

Archdiocese of Boston producing low- and middle-income housing

By [John Lavenburg](#) [🐦\(https://twitter.com/JohnLavenburg\)](https://twitter.com/JohnLavenburg)



Sep 26, 2024 | National Correspondent



On Sept. 24, leaders of the St. Francis House day shelter in Boston, the Archdiocese of Boston's Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Massachusetts Lieutenant Gov. Kim Driscoll, and City of Boston officials came together for a groundbreaking ceremony of a new 19-story, 126 mixed-unit residential tower in downtown Boston. (Credit: Archdiocese of Boston Planning Office for Urban Affairs.)

 Listen

NEW YORK – With the announcement of another affordable housing project, the Archdiocese of Boston this year has under construction more than 150 mixed unit apartments in the Greater Boston Area – something sorely needed in one of the country's most expensive regions.

On Sept. 24, the archdiocese announced that its Planning Office for Urban Affairs has partnered with St. Francis House – the largest day shelter in Massachusetts, which is located in the heart of Boston and serves 7,000 adults annually – to build a new 19-

story residential tower in downtown Boston.

The building will consist of 68 studios, 21 one-bedroom, and 37 two-bedroom units that will be available to low- and middle-income households, which will include permanent supportive housing for households coming out of homelessness, according to the archdiocese.

Speaking from personal experience as the CEO of St. Francis House, Karen LaFrazia said the project will “alleviate some of the strain by providing much-needed affordable housing in downtown Boston.”

“As the CEO of our city’s largest day shelter for homeless adults, every day I witness firsthand the harsh realities of Boston’s housing crisis,” LaFrazia said in a statement.

“The surge in homelessness in our region is a consequence of multiple compounding factors, including soaring rents and a severe shortage of affordable housing,” she said.

Of the residential tower’s 126 units, 70 will be set aside as permanent supportive housing for those experiencing homelessness. The residents of these units will receive case management and supportive services provided by St. Francis House, according to the archdiocese.

The remaining 56 units will be targeted to workforce and middle-income households, and will be restricted based on the federal government’s low-income figures. The project, which has a target completion date of mid-August 2026, comes amid a housing and affordability crisis in Massachusetts. The state ranks as one of the most expensive states to buy a home in, with the average cost of a home well over \$500,000.

The project is being funded by the state government’s Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities; MassHousing Finance Agency; Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation; the City of Boston’s Mayor’s Office of Housing, and Neighborhood Housing Trust; Boston Housing Authority; Bank of America; and The Life Initiative.

Leaders of St. Francis House and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs, Driscoll, and City of Boston officials came together for a groundbreaking ceremony on Sept. 24. To that end, Driscoll reiterated in a statement that housing remains the administration's top priority.

"I'm excited to be at LaGrange Street today to celebrate what will be an incredible new home for residents experiencing homelessness," Driscoll said.

Back in June, the archdiocese announced that it had partnered with the governor's office to transform a vacant lot owned by the city of Boston into 30 units of mixed-income, age restricted studio and one-bedroom rental units. That particular development is intended for seniors with incomes in the range of \$30,000-\$70,000, and should be completed sometime in 2025, according to the archdiocese.

Similar to what Cardinal Séan O'Malley said with the announcement of that project, with new development he emphasized that "respect for the dignity of all people includes doing all possible to provide every person a safe home."

"Too many members of our community are either homeless or on the verge of homelessness for reasons that include the rising cost of housing in Boston," O'Malley said in a statement. "The 41 LaGrange St groundbreaking gives us all hope that working together, more unhoused men and women will have access to a new apartment and the services they need to make this housing a stable home."

Follow John Lavenburg on X: [@johnlavenburg](https://twitter.com/JohnLavenburg) (<https://twitter.com/JohnLavenburg>)