

Housing Supply and Homelessness in Rhode Island

Observations and Options

APRIL 2023



Contact information

This report summarizes research and analysis conducted on behalf of the Rhode Island Foundation and partner organizations over an eight-week period from February-April 2023.

Please direct any questions about this material to Chris Barnett (cbarnett@rifoundation.org).

Context for this report

The Rhode Island Foundation is a proactive community and philanthropic leader dedicated to meeting the needs of the people of Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Foundation has earned the trust of Rhode Islanders through effective investments, strategic grants, and responsible decisions. It has three strategic priorities: to improve economic, educational, and health outcomes for Rhode Islanders.

The Foundation launched this project to jump start action steps to address homelessness and boost housing creation. This work is in collaboration with and in support of the Rhode Island Department of Housing and sponsored by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI, and the Partnership for Rhode Island. The sponsors and United Way of Rhode Island formed a steering committee that guided this effort.

The Foundation engaged Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to support fact-gathering and analysis over an eight-week period from February to April 2023. The research and analysis is meant to inform and provide options to be acted upon by the RI Department of Housing but is separate from the strategic plan that the RI Department of Housing is developing. The work leveraged and built upon a wide range of existing housing and homeless reports and analyses developed in Rhode Island over the past years.¹

The purpose of this report is to synthesize observations and options developed during this process. Implementation of any options will be incremental and not every option identified here can or will be implemented at once.

1. Referenced reports include: 2022 RI Department of Housing Integrated Housing Report; RI Housing 2022-2027 Strategic Plan; HousingWorks RI 2022 Factbook; NLIHC 2022 Gap Report; Department of Commerce 2021 Preliminary Housing Submission; HousingWorks RI 2016 Projecting Future Housing Needs Report; Rhode Island 5-yr Strategic Housing Plan

Introduction

Housing is an urgent need in Rhode Island. The Ocean State faces challenges both in making enough affordable housing supply available for its residents and in providing services to those residents who have become unsheltered.

Rhode Island faces a housing supply shortage which has led to a state-wide affordability challenge. The state has historically under-invested in housing, resulting in one of the slowest per capita rates of housing production in the country and one of the oldest sets of housing stock. This shortage is particularly acute for lower-and middle-income Rhode Islanders, who struggle to access housing that is affordable to them in any part of the state.

Rhode Island does not face a homelessness challenge of the same absolute magnitude as other parts of the country (Rhode Island ranks in the middle of U.S. states on measures of per capita homelessness, at 32nd for unsheltered homelessness and 17th for total homelessness). Yet unsheltered homelessness in Rhode Island has grown ~56% per year since 2020, the second highest growth rate across states. Hundreds of Ocean State residents are unsheltered; more than a thousand require emergency shelter at some point each year; and thousands are housing insecure. Homelessness must remain a key focus area for policymakers moving forward.

This is a moment of opportunity for Rhode Island given the ongoing creation of the new state government Department of Housing, the availability of multiple federal funding streams and the easing of the COVID-19 pandemic. Capturing this opportunity will require coordination and collaboration across state government, municipalities and community organizations to invest in the creation of new housing, reform policies which are no longer workable and evolve homelessness services. This document gathers research and options to inform policy makers, housing and homelessness organizations and interested residents.

Executive Summary: Housing Supply (I/III)



How significant is the housing supply problem and what is the affordable housing gap?

- **150k+** households (more than 1/3 of the households in RI) are cost-burdened¹
 - 72k renter households (45% of all renters) are cost-burdened
 - 78k homeowner households (28% of all homeowners) are cost-burdened
- To close the gap in affordable housing today, an additional **~24k units**² would need to become affordable and / or be built
- In contrast, Rhode Island only produced **~1,150 total net units** (market rate and affordable) in 2021



Where is more affordability needed (converted or constructed units)?

- More affordable units are needed across the state, but especially in municipalities with the largest cost-burden:
 - **Providence:** 24k households are cost-burdened
 - **Warwick:** 14k households are cost-burdened
 - **Cranston:** 12k households are cost-burdened



What types of units are needed?

- To meet the housing need in the state, more multi-family housing is needed. **Only ~800 net multi-family units have been built since 2011**
- Up to **55k smaller units** (studios, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments) are needed to match demand from 1- and 2-person households

Full estimates of RI's housing gap to be articulated as part of statewide housing and homelessness plan by the Department of Housing

1.. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines cost-burdened households as those who pay more than 30% of their income towards housing 2. According to the NLIHC 2023 Gap Report, RI has a shortage of ~24k units for households making <30% AMI

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

Executive Summary: Housing Supply (II/III)

Current State

Rhode Island faces a housing supply shortage which has resulted in a worsening affordability challenge that impacts all people in the state, especially those with low and moderate incomes. This affordability challenge affects cost of living and harms quality of life, limiting Rhode Island's economic competitiveness and ability to attract new talent. It has even caused some low- and moderate-income residents in the state to experience homelessness (see subsequent section for additional detail).

Over the past decade, per capita net housing production in Rhode Island has ranked 38th in the nation. This trend continues to worsen. In 2021, RI increased housing supply by only 1,150 units, which ranked last in the nation on a per capita basis. This level of housing production is insufficient to meet the needs of Rhode Islanders: growth in number of households has exceeded growth in housing supply, leading to vacancy rates declining by ~30% since 2018.

The lack of housing supply is particularly acute across the following segments:

- **Income:** More than 150k households in the state are cost-burdened (paying >30% of their income for housing), including 72k renter households (45% of renters) and 78k of homeowner households (28% of homeowners). To close the affordable housing gap, an additional ~24k affordable housing units would need to be affordable
- **Geography:** While ~30% of households across the state are cost-burdened, Providence, Warwick, Cranston and some coastal communities are particularly affected
- **Building/unit type:** To meet the housing need in the state, more multi-family housing is needed. Only 800 net multi-family units have been built since 2011. Up to 55k smaller units (studios, 1-bedroom, and 2-bedroom units) are needed to match demand from 1- and 2-person households
- **Occupancy type:** Households making the state median income could not affordably buy a home in any RI city or town, and RI home values are among the fastest growing in the Northeast. Homeownership has increased by ~3 percentage points since 2012, but rates of Black and Latino RI-ers are still only ~1/2 of white RI-ers

Executive Summary: Housing Supply (III/III)

Drivers of the housing supply shortage

Based on analysis of Rhode Island data, benchmarking other jurisdictions and conversations with RI stakeholders, three major reasons for the housing shortage in RI are:

1. **Regulatory policy and limited process implementation capacity:** Restrictive permitting has limited production of new housing units. Municipal capacity to support developers and coordinate permitting processes is limited
2. **Lack of state financing tools and underutilization of existing federal programs:** Historically, RI has not allocated sufficient funding for housing production and has underutilized existing financing tools (e.g., 4% federal tax credits, private activity housing bonds)
3. **Loss of housing stock:** Aging housing stock contributes to reductions in housing supply, as do short-term rentals which take units off the market, particularly in coastal regions and Providence

Options to address housing supply shortage

To address these challenges, Rhode Island needs to act by implementing new policies, investing in housing production, and considering reform of policies that limit housing production. There are opportunities to examine successful models for regulatory reform, housing financing, and production targets from other jurisdictions. Several of these options require coordination across levels of government; this report focuses on mechanisms available to the state (and private sector, in some cases), but coordination with both municipal and federal stakeholders is essential

In total, this report presents 65 potential policy levers which could be used to address Rhode Island's housing shortage. Based on conversations with RI stakeholders and benchmarking across other US states and jurisdictions, six options are analyzed in more depth:

- Targeted support for the development process
- Regulation
- State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
- Sales tax exemptions and tax stabilization agreements
- Mobilizing the business community
- Incentives, accountability measures, and accompanying production targets

Executive Summary: Homelessness (I/V)

Context and objectives for homelessness effort

Though Rhode Island does not face a **homelessness challenge** of the same absolute magnitude as other parts of the country (Rhode Island ranks in the middle of U.S. states on a per capita basis, at 32nd for unsheltered homelessness and 17th for total homelessness), unsheltered homelessness in Rhode Island has grown ~56% per year since 2020, the second highest growth rate across states. Hundreds of Ocean State residents are unsheltered; more than a thousand require emergency shelter at some point each year; and thousands are housing insecure. Homelessness must remain a key focus area for policymakers moving forward.

At the outset of this engagement, Rhode Island was facing **additional acute short-term challenges** relating to the expiration of contracts and funding for various emergency shelters and homelessness programs:

- Under the status quo, contracts and/or funding for more than 400 emergency beds were due to expire in April alone, with funding for more than one hundred additional beds expiring in September
- The challenges of both measuring various forms of unsheltered and sheltered homelessness and system capacity at any given point in time and navigating multiple sources of funding exacerbated these issues

Against this backdrop, this engagement initially focused on two core efforts in relation to homelessness:

- 1 Analyze the **current state of homelessness in Rhode Island** to understand the number of individuals currently experiencing homelessness in Rhode Island and their basic needs and locations; and synthesize information on the current state of **homelessness data management, funding, and the Continuum of Care**
- 2 Support the development of tactical **short-term options** in response to the major short-term challenges faced by Rhode Island

The team additionally delivered research to support Rhode Island's efforts on homelessness over the longer term, inclusive of :

- 3 Documenting diverse stakeholder input **longer-term options** for reducing homelessness in Rhode Island, which were encountered in the course of conversation with a diverse and experienced set of stakeholders, spanning providers, advocates, governmental bodies and other practitioners across the state
- 4 Conducting an **external landscape scan** to benchmark innovative stakeholder engagement practices adopted in other jurisdictions

Executive Summary: Homelessness (II/V)

Current state of homelessness in Rhode Island

Current state of homelessness in Rhode Island

Nearly 2,000 **individuals** with **diverse needs** were in emergency shelter or unsheltered in Rhode Island as of March 2023 across the state and facing a serious deficit of more permanent housing solutions

- Rhode Island has the **17th highest per capita homelessness** count, and **32nd per capita unsheltered homelessness** count among states, according to HUD per capita point-in-time estimate of homeless individuals conducted in 2022
- As at March 2023, a cumulative total of ~380 individuals had been counted in Rhode Island's homelessness information management system as being unsheltered in the previous 14 days without resolution in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); Rhode Island served a total of ~1,530 individuals in emergency shelter, an emergency hotel or transitional housing in Rhode Island and nearly ~2,800 individuals in more permanent housing types
- **Vacancies** across all bed types are extremely low, with ~30 emergency beds vacant and a maximum of ~40 permanent beds vacant, largely due to natural transitions
- Although the highest numbers of unsheltered homelessness is seen in Providence, unsheltered homelessness is experienced **across the state**
- Homeless Rhode Islanders have **unique needs**, with ~35% of unsheltered individuals entering the shelter system being families, 15-20% having substance-use disorder, 45% mental health needs, 30% a chronic health condition and 20% a physical disability

To bring insight to housing and homelessness efforts in RI, a scan was conducted to better understand the current homelessness ecosystem, specifically by documenting **data management practices** and **funding availability** in the current system, and by better understanding **key players**

- The Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness manages Rhode Island's **Homeless Management Information System**, producing several regular reports on the state of unsheltered and sheltered homelessness in Rhode Island using several recurring metrics
- The Rhode Island **Continuum of Care** executes several critical HUD-mandated responsibilities, including overseeing Rhode Island's Coordinated Entry System and associated rules for prioritizing a waiting list for individuals seeking shelter and applying for competitively awarded HUD funding. It also periodically produces strategic documents on critical aspects of homelessness and convenes diverse stakeholders

Executive Summary: Homelessness (III/V)

Short-term challenges and options

Short-term challenges and options

At the onset of this engagement in February 2023, Rhode Island was facing **several major challenges** related to homelessness, with contracts and/or funding for more than 400 emergency beds due to expire in April alone under the status quo, and funding for more than 100 additional beds expiring in September

- The Cranston St Armory, which was set up in to operate as an emergency warming center for a limited time period beginning in December 2022, was due to close in mid-April. This represented **potential loss of ~150 beds of emergency capacity**
- Contracts and funding for multiple additional seasonal emergency shelters and warming centers, were likewise due to expire over the course of April, May and June. This represented a **further loss of ~220 beds of emergency capacity**
- Federal funding for more than 100 rapid rehousing vouchers was expected to expire within ~6 months
- Several circumstances exacerbated these major challenges, including the fact that Rhode Island has experienced the **second highest growth rate of unsheltered homelessness** per capita across states since 2020; as well as the serious deficit of longer-term, non-emergency permanent capacity across the state

In response to the state's urgent capacity needs, and based on input from over **40 stakeholder organizations**, the team rapidly synthesized **several concrete steps to be executed and operationalized** imminently. The following outcomes were achieved:

- Reviewed **120+ properties** in order to identify options for addressing immediate shelter needs and building up longer-term permanent capacity
- Reviewed materials from **20+ temporary structure vendors** in order to identify structures for potential temporary beds
- Facilitated a daily meeting on **physical capacity** across Department of Housing stakeholders, in order to push forward collaboration across funding, procurement, legal and other functions
- Engaged **key municipal and state regulators/entities** to secure necessary approvals, including outreach to municipal stakeholders, especially in communities where potential shelter properties have been identified
- Supported **engagement of service providers** in preparation to staff up new physical properties for immediate shelter needs
- Documented a process to **acquire properties** across several property types, including potential timeline and approvals required

Executive Summary: Homelessness (IV/V)

External landscape scan & related observations about innovation from other homelessness ecosystems

External landscape scan and related observations about innovative practices from other homelessness ecosystems

To bring insight to housing and homelessness efforts in Rhode Island, a scan was conducted to benchmark the [structure and roles of Continuums of Care \(CoCs\)](#) within other homelessness ecosystems, as well as document [innovative practices across homelessness ecosystems](#) in the Northeast and across the country

Our scan of the [structure and roles of CoCs](#) in other homelessness ecosystems showed, amongst other observations, that:

- ~85% of collaborative applicants are non-profit organizations or state agencies and ~85% of Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) leads are non-profits or state/municipal governments
- CoCs may execute capabilities beyond HUD-mandated responsibilities, and may coordinate in different ways with state-level housing leadership

Our scan of [innovative practices across other homelessness ecosystems](#) highlighted at least **five notable practices that we would highlight for Rhode Island:**

- These ecosystems **target 'functional zero' homelessness, rigorously measure progress**, and make a concerted effort to **account for every person experiencing homelessness**. For example, **Metro Denver** CoC set a target of "functional zero" homelessness for veterans and maintains a "by name list" to consistently identify and track individuals experiencing homelessness and facilitate improved case management; Denver has achieved a 31% decrease in veteran homelessness over a 2-year time period
- They seamlessly integrate **case navigation and additional supportive services** for individuals. For example, **Houston** CoC introduced "homelessness court," an alternative pathway from traditional court that is designed to assist homeless participants with reintegration into society; alongside other programs it has promoted, Houston CoC's efforts in this regard have helped to decrease homelessness by over 60% in Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties
- They publish and maintain **publicly-available, real-time, interactive data** on homelessness. For example, in **Vermont**, ICA serves as the HMIS administrator appointed by the CoC and produces publicly-available dashboards that organize and display KPIs and allow stakeholders to monitor homeless outcomes
- They create a clear channel to gather stakeholder input on policy. For example, several jurisdictions have established a **dedicated advisory body** charged with providing input on and suggesting policy to the legislature and/or executive branch specifically on homelessness:
 - **Maine's** Governor appoints a Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) to lead statewide strategic planning – together with Maine's CoC, the SHC participates in a non-statutory Joint Policy Committee that advises legislators on state/federal policy
 - In **Michigan**, the state convened an advisory body specifically to advise the creation of the 2023 statewide plan on homelessness
 - In **Massachusetts'** CHAPA is a nonprofit that convenes committees on housing and homelessness topics to discuss policy and initiatives
- Government agencies take leadership in coordinating response. For example, LAHSA in **Los Angeles** is a joint powers authority between the City and County of LA which coordinates regional efforts; **NYC Dept of Homeless Services** is an independent mayoral agency acting on the authority of the mayor; **King County Regional Homeless Authority** is an independent government administrative agency coordinating response in Seattle and across King County

Executive Summary: Homelessness (V/V)

Longer-term options

While the team's focus was on supporting the development of short-term options, this effort also captured insights into **longer-term options** over the course of regular conversations with executive leadership from homelessness service providers in Rhode Island, Rhode Island's Continuum of Care, the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness, and leading homelessness organizations internationally

- Potential longer-term solutions fell into **four categories**:
 - Create additional permanent physical capacity (e.g., partner with State Licensed Facilities such as hospital wings and nursing homes)
 - Scale diversion and placements into housing (e.g., deploy case conferencing, incentivize developers to prioritize units for homeless individuals)
 - Strengthen the service provider ecosystem (e.g., create a provider-led training institute to recruit workforce)
 - Expand homelessness prevention (e.g., expand legal services for tenants facing eviction)
- The team captured these insights in summary pages that document pain points we heard from stakeholders, illustrative actions that the state could take in response and provide illustrative examples

Executive Summary: RI housing ecosystem and department capabilities (I/II)

The following section summarizes observations on the current Rhode Island housing ecosystem and options to guide the organizational design and capabilities of the newly formed Rhode Island Department of Housing. To inform this work, 40+ RI stakeholders were interviewed and 25+ states and jurisdictions were researched, including conducting interviews with 14 current or former staff members in other housing departments.

Rhode Island stakeholders identified five main pain points within the current housing ecosystem:

- Many potential housing developments are unable to get to the construction stage due to a lack of support throughout the development process
- The Department of Housing has limited formal/informal structures to coordinate across housing and homelessness programs managed by other state agencies
- The Housing Resources Commission (HRC) in its current state is not optimally positioned to execute on its broad mandate
- Municipalities feel the state should provide more direction, support and technical assistance (e.g., help navigating permitting, federal funding)
- There is a lack of statewide long-term goal-setting, planning, and coordination on housing

To inform the potential responsibilities of the Department of Housing and the organization of state government beyond the Department, the organizational structure of several other states was benchmarked:

- All housing departments studied take a leadership role in housing development and affordability
- For individual/family supports, strategy is often organized across agencies and key programs and data tracking owned within the housing dept
- Across the departments studied, there is a similar model for climate and sustainability with key programs in the housing dept (e.g., weatherization)

Executive Summary: RI housing ecosystem and department capabilities (II/II)

To guide decision-making on the best way to improve stakeholder engagement in Rhode Island, several effective stakeholder engagement models were benchmarked:


- Benchmarking across five dimensions indicated that there are two archetypes of effective stakeholder models:
 - Large, representative bodies that serve primarily in an advisory function
 - Small, representative bodies with clearly defined decision-making authority
- RI's stakeholder body, the Housing Resources Commission (HRC), does not fit cleanly into either of the two archetypes, with some inconsistencies in design and function

To understand capability gaps within the newly formed Department of Housing, the size and budget of other Northeast states was benchmarked:

- Of the states used to benchmark, the RI Department of Housing has the smallest number of per capita full-time employees and the second-lowest per capita state budget
- RI has significantly fewer full-time employees focused on housing production and homelessness than peer states

100+ individuals across 24 Rhode Island organizations provided input for this report

RI Stakeholders

<p>RI Department of Housing</p>	<p>Housing Resources Commission</p>			 United Way of Rhode Island	
					
					
	<p>Rhode Island Continuum of Care</p>				

Additionally, we solicited input from 45+ individuals across 35 housing and homelessness expert sources outside of RI

Housing and homelessness experts

Housing developers

Temporary structures and mobile solutions vendors

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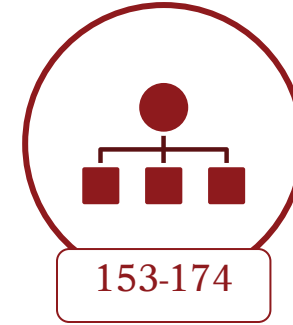
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Housing Supply

Executive Summary: Housing Supply (I/III)



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Where is more affordability needed (converted or constructed units)?

- More affordable units are needed across the state, but especially in municipalities with the largest cost-burden:
 - **Providence: 24k households** are cost-burdened
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What types of units are needed?

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1.. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines cost-burdened households as those who pay more than 30% of their income towards housing 2. According to the NLIHC 2023 Gap Report, RI has a shortage of ~24k units for households making <30% AMI

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC)

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Over the past decade, per capita net housing production in Rhode Island has ranked 38th in the nation. This trend continues to worsen. In 2021, RI increased housing supply by only 1,150 units, which ranked last in the nation on a per capita basis. This level of housing production is insufficient to meet the needs of Rhode Islanders: growth in number of households has exceeded growth in housing supply, leading to vacancy rates declining by ~30% since 2018.

