

The Evolving Landscape of Social Housing in New England

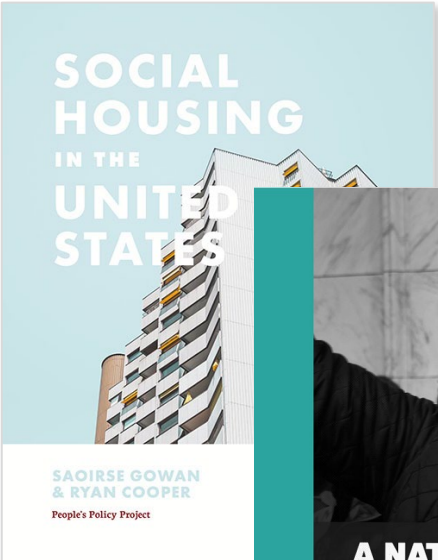


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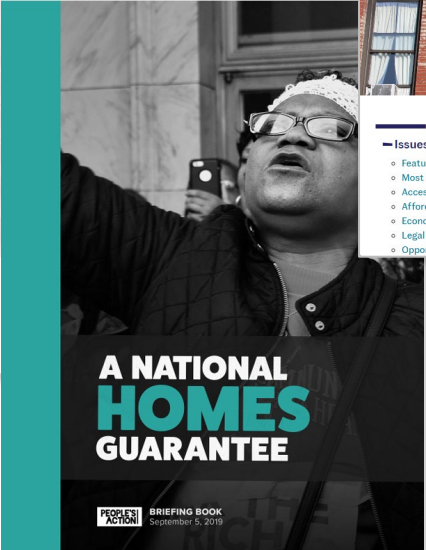


Friday, April 18, 2025 | Harvard Graduate School of Design

A Push for “Social Housing” Has Been Gaining Momentum Over Last Several Years and Does Not Seem to Be Slowing



