

Four communities chosen for latest round of MHP's intensive trust technical assistance

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BOSTON --- MHP's Community Assistance team has selected four communities to receive support through its intensive **technical assistance program** for local housing trusts. The program is designed to help the communities achieve their affordable housing goals through the use of an affordable housing trust fund. Agawam, Hatfield, Randolph, and Westford were selected in the latest round.

Three are seeking assistance to establish an affordable housing trust fund. One has an established trust fund. Each community will receive up to 10 months of direct technical assistance from MHP staff.

Agawam prepares for launch

The community is ready to launch an effort to establish an affordable housing trust fund, which has been discussed many times in public meetings over the years. In addition, staff have attended MHP trust trainings for years. Their housing needs assessment, community preservation planning, and housing production plan all point to establishing a trust. The Agawam Housing Committee, with support from the planning department, will lead the initiative.

Hatfield is on the move

The town is fresh from developing a comprehensive plan, called Hatfield: 2040, which recommends the creation of an affordable housing trust fund. With a population of just 3,352 Hatfield is on the move. The town has adopted new zoning bylaws for accessory dwelling units and Open Space Residential Development to encourage new housing development. The town is in conversations with three developers interested in "friendly" 40B developments and working to implement recommended changes to the zoning code to make more multifamily housing permitted by right. An affordable housing trust will build on Hatfield's ability to use CPA funds for housing development.

Randolph removes hurdles

Randolph has methodically been moving toward expanding housing options. In 2025, a housing coordinator was hired to address affordable housing needs, support residents, work with property owners, and develop housing policy. Then updates were made to zoning ordinances to remove hurdles to the construction of two-family dwellings and reduce parking thresholds. Randolph is on schedule to establish an inclusionary zoning ordinance in 2026. The creation of an affordable housing trust fund will further develop housing infrastructure to increase affordable housing access.

Westford repositions

The town has celebrated a milestone. Its affordable housing trust board has turned 20. The town wants to position the board for the future. The board's current structure is being reevaluated and discussion centers on reviewing and revising the board's mission statement, committee charge, and the onboarding of new trustees. Talking points may be developed to explain the board's mission to the community.

Launched in 2021, MHP's Affordable Housing Trust Fund Technical Assistance Program builds on MHP's history of helping communities start and operate effective trusts. This effort began in 2005 when the state legislature passed the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Law, simplifying the process of establishing a local housing trust fund.

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