



MAKING *Boston* A HOME FOR EVERYONE

MAYOR MICHELLE WU'S
FIRST TERM REPORT ON
HOUSING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January 2026



Housing

B EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Mayor Wu's [Housing Strategy 2025](#) presented a roadmap to a Boston that is home for everyone. During her first term, Mayor Michelle Wu used every available tool to make Boston a more affordable, accessible, and inclusive place to live. Here are just some key housing accomplishments.

HISTORIC SUCCESSES

The Wu Administration set records for income-restricted housing and homeownership opportunities.

- With 6,210 new income-restricted units built or in construction, Mayor Wu's first term saw the highest number of affordable housing units created during any other comparable period in the last 25 years.
- Since 2022, nearly 800 occupied market-rate rental units were converted to income-restricted housing through the Acquisition Opportunity Program.
- More than 1,000 new income-restricted homeownership units were completed or began construction – among the highest levels of any 4-year period in the last generation.

INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

The Wu Administration developed new tools to increase housing opportunity and make Boston a leader in green, healthy housing.

- By the end of 2025, applications for 1,517 new units had been submitted to the Office to Residential Conversion Program, including 284 income-restricted units.
- In 2022, the Wu Administration conducted a first-of-its kind comprehensive audit of the 176.9M square feet of City-owned land, a change from the old site-by-site approach to unlocking public land for housing.
- Under Mayor Wu, the Boston Housing Authority once again builds new housing, engaging in public-private partnerships to create mixed-income housing.
- Boston opted into the State's Municipal Opt-in Specialized Stretch Building Code, incorporated Zero Net Carbon requirements into the Zoning Code, and launched a \$15M deep energy retrofits program.
- The Boston Housing Authority has become a national leader in building decarbonization, investing millions in federal resources and \$50M of City funding into electrification projects.

SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT

The Wu Administration has implemented key zoning and permitting changes to move development forward now and as macroeconomic conditions improve.

- A new \$110M Housing Accelerator Fund was established to move mixed-income housing projects from approval to construction.
- New neighborhood zoning was adopted in Charlestown, East Boston, Mattapan, Newmarket, and Downtown.
- Squares + Streets launched to create more opportunity for residential and mixed-use development in neighborhood centers and along main streets.
- Article 80 Modernization will improve development review processes, making it more efficient to approve good housing developments.

B KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



1. MAKING IT EASIER, FASTER, AND LESS EXPENSIVE TO CREATE NEW HOUSING

Since the start of Mayor Wu's term, nearly 20,000 new homes have been completed or began construction (14,515 units and 5,454, respectively), including over 6,200 income-restricted units. Another 14,680 units entered the pipeline, including those approved by the Board and those that have submitted applications to ISD.¹

- Article 80 Modernization: In 2023, Mayor Wu launched a major update of Article 80, including zoning amendments to simplify development review, operational changes to ensure earlier and more equitable engagement, clearer costs and timelines, and new systems for transparent decision making and effective feedback loops. Next steps include continued improvements to a range of permitting processes for Boston's residents and businesses.
- Zoning for more homes: Zoning passed for Mattapan, East Boston, Charlestown, Newmarket, and Downtown; Allston-Brighton planning, which will lead to new zoning, is underway. Mayor Wu also launched a new planning and zoning initiative to create more opportunity for residential and mixed-use development in neighborhood centers and along main streets. Squares + Streets zoning districts were added to Boston's Zoning Code in 2024 and have been adopted and mapped in Mattapan and Roslindale Square.
- Streamlined approval of affordable housing: In 2022, Mayor Wu issued an Executive Order to accelerate the approval and permitting of income-restricted housing with the goal of reducing the time it takes to get zoning relief by half. Since the implementation of the Executive Order, approval time for affordable housing has already been reduced by 26%.²
- Housing Accelerator Fund: Due to macroeconomic trends impacting development, including lending requirements and the high cost of materials, Boston has a large pipeline of approved units in need of financial support. To move more units into production, Mayor Wu launched a Housing Accelerator Fund with \$110M in City dollars for equity investments in multifamily projects.