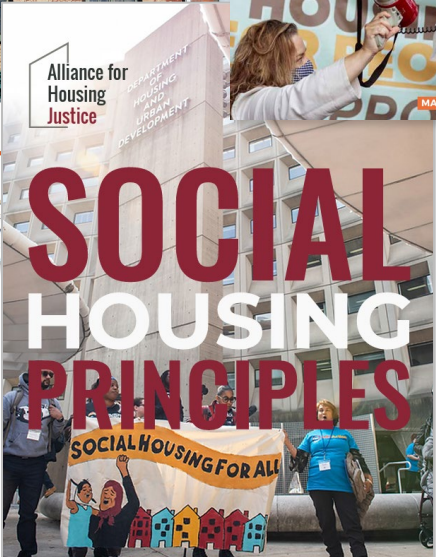
2018



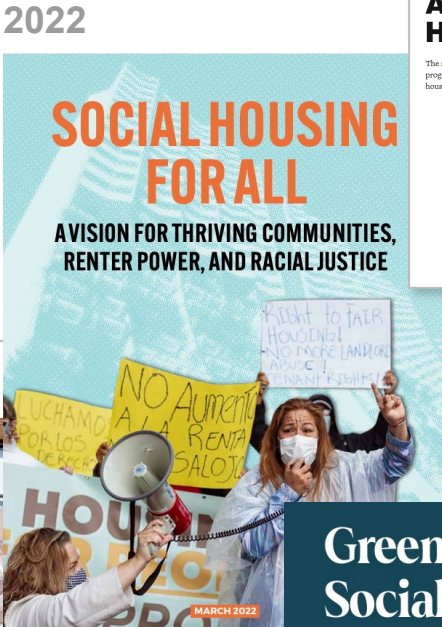
2019



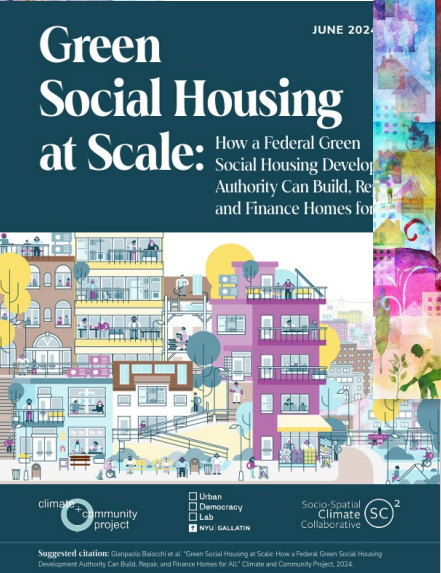
2020



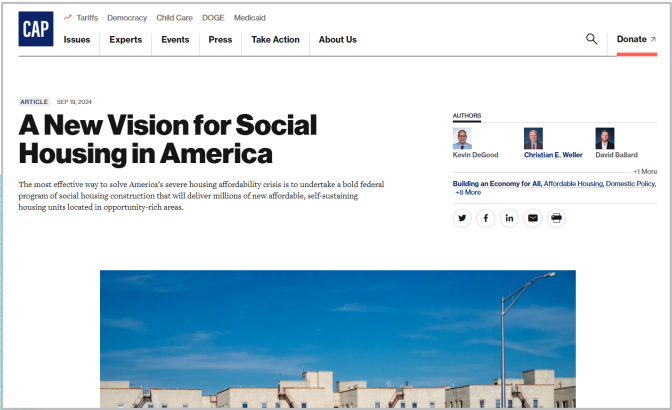
2022



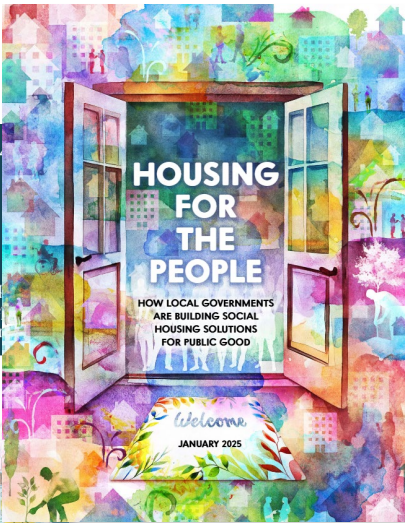
2022



2024

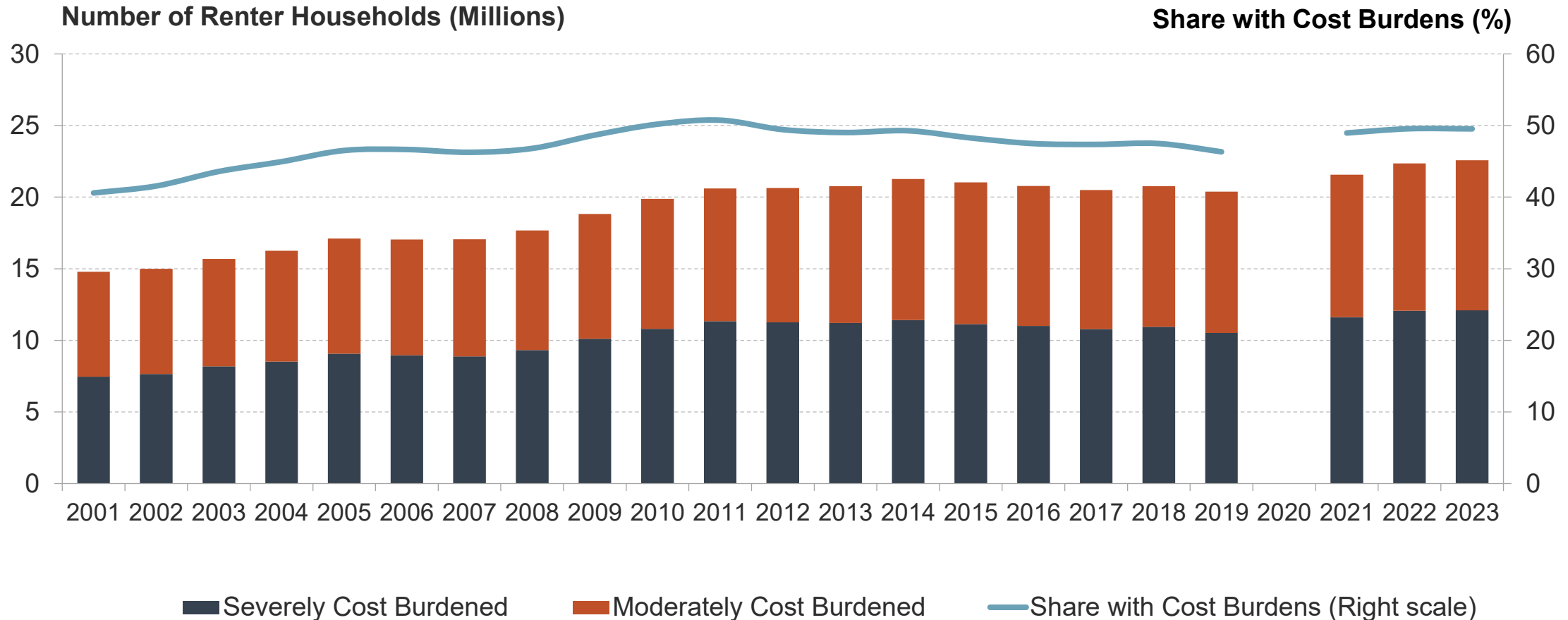


2024



2025

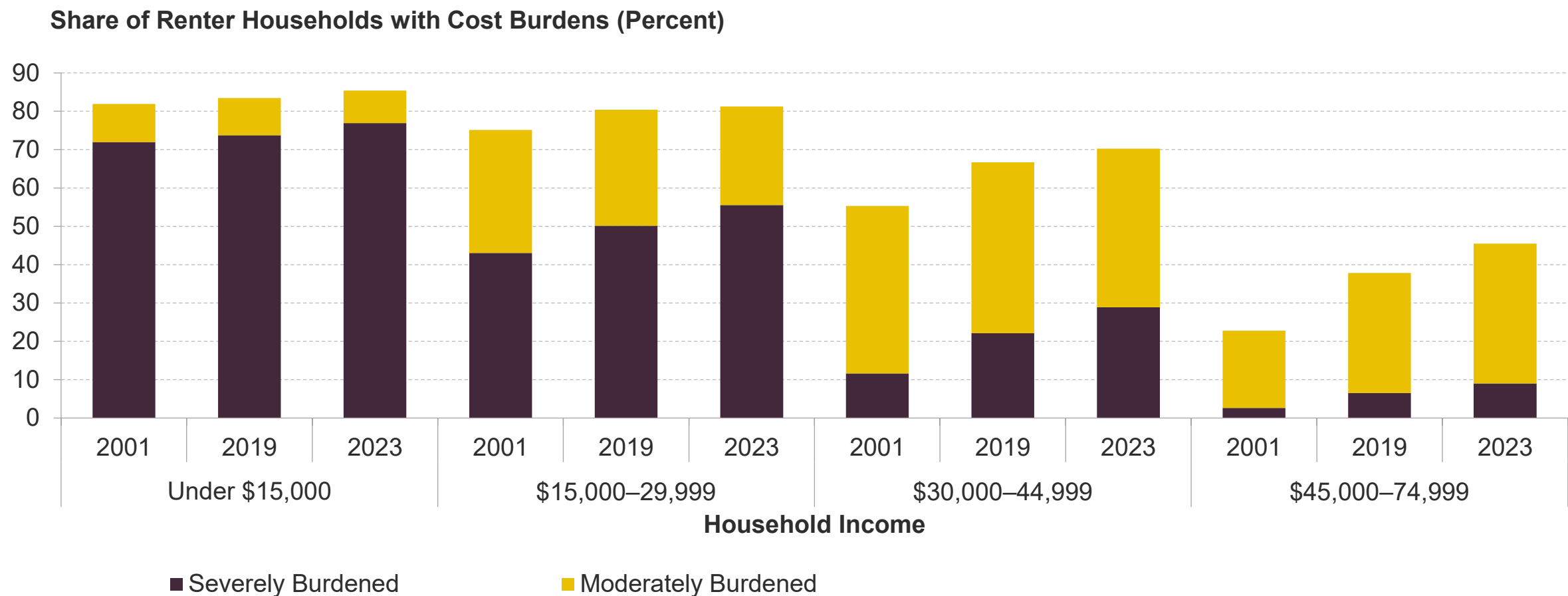
Renters Face Record Levels of Unaffordability



Notes: Moderately (severely) cost-burdened households spend 30–50% (more than 50%) of income on rent and utilities. Households with zero or negative income are assumed to have burdens, and households that are not required to pay rent are assumed to be unburdened. Estimates for 2020 are omitted because of data collection issues experienced during the pandemic.

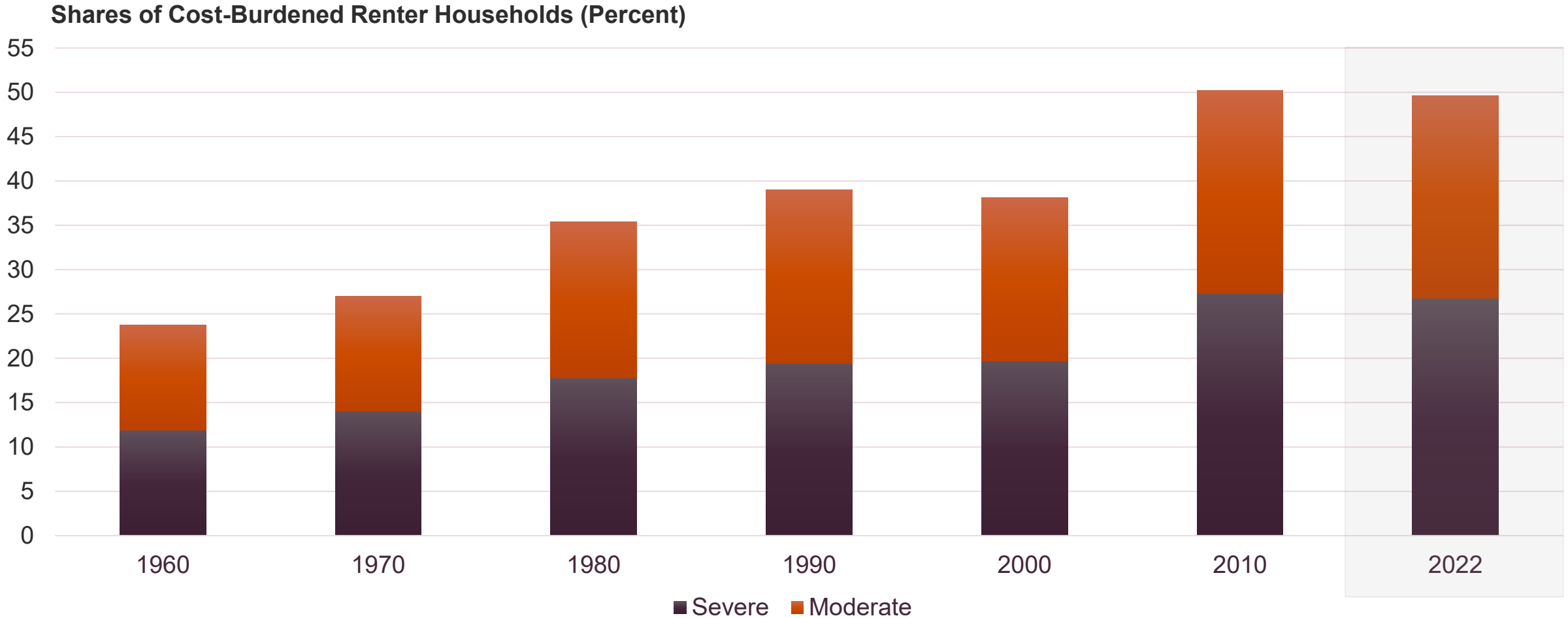
Source: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

Cost Burdens Have Risen Most for Middle-Income Renters



Notes: Incomes are adjusted for inflation using the CPI-U for All Items. Moderately (severely) cost-burdened households pay 31–49% (50% or more) of income for housing. Households with zero or negative income are assumed to have severe burdens, while households paying no cash rent are assumed to be without burdens.
Source: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.

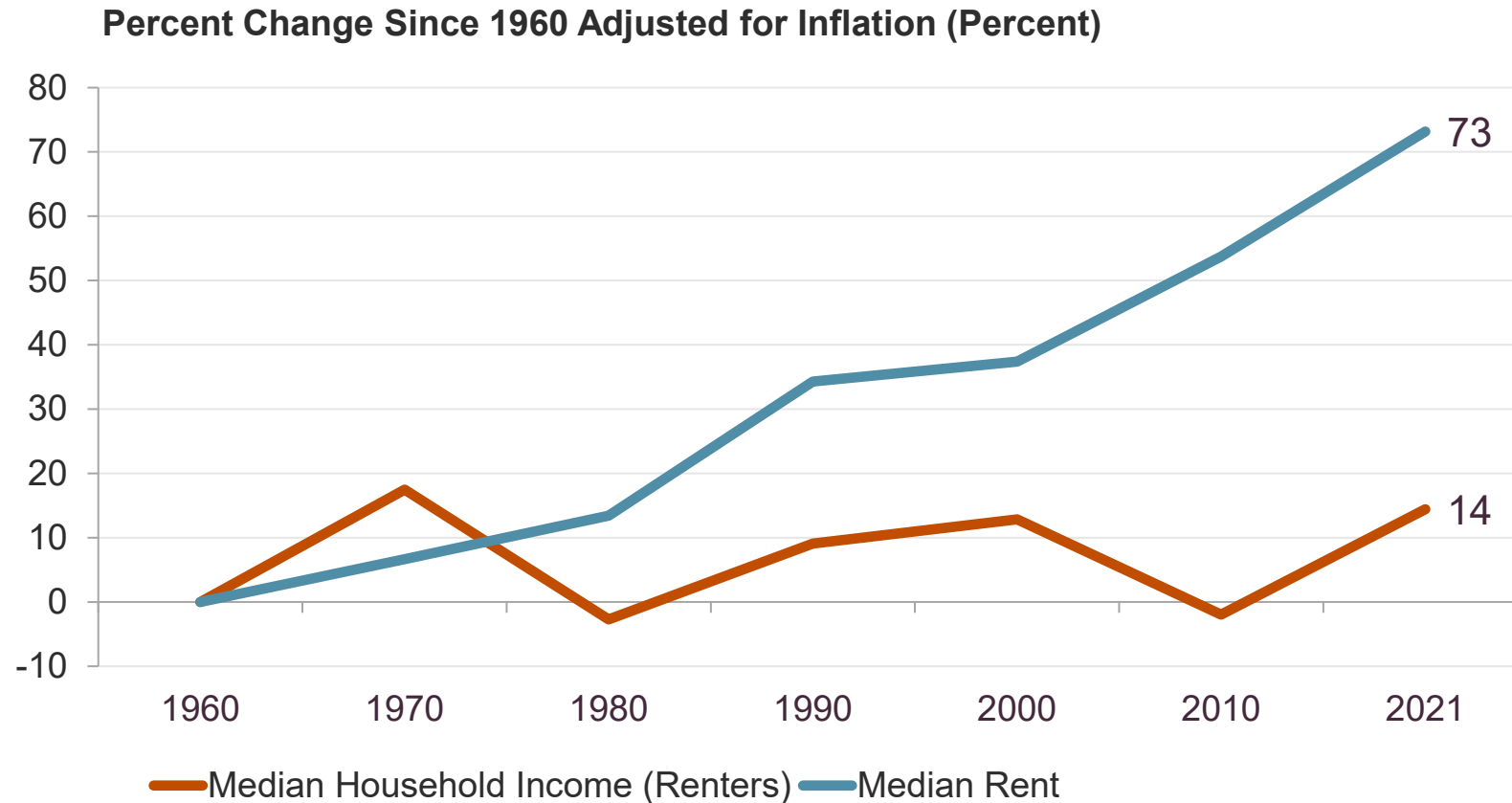
But Rental Housing Affordability Is by No Means a New Problem— In Fact, It Has Actually Been Deteriorating for Decades



Notes: Moderate (severe) burdens are defined as housing costs of 30-50% (more than 50%) of household income. Households with zero or negative income are assumed to be severely burdened, while renters not paying cash rent are assumed to be unburdened.

