



# Executive Summary

Municipalities across Greater Boston are facing increasing challenges in managing and preserving their affordable housing stock. Local Action Units are affordable housing units that are created through local municipal action without a comprehensive permit and without direct State financial subsidies. Enabling local actions that municipalities can undertake to create LAUs include special permits, inclusionary zoning, conveyance of public land and utilization of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds, among others. LAUs are a component of the Local Initiative Program (LIP) administered by EOHLC. There are two components of LIPs: LIP Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit developments (also known as a Friendly 40B) and LAU. LAUs should meet the requirements of the LIP Program, outside of requirements for a comprehensive permit. LAU can also be included on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) should it meet requirements set forth by EOHLC.

Over the course of this project, MAPC partnered with a group of municipalities to better understand the challenges involved in administering Local Action Units (LAUs). A key motivation for this work was the growing concern among municipal staff about large and unpredictable rent increase requests, particularly in the wake of post-pandemic rent increase restrictions.

This resource guide is intended to serve multiple purposes. It includes a foundational “LAU 101” section that provides a program overview and outlines the LAU application process to support the onboarding of municipal staff. It also offers a dedicated resources section to assist municipalities with day-to-day administration. Additionally, the guide documents program related challenges shared by municipalities and presents recommendations developed in response to those findings to help strengthen long-term affordability and housing stability.

To support ease of use, this resource guide is organized as a web-based tool. The website begins with a project overview section that provides background on the project, the process, timeline, and acknowledgments. This is followed by a clickable table of contents that allows users to explore key sections, including LAU program basics, the application process, municipal resources, challenges and recommendations. Additional materials such as a glossary of terms and downloadable one-pagers are available through the sidebar.