2. PRODUCING RECORD AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH STRATEGIC INVESTMENT & STRONGER TOOLS

Despite a challenging development environment, Mayor Wu's first term has seen the highest number of affordable housing units built or in construction than during any other comparable period in the last 25 years. Since 2022, 6,210 new units of income-restricted housing were completed or began construction.³

- Acquisition Opportunity Program: The Acquisition Opportunity Program fights displacement by providing City subsidy to mission-driven developers who acquire and income-restrict market-rate multifamily properties. With a historic investment of more than \$59M in federal resources, the Wu Administration has supported the acquisition of 789 units, reaching the goal of 1,000 units acquired by 2030 six years early.⁴ The City also

established the Boston Acquisition Fund with \$70M in public and private investment to further support this work with a low-interest loan product.

- Prioritize federal funds for affordable housing: In many cities across the country, federal Covid America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds were used for revenue replacement. In Boston, Mayor Wu and the City Council allocated the majority of the funds towards housing, including \$95M towards the creation of new affordable housing.
- Linkage: In 2023, the Mayor updated Boston's Linkage policy, which requires large-scale development to contribute funding to affordable housing and workforce training. It now applies to projects of 50,000 square feet (down from 100,000 square feet) and the fee increased by 50%.
- Inclusionary Zoning: In 2024, the Mayor incorporated Boston's Inclusionary Development Policy into the Zoning Code, establishing a more permanent and effective approach to creating income-restricted housing through private development. Inclusionary Zoning now applies to all residential projects of 7 or more units (down from 10) and requires more and deeper affordability.

3. FOSTERING INNOVATIVE WAYS TO DEVELOP MUCH-NEEDED HOUSING

Since January 1, 2022, more than 2M square feet of City-owned real estate has been made available to support the production of more than 2,700 new units of income-restricted housing, of which more than 1M square feet and 1,009 units are already completed or in construction.⁵

- Building housing on underutilized City-owned land: In 2022, the Wu Administration conducted a first-of-its kind audit of the 176.9M square feet of City-owned land, and found 9.5M (or 5.4%) to be vacant or underutilized. Since 2022, five large parcels in Chinatown, Charlestown, and Brighton underwent community planning processes and were approved for mixed-income housing developments totaling 1,441 units.⁶ In addition, one large parcel in East Boston is moving through a community planning process. Of the 150 small parcels identified for neighborhood infill development, just over one third have already been put out via RFP to create 144 new income-restricted homes for sale.⁷
- Housing with Public Assets: This program aims to maximize the use of municipal properties for the public good by combining key community functions with housing. To date, the West End Library will be redeveloped with 119 new income-restricted units; Parcel R-1 in Chinatown will be redeveloped with 110 income-restricted rental and ownership units and a new branch of the Boston Public Library (BPL); and 555-559 Columbia Road in Dorchester will become a new income-restricted homeownership project with 33 units and a new BPL branch.⁸
- Office to Residential Conversion Incentive Program: In 2023, Mayor Wu announced a new program to support conversion of older commercial office buildings with high vacancy rates to housing. These developments receive tax abatement up to 70% for as many as 29 years, as of right zoning, in some cases additional height/FAR, and a fast-tracked review

and permitting process. The City received applications for projects totaling 1,517 units, including 284 income-restricted units, in the Mayor's first term. Of those, a 15-unit project was completed in 2025 and another 306 units are in construction.⁹

- Accessory Dwelling Units: Under Mayor Wu, the City has taken several steps to make it easier for homeowners to add ADUs, expanding lower-cost housing options, increasing wealth-building opportunities, and supporting multigenerational living. Zoning has already been updated in Mattapan, with additional neighborhoods underway. The City also produced an ADU [guidebook](#) and rolled out technical assistance, updated financial support, and a new loan product to homeowners.