Sources: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau, Decennial Census and American Community Surveys.

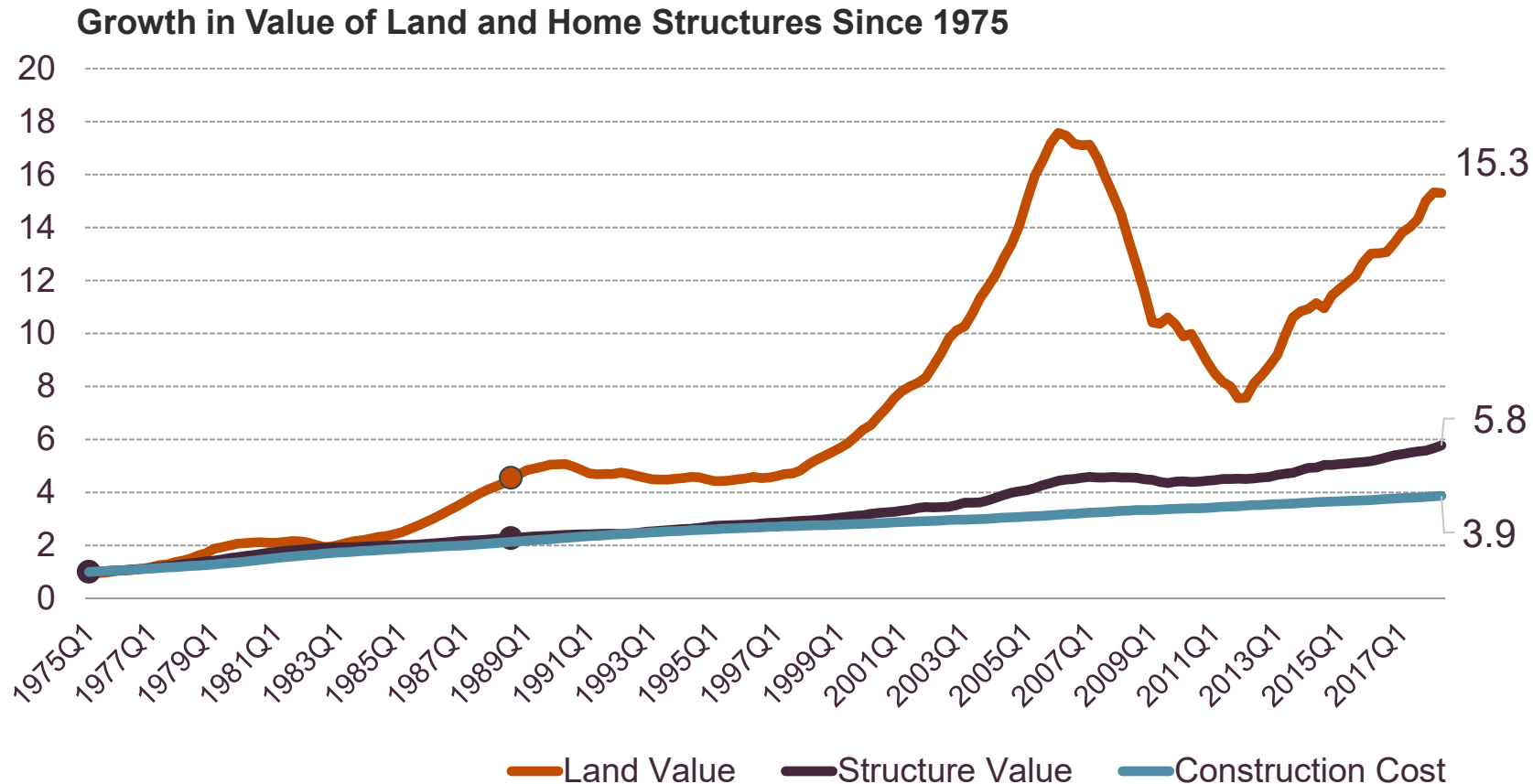
The Problem of Housing Affordability Is a Case of Simple Math: Housing Costs Have Consistently Grown Faster than Income



Since 1960 median real rents have increased 73% while median real renter incomes are only up 14%

Notes: Household incomes and rents are adjusted for inflation using the CPI-U for All Items. Median rents exclude no cash renters.
Source: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau via IPUMS-USA.

Most of the Increase in the Price of Housing over Time Reflects Increases in Land Costs—Leading to Arguments for Decommodifying Housing



Since 1975 land values have increased 15x, while construction costs have increased 4x, and structure values have increased 6x as they have gotten larger and higher quality.

Source: Davis, Morris A. and Michael G. Palumbo, 2008, "The price of residential land in large US cities," Journal of Urban Economics, vol. 63(1), pages 352-384. Data downloaded from <https://www.aei.org/historical-land-price-indicators/>

But What Is “Social Housing” Anyway?



The Common Denominator: Housing That Is Permanently Affordable

- Often taken to mean publicly owned—but it doesn't have to be
- Affordability levels vary and generally do not rely on subsidies



Often elevates
resident and
community control



Often emphasizes
socioeconomic and
racial inclusion



Sometimes includes
goals of green housing
and fair labor practices

New Social Housing Programs Have Begun to Proliferate

The New York Times

HEADWAY

This Is Public Housing. Just Don't Call It That.

Montgomery County, Md., like many places, has an affordable housing crisis. So it started acting like a benevolent real estate investor.

CHICAGO SUN★TIMES

OTHER VIEWS COMMENTARY

The case for green-lighting green social housing in Chicago

Green social housing is an environmentally and fiscally sustainable, mixed-income housing production model that will enable our city to develop permanently affordable housing for all Chicagoans, write four City Council members.

By Ald. Walter Burnett, Ald. Lamont Robinson, Ald. Angela Clay and Ald. Leni Manaa-Hoppenworth | Apr 8, 2025, 7:00am EDT

CASCADE PBS

POLITICS

What's next for Seattle's social housing after big tax win?

In a 63% landslide, Seattleites voted to create a new “excess compensation” tax. Now it's time for the city's Social Housing Developer to get to work.

by Josh Cohen / February 28, 2025

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

METRO ATLANTA

Atlanta Housing OK's creation of nonprofit to build social housing

Chattanooga Times Free Press

New Chattanooga housing fund aims to spur affordable rental development

December 4, 2024 by Ellen Gerst

Evolving Landscape

Champlain Housing Trust, Burlington, VT * **Vermont**

ROC USA, Concord, NH * **New Hampshire**

White Mountains

* RaiseOp, Lewiston, ME

* East Boston Neighborhood Trust

* Boston Housing Authority

* Cambridge Housing Authority

* MassHousing

Rhode Island Department of Housing * **Massachusetts**

Connecticut Tenants Union * **Connecticut**

Rhode Island

Hartford

New Haven

Burlington

Manchester

Worcester

Boston

Providence

Cape Cod

Acadia National

Portland

White Mountains

Canada

New York

(Nick Roux,
Map-USA-New_England01.svg,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=22864293>)

Three Demands, Three Panels

Enabling Public Development

Champlain Housing Trust, Burlington, VT *

Vermont

* RaiseOp, Lewiston, ME

Empowering Residents

ROC USA, Concord, NH *

Hampshire

* East Boston Neighborhood Trust

* Boston Housing Authority

* Cambridge Housing Authority

* MassHousing

Expanding Financial Supports

Rhode Island Department of Housing

* Providence

Connecticut Tenants Union *

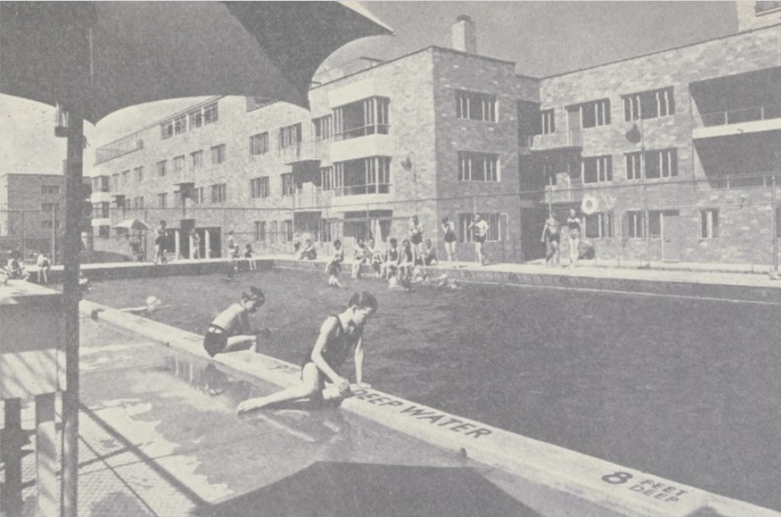
New Haven

Connecticut

Rhode Island

(Nick Roux,
Map-USA-New_England01.svg,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=22864293>)

Past



Carl Mackley Houses, Philadelphia,
American Federation of Full-Fashioned
Hosiery Workers,
Oskar Stonorov, architect,
1933-35.



Levittown, New York,
Levitt & Sons, designers and builders,
1947-51.



Pruitt-Igoe Homes, St. Louis,
St. Louis Housing Authority,
Minoru Yamasaki, architect,
1950-55.

Recurring Questions

Scale

Eligibility

Wealth-Building

Design



Carl Mackley Houses, Philadelphia,
American Federation of Full-Fashioned
Hosiery Workers,
Oskar Stonorov, architect,
1935.



Levittown, New York,
Levitt & Sons, designers and builders,
1947-51.



Pruitt-Igoe Homes, St. Louis,
St. Louis Housing Authority,
Minoru Yamasaki, architect,
1950-55.

Present



Conor Dougherty,
“Why America Should Sprawl,”
New York Times Magazine, April 10, 2025.

Image: Celina, Texas, 2025
Developer: Hillwood
Architect: n/a



Francesca Mari,
“Imagine a Renters' Utopia. It Might Look Like Vienna,”
New York Times Magazine, May 23, 2023.

