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Baker Administration Announces Affordable Housing Development Awards

Aug 16, 2016

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The Baker Administration announced awards to fund the development, renovation and preservation of affordable rental housing across the commonwealth on Monday. The money will be used to create or preserve 1,420 housing units.

“These affordable housing awards reflect our administration’s commitment to a stronger, more prosperous and more inclusive commonwealth,” Gov. Charlie Baker said in a statement. “By increasing affordable housing production, and stabilizing working families, low-income senior citizens and homeless families or those at risk, these housing awards will strengthen communities across Massachusetts.”

The announcement was made at 48 Boylston St. in Boston, a historic rehabilitation project for formerly homeless residents sponsored by St. Francis House and the Archdiocese of Boston’s Planning Office for Urban Affairs.

The 26 projects awarded will create or preserve 1,420 rental units, including 1,334 affordable units, across 16 Massachusetts communities. The Department of Housing and Community Development is awarding over \$31 million in state and federal low-income housing tax credits, which will generate over \$218 million in equity for these projects. Additionally, the administration is awarding over \$59 million in housing subsidy funds, including federal HOME funds and state capital funds, across the 26 projects.

Projects will serve a wide variety of constituents, including individuals and families transitioning out of homelessness, persons with disabilities and the elderly. Four projects are focused on senior housing, five will provide supportive services to residents and all 26 will include deeply affordable units. The Baker Administration prioritized applications that included a 10 percent allotment for individuals and families who are, or are at risk of becoming, homeless.

In May, the administration unveiled a five-year capital budget plan that includes a \$1.1 billion commitment to increasing housing production, an 18 percent funding increase for mixed-income housing production, and affordable housing preservation. In May, the Administration and MassHousing committed \$100 million, to support the

construction of 1,000 new workforce housing units. Since 2015, the administration has provided funding to create and preserve 2,856 units of affordable housing, including 874 deeply affordable units for at-risk populations.

“St. Francis House is a perfect example of an organization committed to ending homelessness for individuals and families by providing safe and affordable housing and meeting the full needs of their tenants,” Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders said in a statement. “These awards will help support vulnerable citizens in the commonwealth.”

The award will include 46 units of affordable housing at the former Boston Young Men’s Christian Union building at 48 Boylston St. The state Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will support the project with federal and state low income housing tax credits that will leverage about \$11.8 million in equity and \$4 million in subsidies from DHCD.

St. Francis House and the Planning Office for Urban Affairs of the Archdiocese of Boston (POUA) purchased the building in April of this year, and the two entities plan to rehabilitate the historic, but presently vacant, building into affordable housing. The completed development will include units reserved for people who have experienced homelessness and others with very modest incomes. Twenty-six of the units will be reserved for individuals earning less than 30 percent of the area median income.

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