

NEW PILOT Boards and Commissions Mini-Boost

Technical Assistance Program for Municipal Boards and Commissions
to support the creation of affordable housing

Overview

MHP's Community Assistance team builds the capacity of municipalities to support policies, programs and development that increase housing diversity and open communities to people of all racial and economic backgrounds. Strengthening local boards is key to this effort.

This new, small-scale technical assistance program provides direct support to boards and commissions that are working to create affordable housing. Small grants (max. \$2,000 in technical assistance) can fund short-term problem solving and technical assistance projects that assist boards in capacity building. Technical assistance is provided by consultants preapproved by MHP for specific functions. In some cases, CA staff may support a project.

This grant program is intended to help municipal boards and commissions become more effective in supporting local affordable housing development. Applicants are also encouraged to attend MHP's training series, "Strengthening local boards and commissions to support affordable housing," available virtually in March 2026.

Application process

- Municipal boards or commissions, with support from the Select Board or chief executive, apply online for a grant. Proposals can be structured to seek one-time, short-term problem-solving assistance, training and/or support on a specific affordable housing proposal or initiative. *Note: We will not consider housing predevelopment work for this program.*
- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis with up to 15 awards in 2026. MHP will review applications on a first-come, first-served basis. Time sensitivity may be considered when prioritizing applications.
- Projects must be able to be completed within 3-6 months.
- After tentatively accepting an application for funding, MHP will meet with the applicant and an identified TA provider to ensure the project is achievable within the program parameters.
- Once an award is made (max. \$2,000 in technical assistance), MHP will issue a grant agreement to the municipality including terms and agreed upon scope of services. Consultants will be paid directly by MHP.

Eligible technical assistance

This is not an exhaustive list.

- Prioritize municipal parcels for affordable housing development
- Provide GIS mapping for possible municipal sites for affordable housing development
- Establish a process for acquiring land or buildings for affordable housing development
- Identify board goals and strategies
- Manage a hearing process for an affordable housing proposal
- Navigate difficult conversations about affordable housing development
- Clarify inclusionary zoning goals and parameters using MHP's IZ worksheet
- Train board members in affordable housing finance 101
- Guidance on understanding municipal jurisdiction based on zoning
- Support in receiving comments from other boards during an affordable housing hearing process
- Clarify role of housing boards during affordable housing proposal reviews
- Facilitate collaborative conversation between ZBA, Board of Health and Conservation Commission
- Formalize process for allocating housing funds to expedite support of housing applications

15 grants are available for calendar year 2026.

Program Contact

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