Image: Alt Erlaa, 1975-86,
Developer: Alterlaa AG (limited-profit stock company)
Architect: Harry Glück

The Opportunity

Ensuring the longevity of public investment.

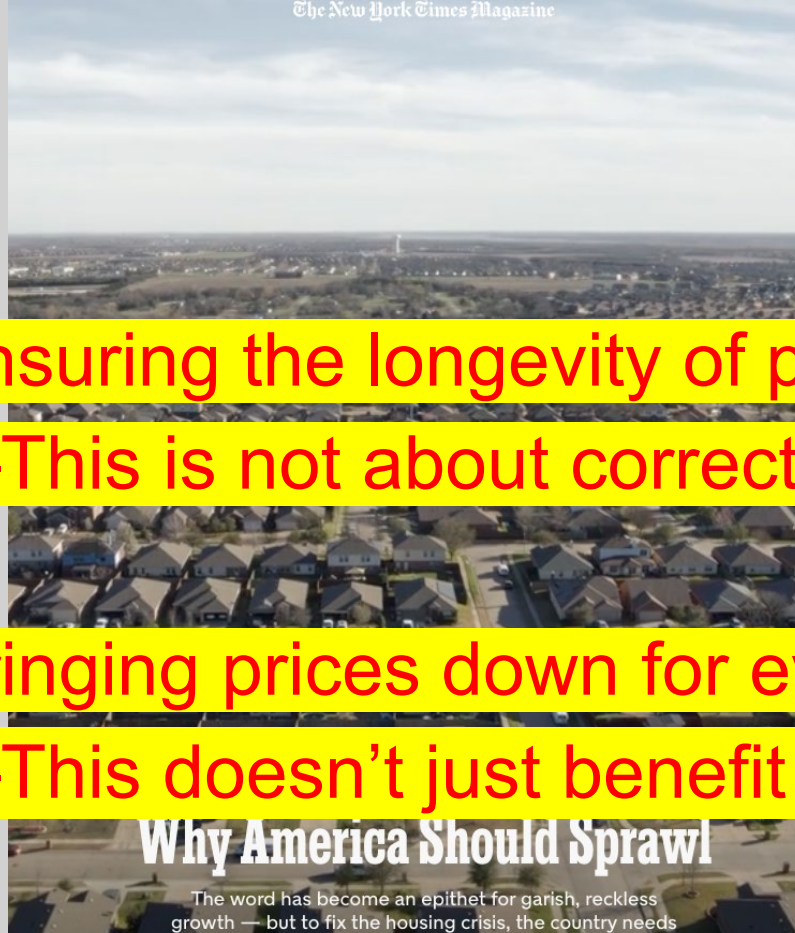
—This is not about correcting a “market failure.”

Bringing prices down for everyone.

—This doesn’t just benefit residents.

Designing places where we can learn to live together again.

—This is not about building more of the same.



Why America Should Sprawl

The word has become an epithet for garish, reckless growth — but to fix the housing crisis, the country needs

“Why America Should Sprawl,”
New York Times Magazine, April 10, 2025.

Image: Celina, Texas, 2025
Developer: Hillwood
Architect: n/a



Imagine a Renters' Utopia.

It Might Look Like Vienna.

“Imagine a Renters' Utopia. It Might Look Like Vienna,”
New York Times Magazine, May 23, 2023.

Image: Alt Erlaa, 1975-86,
Developer: Alterlaa AG (limited-profit stock company)
Architect: Harry Glück

Bridging Divides

462 efficiencies to help accelerate production and incorporate energy efficiency or energy
463 conservation into their design, construction or rehabilitation; (c) accessory dwelling units and co-
464 housing models; and (d) other market transformation efforts to be determined by the executive
465 office of housing and livable communities, which may include, but shall not be limited to, any
466 pilot program or demonstration program that is consistent with the purposes of this item;

21 of 181

467 provided further, that such strategies may include a mixed income social housing pilot program
468 in which a local or regional housing authority or other public or quasi-public entity maintains
469 majority ownership or control of such housing; (ii) the creation of low-income and moderate-
470 income residential housing units and mixed use developments that include both residential
471 housing units and commercial or retail space in close proximity to transit nodes or within
472 neighborhood commercial areas including, but not limited to, those areas designated as main

Massachussetts, Affordable Homes Act (H4977),
adopted by the legislature, October 2024,
excerpt of final bill.

1 (a) Affordable Housing ~~\$90,000,000~~ \$80,000,000
2 Provides ~~ninety~~ eighty million dollars (~~\$90,000,000~~) (\$80,000,000) to increase and
3 preserve the availability of low and moderate income ~~affordable~~ housing ~~production~~. Of this
4 amount, up to ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) may be used to support a new program for public
5 housing development.
6 (b) Acquisition and Revitalization \$10,000,000
7 Provides ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) to support community revitalization through
8 property acquisition and the redevelopment of existing structures.
9 (c) Homeownership ~~\$10,000,000~~ \$20,000,000
10 Provides ~~ten~~ twenty million dollars (~~\$10,000,000~~) (\$20,000,000) to increase production of
11 ~~affordable~~ low and moderate and middle- income housing intended for homeownership.
12 (d) Site Acquisition \$5,000,000
13 Provides five million dollars (\$5,000,000) to support the acquisition of properties for
14 redevelopment as affordable and supportive housing.
15 (e) Housing Related Infrastructure \$4,000,000
16 Provides four million dollars (\$4,000,000) to support pre-development and development

Rhode Island, housing bond bill,
adopted by voters November 2024,
excerpt of in-progress wording.

It's Possible

- 462 efficiencies to help accelerate production and incorporate energy efficiency or energy
463 conservation into their design, construction or rehabilitation; (c) accessory dwelling units and co-



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- 471 housing units and commercial or retail space in close proximity to transit nodes or within
472 neighborhood commercial areas including, but not limited to, those areas designated as main



David Shim, "Conant Thread First,"
adaptive reuse of a former textile mill, Central
Falls, Rhode Island.
studio project, Harvard GSD, Spring 2024.

PANEL 1: Enabling Public Development

Kenzie Bok, Administrator, Boston Housing Authority

Margaret Donnelly Moran, Deputy Director of Development,
Cambridge Housing Authority

Deborah Goddard, Secretary, Rhode Island Department of Housing

Susanne Schindler, Research Fellow, Joint Center for Housing
Studies (moderator)



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Jefferson Park Apartments in North Cambridge

Cambridge Housing Authority

Expanding Publicly Driven Housing Development

About the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA)

Established
1935

Mission

To develop and manage safe, good quality, affordable housing for low-income individuals and families in a manner that promotes citizenship, community, and self-reliance in one of the most expensive housing markets in the country.

Units Owned and Managed

~3,000 units at 50 developments consisting of elderly / disabled, family, and permanent supporting housing

Vouchers Administered
5,000

Households Served

More than 8,000 (14,000+ individuals)



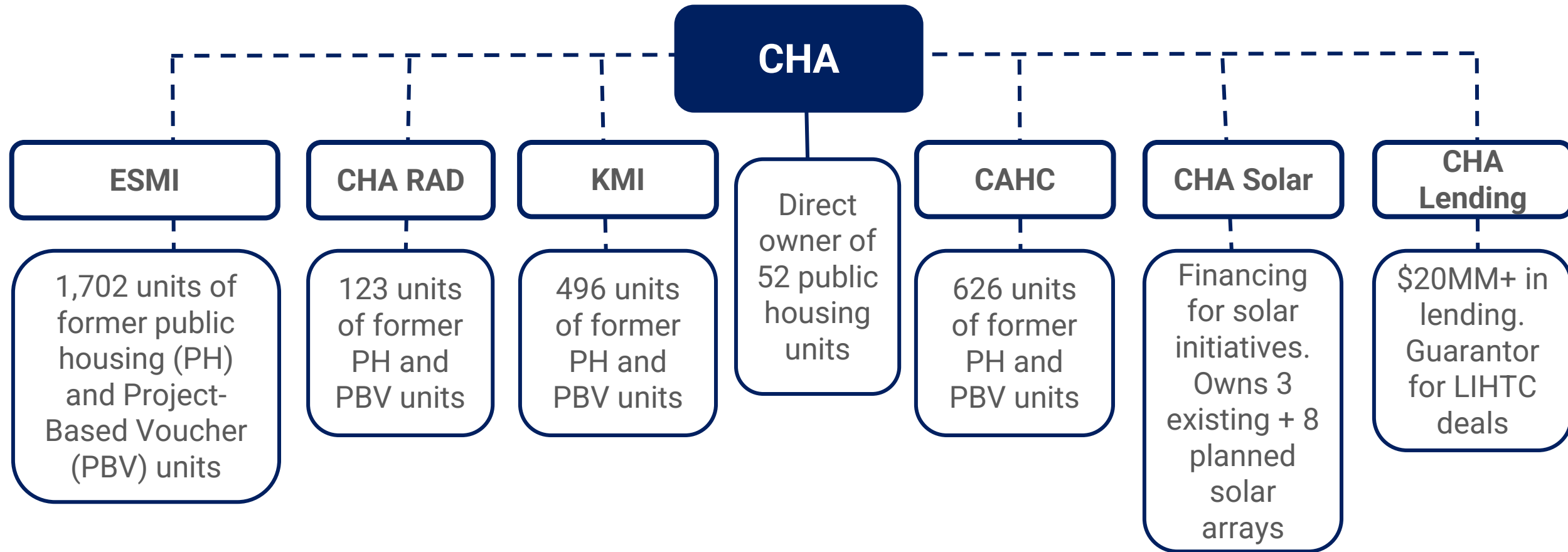
CHA's first development, Newtowne Court, was built in 1938 and serves 268 families today.

Preserving & Building Affordable Housing in Cambridge



Since 2010, CHA has preserved 2,300 deeply affordable apartments and created over 200 new units in Cambridge. Construction emphasizes long-term durability, livability, energy efficiency and high-quality construction

CHA's Non-Profit Affiliates



CHA's non-profit affiliates have been a critical tool to convert public housing to the Section 8 program in order to increase operating income while maintaining long-term control of developments, and in providing innovative financing to support redevelopment and sustainability initiatives.