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Executive Summary: Housing Supply (III/III)

Drivers of the housing supply shortage

Based on analysis of Rhode Island data, benchmarking other jurisdictions and conversations with RI stakeholders, three major reasons for the housing shortage in RI are:

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Options to address housing supply shortage

To address these challenges, Rhode Island needs to act by implementing new policies, investing in housing production, and considering reform of policies that limit housing production. There are opportunities to examine successful models for regulatory reform, housing financing, and production targets from other jurisdictions. Several of these options require coordination across levels of government; this report focuses on mechanisms available to the state (and private sector, in some cases), but coordination with both municipal and federal stakeholders is essential

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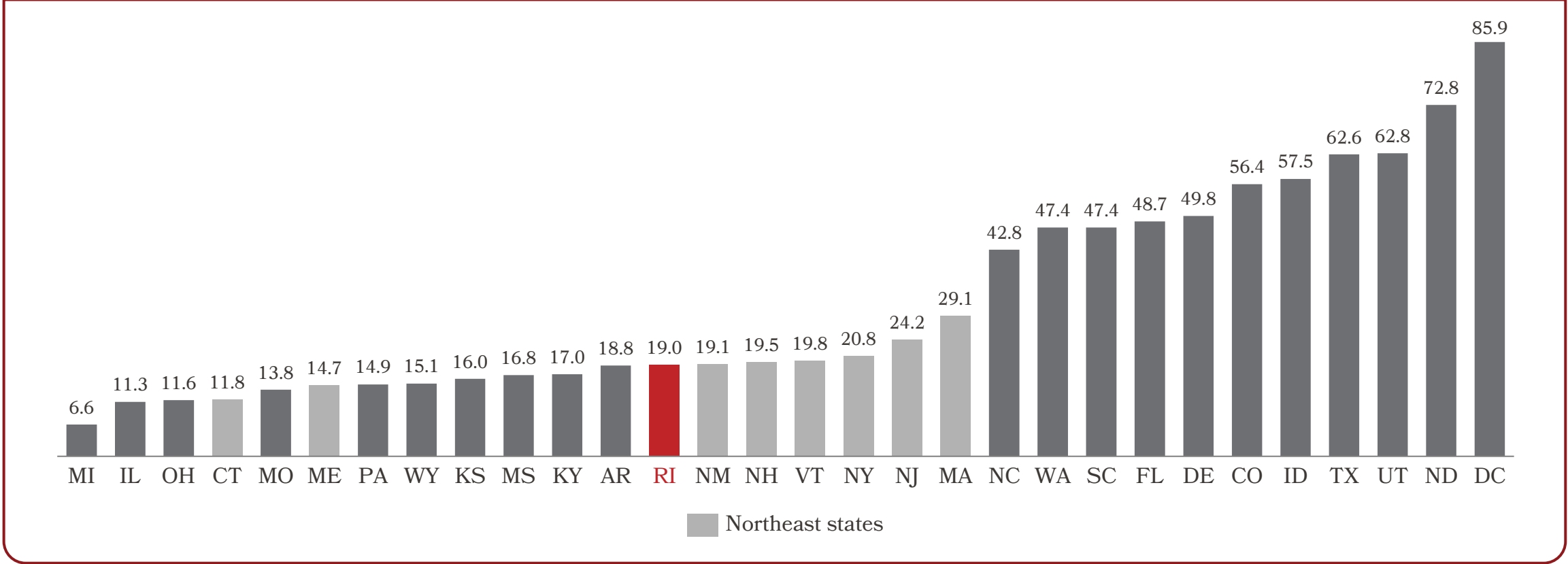


Current State of Rhode Island's Housing Shortage



Over the past decade, Rhode Island's annual housing production per 1,000 residents has ranked 38th in the nation

Net housing units produced per 1000 residents (2012-2021)

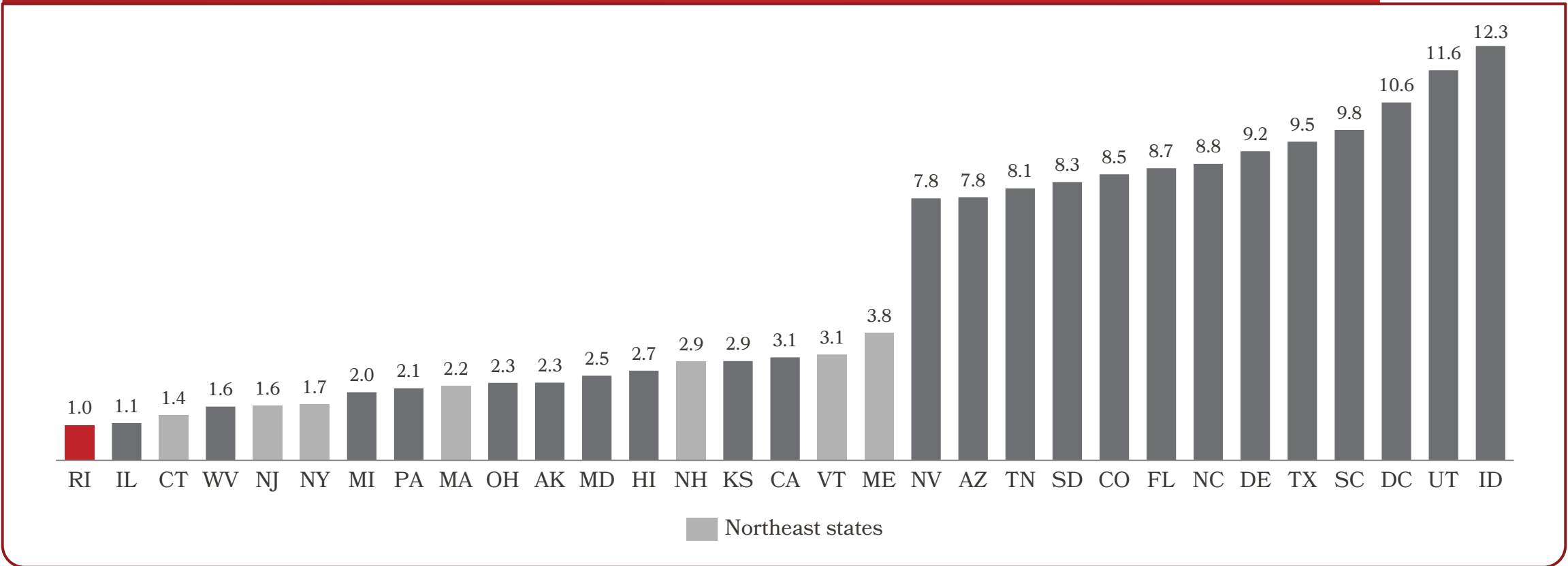


Note: total housing units produced per 1000 residents calculated by finding the difference in total housing units YoY from 2012-2021; data excludes middle 20 states (not including Northeast states): WI, CA, OK, IN, AK, LA, MD, AL, IA, NE, MN, HI, VA, MT, GA, OR, TN, AZ, SD, NV; data also excludes WV, which had the lowest per capita housing production, but functions as an outlier in this data set
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; Up For Growth



In 2021, Rhode Island's annual housing production per 1,000 residents ranked last in the nation

2021 net housing units produced per 1000 residents

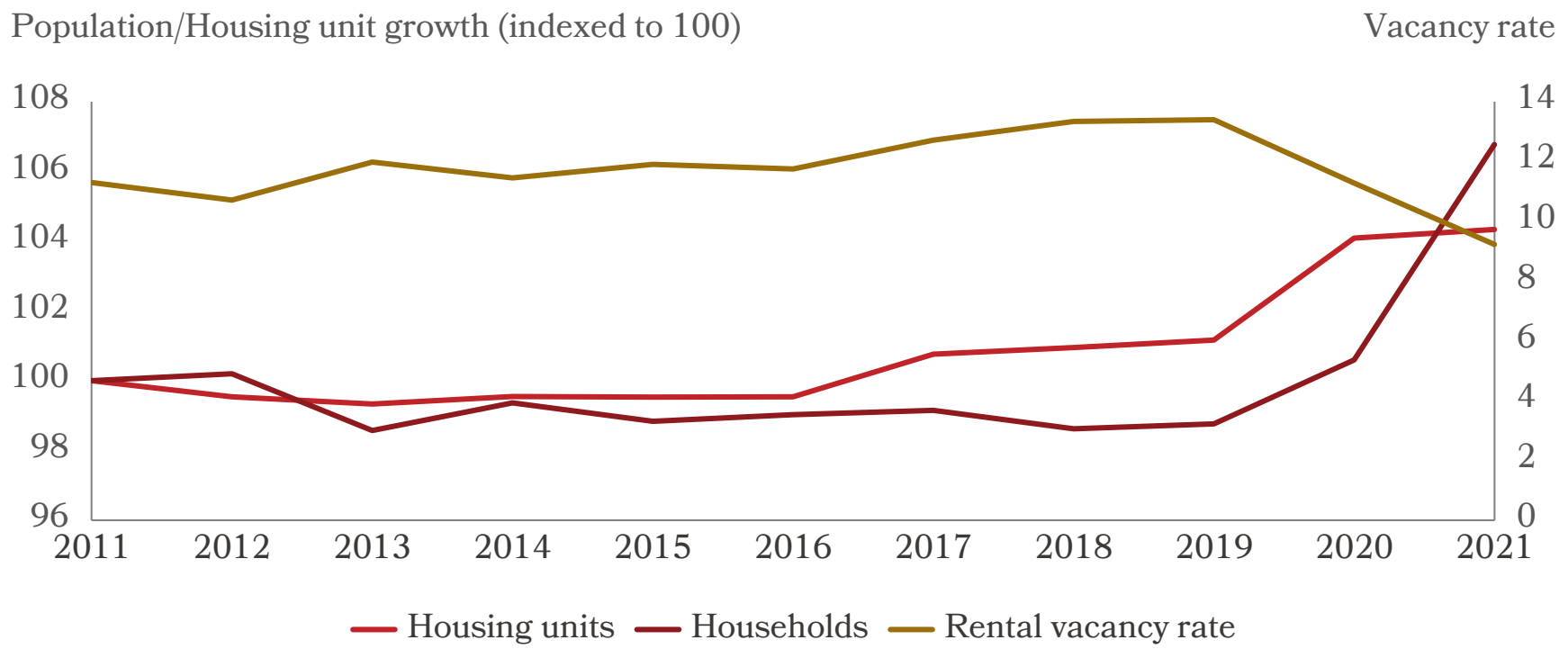


Note: total housing units produced per 1000 residents calculated by finding the difference in total housing units YoY from 2020-2021; data excludes middle 20 states (not including Northeast states): WA, MT, GA, MT, OR, NE, AR, AL, ND, LA, WY, IA, MS, IN, VA, OK, WI, NM, MO, KY
 Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; Up For Growth



Since 2011, net housing unit growth has trailed household growth; vacancy rates have declined sharply in recent years

RI state housing market, 2011-2021



From 2018 to 2021, the number of **vacant housing units in Rhode Island** decreased by nearly 30%

Hypotheses for this include:

- Shrinking households size and growing number of households
- Underutilization of housing units
- Data overestimates stock of "viable" housing



← Increase in →

Households	Housing units
6.8%	4.3%
8.3%	3.4%

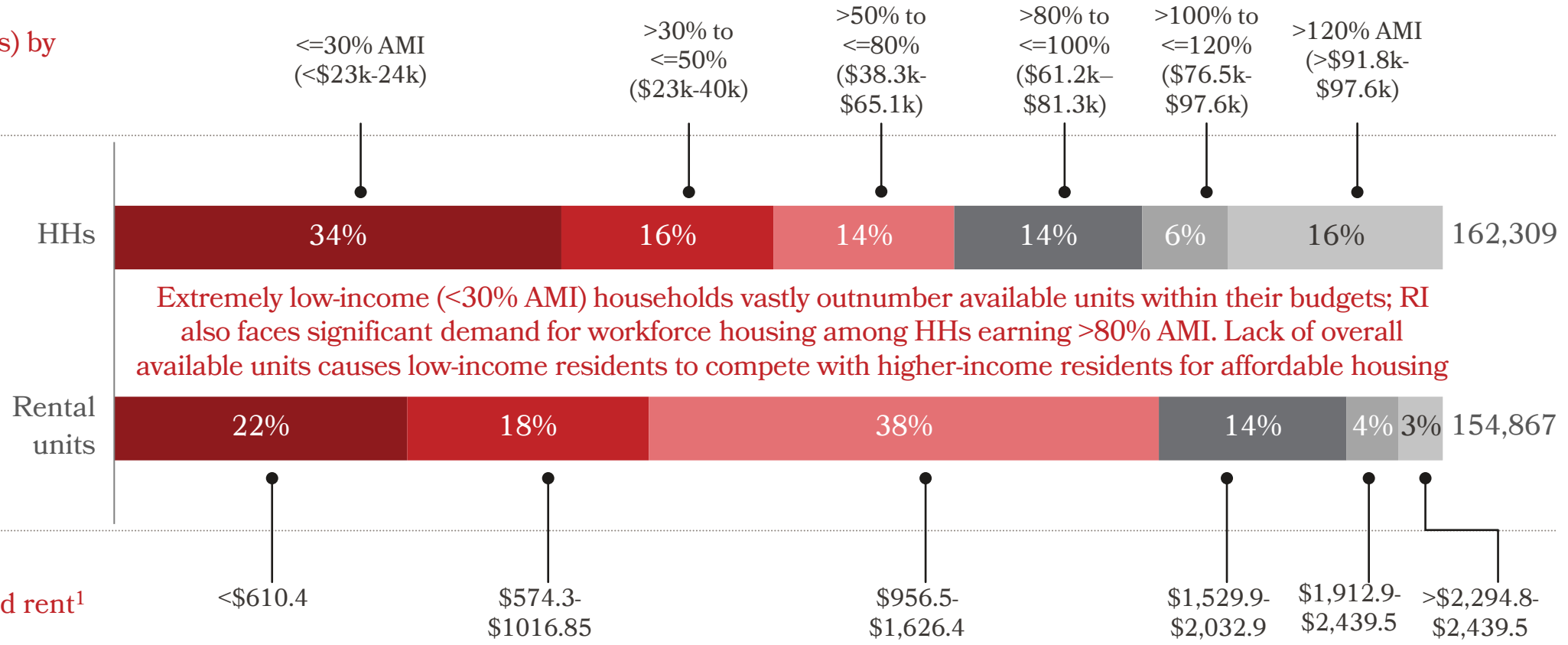
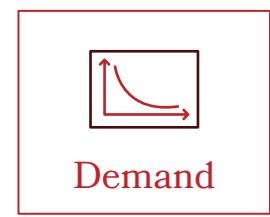
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



Rental prices do not match the housing need in RI; severe shortage of affordable units for households who make <30% of the area median income (AMI)

All figures show 2021 values

Household (HHs) by income level (\$)



Affordably priced rent¹

1. As measured by monthly home-ownership/rent costs; HUD considers housing to be affordable when a household pays no more than 30% of its income towards rent
 Note: Leverages county level American Community Survey data on household income, average household size, and monthly rent to estimate how many households and affordably priced rental units are at each level of AMI; AMI and affordably priced rent thresholds overlap due to varying household sizes across RI counties; data shows cumulative statewide view; data excludes rental units for which no rent is being paid



In 2021, households making the state median renter income could affordably rent housing in only one RI city or town (Burrillville)

Median household income \$70,305		Median renter household income \$38,339				
City/Town	Annual income needed to affordably rent a 2-bedroom apartment in this community (\$)	Rectangles represent income required to affordably rent				
		≤ \$30 k	≤ \$50 k	≤ \$70 k	≤ \$100 k	> \$100 k
Burrillville	37,160					
Bristol	44,360					
Woonsocket	48,160					
Westerly	50,880					
Central Falls	57,720					
Pawtucket	59,240					
Lincoln	62,160					
Newport	62,280					
North Smithfield	65,880					
West Warwick	66,320					
Narragansett	68,040					
Tiverton	68,320					
East Greenwich	68,400					
Coventry	68,520					
North Kingstown	68,720					
Middletown	68,960					
Warwick	69,480					
Cranston	70,480					
North Providence	70,520					
Portsmouth	71,600					

Based on 2021 average 2-bedroom apartment rental rates, a household earning the state's median renter income of \$38,339 could affordably rent in **only one** Rhode Island city or town (Burrillville)

City/Town	Annual income needed to affordably rent a 2-bedroom apartment in this community (\$)	Rectangles represent income required to affordably rent				
		≤ \$30 k	≤ \$50 k	≤ \$70 k	≤ \$100 k	> \$100 k
Smithfield	73,320					
Providence	73,840					
Johnston	76,040					
East Providence	77,320					
Warren	79,080					
Cumberland	84,520					
Barrington	N/A					
Charlestown	N/A					
Exeter	N/A					
Foster	N/A					
Glocester	N/A					
Hopkinton	N/A					
Jamestown	N/A					
Little Compton	N/A					
New Shoreham	N/A					
Richmond	N/A					
Scituate	N/A					
South Kingstown	N/A					
West Greenwich	N/A					

Thank you to HousingWorks RI for conducting this analysis

Note: N/A indicates insufficient data
Source: HousingWorks RI



In 2021, households making the state median household income could not affordably buy a home in any RI city or town

Median household income \$70,305		Median homebuyer household income \$94,183				
City/Town	Annual income needed to affordably buy a median priced single-family home in this community (\$)	Rectangles represent income required to affordably rent				
		≤ \$30 k	≤ \$50 k	≤ \$70 k	≤ \$100 k	> \$100 k
Pawtucket	77,004					
Central Falls	77,968					
Woonsocket	84,089					
Warwick	85,271					
West Warwick	87,263					
Providence	87,996					
Cranston	88,452					
Coventry	89,411					
East Providence	89,422					
North Providence	92,077					
Johnston	95,405					
Gloicester	96,680					
Tiverton	97,193					
Burrillville	98,627					
Cumberland	101,461					
Hopkinton	101,573					
Scituate	102,599					
Smithfield	104,931					
Foster	107,608					
Richmond	107,905					

Based on 2021 median single family home prices, a household earning the state's median household income of \$70,305 **would not** be able to buy a home affordably in **any** of Rhode Island's cities and towns

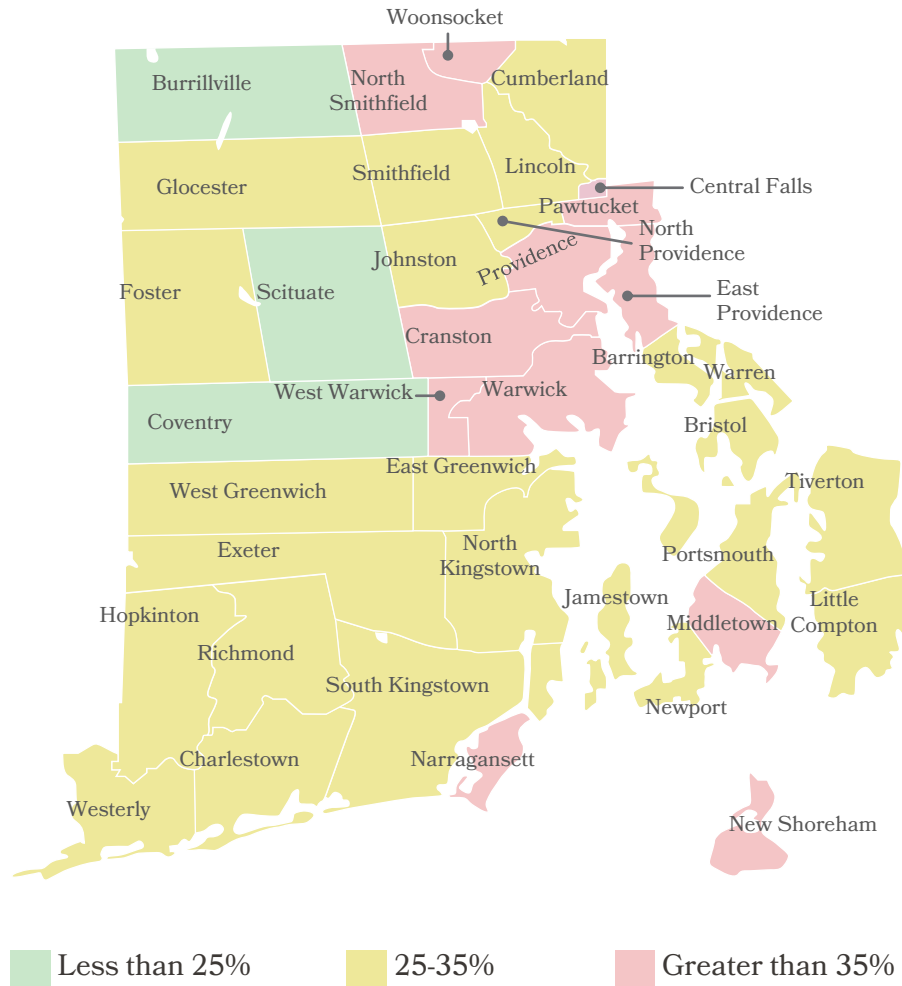
City/Town	Annual income needed to affordably buy a median priced single-family home in this community (\$)	Rectangles represent income required to affordably rent				
		≤ \$30 k	≤ \$50 k	≤ \$70 k	≤ \$100 k	> \$100 k
Warren	108,510					
North Smithfield	109,744					
Westerly	112,073					
Charlestown	116,038					
Lincoln	116,974					
Bristol	121,223					
Exeter	122,772					
South Kingstown	122,772					
Portsmouth	132,367					
Middletown	136,967					
North Kingstown	138,526					
West Greenwich	139,116					
Barrington	154,577					
Narragansett	157,762					
Newport	172,399					
Little Compton	174,010					
East Greenwich	181,740					
Jamestown	216,791					
New Shoreham	324,309					

