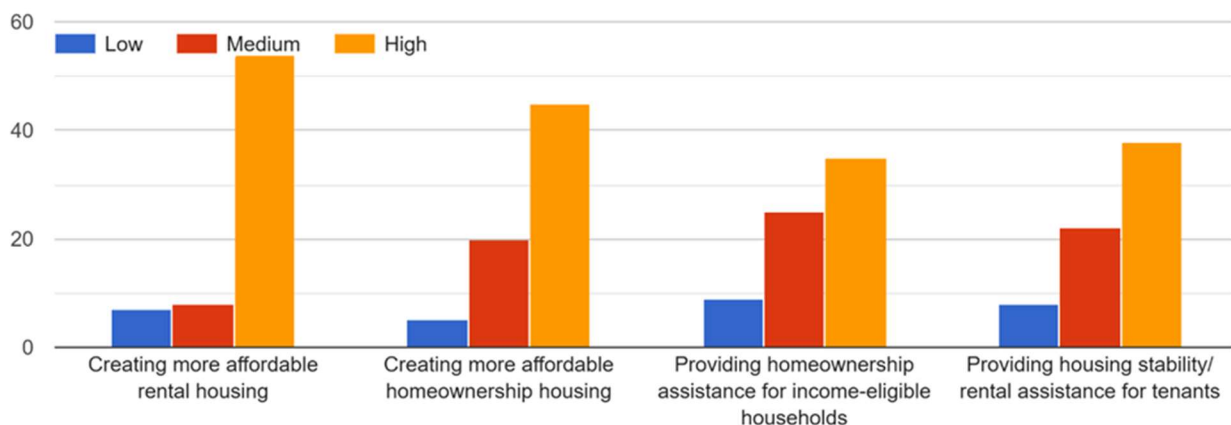
70 responses



If you answered 'yes' to the above question, please specify.

- Member of household on Mass Health
- LIHEAP
- Masshealth, snap, section 8 voucher
- Mass health
- SNAP
- Home Health Aid - I am age 80.
- I receive MassHealth and Reduced MBTA fare
- MassHealth Fuel Assistance
- SNAP
- Snap and mass health
- Fuel assistance
- Mass Health, SNAP, & fuel assistance.
- I receive SSI/SSP, Section 8, MassHealth, SNAP, and Fuel Assistance.
- Masshealth

What kind of activities would you like the Affordable Housing Trust to focus on? (Please rate each as either Low, Medium, or High priority)