Partnerships to Grow Affordable Housing in the Region

Consulting Engagements

Development Since 2019, CHA has provided development, construction, and relocation consulting services. To date, partnerships include those with housing authorities in Medford, Belmont, Needham Watertown, Haverhill, Brockton, Revere, Sudbury, and Lewiston (ME).

Co-Development

In 2023, CHA closed on the Modernization of Saltonstall Apartments as a co-developer with the Medford HA. The collaboration will bolster MHA's ability to independently pursue development activity in the future.



The Saltonstall project will convert the property to the Section 8 program and increase the site's unit count from 200 to 222.

Of this amount, up to ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) may be used to support a new program for public housing development.

From a \$120 million housing bond bill, approved by
Rhode Island voters in November 2024.



The Transformation of Public Housing in Newport, RI



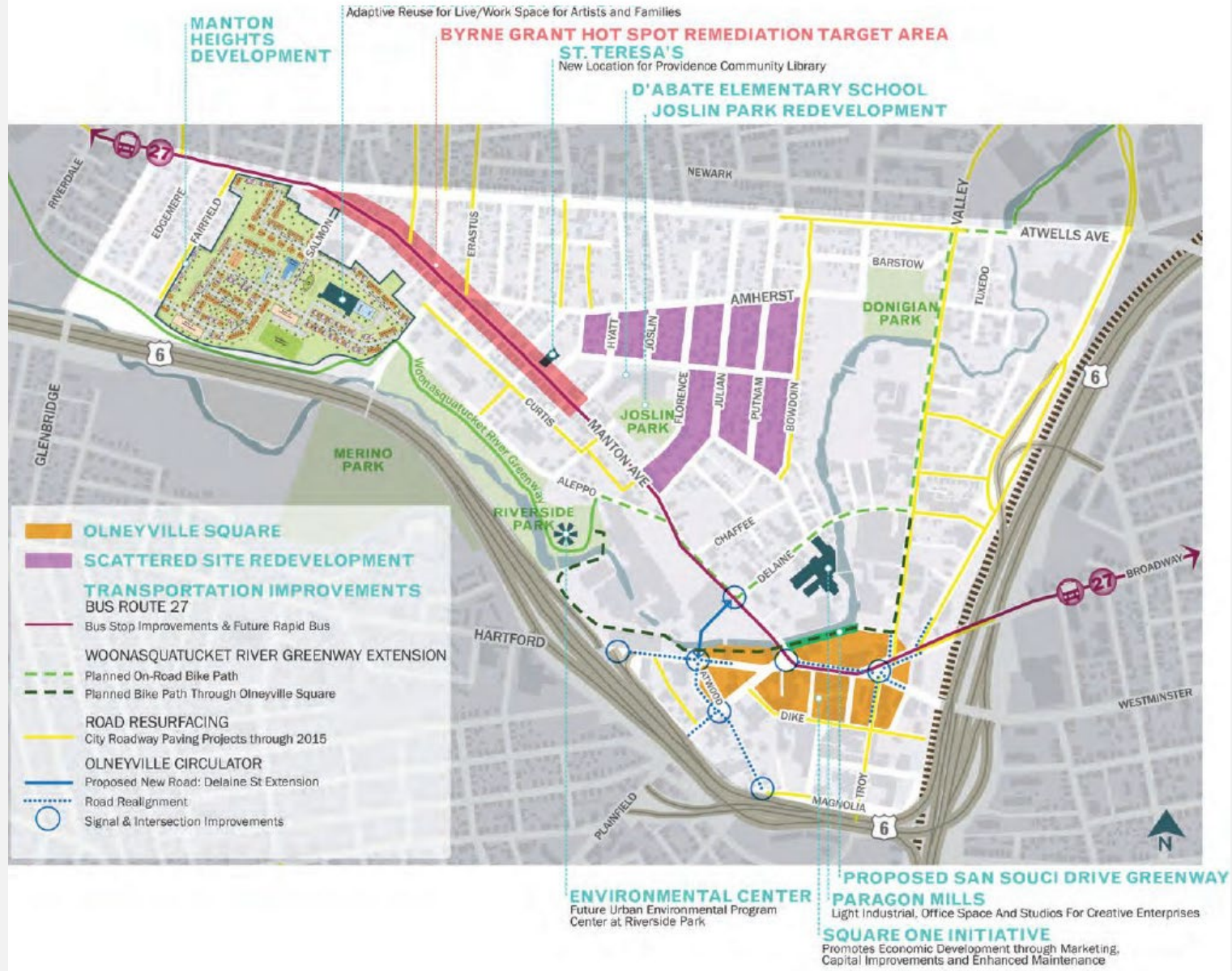
Build Olneyville Plan



Funded by:
2010 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant
Local Partners

June 2014

Figure I-1. Olneyville Neighborhood Master Plan



Manton Heights Choice Neighborhood Plan, Providence, Rhode Island



Existing Manton Heights Public Housing



Proposal for New Construction & Adaptive Re-Use

PANEL 2:

Empowering Residents

Peter Fousek, Secretary-Treasurer, Connecticut Tenants Union

Michael Monte, Chief Executive Officer, Champlain Housing Trust

Mary O'Hara, Executive Vice President, ROC Movement

Dana McKinney White, Assistant Professor of Urban Design,
Harvard Graduate School of Design (moderator)



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What Is a Tenant Union?



Blake Street Tenants Union (BSTU) members & other CTTU supporters march to block retaliatory evictions in CT's first collectively bargained lease campaign. Credit: *People's World CT*



Tenant Unions, Democracy, & Social Housing



CTTU members from across the state gather for a day of discussion, debate, deliberation and direct democratic decision making at the Union's annual convention

Credit: CTTU



CTTU Social Housing — So Far



Parkside Village II Tenants go public in 2024, en route to becoming CTTU's first resident-controlled housing complex. Credit: Abby Brone/CT Public



BSTU Members hold press conference demanding resident acquisition negotiations for their complex. Credit: Arthur Delot-Vilain



CTTU Social Housing — The Model



HOME INC



The American Prospect

Why America Needs More Social Housing

Subsidizing market prices to make housing affordable is a losing strategy. There's a better way—
—on display for a century in Vienna.



CTTU CLT



Center: screenshot of article promoting mixed-income, public/private hybrid social and cooperative housing as an alternative to current public housing subsidies in the USA.

Left, right: logos of partner organizations in CTTU's social housing campaigns to date.

“The Price of Obedience Has Become Too High”



CTTU members rally at Hartford City Hall to demand justice & equity after a mass displacement in 2024

Credit: Tyler Russell/CT Public







CHAMPLAIN
HOUSING TRUST









ROC USA®, LLC



ROC Movement
Training & Continuous Learning
Cooperative Solutions
ROC USA Direct
Operations
Finance & Accounting

ROC's



ROC USA®
Capital



COOPERATIVE
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE

CTAPs



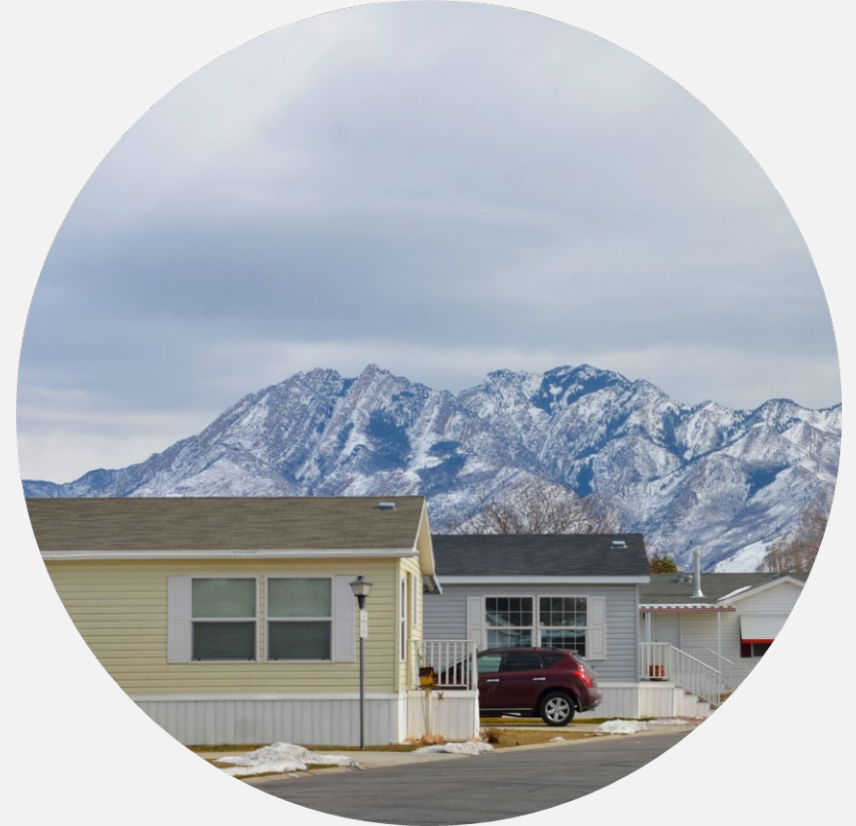
ROC-NH
creating opportunity and value
for manufactured-home owners