Thank you to HousingWorks RI for conducting this analysis

Note: N/A indicates insufficient data
Source: HousingWorks RI



Across the state, 150k households are housing cost-burdened; the problem is particularly acute in Providence County, Warwick, and certain coastal areas



Municipality	Total housing cost-burdened HHs	% housing cost-burdened	Municipality	Total housing cost-burdened HHs	% housing cost-burdened
Central Falls	3488	50%	Johnston	3319	29%
New Shoreham	181	45%	Barrington	1761	29%
Narragansett	2435	42%	Exeter	648	29%
Pawtucket	11539	40%	Tiverton	1885	29%
Woonsocket	6406	39%	Hopkinton	903	28%
West Warwick	5264	38%	Foster	392	28%
Warwick	13788	38%	Cumberland	3721	27%
Providence	24093	37%	Lincoln	2250	27%
Cranston	11844	37%	Little Compton	405	27%
Middletown	2541	36%	Glocester	953	27%
East Providence	7131	36%	Portsmouth	1965	27%
North Smithfield	1797	36%	South Kingstown	2771	27%
Newport	12358	33%	Charlestown	897	26%
North Providence	4622	33%	West Greenwich	591	26%
Westerly	3288	32%	North Kingstown	2738	25%
Warren	1552	32%	Richmond	730	25%
Smithfield	2422	31%	Scituate	874	21%
Bristol	2470	31%	Coventry	2880	20%
East Greenwich	1544	30%	Burrillville	1138	19%
Jamestown	704	30%			

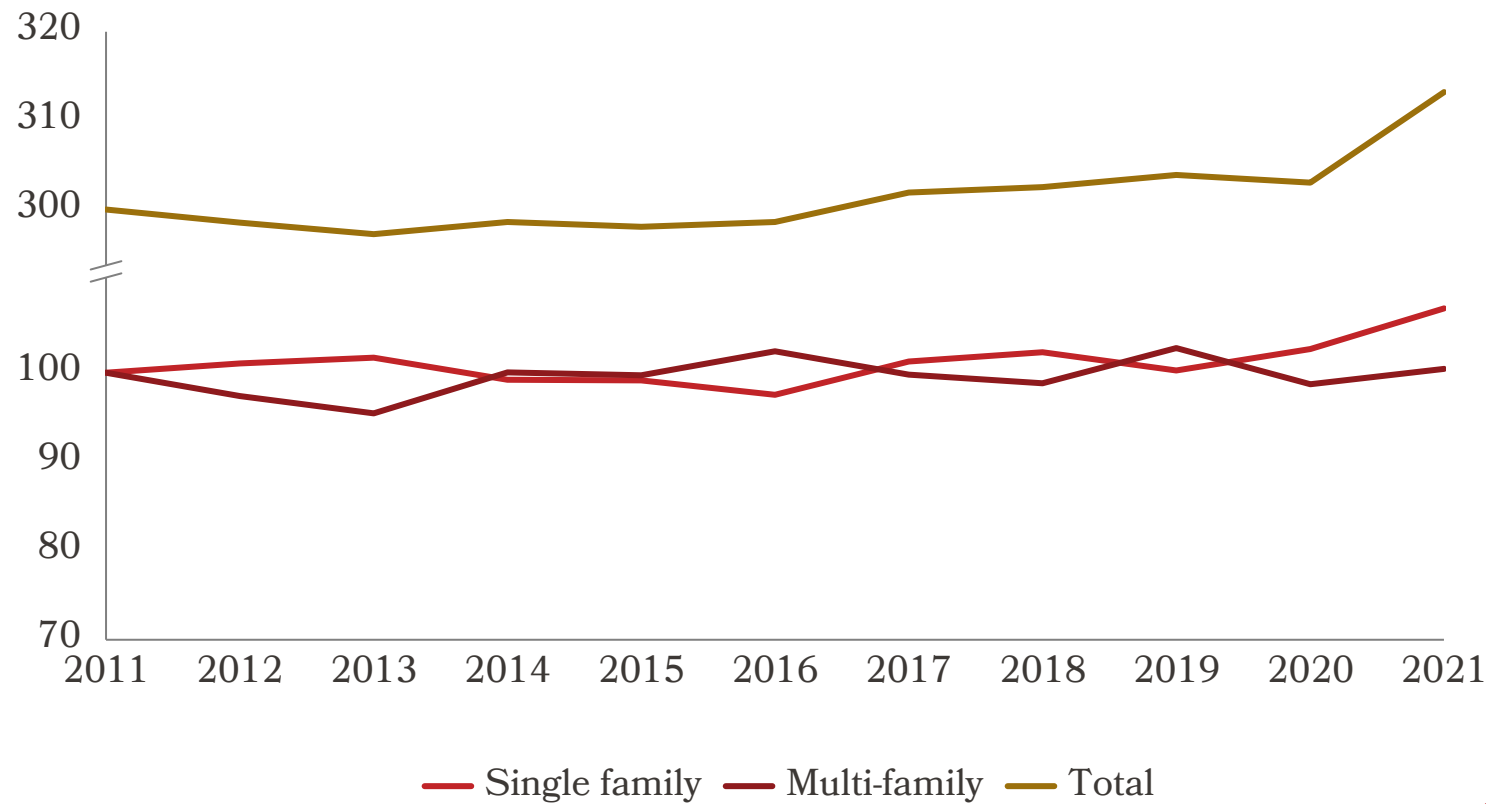
Across Rhode Island, ~150k total households (> 1/3 of the population), including ~78k home-owner households, are housing cost-burdened¹

1. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines cost-burdened households as those who pay more than 30% of their income towards housing
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



While production growth over the past decade was low, single-family unit growth outperformed multi-family; only ~800 units of multi-family added since 2011

Net housing unit production indexed to 100 (2011-2021)



Building type	2011 units	2021 units	% change
Single-family	269k	288.4k	7.2%
Multi-family	191.2k	192k	0.4%
Total ¹	460.2k	480.4k	4.4%

1. Analysis excludes alternative housing (e.g., mobile homes, boats, etc.); in 2011, Rhode Island had ~3.7k units of alternative housing; in 2021, this figure was ~3.6k
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



Across Rhode Island, demand from small households (1- and 2-person) exceeds available supply of appropriately sized units (studios, 1-bedroom, and 2-bedroom)

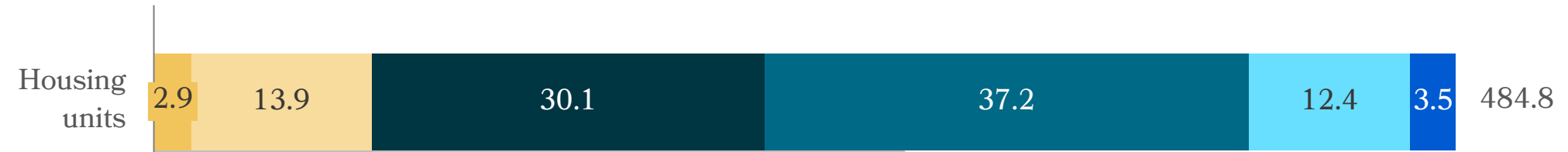
All figures show 2021 values

% housing units by # of bedrooms (supply) and % households by # of people (demand) in RI

Housing units by bedroom size



Studio 1 bed 2 bed 3 bed 4 bed 5+ bed



Rhode Island faces up to a 55k shortage of smaller housing units and a surplus of larger (3+ bed) units



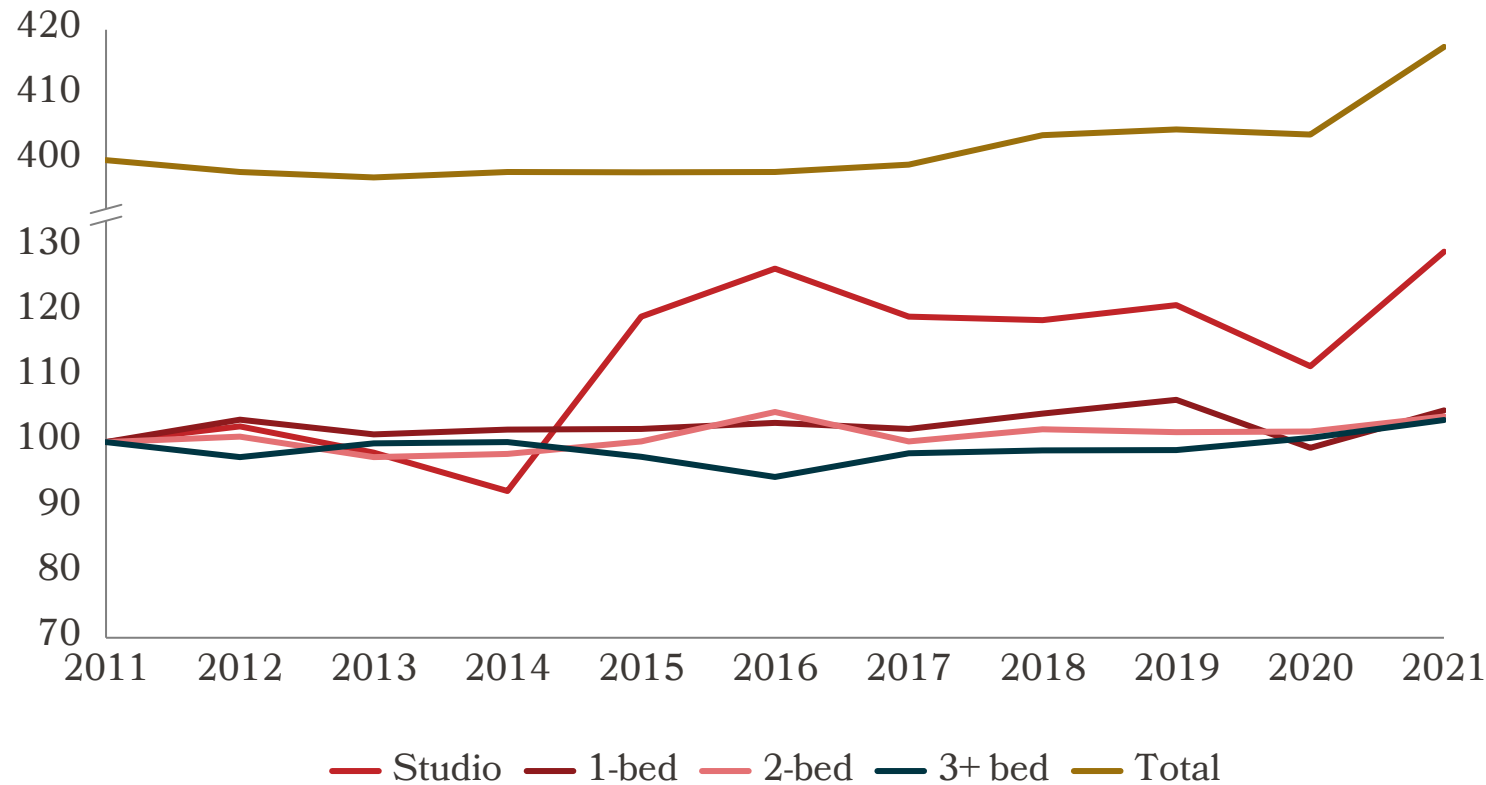
Households by # of people

1-person 2-person 3-person 4-person 5-person 6-person 7+ person



Production of studio units has increased significantly, which is beginning to address the high levels of demand for smaller units

Net housing unit production indexed to 100 (2011-2021)



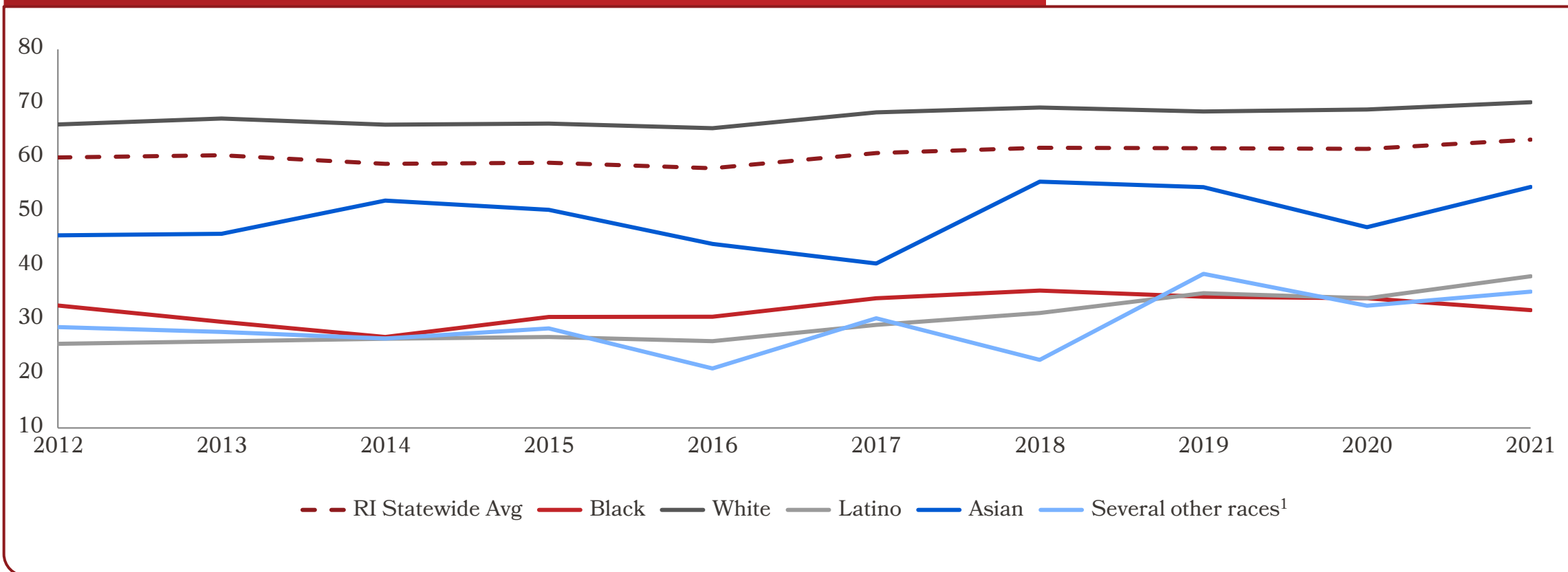
Unit type	2011 units	2021 units	% change
Studio	10.8k	13.9k	29.2%
1-bed	64.2k	67.3k	4.8%
2-bed	139.3k	144.8k	3.9%
3+ bed	250.5k	259k	3.4%
Total ¹	464.7k	484.9k	4.3%

1. Analysis excludes alternative housing (e.g., mobile homes, boats, etc.); in 2011, Rhode Island had ~3.7k units of alternative housing; in 2021, this figure was ~3.6k
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



Over the past decade, homeownership rates among White RI-ers have been ~2x the rates among Black and Latino RI-ers; all minorities lag RI statewide homeownership rate

Rhode Island homeownership rates (%) by race (2012-2021)

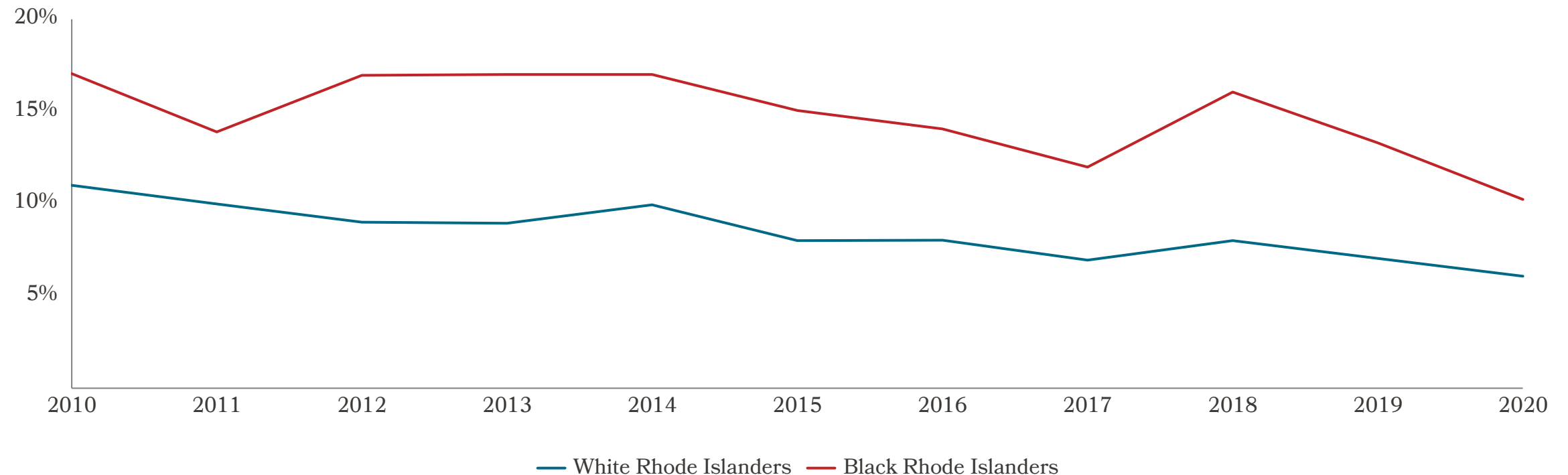


1. Including American Indians, Alaska Natives, Pacific Islanders, and "Other Races"
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



Over the past decade, Black Rhode Islanders have been 1.5x – 2x more likely to be denied a mortgage loan than White Rhode Islanders

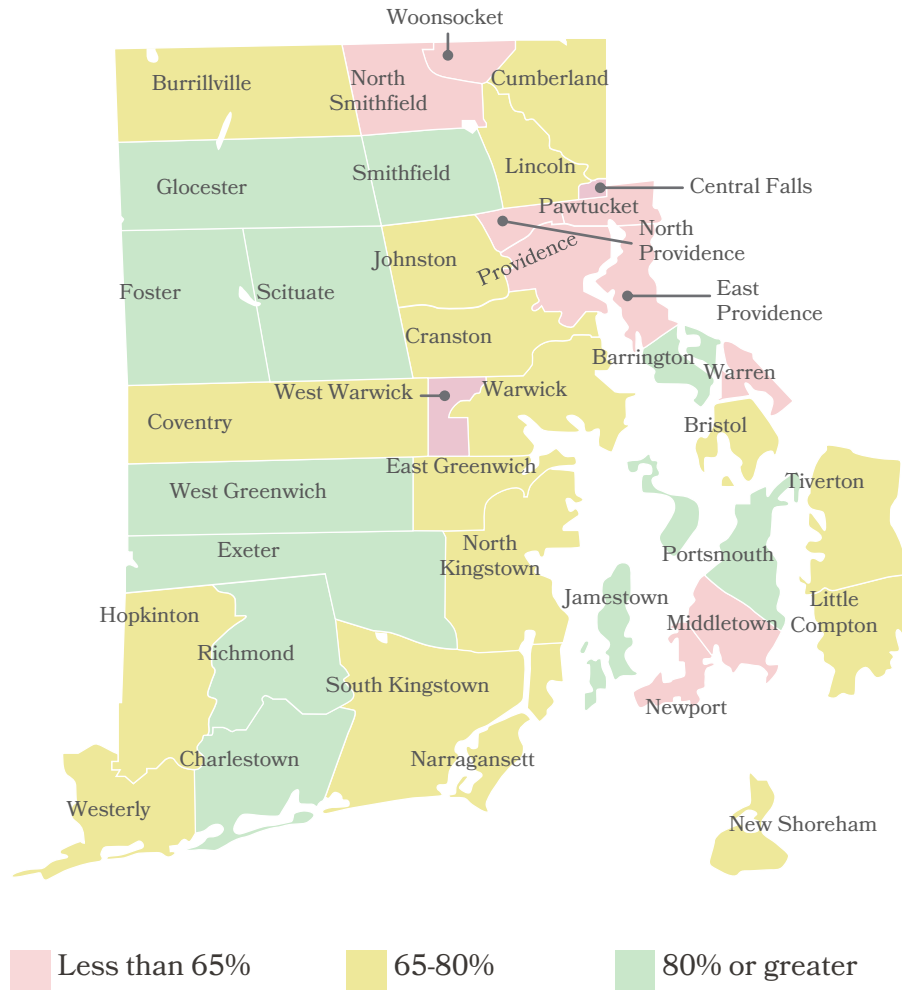
Percentage of Rhode Islanders denied mortgage loans (2010-2020) for Black & White Rhode Islanders