4. BUILDING A BOSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY THAT CREATES NEW PUBLIC HOUSING FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE 1980S

- Federally-funded new public housing: In her 2024 State of the City address, Mayor Wu announced the intention to identify locations for new federally-funded permanently affordable apartments through BHA's Restore Rebuild (formerly known as Faircloth) capacity. The BHA has since engaged developers, community-based organizations, and residents, identifying 60 potential locations for 2,964 new units—the federal limit for Boston. Several projects are currently under way, including the West End Library described above.
- Social housing: The Housing Accelerator Fund, announced by Mayor Wu in the fall of 2024 and created in June of 2025, will support the redevelopment of the Bunker Hill public housing community in Charlestown into mixed-income rental housing. The BHA and its developer partner are close to finalizing the financing for this redevelopment project. Throughout the Wu Administration, the BHA and City have also invested in community land trusts and other innovative housing models through housing acquisition and voucher programs.

5. INCREASING HOUSING STABILITY AND SUPPORTING BOSTON RESIDENTS TO STAY AND FLOURISH

Since 2022, 6,438 families struggling with housing instability received legal and rental assistance, eviction prevention mediation, and/or housing search support for new permanent or temporary housing through City initiatives.¹⁰

- Anti-Displacement Action Plan: Mayor Wu is the first in Boston's history to develop a comprehensive Anti-Displacement Action Plan, published in July of 2025. It addresses residential, small business, and cultural displacement; proposes new tools to fill gaps in the City's anti-displacement toolkit; and improves how we target resources to people, places, and spaces at greatest risk.

- Eviction prevention: Mayor Wu transitioned the Rental Relief Fund from a temporary Federally-funded COVID-response program to a permanent City-funded resource known as the Tenant Stabilization Fund. Residents can now connect with City staff for referral to wrap-around support, including case management, housing search and/or financial assistance, legal services, and/or mediation.
- Improved access to income-restricted housing: Mayor Wu removed barriers, increased transparency, and improved government processes related to the marketing and application process for income-restricted housing. This work made it easier for people to apply for housing, and easier for developers to fill their income-restricted units.
- Access to Counsel Pilot Program: In January of 2025, Mayor Wu and the City Council launched the Access to Counsel Program to support families with children in Boston's schools facing eviction. Led by the City's Office of Housing Stability in partnership with Boston Public Schools and local legal aid organizations, the program provides free legal representation to eligible families to help them stay in their homes and connected to their communities.

6. INVESTING MORE TO INCREASE HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES THAN THE CITY EVER HAS BEFORE

Since the start of Mayor Wu's term, the City has helped more than 1,300 households buy homes, 64% of whom are BIPOC, through down payment and closing cost assistance and mortgage interest rate writedowns.¹¹ In addition, City initiatives during the Mayor's first term have funded the building of 1,003 new affordable homes for sale, among the highest levels in the last 20 years. Going forward, Boston has 836 additional income-restricted homeownership units in the pipeline.¹²

- Welcome Home Boston: Mayor Wu established a successful new program to incentivize development of affordable homes for purchase. To date, funding has been allocated to support new development and RFPs have been released for sites in Dorchester and Mattapan. The City selected 10 local development teams to build 144 new affordable homes for sale. Future phases of work will unlock development on additional sites throughout Boston.
- Increased financial assistance: Thanks to Mayor Wu's ARPA allocation, the City was able to significantly enhance down payment assistance and introduce an interest rate reduction for homebuyers using the ONE+Boston Program. Since January of 2022, the Boston Home Center has assisted 1,147 first-time homebuyers through this program and its traditional Financial Assistance Program.¹³
- BHA's First Home Program: Launched in November of 2022, this program unlocks homeownership opportunities for Boston's Section 8 and public housing residents by providing financial assistance, including down payment, closing costs, and other fees. In the Mayor's first term, the First Home program helped 103 first time homebuyers, more than 90% of whom are BIPOC. The majority (76) purchased market rate homes.¹⁴

- Co-Purchasing Housing Pilot Program: In 2025, Mayor Wu launched an innovative pilot program to increase access to affordable homeownership for middle-income Bostonians. Multiple households can now combine their purchasing power to buy multifamily homes, while each household is still assessed individually for eligibility for City financial assistance, including a deferred loan of up to 5% of their share of the purchase price for down payment and closing costs.