ROC member-owners approve the annual budget



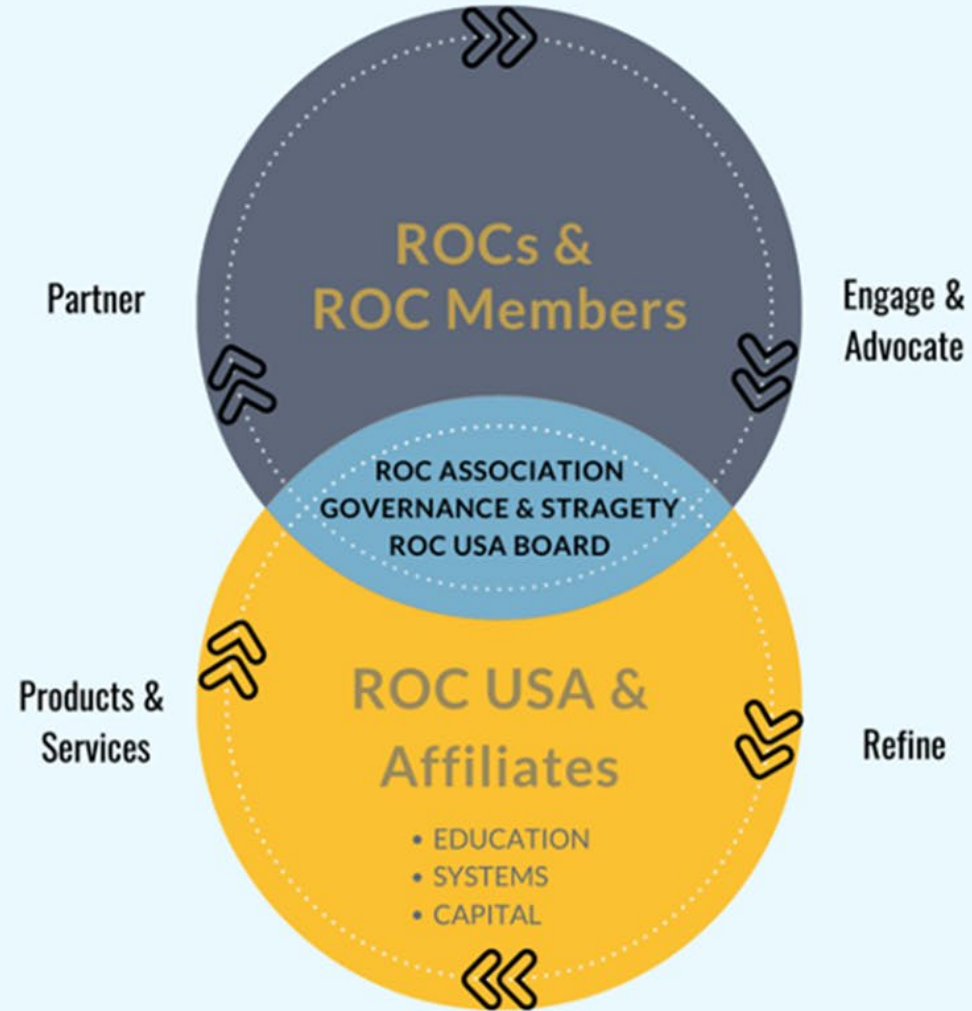


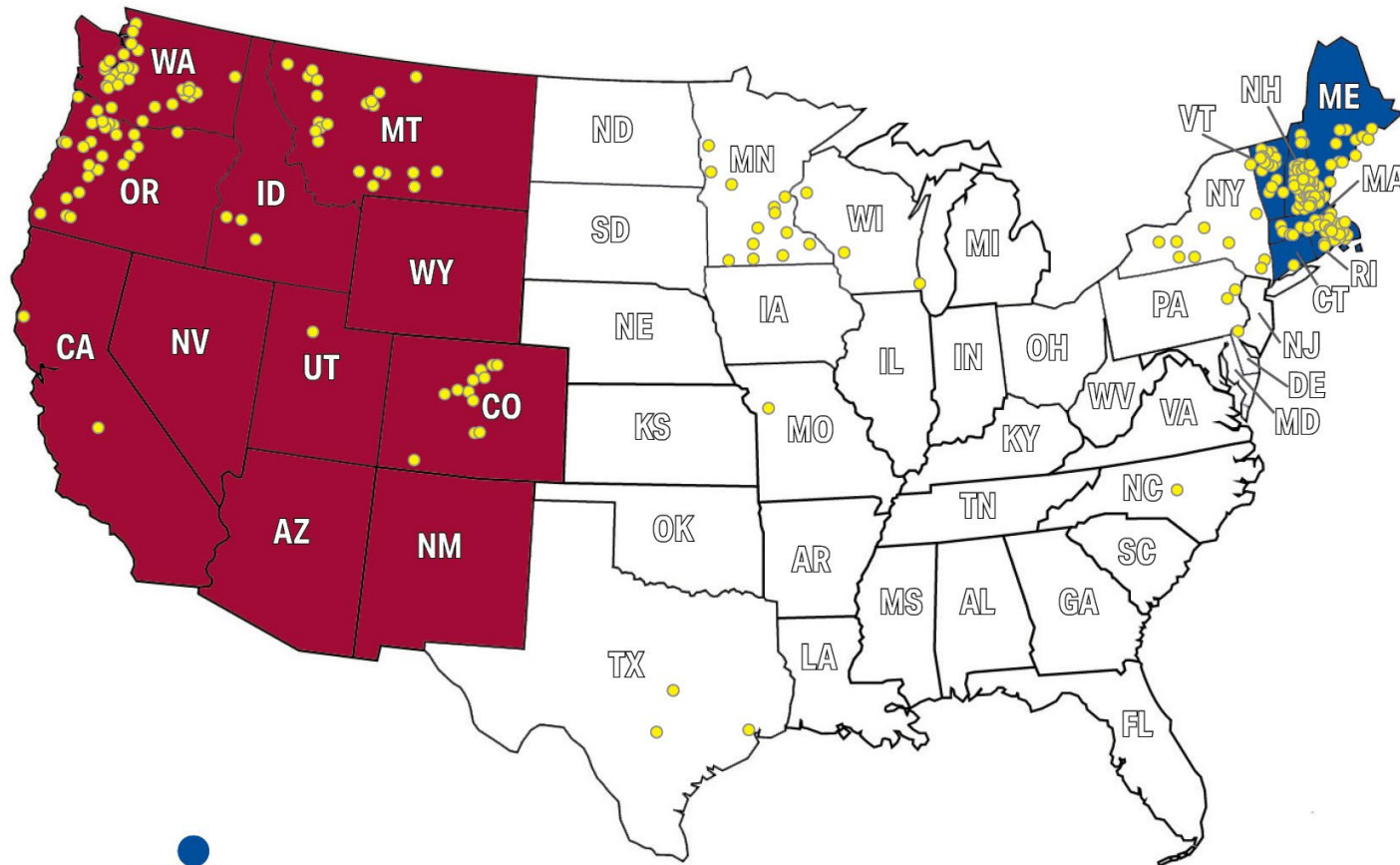
Brittany Terrace adds solar; Park Plaza installs new water infrastructure; Applewood fills vacant sites



National ROC Movement

- Preserve and Improve Affordable Communities
- Build Individual Assets
- Foster healthy, mutually supportive communities and Leaders





ROC
Association

- MOUNTAIN WEST REGION
- EAST, MIDWEST & SOUTH REGION
- NEW ENGLAND REGION

A National Association of

- 343 ROCs
 - In 21 States
 - Representing 23,700 Homeowners
-
- 212 ROCs in NE
 - 14,900 Homeowners

PANEL 3:

Expanding Financial Supports

Tanya Hahnel, Project Manager, East Boston CDC

Chrystal Kornegay, Chief Executive Officer, MassHousing

Craig Saddlemire, Cooperative Development Organizer,
Raise-Op Housing Cooperative

Rachel Weber, Professor of Urban Planning,
Harvard Graduate School of Design (moderator)



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Trust Neighborhoods

A nonprofit creating
community-controlled real
estate where gentrification
threatens displacement



The East Boston
Neighborhood Trust

Our mission

Working for neighborhoods to harness growth to
prevent displacement and benefit existing residents

Our vision

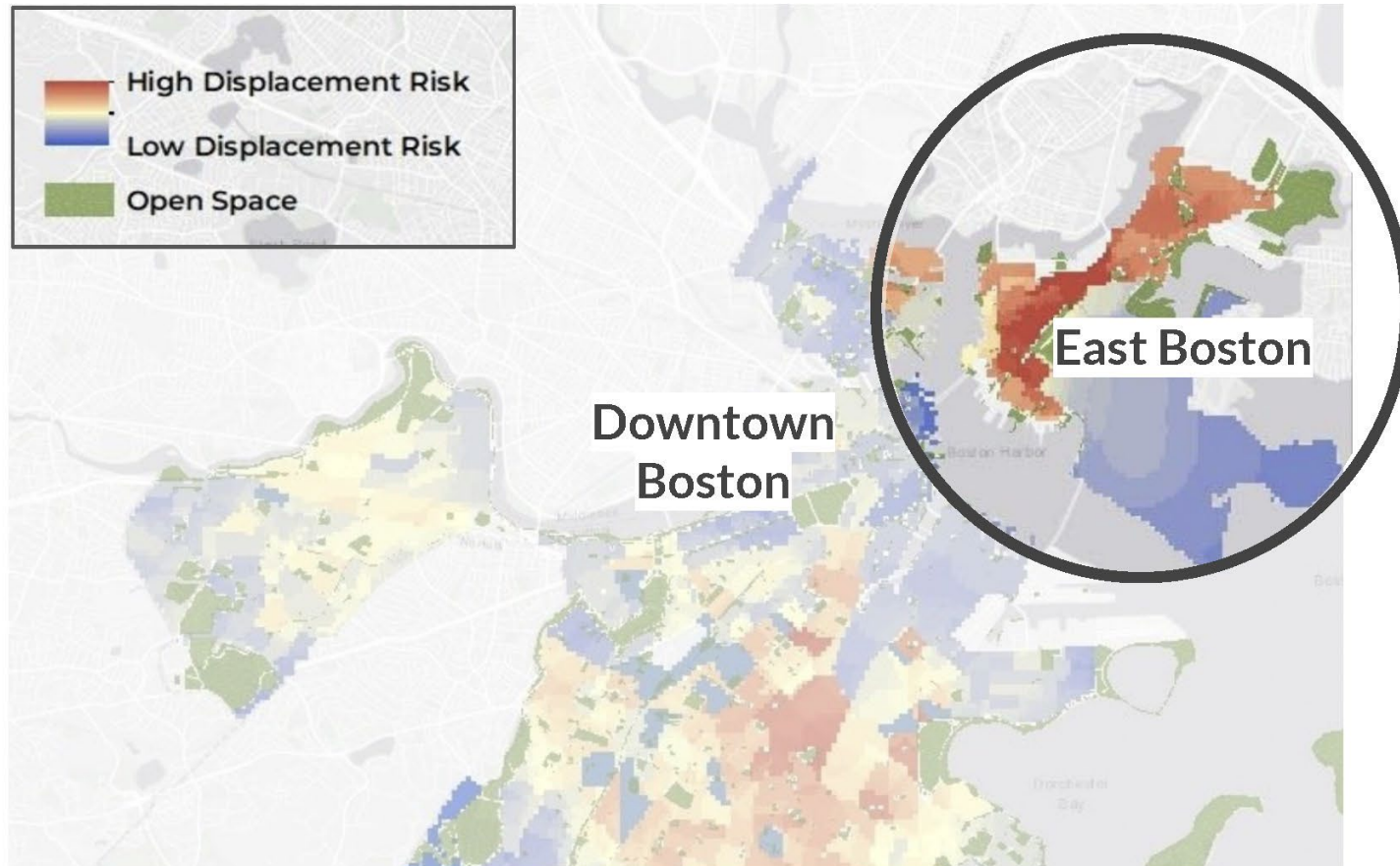
Diverse, mixed-income neighborhoods
that grow opportunity for everyone

Our work

A new tool for existing neighborhood-based organizations:
the Mixed-Income Neighborhood Trust (MINT)

East Boston Residents face the highest risk of displacement in the City of Boston.