Thank you to The State of Black Rhode Island for conducting this analysis

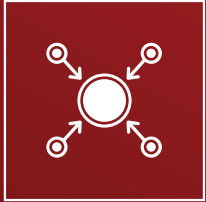


There is significant variation in homeownership rates across RI; homeownership is particularly low in urban areas (e.g., Providence metro area, Woonsocket)



Municipality	Homeownership rate (%)	Municipality	Homeownership rate (%)
Richmond	95.7%	New Shoreham	73.6%
Barrington	89.1%	Johnston	72.9%
Foster	88.7%	Westerly	70.5%
Scituate	87.5%	Cranston	69.8%
Glocester	86.3%	Narragansett	69.0%
Exeter	85.6%	Bristol	68.7%
Jamestown	84.8%	Lincoln	68.3%
West Greenwich	83.7%	Newport	63.5%
Charlestown	83.4%	East Providence	60.1%
Portsmouth	80.9%	North Providence	58.2%
Smithfield	80.9%	Warren	58.0%
Hopkinton	79.6%	Middletown	56.4%
Coventry	79.5%	West Warwick	54.7%
Little Compton	79.3%	North Smithfield	51.3%
North Kingstown	79.1%	Pawtucket	49.8%
Cumberland	78.2%	Providence	57.2%
Tiverton	77.9%	Woonsocket	37.6%
Burrillville	77.4%	Central Falls	25.6%
East Greenwich	77.2%		
South Kingstown	74.2%		
Warwick	73.7%		

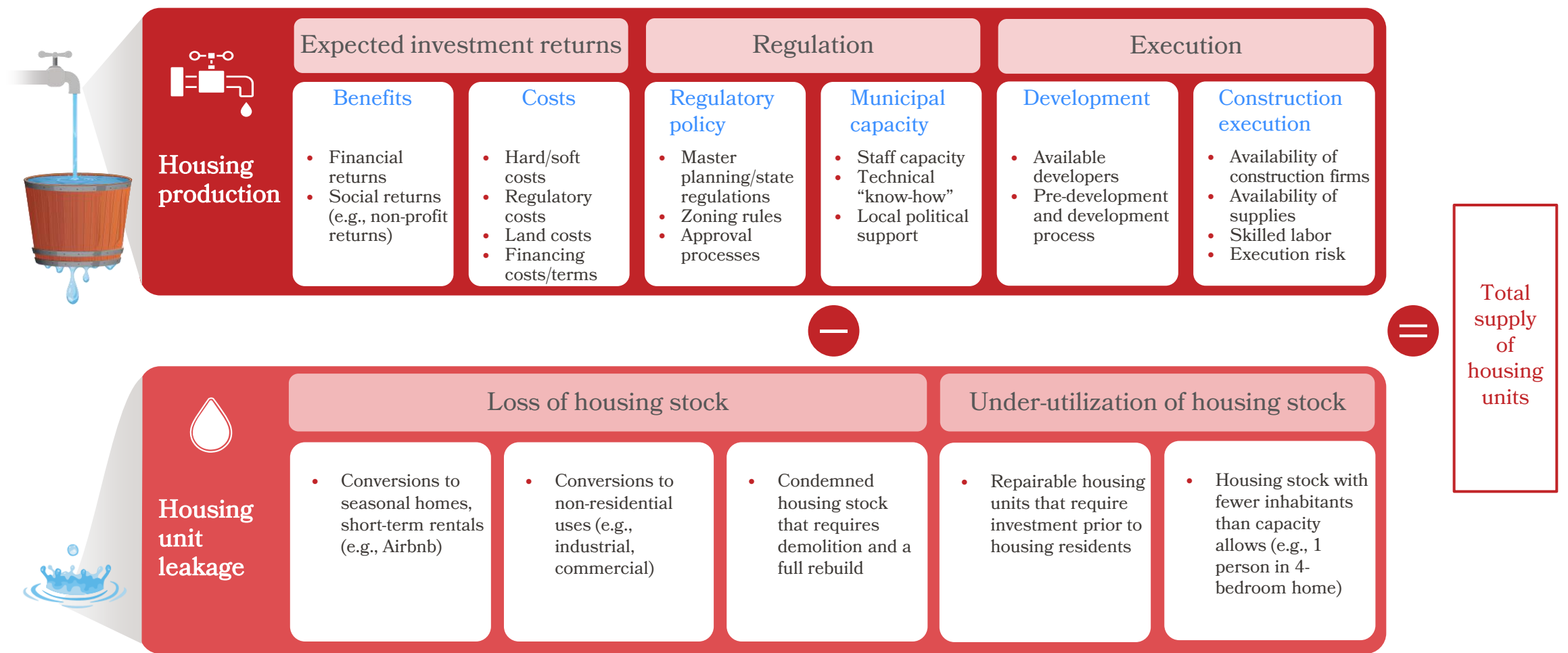
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



Drivers of Rhode Island's Housing Shortage



Housing supply can be impacted by many potential drivers





Stakeholder engagement and analysis show that three drivers of the Rhode Island housing supply shortage are the most acutely challenged



Regulatory policy and limited process implementation capacity



Lack of state financing tools and underutilization of existing federal programs



Loss of housing stock

Challenges to housing supply	Restrictive land use and permitting has limited production of new housing units. Municipal capacity to support developers and coordinate permitting processes is limited	Historically, RI has not allocated sufficient funding for housing production and has underutilized federal financing tools	Aging housing stock and conversion of homes to short-term rental investment properties contribute to reductions in housing supply
Supporting data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the past decade, Rhode Island's rate of permitting has ranked last in the nation In 2018, the Providence-Warwick metro area was ranked the 3rd most regulated metro-area in the US Municipalities lack resources (e.g., funding, planning support); staff do not receive adequate technical training on key topics (e.g., navigating funding sources) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RI housing spend expected to fall significantly despite current influx of federal funds RI has the 2nd lowest per capita state spend on housing production in the Northeast over the past 8 years As a result of low state spending on housing, several federal funding sources (e.g., private activity bonds, 4% tax credits) go underutilized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RI has the 3rd oldest housing stock in the US, with ~75% of total housing stock built before 1980 ~3.5k Rhode Island units are listed on short-term rental platforms
What we've heard from RI stakeholders	<p>"Our single biggest obstacle in RI is dealing with the permitting process"</p> <p>– Affordable housing developer</p>	<p>"We're lagging on state housing spending ... close to 75% of the funding going towards housing production is federal spending"</p> <p>–RI housing expert</p>	<p>"RI housing is the 3rd oldest in the country but unlike MA, RI's housing stock hasn't had much reinvestment over the years"</p> <p>– RI builder</p>



Regulatory policy and limited process implementation capacity



Restrictive permitting and regulatory policy combined with municipal capacity challenges have limited production of new housing units

Over the past decade, RI has experienced low permitting/high levels of regulatory restrictiveness; municipalities also lack resources and support

- Over the past decade, RI has had the lowest rate of per capita residential building permitting in the US; RI trails states experiencing similar population growth
- In 2018, the Providence-Warwick metro area was ranked the 3rd most regulated metro-area
- Municipalities lack resources (e.g., funding, planning support); staff do not receive adequate technical training on key topics (e.g., navigating funding sources, understanding regulatory policy)
 - Additional information on municipality capacity and resources located in the *RI housing ecosystem and department capabilities* section of this report

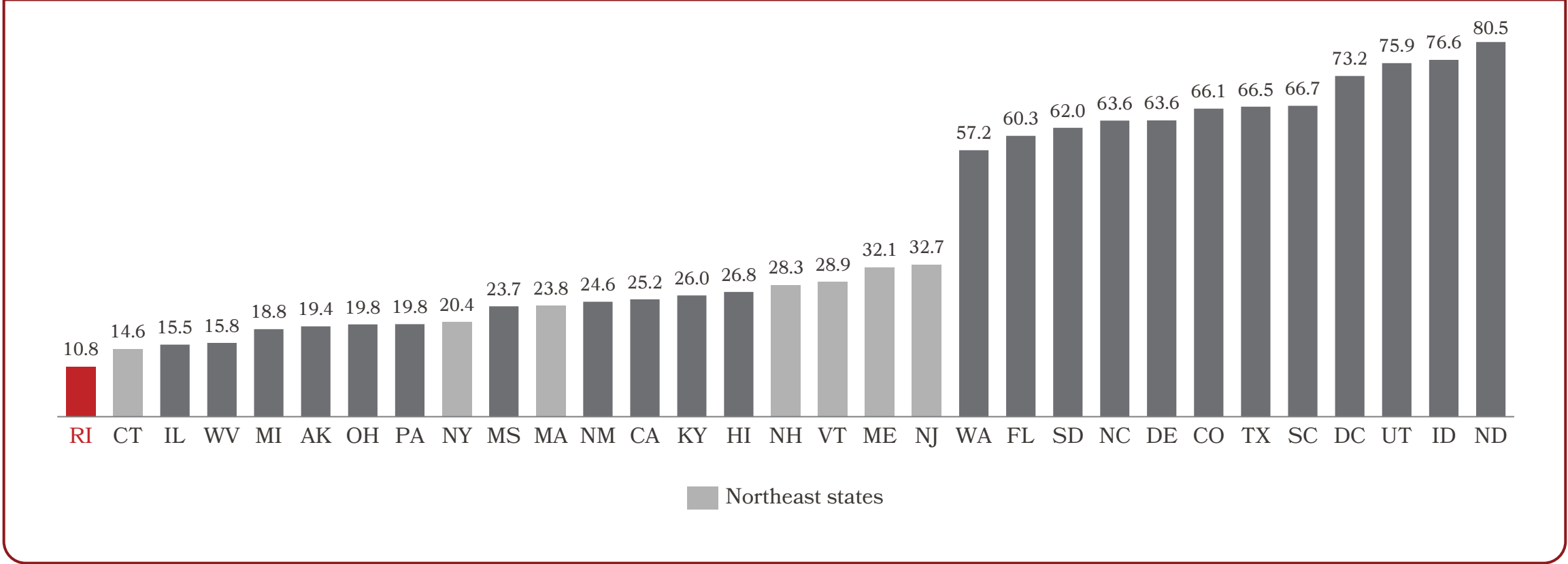
Stakeholder input

- “ Our single biggest obstacle in RI is dealing with the permitting process
– *Affordable housing developer*
- “ Delays between when permits are approved and when funding is allocated prevent efficient developing
– *Affordable/PSH developer*
- “ We just don't have the staff and know-how to move quickly, particularly on navigating planning and accessing funding sources
– *RI town mayor*
- “ There is no contact at the state level that can help us problem solve when we run into issues
– *RI town planner*



Over the past decade, Rhode Island's rate of permitting has ranked last in the nation

Total housing permits issued per 1,000 residents (2012-2021)

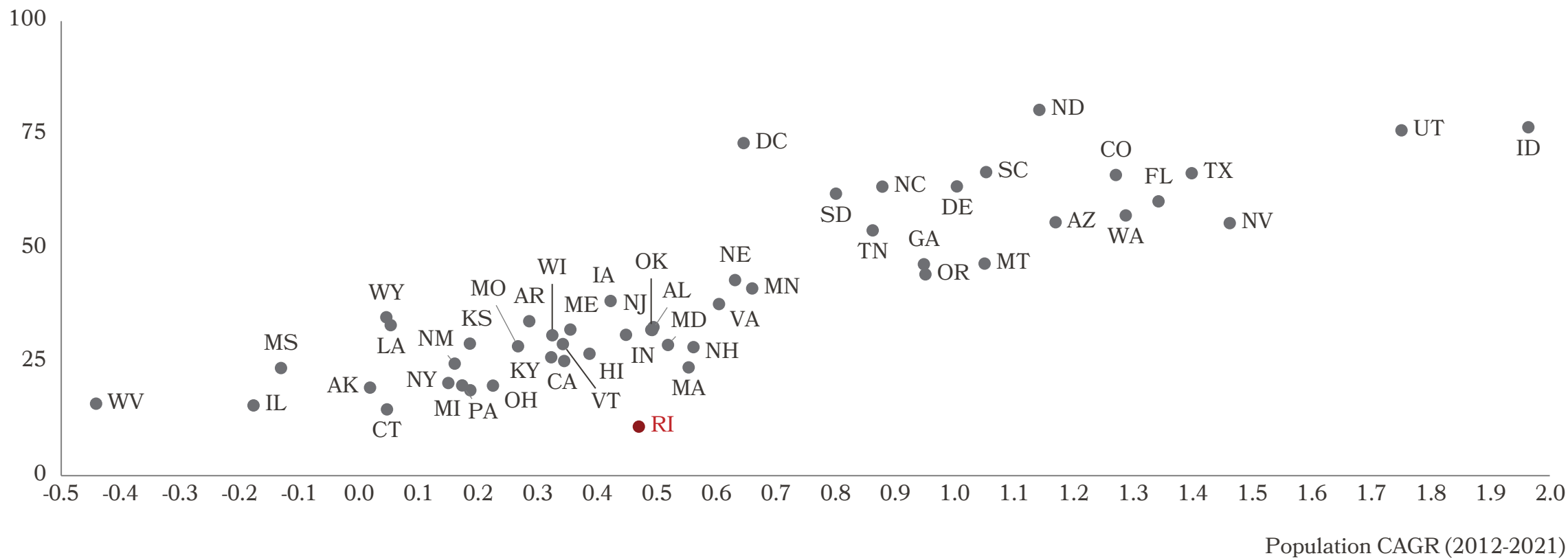


Note: Data excludes the middle 20 states (not including Northeast states): MO, MD, KS, WI, IN, AL, OK, LA, AR, WY, VA, IA, MN, NE, OR, GA, MT, TN, NV, AZ.
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; Building Permits Survey



Rhode Island's permitting per capita lags well behind other states experiencing similar population growth

Total permits issued per 1000 residents (2012-2021)

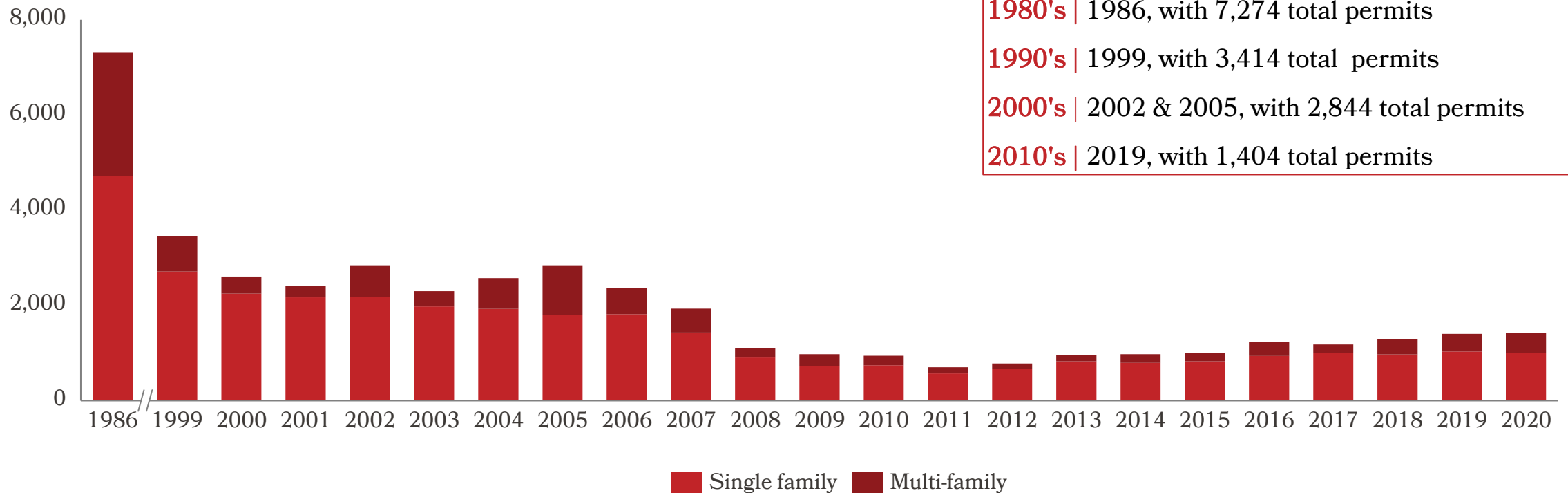


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; Building Permits Survey



Residential building permitting in RI in 2020 was ~1/5 what it was in 1986; both single-family and multi-family permitting have drastically declined

Residential building permit activity, 1986–2020



Highest permitting year(s) of each decade

1980's | 1986, with 7,274 total permits

1990's | 1999, with 3,414 total permits

2000's | 2002 & 2005, with 2,844 total permits

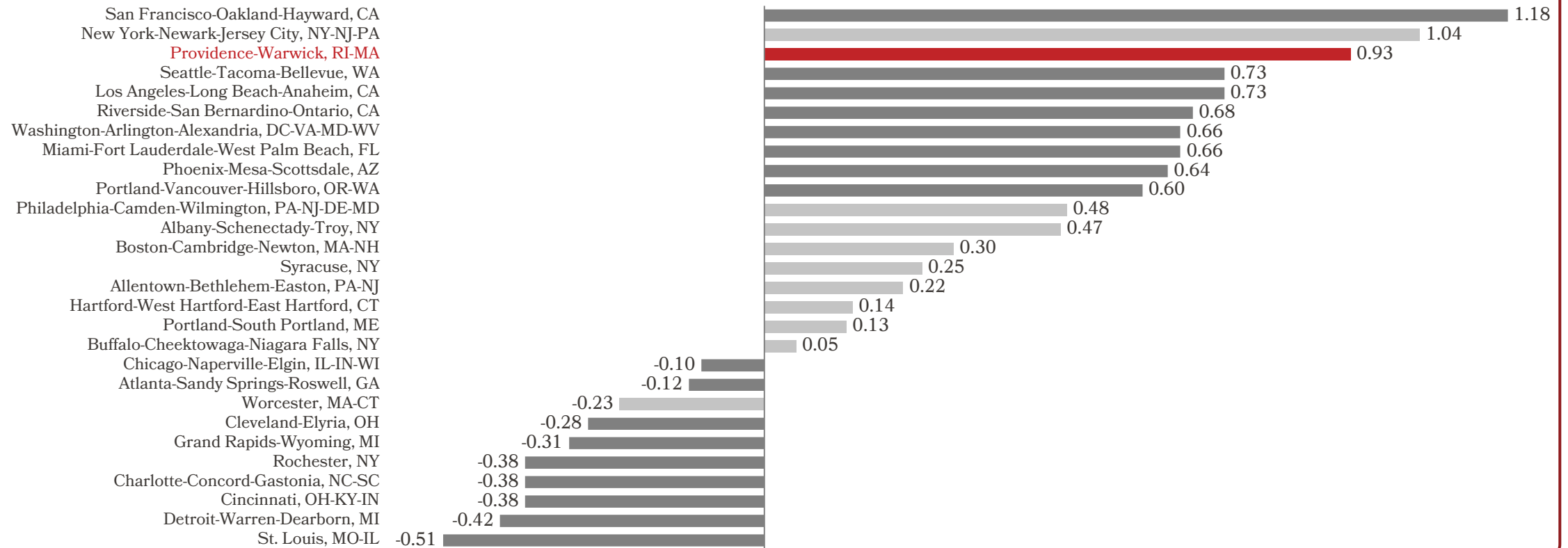
2010's | 2019, with 1,404 total permits

Thank you to HousingWorks RI for conducting this analysis



In 2018, the Providence-Warwick metro area, covering all of RI and a small part of MA, was the third-most-regulated metropolitan area in the nation

Regulatory restrictiveness index¹ across major metropolitan areas 2018



1. As measured by the Wharton Residential Land-Use Regulatory Index 2018 (WRLURI 2018); WRLURI 2018 index created as a composite of 12 sub-indexes which measure survey responses to various questions (e.g., caps on production / permitting, housing restrictions, outcomes, etc.), standardized such that the mean is 0 and the standard deviation is 1

Note: Data shows the top 10 most regulated metropolitan areas, the top 10 least regulated metropolitan areas, and all additional Northeast areas; 44 total metropolitan areas were included in NBER data analysis.