7. MAKING HOUSING GREEN AND HEALTHY

- Building healthier, energy efficient homes: Under Mayor Wu, Boston has become a leader in building energy efficient and low carbon buildings. In 2022, Boston opted into strict building performance standards through the State's Municipal Opt-In Specialized Stretch Energy Code in 2022, implemented guidelines to require all new City-funded income-restricted housing to be fossil fuel free in 2024, and passed Net Zero Carbon Zoning in 2025, which introduces a net zero emissions standard for new projects and significant additions to existing buildings.
- Decarbonizing existing buildings: In 2024, the City passed the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO), requiring large buildings to comply with emissions limits that decrease over time to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.
- Public housing decarbonization: In 2022, the Wu Administration committed to achieving fossil fuel free public housing by 2030. Since then, the BHA shifted millions of federal capital resources from boiler replacement to electrification projects. With \$50M in City funding, major capital projects are now advancing at Mildred Hailey, Franklin Field, St. Botolph, Pond Street, Fairmount, and other properties. During the 2023-25 period, more than 1,100 BHA units have been weatherized, insulated, equipped with heat pumps, or benefitted from multiple decarbonization measures, with improvements to hundreds more units to come.
- Income-restricted housing decarbonization: In 2023, Mayor Wu launched the Large Building Green Energy Retrofit program to provide financing to owners of large affordable housing buildings to decarbonize and undergo retrofits, and the Healthy and Green Retrofit pilot to support low-to-moderate-income homeowners to decarbonize their two- to four-unit buildings.
- Homeworks Green Loan Program: In January of 2025, Mayor Wu launched a new program to provide income-eligible Boston homeowners with interest-free loans to fund energy efficiency upgrades, health and safety repairs, and renovations. A portion of the loan will be forgiven after 10 years.
- Energy Saver Boston: In March of 2025, Mayor Wu launched a partnership with Mass Save to invest more than \$150M into Boston homes to improve energy efficiency, lower heating and cooling costs, and move homes away from fossil fuel usage.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT MAYOR WU'S HOUSING INITIATIVES?

Check out the [Boston Housing Strategy 2025](#).



1. City of Boston, data between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025. Units moved forward refers to units completed, in construction, and in the approved pipeline (the project has received one or more formal approvals from the City (e.g. MOH funding approval, BPDA Board-approved, etc.)).
2. City of Boston Mayor's Office of Housing, income-restricted project approval data between October 6, 2022, and December 31, 2025.
3. City of Boston, units completed or in construction (permitted but no certificate of occupancy) between January 1, 2022, and October 31, 2025.
4. City of Boston Mayor's Office of Housing, units acquired through the Acquisition Opportunity Program between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025.
5. City of Boston, units completed, in construction, or approved on City-owned land between January 1, 2022, and September 19, 2025. "In construction" refers to projects with permits but no certificate of occupancy yet. Approved means the project is in the pipeline and has received at least one formal approval from the City.
6. City of Boston Planning Department, City-owned large parcels approved for development between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025. Approved refers to Tentative Designation, which is when the BPDA Board approves of the developer/project to have tentative rights to the land to pursue permitting and financing.
7. City of Boston Mayor's Office of Housing, income-restricted units to be created on City-owned small parcels put out to bid through the Welcome Home Boston program between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025.
8. City of Boston Mayor's Office of Housing, status of Housing with Public Assets projects as of December 31, 2025.
9. City of Boston Planning Department, status of Office to Residential Conversion Program as of December 31, 2025.
10. City of Boston, evictions prevented, temporary or permanent housing secured, and rental assistance awarded (all de-duplicated) between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025.
11. City of Boston, households who received homebuyer assistance between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025.
12. City of Boston, units completed and in construction (permitted but no certificate of occupancy) between January 1, 2022, and December 31, 2025; pipeline as of December 31, 2025. Only includes projects that entered the pipeline on or after January 1, 2022. Pipeline includes any project that has submitted an application to ISD but has not yet been permitted, including Board-approved projects. Projects that submitted an application but haven't been issued a permit within two years are considered "inactive" and excluded.
13. City of Boston, first-time homebuyers assisted through the ONE+ and traditional Financial Assistance Program from January 1, 2022, through December 31, 2025.
14. Boston Housing Authority, First Home Program data from November 2022 through December 31, 2025.