City of Boston Displacement Risk Map 2020



East Boston Median Rents

Jan. 2014

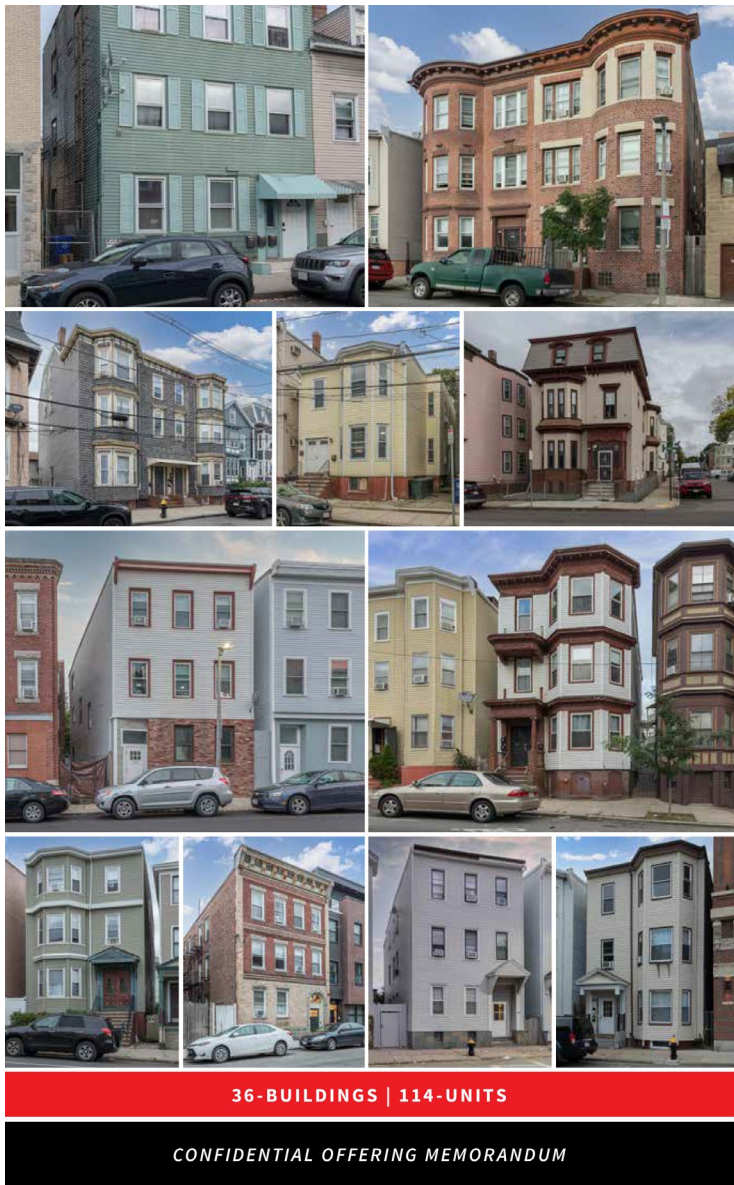
\$1,639

March 2021

\$2,143

East Boston median rents have increased more than 2x the increase in rents across Boston

Source: City of Boston, [Boston Displacement Risk Index 2020](#)