Source: National Bureau of Economic Research



Lack of state financing tools
and underutilization of
existing federal programs



State housing funding has been insufficient over the past decade, which has resulted in underutilization of federal funding tools

RI has not allocated sufficient funding for housing production and has underutilized existing federal financing tools

- Despite influx of federal funds distributed over the past two years, RI spending on housing production is expected to fall off significantly by FY26
- Over the past 8 years, RI has the 2nd lowest per capita state housing spend in New England
- Limited state investment in housing production resulted in significant quantities of federal tax-exempt private activity bonds (PABs) going unutilized or underutilized
- As a result, Rhode Island used only 11% of its potential 4% low-income housing tax credits from 2014 to 2020

Stakeholder input

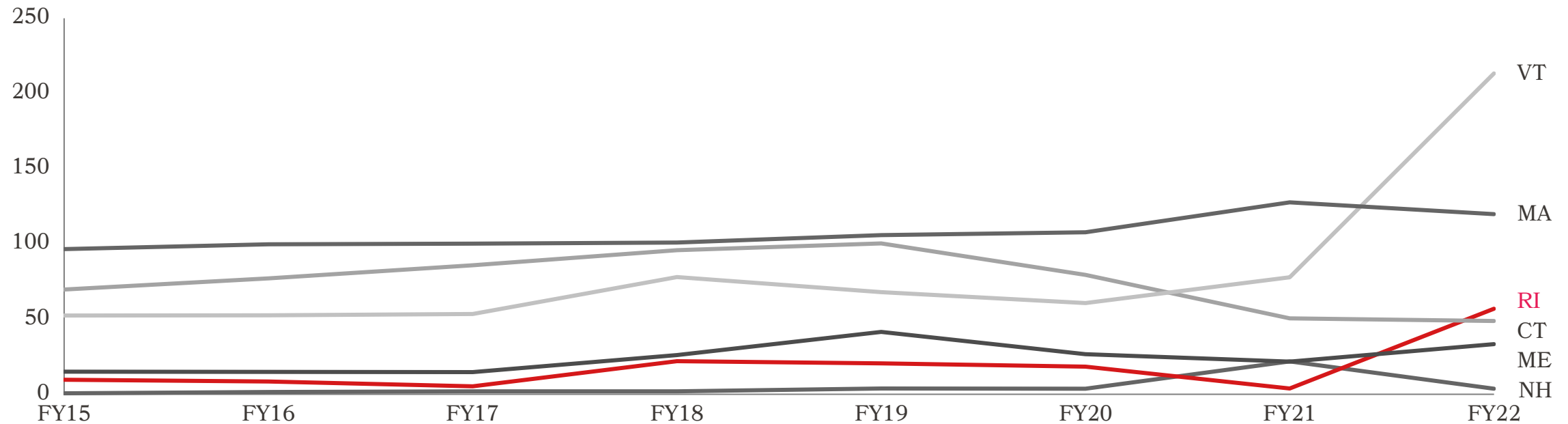
- “ We're lagging on state housing spending ... close to 75% of the funding going towards housing production is federal spending
– *RI housing expert*
- “ RI could be doing a way better job of putting 4% tax credits to use – they are just leaving federal money on the table
– *Affordable/PSH developer*



Over the past eight years, Rhode Island has ranked second-to-last in per capita state housing spend in New England

Per capita state housing spend (\$) among New England states (FY15-FY22)

State spend FY15-FY22	NH	RI	ME	CT ²	VT	MA
Per capita ¹ spend	38.8	144.6	193.5	606.9	655.3	857.9

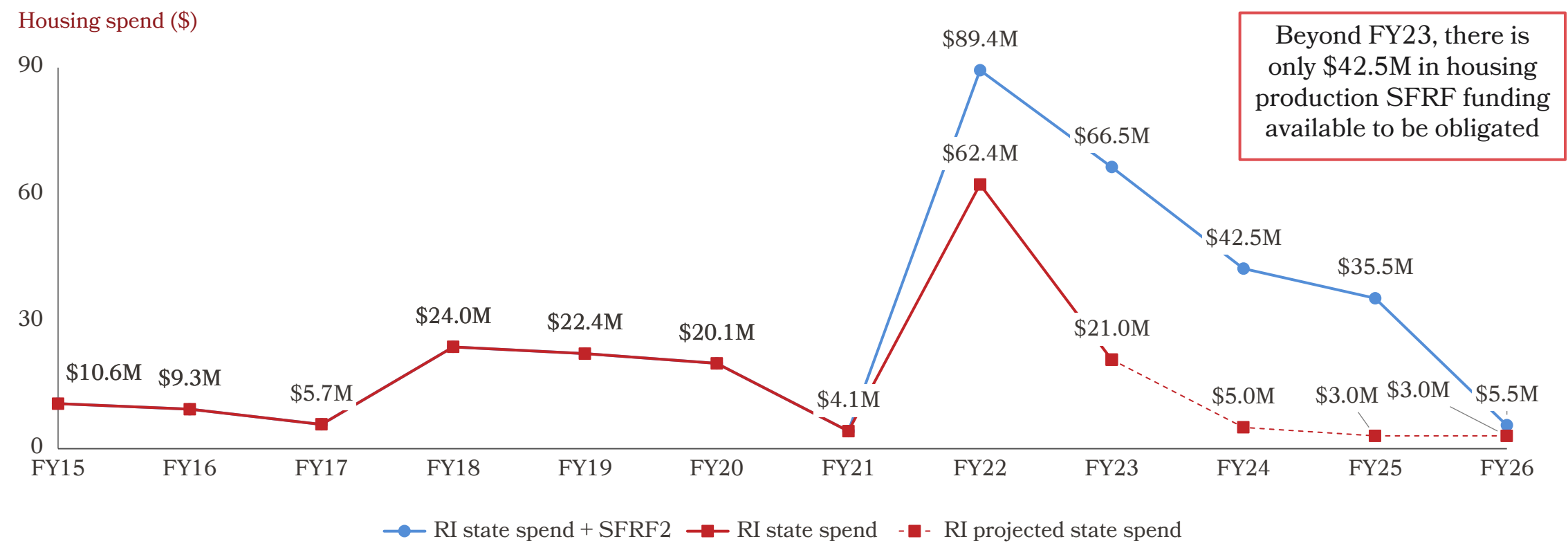


Thank you to RI Housing and HousingWorks RI for providing this data

1. Spend (\$) per resident
 Source: RI Housing; HousingWorks RI



Despite State Fiscal Recovery Funds¹ (SFRF) providing a temporary bump to state housing spending; without new resources, spending will drop significantly by FY26



Thank you to RI Housing and HousingWorks RI for providing part of this data

1. Program authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act, delivered \$350 billion to state, territorial, local, and Tribal governments across the country to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency 2. Some SFRF funding has been accelerated in the Governor's proposed budget Sources: RI Housing, HousingWorks RI



RI needs additional state funding to appropriately leverage tax-exempt private activity bonds and 4% low-income housing tax credits for affordable housing production

Two of the most significant federal tools to finance affordable housing are tax exempt **private activity bonds (PABs)** and **4% low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs)**.

- **LIHTCs:** tax incentives for developers to construct or rehabilitate affordable rental housing for low-income households.
- **PABs:** bonds issued by or on behalf of a State or Local Government for the purpose of providing special financial benefits for qualified projects.

Projects using PABs to fund at least 50% of construction costs trigger an automatic award of 4% LIHTCs. While PABs and 4% LIHTCs are powerful tools, they are **not typically sufficient** to catalyze affordable housing development **without additional state support**.

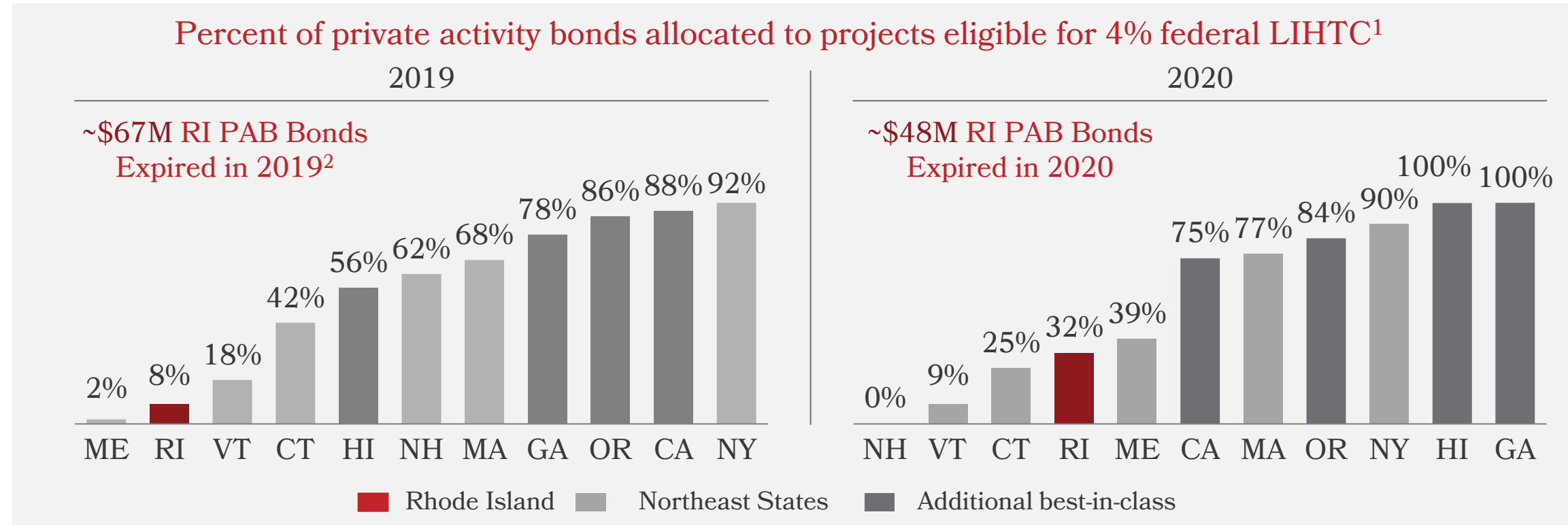
The US Department of the Treasury is responsible for allocating PABs to states based on population size. In 2020, Rhode Island's **federal cap on PABs was set at \$322M**. The RI Public Finance Management Board is responsible for distributing this PAB allocation towards specific agencies (e.g., RI Housing, RI Student Loan Authority) and uses based on agency requests. Typically, there is insufficient demand from agencies, which results in funds expiring. For example, in 2019 and 2020 alone, **\$115M in PABs expired**. Additionally, PABs that did not expire are primarily being used for **sub-optimal uses**, which do not directly unlock additional federal funds (e.g., mortgage revenue bonds and financing of student loans).

An added consequence of the low utilization of PABs for multi-family housing is that a **significant amount of LIHTC potential goes unused**. For comparison, while New York used 92% (2019) and 90% (2020) of its federal PAB distributions for LIHTC-qualifying activities, Rhode Island utilized only 8% (2019) and 32% (2020) for LIHTC-qualifying activities. From 2014-2020, Rhode Island utilized just **11% of its 4% LIHTC allocation potential**.

To better utilize both tools, Rhode Island **needs to allocate additional state funding towards affordable housing production and ensure PABs are allocated towards multi-family housing development to unlock 4% LIHTCs**.



In 2019 and 2020, Rhode Island let \$115M in Private Activity Bonds expire; Rhode Island has routinely allocated most of its PABs to non-4% LIHTC qualifying uses



Projects using PABs to fund at least 50% of construction costs triggers an automatic award of 4% federal LIHTC;²
 Over the past 8 years, Rhode Island utilized only ~11% of its federal 4% low-income housing tax credit potential

1. The federal 4% LIHTC does not have a specified yearly allocation; total 4% LIHTC available across years was calculated using the PAB volume cap as the baseline 2. Unused bonds expire 3 years after issuance; the \$67M that expired in 2019 was issued in 2016, the \$48M that expired in 2020 was issued in 2017
 Sources: CSH report on Financing Supportive Housing with Tax-Exempt Bonds and 4% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits; RI Senate Chamber Report "Money Rejected: How Rhode Island Has Turned Away \$197.3M in Federal Funds for Affordable Housing"; CDFA Annual Volume Cap Report



Loss of housing stock



Aging housing stock and short-term rentals contribute to reductions in housing supply

Housing supply is being reduced due to RI's aging housing stock and the conversion of ~3.5k housing units into short term rentals

- RI has the 3rd oldest housing stock in the US, ~75% of total stock was built before 1980; only 10% was built after 2000
- Among NE states, RI has the highest percentage of housing built before 1940 and the 2nd highest percentage of housing built before 1980
- Across RI, ~3.5k properties are listed on short-term rental platforms; Coastal areas and Providence have the most short-term rentals

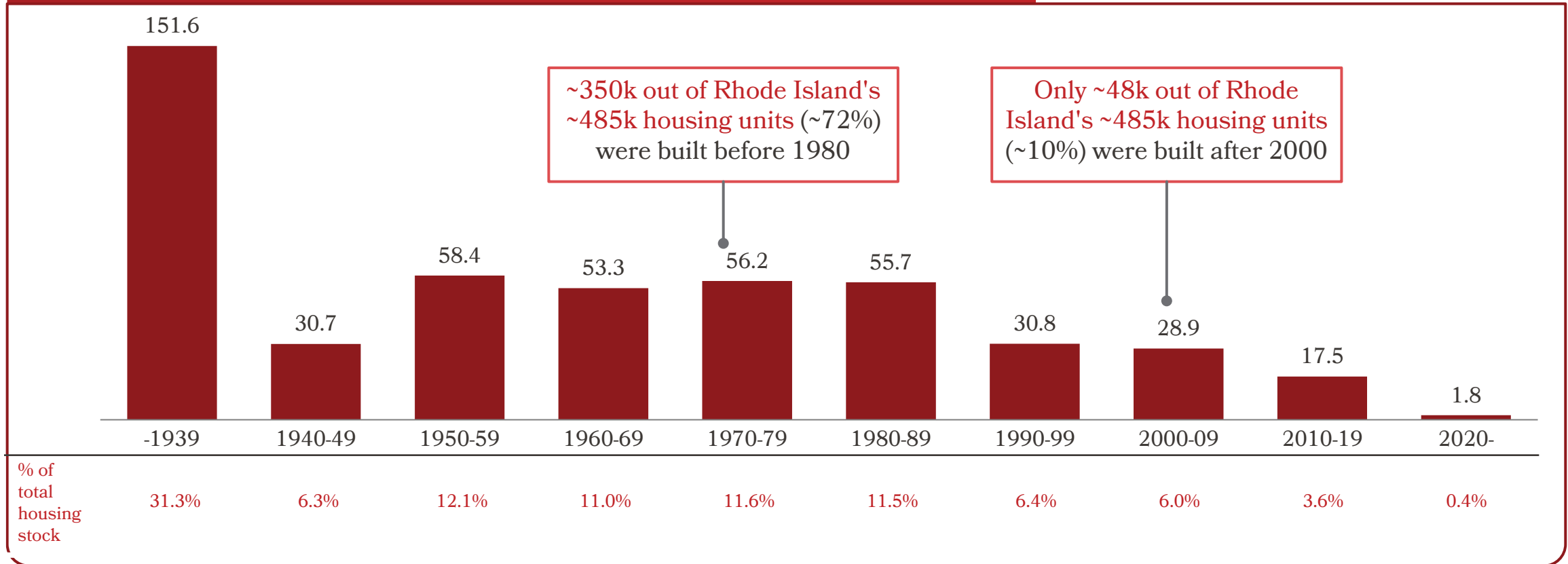
What we've heard from stakeholders

- “ The RI housing stock is the 3rd oldest in the country but unlike MA, RI's housing stock hasn't had much reinvestment over the years
– *RI housing expert*
- “ Our community is seeing an increase in housing prices driven by homes being purchased by investors and taken off the market
– *RI town mayor*



RI has the 3rd oldest housing stock in the US; nearly 3/4 of Rhode Island's 485k housing units were built before 1980, only 10% of housing was built after 2000

Rhode Island housing units by decade built (thousands)



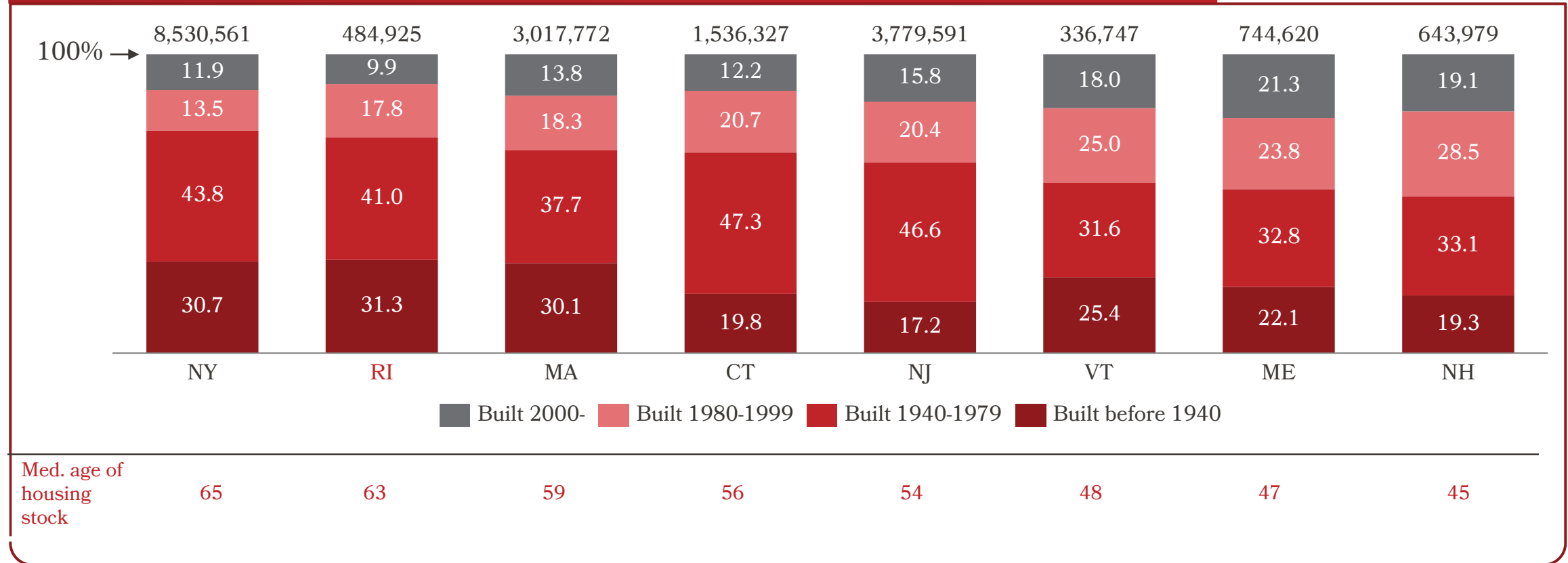
Note: In 1978 lead paint was banned nationally—homes built before this point potentially used lead paint; analysis leverages 2021 American Community Survey "Year Structure Built" 1-year estimate.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; National Association of Home Builders



Among all Northeast states, RI has the highest percentage of housing units built before 1940, second lowest percentage of housing units built since 1980

Northeast states percent of housing units by period built

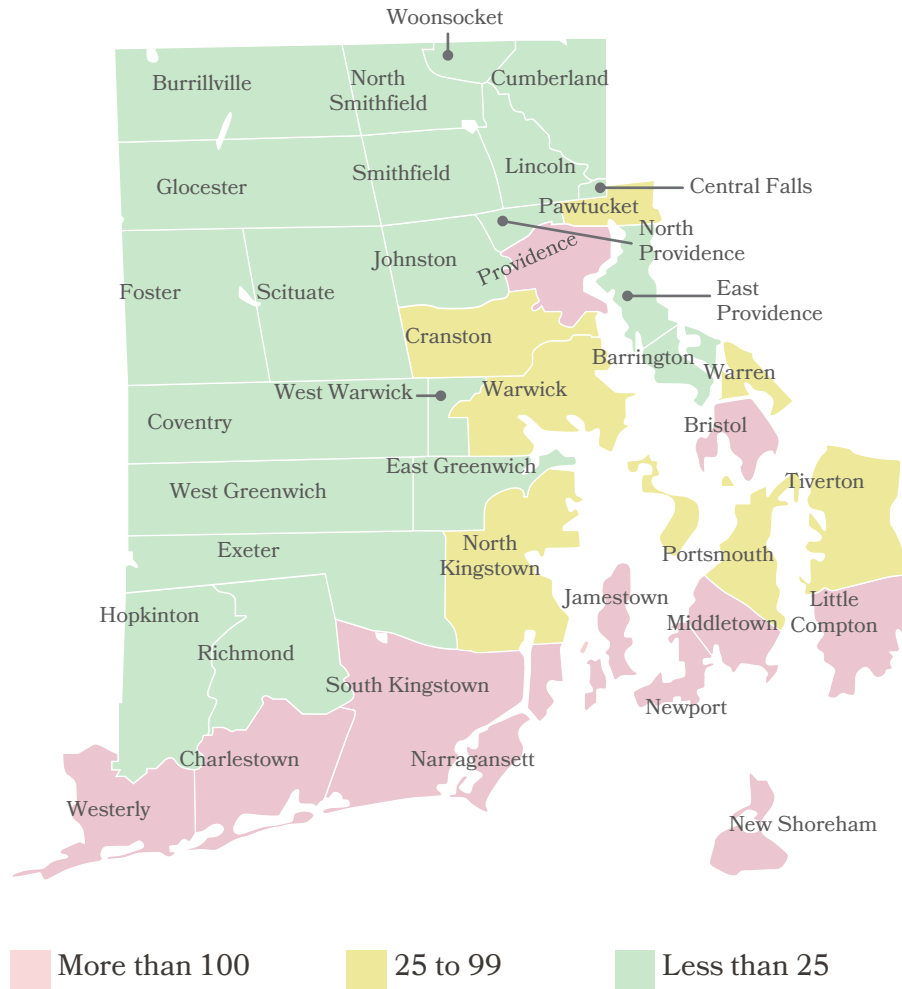


Note: In 1978 lead paint was banned nationally—homes built before this point potentially used lead paint; analysis leverages 2021 American Community Survey "Year Structure Built" 1-year estimates.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey



