



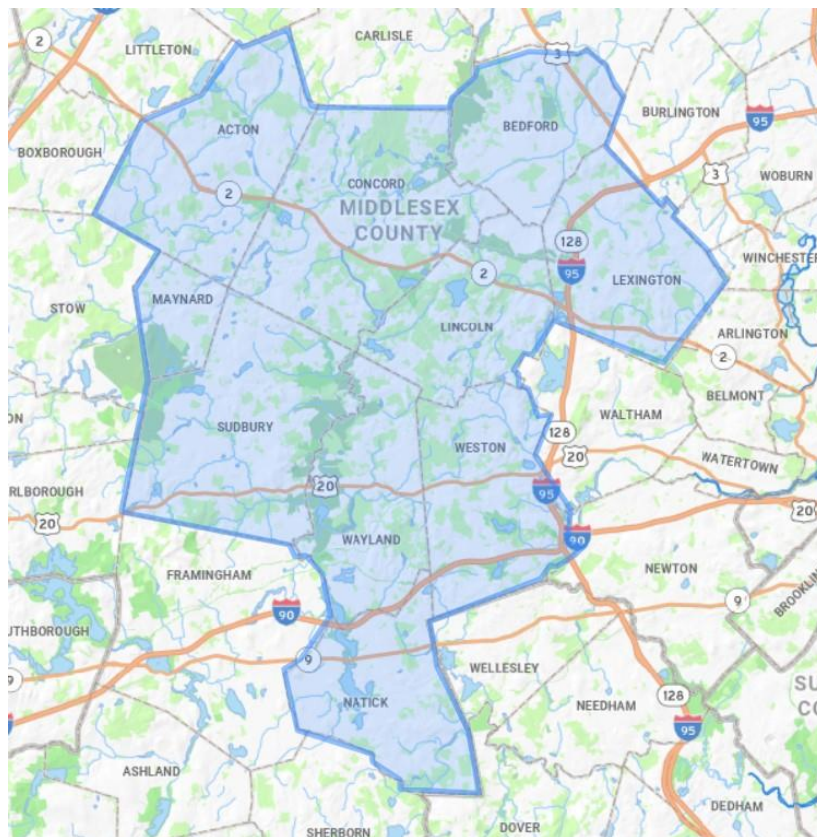
## Regional Housing Services Office

July 2023 Newsletter

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### **RHSO welcomes Natick!**

At RHSO's convening in May, the region's town managers approved adding Natick to the Inter-Municipal Agreement. The Regional Housing Services Office was formed in 2011 by six member towns and the group's membership has fluctuated slightly over the years. As of this month, we have ten member towns, our largest number to date.



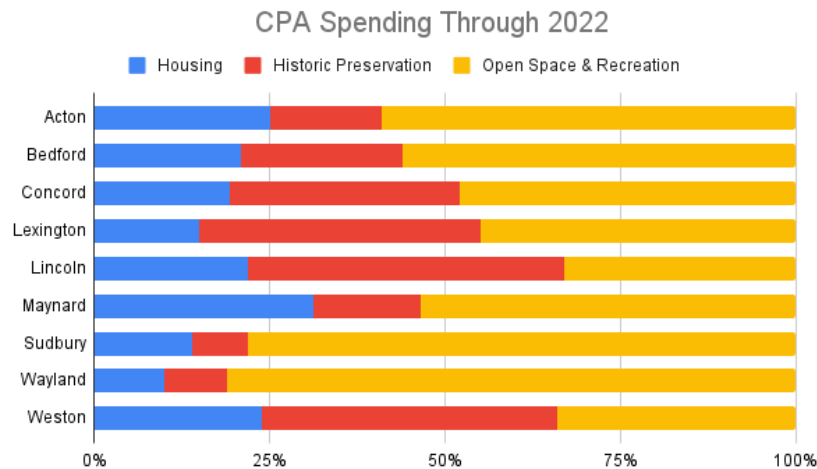
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### **Report on Community Preservation Act from Tufts & Greater Boston Real Estate Board**

The Greater Boston Real Estate Board and Tufts University's Center for State Policy Analysis evaluated the Community Preservation Act in a report released this month. Cities and towns that opt into the program add a surcharge to local property taxes, receive a state match, then can spend the proceeds on affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation. They recommend additional state funds to incentivize municipalities' spending at least 20% of CPA dollars on affordable housing (minimum is 10%), more technical assistance from the state to help municipalities better integrate CPA

spending with long-term planning, and more state assistance with project bidding and management for smaller towns. Find the report on our website at <https://www.rhsohousing.org/about-rhso/pages/regional-housing-information>.

The following chart is based on data from *Missed Opportunities: Funding Housing through the Community Preservation Act*. Overall, suburbs have spent 19% of their CPA funds on affordable housing while rural areas have spent 42% and urban areas 52% on housing. The housing category includes funds that have been spent on affordable units and funds that have been transferred to Housing Trusts for future projects.



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### **RHSO Director Presents at MA Housing Institute**

The MA Housing Partnership held its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Housing Institute this month. Geared toward officials, volunteers, and employees in suburban and rural communities, the Housing Institute is a two-day intensive training that engages participants in discussion and problem-solving activities related to the development of affordable housing in Massachusetts. All the state housing agencies send representatives, along with non-profits and other major affordable housing entities. The first day was online and the second day was in person, when we crossed paths with folks from Bedford, Lexington, and Acton. Liz Rust was a panelist in the Local Action Units workshop and explained the required components of Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plans. You can find her slides along with the rest of the institute's materials at <https://www.housingtoolbox.org/recorded-workshops-and-trainings/housing-institute-2023>.

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### **Governor Creates New Housing Secretary Role in Reorganized State Agency**

Housing has become a growing concern for Massachusetts political and business leaders, with not a day going by without compelling stories in local media about the human impact of spiraling housing costs. This spring, Governor Healey moved the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) out of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development into its own Secretariat as the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC). The new Housing Secretary Ed

Augustus has deep roots in municipal governance, having served most recently as City Manager of Worcester for eight years. EOHLC's mission is "to create more homes and lower housing costs in every region."

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### **RHSO Homeowner Training**

RHSO held its annual homeowner training on May 23. The training was offered in an online format via a Zoom webinar, and attendance was strong with 40 registered. The webinar covered deed restriction requirements and condo/homeowners' associations. Our own Lara Plaskon reviewed refinancing, capital improvements, the resale process, inheritance, and the role of monitoring agents. Attorney Richard Vetstein presented an overview of the responsibilities of condominium and homeowners' associations. The panelists answered questions ranging from how to figure out the resale value of your restricted home to how to review your condo budget. Due to a technical issue, a recording of the webinar is unfortunately not available, but the slides from the presentation are available on our website at <https://www.rhsohousing.org/about-rhso/pages/regional-housing-information>.

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