EAST BOSTON BLUE LINE PORTFOLIO

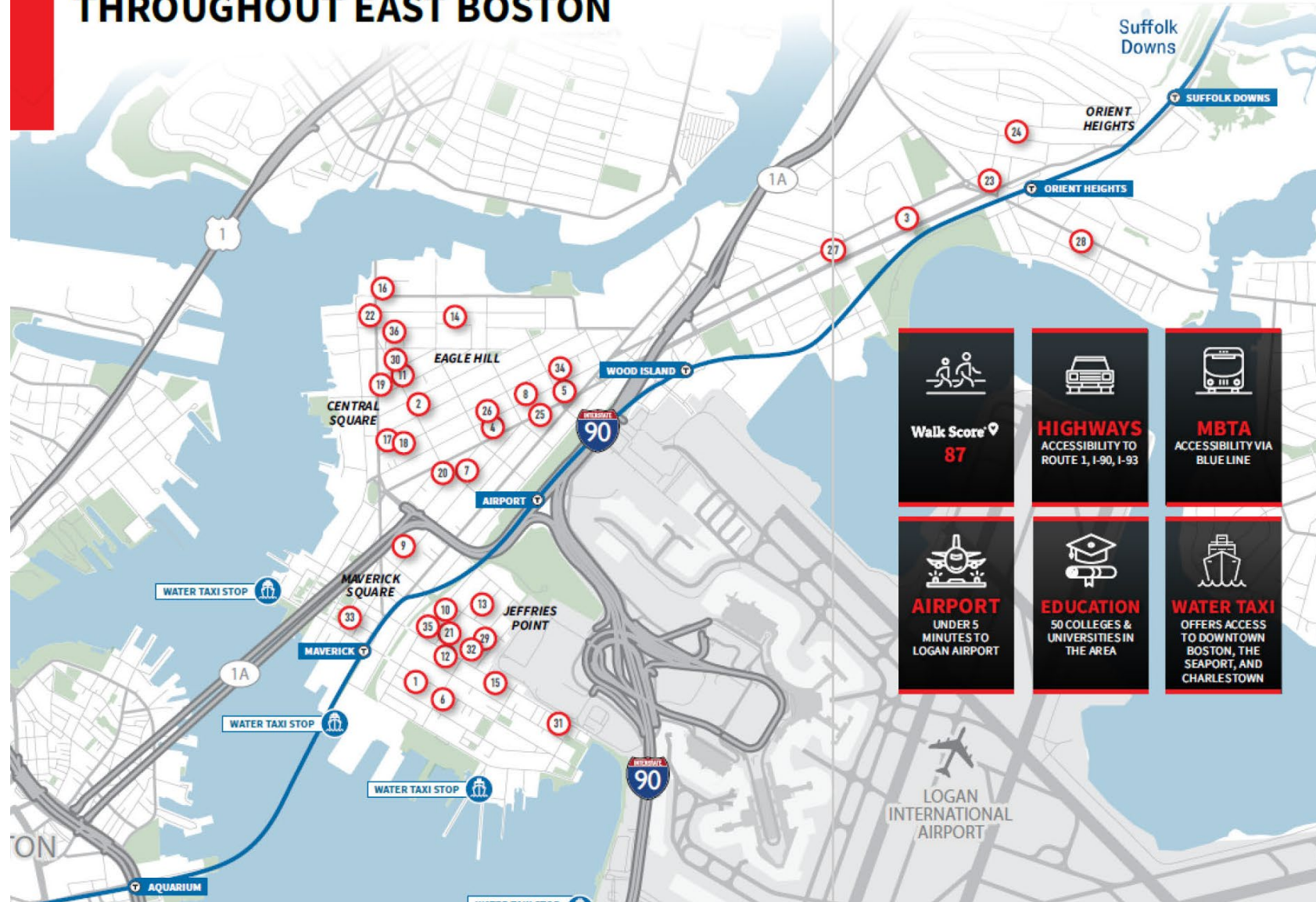


THE EAST BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD TRUST

EST. 2022



BOTH SCALE AND CONNECTIVITY THROUGHOUT EAST BOSTON



Walk Score®
87

HIGHWAYS
ACCESSIBILITY TO
ROUTE 1, I-90, I-93

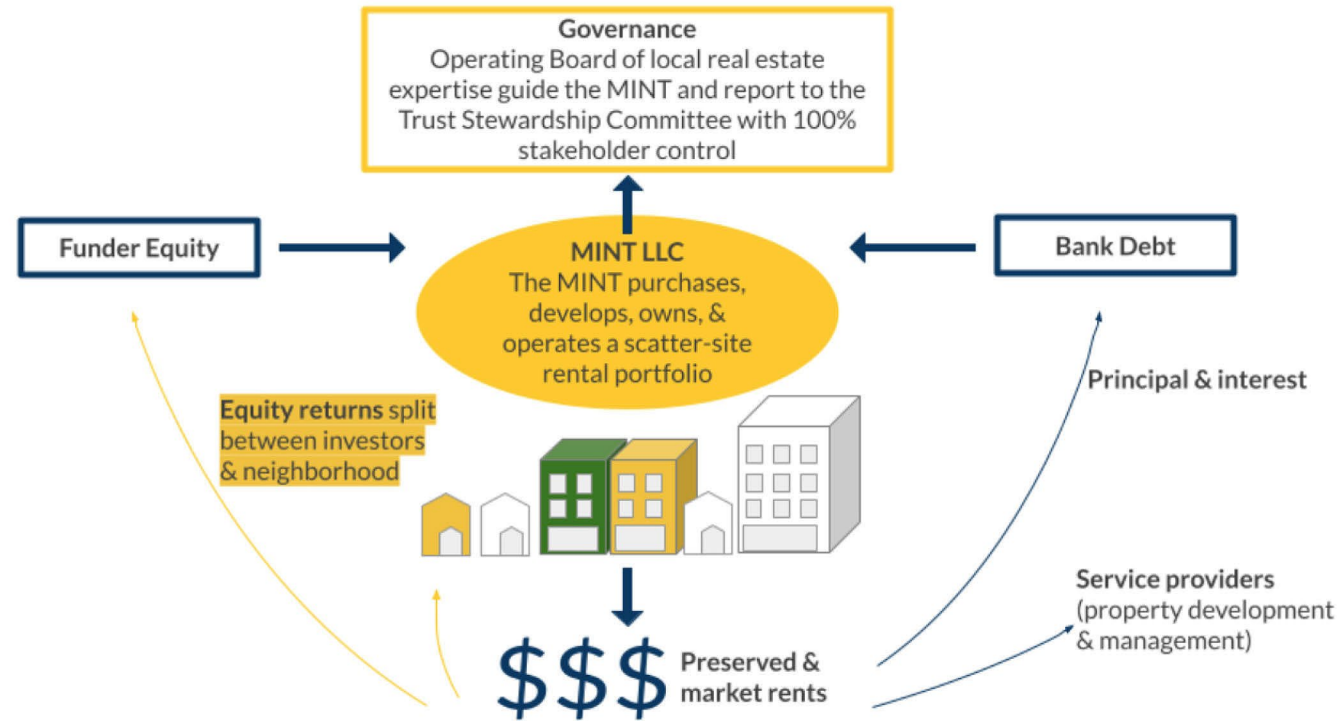
MBTA
ACCESSIBILITY VIA
BLUE LINE

AIRPORT
UNDER 5
MINUTES TO
LOGAN AIRPORT

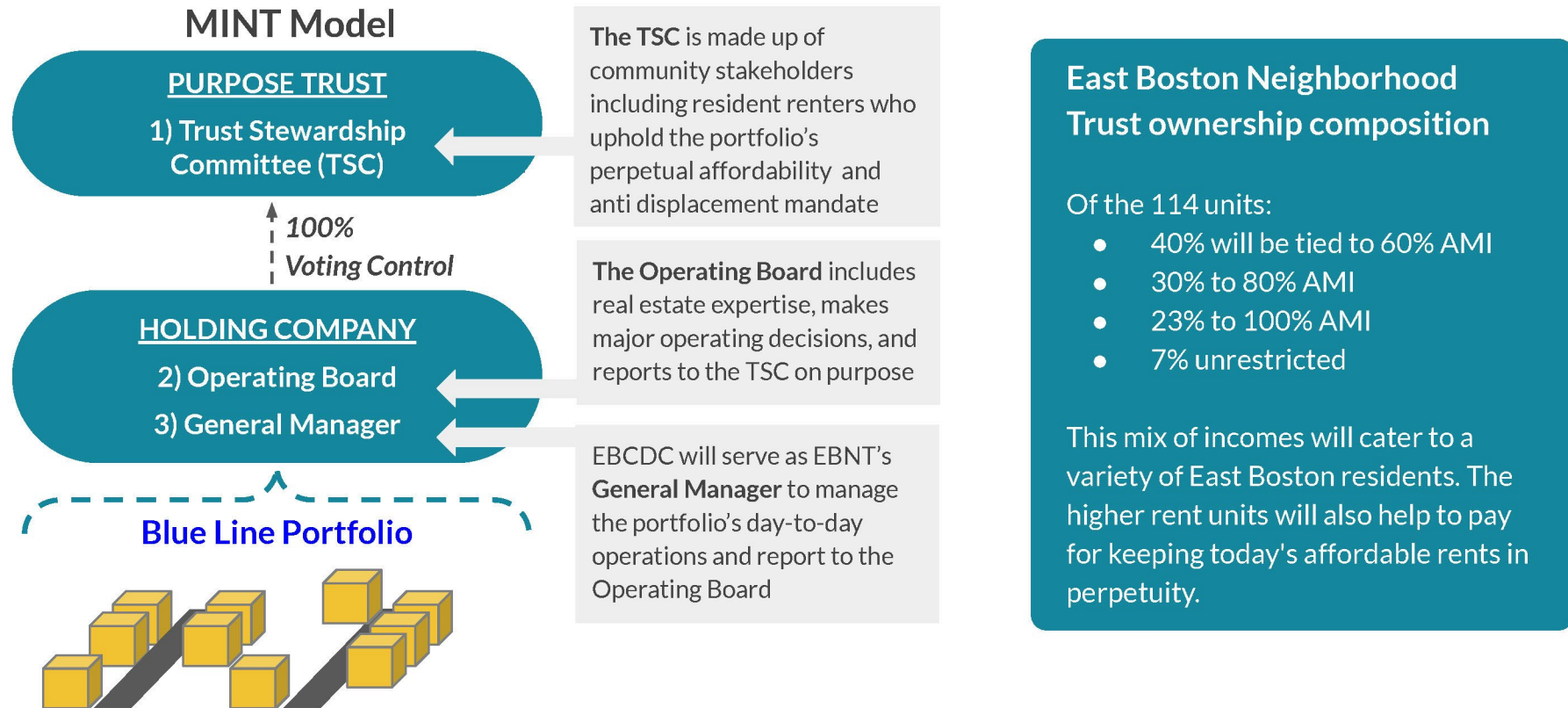
EDUCATION
50 COLLEGES &
UNIVERSITIES IN
THE AREA

WATER TAXI
OFFERS ACCESS
TO DOWNTOWN
BOSTON, THE
SEAPORT, AND
CHARLESTOWN

#	Address	Unit Count
1.	289 Sumner	3
2.	57 Trenton	3
3.	746 Bennington	3
4.	215 Saratoga	3
5.	72 Prescott	3
6.	41 Cottage	3
7.	261 Havre	3
8.	324 Saratoga	3
9.	110 Paris	3
10.	135 Orleans	3
11.	21 Monmouth	3
12.	219 Maverick	3
13.	64 Lubec	7
14.	101 Falcon	2
15.	297 Maverick	3
16.	451 Meridian	3
17.	26 Princeton	3
18.	28 Princeton	3
19.	365 Meridian	3
20.	1-2 Appian	4
21.	17 Frankfort	3
22.	438 Meridian	3
23.	10 Breed	6
24.	166 Leyden	3
25.	229 Bennington	3
26.	220 Saratoga	3
27.	809 Saratoga	3
28.	1117 Saratoga	2
29.	133 Cottage	3
30.	26 Monmouth	3
31.	377 Maverick	3
32.	121 Cottage	3
33.	15 Havre	3
34.	265 Princeton	3
35.	103 Orleans	3
36.	31 West Eagle	3
Total		114



East Boston Neighborhood Trust MINT Model



THE CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY

Many of these developments are **permitted, but are “stuck”** due to the following challenges:



rapidly changing
economic factors



lack of affordable **equity**
financing



high **interest rates**

MassHousing can **leverage public capital to mobilize private capital** for mixed-income rental production to ensure **our momentum in residential production.**



ABOUT **BILD**

MassHousing BILD (an acronym for **B**ringing **I**nnovation to **L**ending and **D**evelopment) **creates financing solutions** for market-oriented, mixed-income rental housing construction to **catalyze private capital investment**.

BILD is a **one-stop financial solution** offering an innovative **equity investment (Momentum Equity)** coupled with a **competitive senior debt product (FORGE)**.

Rental developers are eligible to apply projects that are **new production, at least 50 total units**, with at least **20% of the units** for residents earning up to 80% of AMI.





Momentum Equity | April 8, 2025

Residences at East Milton

Location	4 Franklin Street, East Milton
Sponsor	Joseph J. Corcoran Company The Falconi Companies
Transaction Type	Production
Funding Type	Equity
Execution Type	Momentum Equity
Total Rental Units	92
Affordability Mix	23 Affordable 69 Market

Deal Team Members

Origination	Brian Robinson, Originator Matt Deych, Analyst
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Sources and Uses

Sources	Construction	<i>per unit</i>	Permanent	<i>per unit</i>
Metro Credit Union Construction	\$29,820,000	\$324,130		
Fidelity Equity	\$5,000,000	\$54,348		
First Mortgage Loan			\$26,838,000	\$291,717
Subordinate Mortgage Loan			\$2,982,000	\$32,413
Momentum Equity			\$5,000,000	\$54,348
Syndicated Limited Partner Equity	\$14,772,611	\$160,572	\$14,772,611	\$160,572
Falconi Companies Equity	\$1,315,000	\$14,293	\$1,315,000	\$14,293
Joseph J. Corcoran Equity	\$1,315,000	\$14,293	\$1,315,000	\$14,293
Total	\$52,222,611	\$567,637	\$52,222,611	\$567,637

Uses	Permanent	<i>per unit</i>
Acquisition	\$2,968,000	\$32,261
Construction	\$34,200,000	\$371,739
Contingency	\$1,665,000	\$18,098
General Development	\$11,140,791	\$121,096
Developer Overhead & Fee	\$2,248,820	\$24,444
Total	\$52,222,611	\$567,637

Raise-Op Annual Member Meeting



Photo Courtesy Raise-Op 2018
Lewiston, ME

Raise-Op Building Design Meeting



Photo Courtesy Raise-Op 2019
Lewiston, ME

Raise-Op Ground Breaking for Blake & Walnut



Photo Courtesy Raise-Op 2022
Lewiston, ME

Raise-Op Ribbon Cutting for Blake & Walnut



Photo Courtesy Raise-Op 2023
Lewiston, ME

Raise-Op Development at 84 Walnut Street
w/ Hebert Construction & Bild Achitecture



Photo Courtesy Raise-Op 2023
Lewiston, ME

Thank You

Photo: Rivermark (Cambridge, MA)—Renovation and Rehabilitation,
completed 2022 by Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. and Bruner/Cott Architects.
© Richard Mandelkorn Photography, courtesy of Bruner/Cott Architects.