Across the state, ~3.5k units are listed on short-term rental platforms; Coastal areas and Providence have the most short-term rentals



Municipality	Short-term rental units
Narragansett	784
Middletown	383
Providence	313
New Shoreham	310
South Kingstown	307
Westerly	194
Charlestown	180
Newport	131
Little Compton	122
Bristol	106
Jamestown	104
Portsmouth	95
North Kingstown	69
Warwick	54
Tiverton	53
Warren	42
Cranston	41
Pawtucket	34
Barrington	24
East Providence	23
North Providence	13

Municipality	Short-term rental units
Hopkinton	11
Coventry	9
East Greenwich	8
West Warwick	8
Exeter	8
Cumberland	6
Richmond	6
Woonsocket	5
Central Falls	5
Burrillville	4
Smithfield	4
Johnston	4
Glocester	3
North Smithfield	3
Lincoln	3
Scituate	2
West Greenwich	1
Foster	0

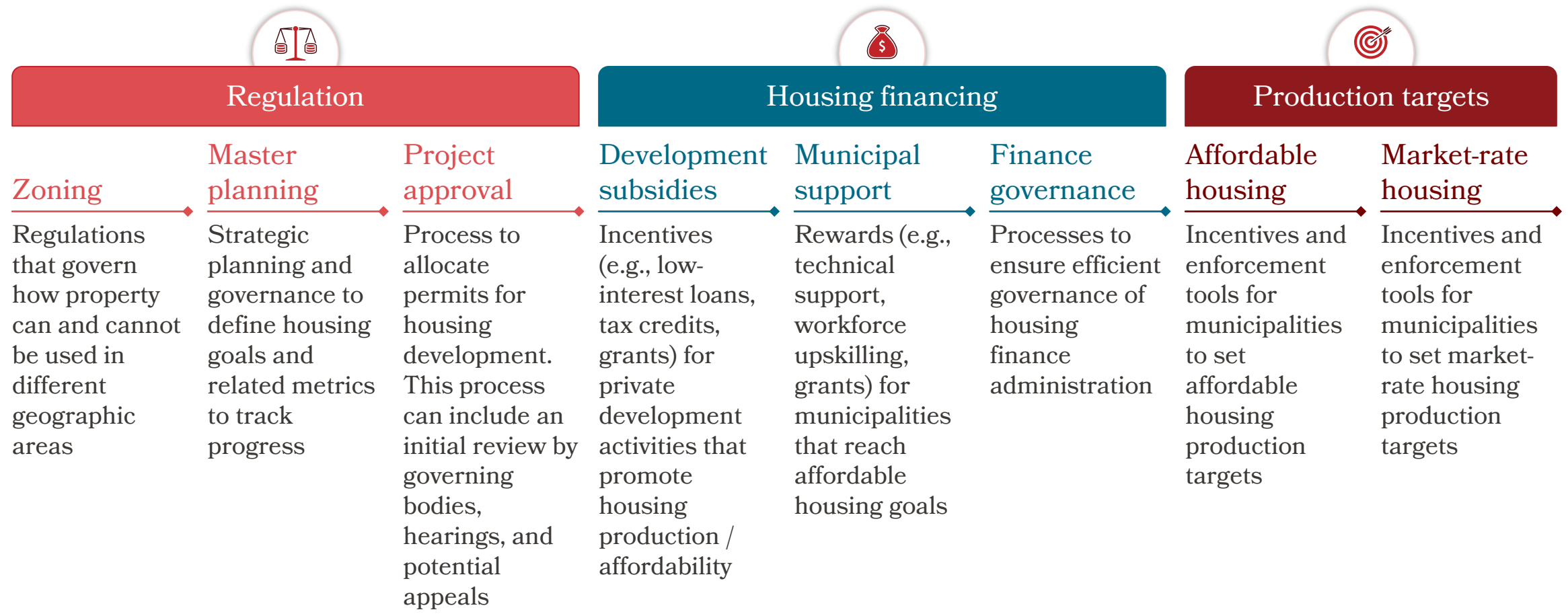


Options to Address

Rhode Island's Housing
Shortage






To accelerate housing production, Rhode Island has multiple options across regulation, housing financing, and production targets



Examined **65** levers across **regulation, housing financing, and production targets**;
 Detailed table of all policies examined provided in the appendix



Based on stakeholder input, six levers were researched in detail

	Policy	Description
 Regulation	Targeted support for development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pro-active state development function could provide targeted support for development to ensure more new developments break ground
	Regulatory reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in zoning code / permitting process geared toward increasing housing production
 Housing Financing	State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and improved use of private activity bonds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax credits issued to developers of low-income housing
	Sales tax exemptions and tax stabilization agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sales tax exemptions on materials/services Municipal tax stabilization agreements
	Mobilizing the business community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private-public partnerships Independent private investment
 Production Targets	Incentives, accountability measures, and accompanying production targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth targets for all municipalities accompanied by investment incentives and accountability measures



Targeted support for development process



A proactive state development function that provides targeted support at specific points in the development process could help more housing projects break ground

The development process describes the journey to **create new (or rehabilitate existing) housing projects**. This includes setting strategy, identifying and screening property, assembling and purchasing property, developing a site plan, clearing the permitting process, and raising construction financing.

In Rhode Island, stakeholders have noted that many potential housing developments are **unable to get to the construction stage** due to a lack of support in the earlier housing development phases. Stakeholders have cited several pain points:

- Lack of proactive development coordination in alignment with state needs
- Difficulty finding viable properties for development
- Lack of support and funding for predevelopment activities (e.g., site assessment, financial planning, land acquisition and assembly, etc.)
- A complicated and time-consuming permitting process with perceived low probability of success
- Insufficient funding opportunities for affordable housing
- Lack of confidence in success at end-stages of the development process (permitting and financing) prevents developers from pursuing pre-development activities

Rhode Island would benefit from a **proactive state development function** that provides targeted support at specific points in the development process. Models from other jurisdictions - including Massachusetts, Colorado and Montgomery County, MD - provide a roadmap on how **state agencies can support development activities by providing technical assistance and financing**.



State-led development process encompasses seven distinct activities from setting strategy to ensuring final funding secured

Note: Process may not always occur in this order



Set strategy

- Identify housing needs based on various demographics
- Interview community members



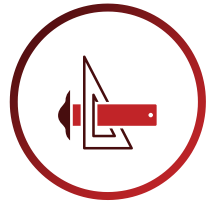
Identify and screen property

- Research available land
- Preliminary site evaluation (e.g., zoning, wetlands, stormwater, wastewater, site boundaries, topography)
- Preliminary financial feasibility analysis



Assemble and buy/own property

- Note: Property may already be state or municipality owned
- Draft and negotiate contract
- Complete purchase agreement
- Transfer funds and obtain deed



Develop a site plan

- Determine what the property can yield (e.g., draft architectural plan)
- Conduct detailed financial planning (e.g., model costs, potential sales/revenues, appraisals, market demand, financing etc.)



Clear entitlement / permitting process

- Submit building permit approval to municipalities
- Submit state-and local- permits (e.g., DEM, fire, and building)
- Adjust site plan as needed based on input from permitting authorities



Support effort to secure construction financing

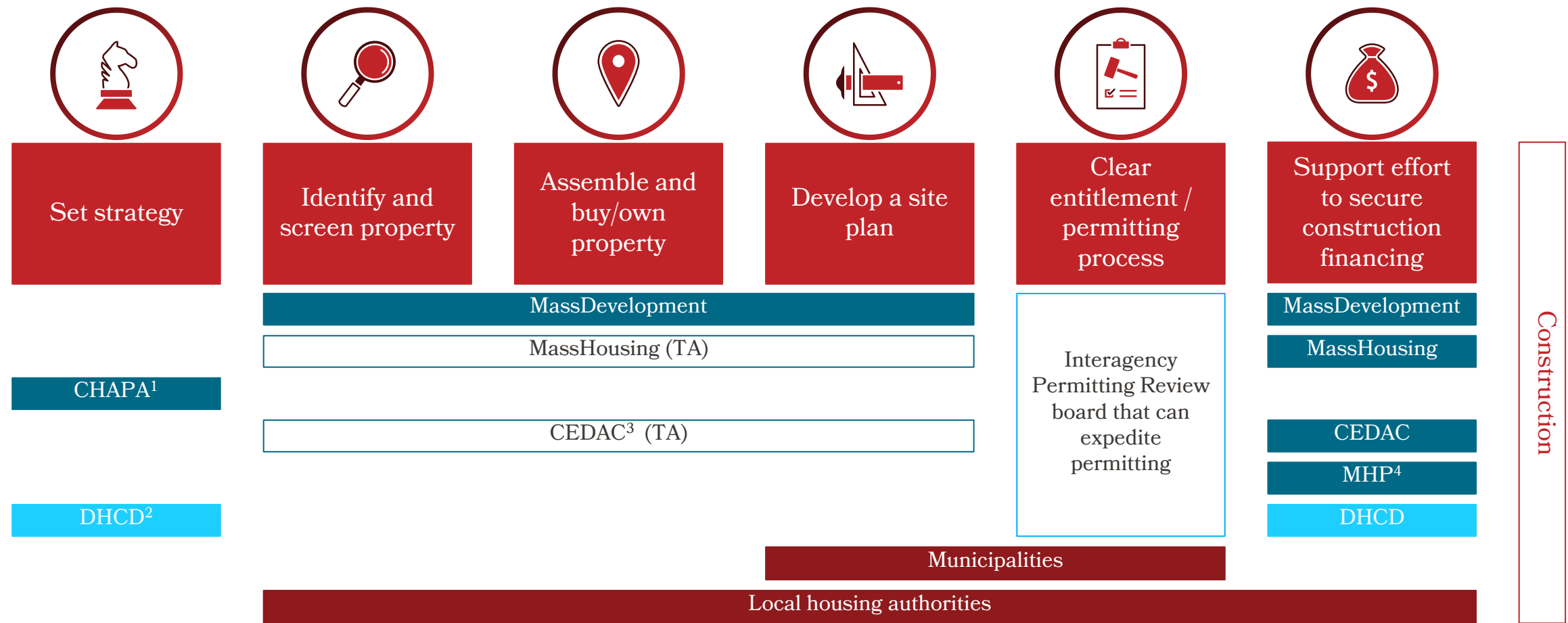
- Identify sources of financing that align with dev. plan
- Draft financing agreements
- Transfer funding to agency to carry out the plan (e.g., federal grants, soft financing)

Construction



In Massachusetts, many agencies support developers with these activities, including with numerous options for development financing

Non-filled boxes indicate that entity provides Technical Assistance (TA), but does not manage process themselves



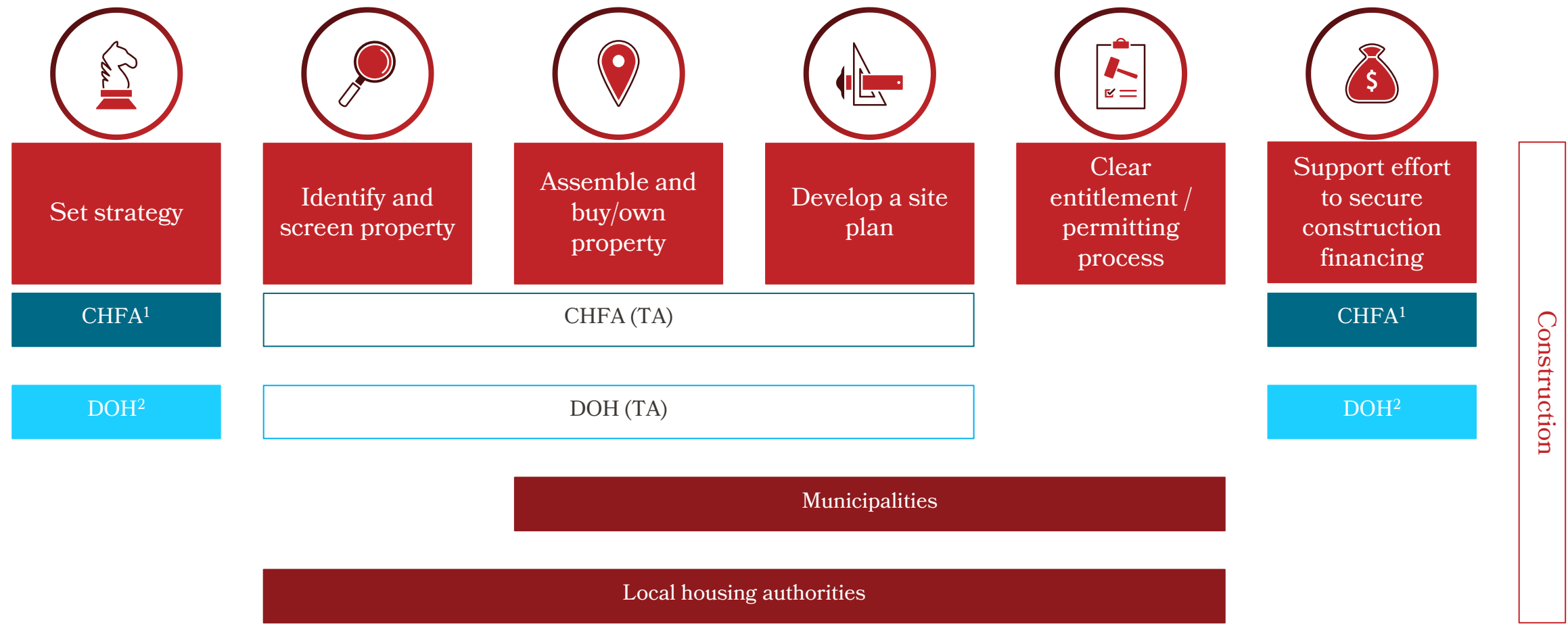
1.Citizens' Housing and Planning Association - stakeholder body, not a separate agency 2. Department of Housing and Community Development 3.Community Economic Development Organization 4. Massachusetts Housing Partnership Sources: Expert interviews, CHAPA, CEDAC, MassDevelopment, MassHousing, MHP and Mass.gov websites

Construction



In Colorado, both the HFA and the Department of Housing offer technical assistance to developers and pre-development and development financing

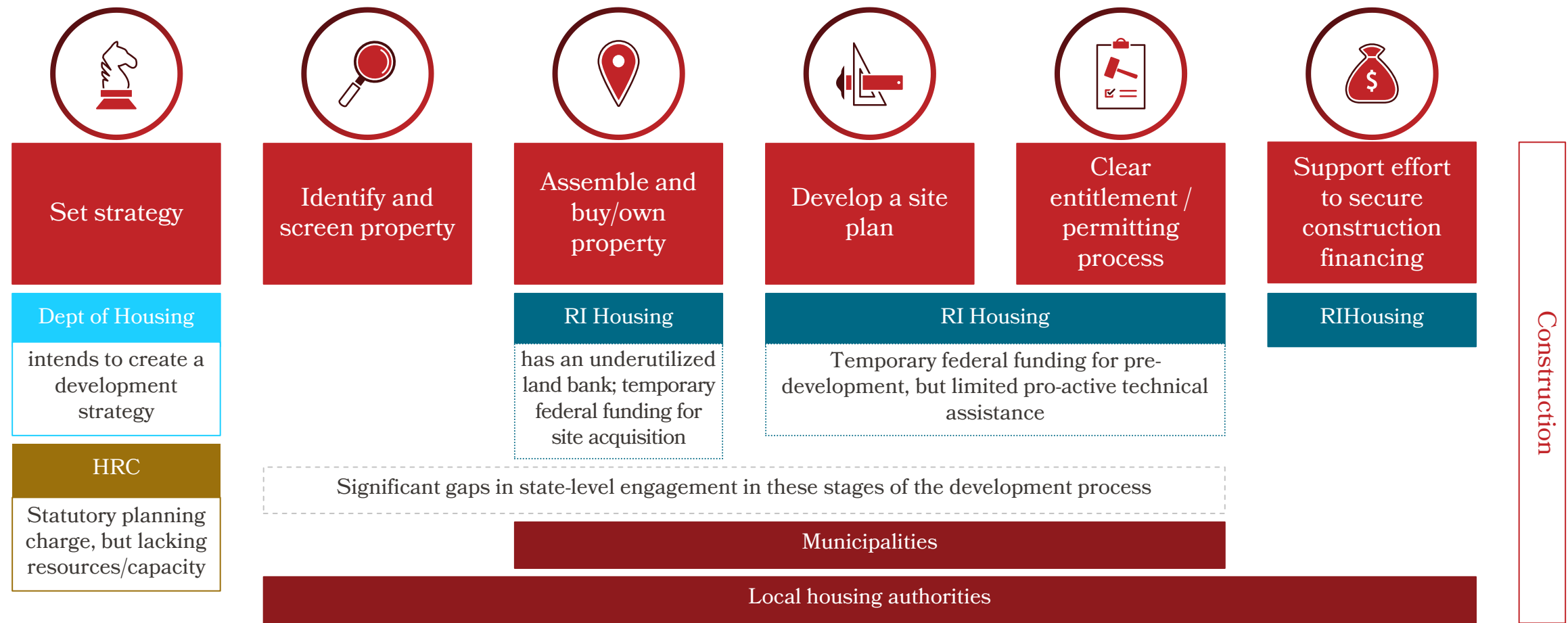
Non-filled boxes indicate that entity provides Technical Assistance (TA), but does not manage process themselves



1. Colorado Housing Finance Authority 2. Department of Housing (within Department of Local Affairs) Source: chfainfo.com



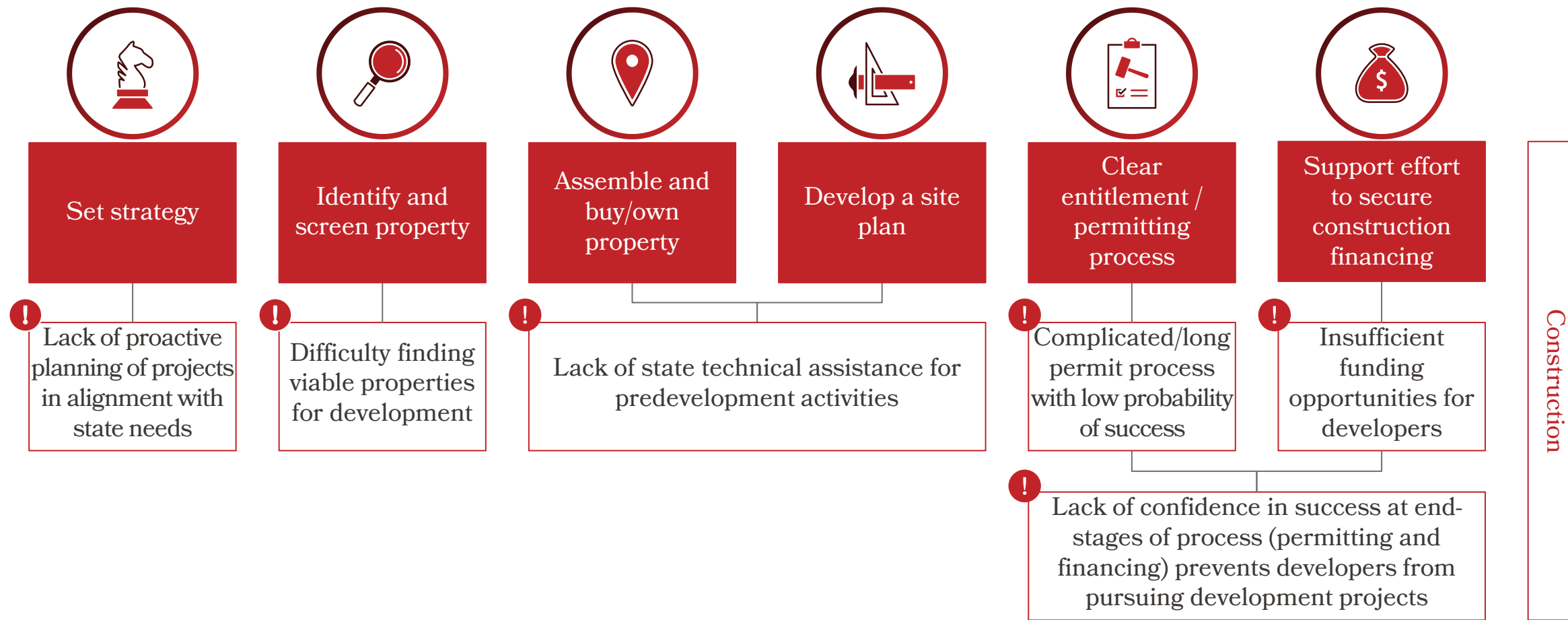
Compared to states benchmarked, there is limited state-wide support across the RI development process