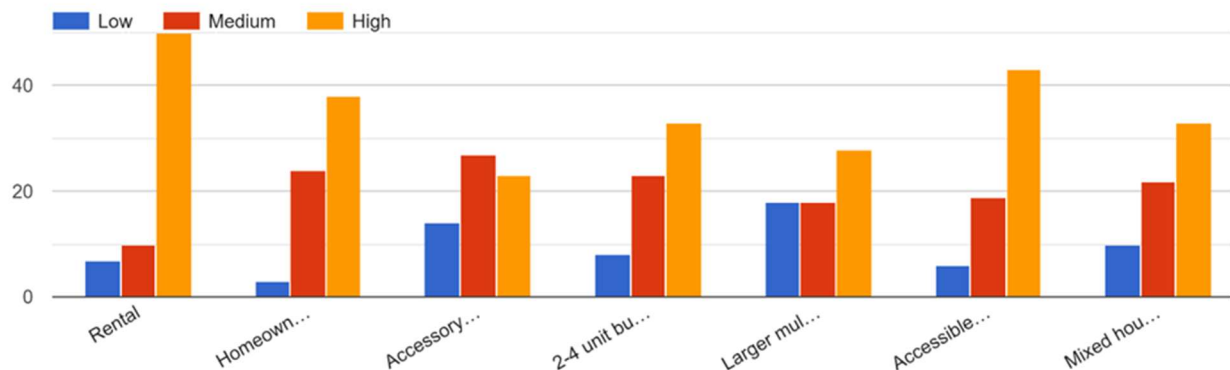


**Are there any other activities you would like the Trust to focus on?**

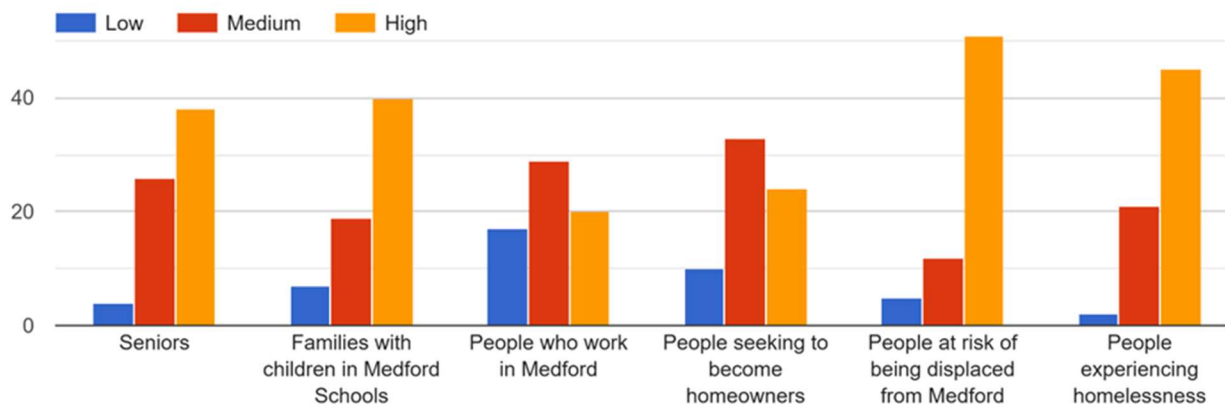
- Finding ways to reduce government spending for more impact for this program
- When affordable units are created for ownership, it would be good to have a trust fund to help residents with major capital improvements and also advising services to help them with contracting.
- Find ways to minimize new development of luxury housing that offers only tiny contribution to affordable housing
- Outdated utilities and absent landlords create additional housing cost burdens for residents. Help with heating costs can be beneficial. Reach out to landlords and tenants to make sure landlords are maintaining properties.
- Changing zoning codes to allow for more multifamily housing and condos. Mixed Residential should be allowed everywhere in the city. People can't afford to buy single family homes on large lots, but they might be able to afford condos if we had more. Right now, there are so few that the prices stay inflated from low supply. Also, more properties on the same land means more tax revenue for the city without unfairly burdening families because it is shared across more people.
- Transportation vouchers/T passes for residents who need them
- Building affordable housing from real estate owned by Medford
- Supporting pro-housing zoning changes to increase affordability
- Community housing, affordable housing for single adults
- Funding itself
- Raising money via the real estate transfer fee
- Helping people to find housing that includes their pets. So many landlords are against pets.
- We are on the subsidized housing list for 3 yrs now. Was told 1 year wait by city of Medford
- Creating community spaces within affordable housing developments that are accessible to the public and prioritized for residents, creating programs within affordable that support upward mobility and stability (financial literacy, workforce development, childcare etc.)
- Encouraging existing small landlords to deed-restrict their units for permanently affordable housing
- Capacity building for tenants, tenant organizing
- We desperately need more housing. I feel that demand subsidies like rent assistance just help landlords in the long run and keep rents high. Whereas new affordable housing benefits working class people long term. I would like to see the AHT help families who own houses add deed restrictions through a Land Trust model, so that the houses become permanently affordable. See DCLT in Durham for a good example.
- There are SO MANY garages that could be ADU spaces instead. Building four and six plex apartments with good central common space (and less parking)
- Truly affordable housing for households that don't make \$80+
- Yes. \*Professional Affordable Housing assistants/workers to help the elderly/disabled to "recertify" their Affordable/Section 8 housing lease annually.
- Anything to stabilize or regulate rent increases would be super helpful. We typically don't find out what our rent increase for the year will be until 30 days before we need to renew. This puts us in a very vulnerable spot every year - so far these increases have been modest but that could change.
- I love the idea of an equity buy-down program, particularly for seniors on fixed/low-incomes. By buying an interest in an established property, this would be an effective way to naturally create affordable housing while providing financial assistance to those who need it most.
- funding the trust

- Please prioritize low income/affordable housing creation and management.
- The elderly and empty nesters who have lived in Medford and have paid taxes all their lives. Make sure that they have their needs met before welcoming those who never lived in Medford.
- Housing Advocacy & Legal Representation for low income tenants.
- creating second chance housing for tenants with poor credit or prior evictions
- Lower the credit score and income eligibility requirements that landlords insist on

Which of the following types of income restricted affordable housing should be developed in Medford? (Please rate each as either Low, Medium, or High priority)



Which of the following types of households should the City prioritize in assisting? (Please rate each as either Low, Medium, or High priority)



**The City is exploring different ways to increase money for the Affordable Housing Trust to help more low-income households. Do you know of strategies or potential funding sources that could provide financial support to the Trust to address housing challenges for low-income households?**

- Require an annual tax from rental property owners that will go toward the AHT



- If you allow more multifamily and mixed zoning, then the increased property taxes could go towards funding to help people.
- Real estate transfer fee prioritizing Tufts PILOT funds for AHT; Community Preservation Act Funding
- PILOT, linkage fees, transfer tax, social housing, donations from estates, budget appropriations, inclusionary zoning fees, upzoning, YIMBY campaign
- Tax override
- Refiling H.5141 (Linkage fees) and making sure it gets through the state house, selling McCormack Ave to fund a nexus study to update linkage fees so that some of it goes into the AHT, the CPA, reading opposition to a real estate transfer fee
- Real Estate Transfer Fee!
- The Governor's Office???
- Mortgage Assistance
- Linkage fees, condo conversion fees
- Low or no interest loans to create ADU housing or densification on single family homes, to provide down payment for home equity loans at market rate to build ADU for elderly. Then, their SSF homes are available for rent. Provide assistance funding to DELEAD SSF homes of income qualified seniors to reduce liability exposure for their SSF rentals.
- Advocate for the state to pass legislation enabling a local option for a 2% real estate transfer fee! Small Properties Acquisition Fund is another potential source if the governor and EOHLC fully fund it; local advocacy would help with that too.
- Increase our permitting fees holistically and then direct these fees (either partially or in-full) towards the AHT - building permits, planning review fees, zoning variance fees. Anything that touches property development should participate in funding affordable housing efforts, full stop. I don't understand how linkage works, but is that applicable?
- Literally tax the rich that can afford to live here more