Source: Stakeholder interviews, expert interviews, Housing Development Toolbox.org



In RI, developers and other stakeholders surfaced six major pain points that stall the pre-construction housing development process





Seven examples of public entities that take on housing development proactively in various forms

Location	Agency	Relationships	Key responsibilities of agency
Montgomery County, MD	Housing Opportunities Commission	Run by a board of commissioners appointed by the County Executive with the concurrence of the County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HOC functions as a state-operated developer and is authorized to acquire, own, lease, and operate housing HOC funds construction or renovation of housing through a revolving investment pool, the Housing Production Fund (HPF)
MA	MassDevelopment	Land Bank EOHED ¹ secretary is board chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists communities with planning and development – sometimes acting as a master developer Offers real-estate financing solutions in the form of bond financing, loans, tax credits (LIHTC), and grants
MI	MI State Land Bank Authority	Sits within the MI Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity; led by LEO ² secretary, appointed by governor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains an inventory of state-owned properties that can be purchased for development
CO	CO Middle Income Housing Authority	Independent organization (not a state agency or situated within a state department), led by 14-person board of directors appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for acquiring, constructing, rehabilitating, owning, operating, and financing affordable rental housing projects for middle-income workforce housing. Issues bonds in connection with its affordable rental housing projects payable solely from revenues from affordable rental housing projects and with no recourse to the state Enters into public-private partnerships and contracts with experienced real estate professionals to develop and operate affordable rental housing projects
HI	HI Public Housing Authority	Led by Director of Department of Human Services, appointed by the governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the state to develop mixed-income and mixed-financed housing projects The Authority is allowed to clear, improve, and rehabilitate property; plan, develop, construct, and finance housing projects
Seattle, WA	Seattle Social Housing Developer	Will be run by 13 board members appointed by Seattle Renters' Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Development Authority that will develop, acquire, and maintain public, affordable housing in Seattle Under I-135, the developer would manage buildings where rents would be capped at 30% of a tenant's income
CA	California Housing Authority	Independent state body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AB-2053 The Social Housing Act would establish the California Housing Authority, as an independent state body, the mission of which would be to produce and acquire social housing developments for the purpose of eliminating the gap between housing production and regional housing needs assessment targets

Approved, not yet implemented
 Proposed

1. Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development 2. Labor and Economic Opportunity

Sources: HOCmc.org, massdevelopment.com, public-mlb.epropertyplus.com, leg.Colorado.gov, cayimby.org, seattle.gov, Hawaii.gov



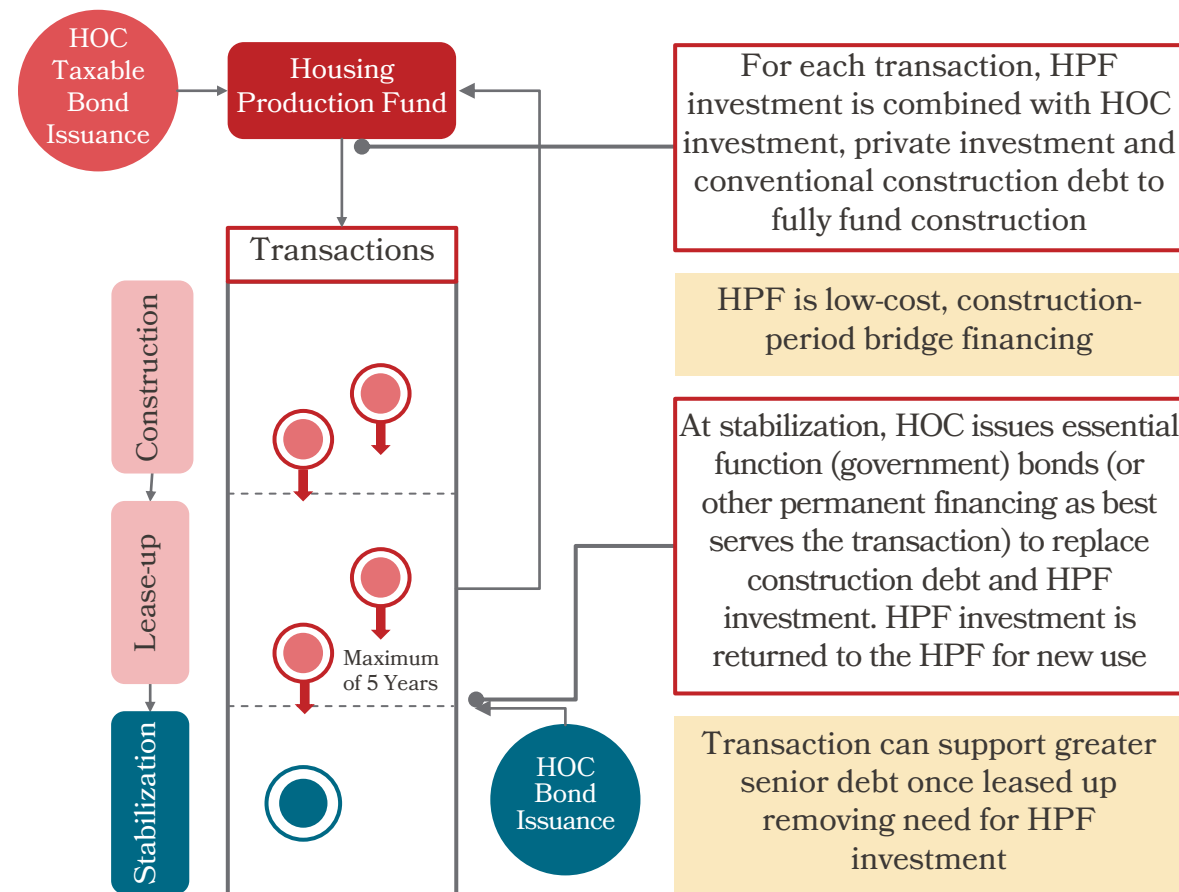
Montgomery County, MD is a jurisdiction some point to as a potential model for affordable housing development, with the county taking on more dev. responsibility

The Housing Opportunities Commission has financed over 3,400 multi-family units

The **Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC)** is authorized to acquire, own, lease, and operate housing

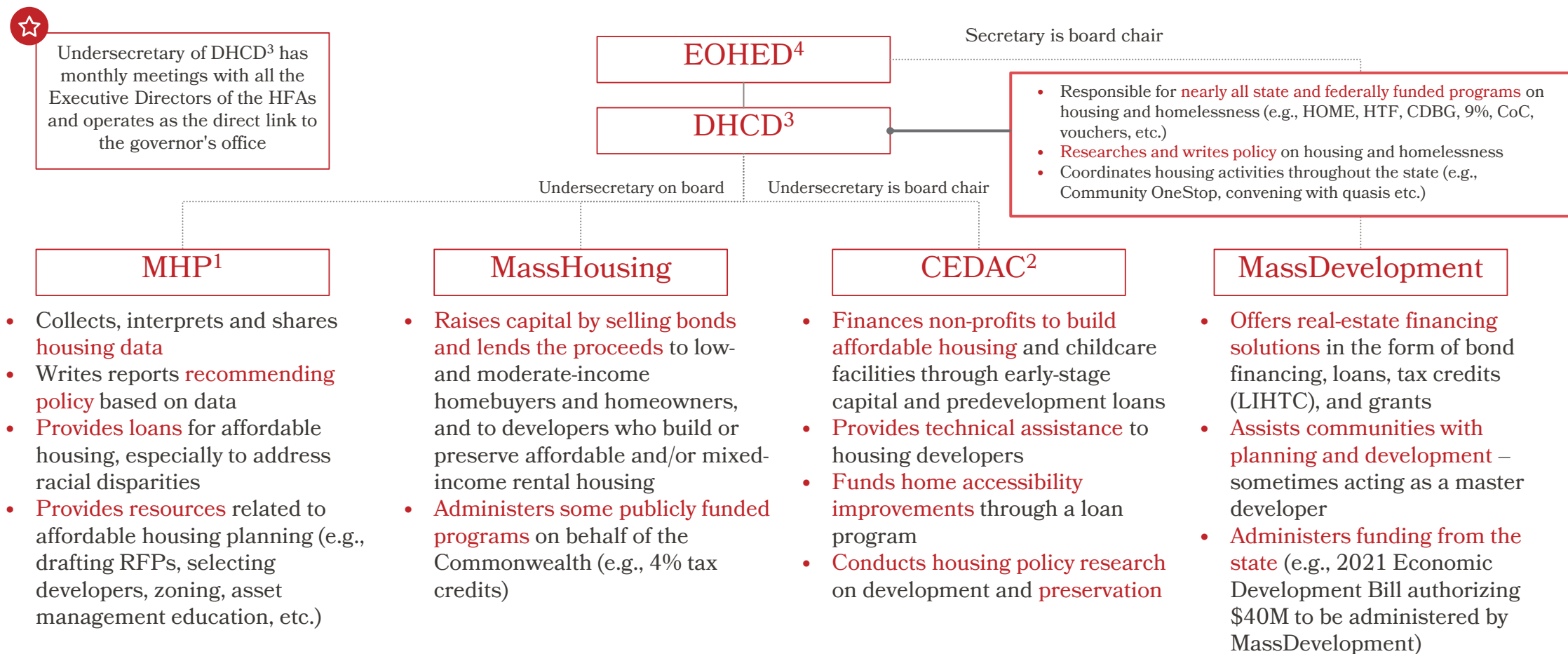
- Funds construction or renovation of housing through a revolving investment pool, the **Housing Production Fund (HPF)**
 - **Low-cost, construction period** investment for mixed income developments without restrictions of state or federal grants
 - Issues taxable municipal bonds to capitalize the fund
 - Investments in new projects can be also be financed by properties with high cash flow
 - **At lease up, HOC permanent financing replaces the HPF investment** and money goes back into the fund
- Growing public sector capacity to participate in housing production has led to **more housing cost stability** (e.g., HOC helped save private project that was at risk of not being built)

Production Fund Mechanism





Massachusetts has a unique quasi environment, with four housing financing agencies (HFA) supporting housing development



1. Massachusetts Housing Partnership 2. Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation 3. Department of Homes and Community Development
 4. Executive office of Housing and Economic Development Sources: Expert interviews, mhp.net, masshousing.com, cedac.org, massdevelopment.com Note:
 These responsibilities/relationships are subject to change as MA is restructuring Department of Housing



Regulatory Reform



Regulatory reform has the potential to unlock significant housing production in RI

Over the past decade, Rhode Island's rate of permitting has **ranked last in the nation**. In 2018, the Providence-Warwick metro area was ranked the **3rd most regulated metro area in the US**. In addition, some RI municipalities lack the capacity to quickly approve and process permitting requests, leading to denials and delays of housing permits. Developers and housing advocates cite the painful (and often unsuccessful) permitting process as one of the primary **reasons why many have chosen not to invest in the state**

Addressing this pain point will likely require a **package of reforms** that includes zoning, master planning and process-related improvements. This report has focused on benchmarking a **short-list of high-potential regulatory policies** that have been effectively utilized in other jurisdictions

The short-list was based on benchmarking against other northeast states and refined via conversations with Rhode Island stakeholders, housing experts from other jurisdictions, and developers

Zoning Policies

- Pass mandates in commercial/transit zones
- Create targeted up-zoning
- Amend ADU legislation
- Convert building
- Design Multi-family housing requirements
- Implement density bonuses
- Reduce parking requirements
- Create flexible development legislation

Master planning policies

- Require housing component for comp plan
- Eliminate LMIH Act Exemptions
- Establish "Safe Harbor" program
- Identify "transition zones"
- Mandate Land Area Minimums

Project approval process policies

- Address procedural issues with LMIH
- Streamline zoning process
- Reconstitute the SHAB
- Institute universal forms/e-permitting
- Address municipal capacity challenges



Inventory of regulatory policy changes adopted outside of RI (1 of 3)

Policy	State	Example
1 Mandates in commercial/transit zones	WA	Sound Transit (Washington State's transit organization) facilitates transit-oriented development on surplus property by offering surplus property for the development of affordable housing. Requires Sound Transit to offer 80% of its surplus property suitable for housing to qualified entities to develop housing which is affordable for families at 80% AMI
	MA	Requires municipalities to have zoning ordinance by-law which allows multi-family housing development in "MBTA Communities" located within a 0.5 miles of an MBTA rail / subway, bus, or ferry station. An MBTA community that fails to comply are not be eligible for funds from the Housing Choice Initiative, the Local Capital Projects Fund, or MassWorks Infrastructure program
	CA	AB 2011 Allows for more housing to be built in commercial corridors zoned for retail and office buildings
2 Targeted up-zoning	FL	Created designated infill target areas with vacant, dilapidated, or abandoned properties; the program includes incentives such as fee refunds and expedited building permit process to developers
	Somerville, MA	Integrated infill development as part of their neighborhood plans, and connected development strategies with an assessment of parcels or buildings suitable for redevelopment
3 Amend ADU legislation	ME	Loosens zoning restrictions statewide to allow two units to be built on plots currently zoned for single unit homes and allows ADUs in residential areas
4 Building conversions	Portland, OR	Mixed Use Zones Project is revising Portland's commercial and central employment zoning codes and implementing greater allowances for mixed use. The program includes an affordable housing incentive where developers are able to earn 100% of the allowed bonus floor area in a zone (additional amounts of development above base zoning entitlements earned in return for providing public benefits) by dedicating 25% of the bonus area to units with rents affordable to households earning 80% of AMI.
	Wheat Ridge, CO	Established a mixed-use commercial zone district, designed to encourage medium to high-density mixed-use development, and a mixed-use neighborhood district, designed to encourage medium density mixed use development
	Fairfax county, VA	Changing zoning to allow greater housing density and commercial/residential mixed-use development
5 Multi-family housing requirements	OR	Oregon House Bill 2001 requires medium-sized cities to allow duplexes on each lot of parcel zoned for residential use that allows for the development of single-family homes. Requires large cities to allow duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters and townhouses in residential areas. Encourages development of multi-family homes where it was previously restricted. Provided \$3.5M for planning assistance to local governments to help with development of plans and regulations for the transition.

Zoning
 Master planning
 Project approval process



Inventory of regulatory policy changes adopted outside of RI (2 of 3)

Policy	State	Example
6 Implement density bonuses	San Diego, CA	Density Bonus program, offerings include a 10% density bonus for developers that do not go beyond the maximum permitted building footprint and allows for 100% density bonus for micro-unit production for developments that do not exceed the permitted building footprint
	San Francisco, CA	Density bonus program for projects in which all residential units are affordable for low-and very low-income households Bonuses include additional three stories in height, priority processing, and parking reductions
	Cambridge, MA	Permits new affordable housing meeting certain requirements to be 1-2 stories taller, denser; they are subject to less stringent requirements around parking, open space, and lot coverage. Requires that at least 80% of rental dwellings dedicated to households making up to 80% of AMI and remaining dwellings dedicated to households making up to 100% of AMI
7 Reduce parking requirements	CA	Bans local agencies from enforcing parking minimums on residential and commercial developments within .5 miles of a major transit stop (with some exceptions for senior and affordable housing)
8 Create flexible development legislation	ME	Loosens zoning restrictions statewide to allow two units to be built on plots currently zoned for single unit homes and allows ADUs in residential areas
9 Require housing component for Comp Plan	Fairfax county, VA	Changing zoning to allow greater housing density and commercial/residential mixed-use development
10 Eliminate LMIH Act Exemptions	CA	Requires that all local governments adequately plan to meet housing needs; local governments must adopt housing plans as part of their 'general plan'. California Department Housing and Community Development determines the regional housing need, segmented by income levels, for each region's planning body and divides the need amongst cities and counties
	MA	Chapter 40B, (Comprehensive Permit Law), enables the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if the municipality's LMIH falls below 10%, and the developer is proposing at least 20-25% of their units with long-term affordability restrictions. If a municipality is above the 10% requirement, it is able to permit "friendly 40B" projects, which allow municipalities to remain in control of most aspects of project design and construction

Zoning
 Master planning
 Project approval process



Inventory of regulatory policy changes adopted outside of RI (3 of 3)

Policy	State	Example
11 Establish "Safe Harbor" program	NY	The NY Housing Compact requires all municipalities to reach new home creation targets on a three-year cycle. Affordable units hold extra weight when calculating progress towards goals. Localities that fail to meet targets can implement certain actions to create zoning capacity and achieve temporary Safe Harbor status. In municipalities that fail to meet targets, development within affordability criteria but may not conform to existing zoning may use a fast-track approval process
12 Identify "transition zones"	Austin, TX	Austin's Transition Areas Program identifies transition areas between commercial zones and single-family homes to plan development for "missing middle housing" (e.g., duplexes, triples, multiplex housing). The Transition Areas will be up zoned to increase density of these areas
13 Land Area Minimum	MA	Requires that municipalities reserve 1.5% of total land zoned for residential, industrial, and commercial use for sites of affordable housing
14 Address procedural issues with LMIH	MA	Executive order to streamline and prioritize review process for affordable housing development. Changes accelerated timeline for review, addressed zoning challenges to LMIH development and minimized need for variances and other permitting burdens, created internal system to track affordable housing reviews and approvals, established governance to ensure implementation.
15 Streamline zoning process	MA	Enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions. Developers have the right to appeal adverse local decisions to the State in communities with little affordable housing (where less than 10% of year-round housing or 1.5% of its land area is affordable)
16 Reconstitute the SHAB	NH	Developed a new Housing Appeals Board for more affordable and quicker option for appeal local rulings about housing developments. Under the statute, the board must rule within 90 days and members of the board must be "learned and experienced in questions of land use law or housing development, or both" with at least one being an attorney.
17 Institute universal forms/e-permitting	CA	Streamlines and brings transparency to permitting process by requiring that all jurisdictions move the application process online and create a detailed list of permit requirements to be posted on their website
18 Address municipal capacity challenges	MA	MA Act Enabling Partnerships for Growth reduced the required vote from 2/3 to a simple majority for certain zoning amendments and certain special permits. The change comes from realization that the prior voting threshold was problematic for project proponents and advocates of zoning changes, as a zoning amendment could have the support of a majority of the members of the applicable local governing body but ultimately fail to obtain the 2/3 vote required for approval

Zoning
 Master planning
 Project approval process



State Low-Income Housing Tax Credit



State low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) have been used by 26 other states to finance affordable housing development and increase utilization of federal funds

The federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) is a tax incentive for developers to **construct or rehabilitate affordable rental housing for low-income households**. The federal government issues tax credits to state governments, who then award the credits to private developers of affordable rental housing projects through a competitive process. Developer generally **sell the credits to private investors to obtain funding**. Once the housing project is placed in service (made available to tenants), investors can claim the LIHTC over a 10-year period. There are types of credits: 4% (30% of project present value) and 9% (70% of project present value)

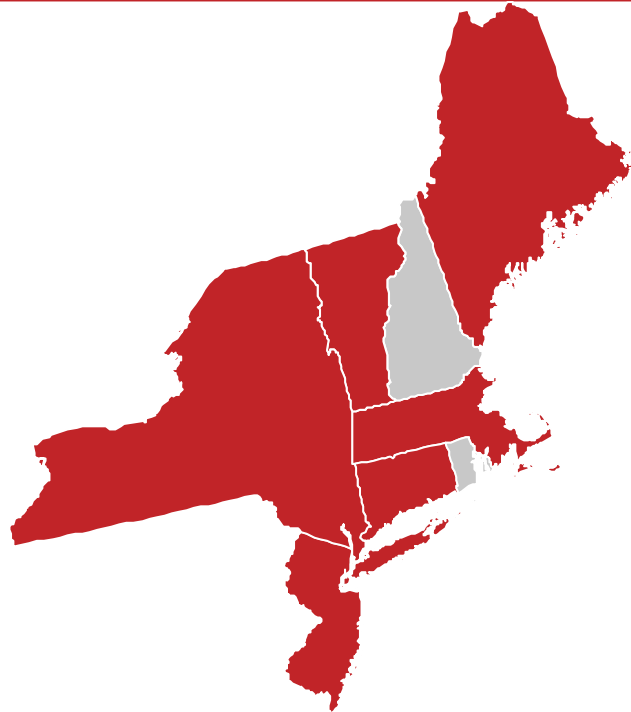
The **federal 4% LIHTC alone is typically not sufficient** to finance a project, which is why **26 states, including six out of eight Northeast states, have enacted state LIHTC programs**. State LIHTC programs are often structured similarly to the federal equivalent and provide complimentary financing with the goal of **increasing utilization of federal funds and providing direct support for affordable housing projects**. States will typically allocate LIHTCs based on their own prioritization principles and state-specific guidelines