#### **Is there anything you would like to tell us?**

- So glad you're doing this!
- Please say no to 6 story or other high-rise development
- Strong towns have some very interesting literature on creating fiscally sustainable cities that also have adequate housing for residents.
- I would love to see an option for individuals to donate to the trust.
- I am a single person making \$60,000/year and I have to live with 3 roommates to be able to afford to live in Medford.
- Creating affordable housing is the #1 most important issue Medford can address.
- Real estate transfer fees were quashed by the real estate lobby. We should not give up on it, as it's a simple and fair way to fund affordable housing.
- Affordable housing is not actually affordable. Stop saying it is when it's not. Is just not as expensive.
- I'd love to stay in Medford for the long term, but unfortunately prices are currently so high that I will be forced to look in other communities soon.
- As a single 80-year-old, I will need Assistive Living shortly - and would like to remain in Medford -will be exploring options in better weather. Something that should be considered for the future. Encouragement/benefits for agencies willing to provide such options.

- I feel like it's hard not to say all kinds of housing assistance are a high priority. As someone fortunate enough to have bought a home in Medford, I understand my role in potentially out-pricing other residents and renters. For my personal situation, raising property taxes or something to fund city housing programs seems like a great way to balance out the impact of gentrification.
- Thanks for your work!
- The State income-based ADU funds (50k at 0% interest) are not granted to Middlesex County households.
- Encourage single family home ownership as well as two and three family home ownership.
- To preserve the public subsidy, the housing trust should finance permanently affordable housing, not housing that will revert to market rate after 15 or 30 years. Medford needs true affordability - 30 - 60% AMI, not 100%
- The Community Land trust model is to have the trust own the land, and the resident own the home or unit, and it can only be sold for the purchase price plus 2-3% per year. So, the resident can build home equity (unlike public housing or rental) but is not participating in the free market to drive up the cost of housing for everyone else when they sell. AHT could try to develop a model along these lines to develop new housing or work with homeowners to put their properties into the trust. Then, if we had an affordable housing overlay in the zoning, the property could be redeveloped with more units, to benefit more people.
- End parking minimums. Advocate for more transit, especially within Medford (you still can't get from Fulton Heights to West Medford on transit in any meaningful or convenient way) so that we can house people, not automobiles.
- Every "affordable" opportunity I have seen, none of my children could afford, also putting all affordable units together is not a good idea
- There is a need to get help (Skilled workers,) with the "recertification process" for Affordable/Section 8 lease renewals.
- I'm very pro as much housing as possible. I support affordable housing but sometimes affordability requirement can hinder development so I say build as much as possible and provide incentives where you can
- I'm frustrated that we're behind on meaningful development, when similar cities/towns around us have been addressing this issue for decades. I am excited that we're addressing it now, but we have a lot of work to do to catch up to today's demands. Thank you for all you're doing to improve life for Medford residents!
- The Elderly and empty-nesters in Medford want to sell their homes and move into really nice, new condos in Medford -- but there aren't any being built! If they sell their present homes, they will have enough money to purchase a lovely condo with amenities, like Mystic Valley Towers at 3920 MVP. They've done it in Stoneham where the old New England Hospital used to be. Plus, Woburn, Melrose, Winchester also built (or are building) lovely new condo buildings catering to empty nesters and the elderly. Every town around us builds condos. Why does Medford only concentrate on building RENTAL apartments (which have pretty expensive rents, I might add.) The only way you're going to free up 1, 2, 3 family homes in Medford is by building beautiful condos along MVP so that empty-nesters and the elderly of Medford can sell their homes and live in a really nice and convenient area of Medford. The old GE plant area is huge. Couple that with the old Gold's Gym area - and you would have an unbelievable destination area in Medford (somewhat like the Assembly area and the Station Landing area.) Let's think of the elderly and empty nesters in Medford who have paid taxes all these years and want to live near friends & family in Medford but can't because there are no new Condos being built in Medford for them to buy, once they sell their present homes.

- Housing Families Inc in Malden does not provide sufficient housing advocacy or legal services to tenants in Medford because they lack the staff, money, and resources.
- I would like to live closer to work and cannot afford to due to having no access to second chance or affordable housing. The long-lasting financial effects of covid have destroyed my ability to obtain housing
- I already was priced out of Somerville after 20 years, and now love living in Medford but am already in danger of being priced out of Medford which makes me so, so sad, as I would love to put roots down here but cannot without more stable and affordable housing