State LIHTCs have been **effective in driving affordable housing production** in other states. If Rhode Island pursues a state LIHTC, there are several key design considerations that will **drive efficiency and efficacy of the program**. These dimensions, including decisions made by other states, are outlined on the following pages



6 of 8 Northeast states have enacted a state LIHTC program

Map of Northeast states with state-level LIHTC programs



No state LIHTC program
 State LIHTC program enacted

Rhode Island and New Hampshire are the only Northeast states without a state LIHTC program

State LIHTC programs mirror the federal LIHTC program and offer state-funded tax credits to developers of affordable housing; state agencies (e.g., HFAs) implementing LIHTC programs are required to issue Qualified Action Plans¹ (QAPs) detailing eligibility criteria

1. Rhode Island already has a QAP that details eligibility criteria for other federal funding programs
Sources: Novogradac; NLIHC



The structure of state LIHTC programs varies across the Northeast and best-in-class examples; four states with <\$100B GDP have state LIHTC programs

State	GDP (2021)	Certificated or allocated?	Bifurcated ¹ from federal LIHTC?	Type of credit (e.g., 4%, 9%)	Level of match to federal funds	Credit period (years)	Compliance period	
California	\$3,356.6B	Both	Yes	Both	State recipients must be federal LIHTC recipients	4	55	
New York	\$1,853.9B	Both	Yes	Flexible amount	N/A	10	30	
Georgia	\$683.3B	Allocated	Yes	Both	1:1 (100%) match for 4% credits	10	15	
New Jersey ²	\$672.1B	N/A	N/A	Flexible amount	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Massachusetts	\$636.5B	Both	Yes	Flexible amount	N/A	5	45	
Connecticut	\$296.5B	Allocated	Yes	Flexible amount	N/A	6	15	
New Mexico	\$98.2B	Both	Yes	Flexible amount	N/A	5	Up to 30	
Hawaii	\$90.1B	Allocated	Yes	Both	1:2 (50%) match for 4% and 9%	5	45	
Maine	\$76.1B	Allocated	Yes	Both	Conditional 1:1 match ³	1	45	
Rhode Island	\$65.9B	No state LIHTC						
Vermont	\$36.2B	Certificated	Yes	4%	N/A	5	15	

1. Bifurcation is the process by which credit investors separate their state credits from their federal credits (generally for transfer purposes) 2. New Jersey's tax credit program, Aspire, is a gap financing tool to support commercial, mixed use, and residential real estate development project; replaces the Economic Redevelopment and Growth Grant (ERG) 3. Matches federal LIHTC allocation for properties that are: the construction of one or more new buildings or adaptive reuse of one or more non-residential structures, subject to a restrictive covenant requiring income mix in which 60% of units are reserved for households at or below 50% AMI

Sources: Novogradac; NLIHC; NJ Economic Development Authority



Deep dive: State LIHTC eligibility and funding considerations vary by state; in MA, NY, and CT the process is competitive, discretionary, and incorporates individual transaction caps

Key decision	Massachusetts	New York	Connecticut
How will the tax credit be structured? Will credits be bifurcated?	Certificated and allocated credits available with 5-yr carry-forward; bifurcated from federal LIHTC	Certificated and allocated credits available with application for 1-yr carry-forward; bifurcated from federal LIHTC	Allocated credits available with ability to carry forward or backwards 5 yrs; bifurcated from federal LIHTC
Will there be a cap on individual awards?	Guided by QAP ¹ . Current version: Up to \$400k (<= 40 units), \$700k (41 - 60 units), \$1M (61-100 units), \$1.5M (>100 units) per development per year	Guided by QAP ¹ . Current version: Up to \$750k per development per year	Guided by QAP ¹ . Current version: Up to \$500k per applicant per year; \$500k per development per year; developments may not exceed \$1.5M in funding over 3-yr period
Is there a competitive process? How is funding prioritized if oversubscribed?	Competitive process based on criteria outlined in QAP ¹	Competitive process based on criteria outlined in QAP ¹	Competitive process based on criteria outlined in QAP ¹
How will the size of the credit be determined (e.g., discretionary or automatic match to 4% LIHTC)?	Discretionary	Discretionary	Discretionary
Are there any differences in eligibility requirements versus federal ¹ ?	Separate scoring criteria	40-90 model ² (as opposed to 20-50, 40-60)	Developer must partner with approved non-profits, who need to build, rehabilitate, own, or operate housing
Which agency is responsible for administering these programs?	MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)	NY Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR)	CT Housing Finance Authority (HFA)
How frequently are awards made?	Bi-annually	Rolling deadline	Annually
What is the length of the credit period?	5 years	10 years	6 years
What is the compliance period for the credit?	45 years	30 years	15 years

1. Qualified Allocation Plan 2. In order to be eligible for federal LIHTC, a development must maintain 20% of its units for households making 50% area median income or 40% of its units for households making 60% AMI; NY State Low Income Housing Credit requires 40% of units be affordable to households making 90% AMI
Sources: MA Qualified Action Plan; NY SLIHTC; CT HTCC Program Overview 2022; Novogradac; NLIHC



Sales tax exemptions and tax financing tools



Sales tax exemptions and tax stabilization agreements are valuable financing tools that have been effectively utilized in other jurisdictions

Tax exemption/abatement programs and tax stabilization agreements are tax financing tools states can leverage to **motivate both developers and municipalities to increase housing production**. These policies can contribute to **closing the gap on financing housing projects**, especially projects that are **relatively close to being financially feasible**. This analysis examined examples of these two tools across different US jurisdictions:

- **Sales tax exemptions:** Exempts developer from paying sales tax on materials and/or services on housing projects that meet specific criteria
- **Municipal tax stabilization agreements (TSAs):** Agreements between states and municipalities that allow municipalities to directly provide incentives to developers with the assurance that the state agrees to cover all or part of the cost of foregone municipal tax revenue; Rhode Island currently covers the cost of up to 10% of foregone municipal property tax revenue for qualifying projects

Examples of successful program design and implementation in other jurisdictions can be used to **help inform the development of new tax incentives in Rhode Island**





Several states offer sales tax exemption programs to encourage affordable housing; impact varies based on design and tax rate

State	Type of tax exemption	State tax rate (%)	Est. exemption amount for \$50M project ¹	Length of exemption	Are goods eligible?	Are services eligible?	Qualifications
Colorado	Sales and use tax exemption	5.8%	\$870k	Construction period	Yes	No	Projects owned by, leased to, or under construction by a housing authority / entity for which a housing authority is an interested party
Georgia	Sales tax exemption	4%	\$1.2M	Construction period	Yes	Yes	Housing authorities
Minnesota	Sales tax exemption	6.5%	\$975k	Construction period	Yes	No	Materials used in the construction / expansion of qualified low-income housing projects (reserving at least 20% of units as low-income)

1. Assumes construction materials makeup 30% of project costs and services make up an additional 30%

Source: Colorado Department of Revenue "Sales 95" notice; Georgia Department of Revenue List of Sales and Use Tax Exemptions; Minnesota Department of Revenue "Sales and Use Tax – Affordable Housing Exemption" notice



Several states have implemented tax stabilization agreements to provide additional tools for municipalities to support housing production

RI currently covers the cost of up to 10% of foregone municipal property tax revenue for qualifying projects via tax stabilization agreements

Jurisdiction	Detail
Massachusetts	<p>Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) enables municipalities to offer tax credits and incentives to companies that commit to creating and/or retaining jobs in the community through commercial production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Assistance Coordinating Council offers EDIP credits on up to 40% of the cost of property purchased for business use • Businesses may not take EDIP credits if already receiving investment tax credit or low-income housing credit
Michigan	<p>Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act authorizes municipalities to create brownfield redevelopment authorities to incentive the redevelopment of blighted properties, increase of housing production / rehabilitation through tax increment financing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Brownfield Authorities must submit brownfield plan approved by MI Housing Development Authority • Households with income less than or equal to 120% area median income qualify
New Hampshire	<p>Tax Increment Financing (TIF) program allows municipalities to recapture a portion of the tax revenue created within select districts to use for the financing of additional municipal development / public improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All districts combined cannot exceed 10% of the community's land area or 16% of a community's total assessed value; plan must be adopted by the municipality after a public hearing • Tax increments can be used for retiring bonds, operation, maintenance, improvements in the district, and general purpose



Mobilizing the business community



Mobilizing Rhode Island's business community can ensure housing and homelessness initiatives are successful




The business community has become increasingly involved in helping to address housing affordability challenges around the country. Over the past few years, large **for-profit companies have made significant financial commitments to address homeownership, housing affordably, housing supply, and homelessness**

In some circumstances, companies have partnered directly with state and local government or non-profits to create impact. In 2019, **Google** partnered with the non-profit, Housing Trust Silicon Valley, and **committed \$1B to addressing market-rate and affordable housing supply challenges** in California. In other instances, companies are launching independent initiatives. In 2020, **JP Morgan and Chase** pledged **\$26B to increase affordable housing production and Black/Latinx homeownership** across the US

Rhode Island is home to several major corporations including CVS Health, Lifespan Health System, Care New England Health System, Citizens Financial Group, and Hasbro. **Rhode Island's business community has an opportunity and a responsibility to be a part of the solution on addressing housing affordability.** Examples of successful program design and implementation in other jurisdictions can help inform the implementation of public-private partnerships / private investment in Rhode Island



Several companies have launched public-private partnerships to produce affordable and workforce housing

Company	State	Investment (\$)	Target segment	State / municipal involvement?	Non-profit involvement?	Approach
 Bank of America	US	\$5B	Pathways to homeownership for low- and moderate-income HHs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal of supporting 20,000 units new homeownership opportunities across the country • Partnering with a number of state / local / federal housing agencies
 Google	CA	\$1B	Market-rate / affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes; partnering with Housing Trust Silicon Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250M affordable housing investment fund • \$50M in grants to organizations addressing homelessness • Goal of producing / supporting 15k units of market-rate housing, 5k units of AH by 2030 • 4k units of housing approved for development; 3.2k units supported to date
 Starbucks	WA	\$150k	Homeless population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes; partnering with King County Regional Homelessness Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Partnership for Zero" initiative provides housing, job training, and additional social support to individuals experiencing homelessness • \$10M in total funding (other corporations / individuals donated) • Starbucks also offered store locations as places for case officers to set up shops



Other companies have invested in initiatives to produce more affordable and workforce housing

Company	State	Investment (\$)	Target segment	State / municipal involvement?	Non-profit involvement?	Approach
 JP Morgan Chase	US	\$30B	Affordable housing; Black / Latinx homeownership	• No	• No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal of supporting 100,000 units of new affordable housing through \$14B in funding for developments in underserved communities • Committing an additional \$12B to offer 40,000 home purchase loans and 20,000 opportunities for mortgage refinancing to Black / Latinx households
 Microsoft	WA	\$500M	Market-rate / affordable housing	• No	• No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250M towards low-income housing investment • \$225M towards middle-income housing near Microsoft headquarters • \$25M to local organizations / homeless services
 Goldman Sachs	NY, NJ, UT	\$25k-150k grants to qualifying applicants	Low- and moderate-income housing	• No	• No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS USA Community Development Grants Program seeks to support community development programs that serve low- and moderate-income individuals or communities and address key needs such as housing, education, and small-business development • Issued 33 grants in 2022



Incentives, accountability
measures, and accompanying
production targets



Incentives, accountability measures, and accompanying production targets have been used in other jurisdictions as a tool to accelerate housing production

Housing production targets consist of a state-wide goal for overall and/or affordable housing production (e.g., in New York the goal is to increase housing stock by 3% in municipalities serviced by the MTA, and 1% elsewhere). In most cases, the targets go down to the **municipal level to create accountability and share the burden across the state**. Often, targets are accompanied by **incentives (e.g., access to new funding) or disincentives (loss of some local permitting control)** for municipalities

Based on a scan of other US states, **nine other states** (including MA and NY) have created affordable and/or overall production targets, most of which include incentives and disincentives

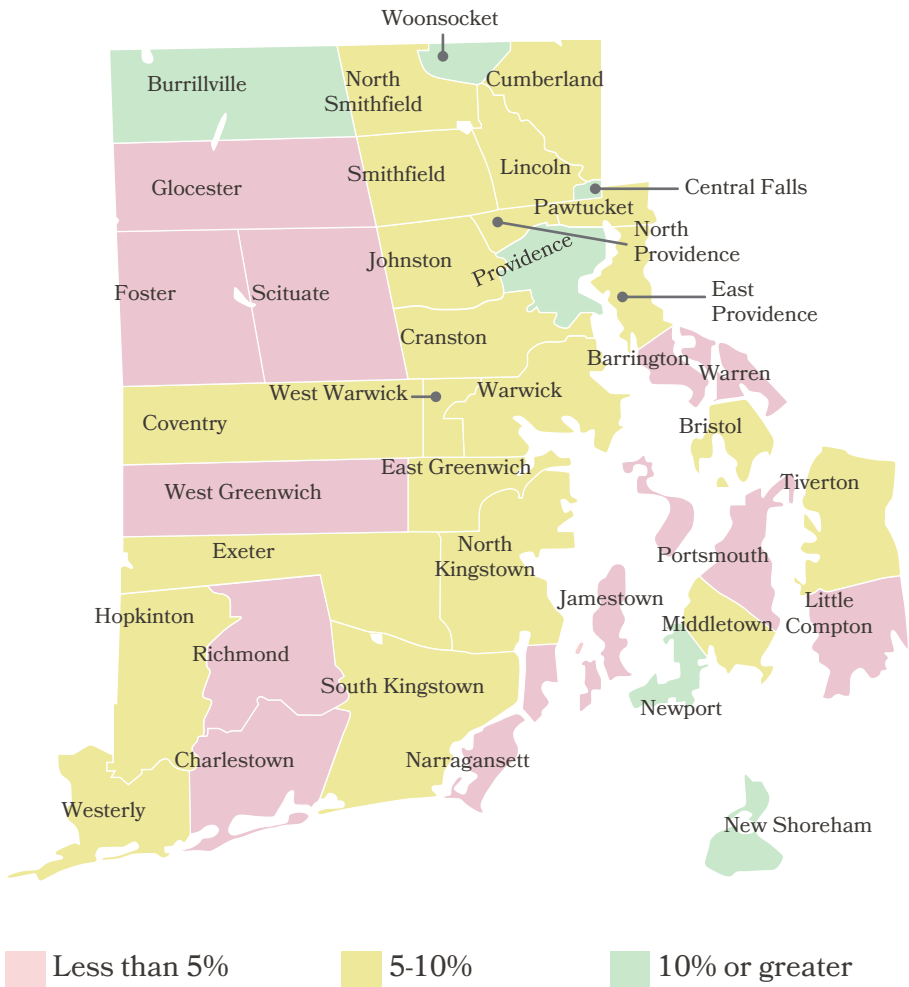
RI does **not have an overall production target**, but it does have a law (RI Gen. Laws 45-53¹) that requires **10% of housing stock** within each municipality be categorized as **low- and moderate-income housing** (LMIH). There are currently **no formal incentives or disincentives** for municipalities, and **only 6 out of 39 municipalities** hit the target in 2021

Analysis of other jurisdictions and mapping of key policy design questions and principles can inform how Rhode Island might **evolve its current target-setting approach to drive new overall and affordable housing production**

1. No enforcement mechanisms are tied to the legislation



Backup: Across RI, only 6 communities meet the statewide threshold requiring municipalities to maintain 10% low- and moderate-income housing (LMIH)

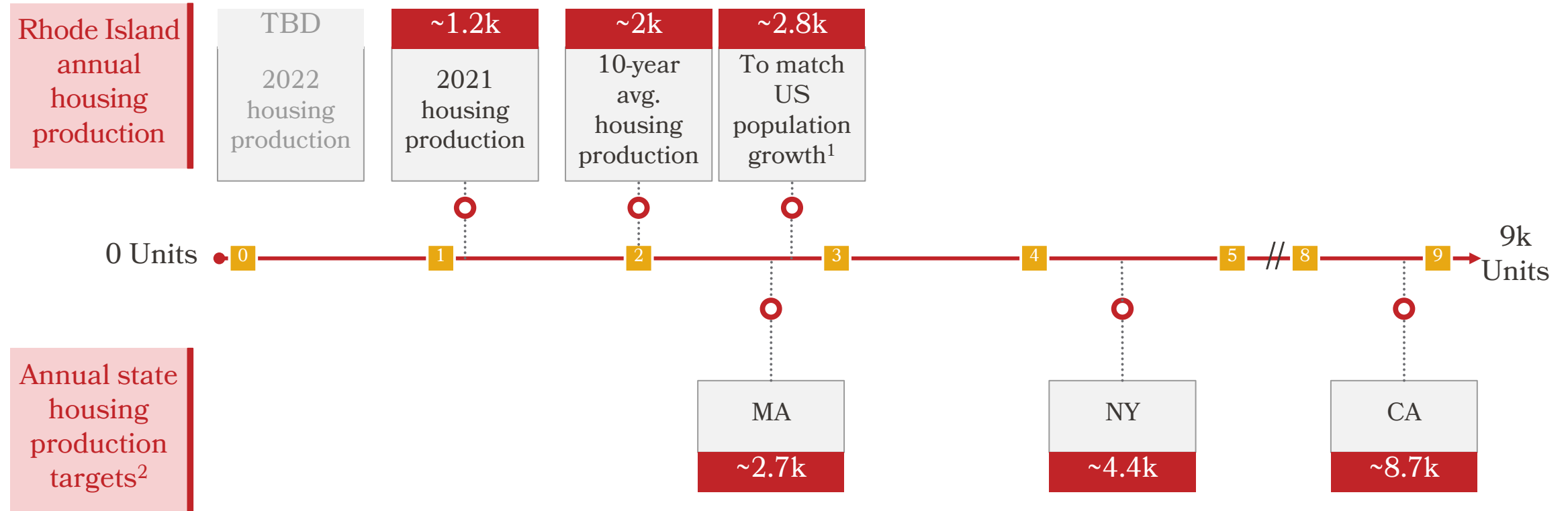


Municipality	Overall LMIH as % of year-round housing	Needed to hit 10%	Municipality	Overall LMIH as % of year-round housing	Needed to hit 10%
Newport	15.90%	Achieved	South Kingstown	5.57%	483
Woonsocket	15.90%	Achieved	Smithfield	5.54%	350
Providence	14.90%	Achieved	Cranston	5.50%	1,481
Central Falls	10.96%	Achieved	Warwick	5.47%	1,686
New Shoreham	10.45%	Achieved	Coventry	5.21%	675
Burrillville	10.29%	Achieved	Tiverton	5.17%	345
East Providence	9.83%	36	Middletown	5.16%	332
North Kingstown	9.09%	99	Westerly	5.10%	511
Pawtucket	8.67%	427	Jamestown	4.59%	137
North Smithfield	8.20%	91	Warren	4.23%	290
Johnston	8.00%	247	Charlestown	3.92%	212
West Warwick	7.99%	277	Narragansett	3.86%	440
Hopkinton	7.09%	98	Richmond	3.71%	183
Lincoln	6.81%	288	Barrington	3.38%	415
North Providence	6.57%	526	Portsmouth	2.75%	537
Cumberland	6.00%	550	Glocester	2.44%	291
Exeter	5.99%	98	Foster	2.05%	140
Bristol	5.80%	379	West Greenwich	1.81%	190
East Greenwich	5.67%	231	Scituate	0.80%	377
			Little Compton	0.56%	153

Note: Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, Newport, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket are exempt from the RI LMIH Act due to percentage of rental housing and/or current affordable housing inventory
 Sources: HousingWorks RI 2022 Factbook; RI Housing



RI housing production needs to accelerate significantly to keep up with population growth; will require coordinated action



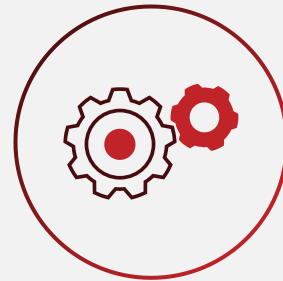
1. Where demand for housing in RI grows at the same rate as US population growth (2012-2021) 2. Annual state housing production targets are indexed to RI population
 Source: US Census Bureau; American Community Survey; Massachusetts Housing Choice Initiative; New York Hochul Housing Compact; California Statewide Housing Plan



Housing production targets and associated investments could help address specific RI housing supply challenges by ...



Offering targeted financial support to municipalities focused on enabling housing production (e.g., infrastructure, financing)



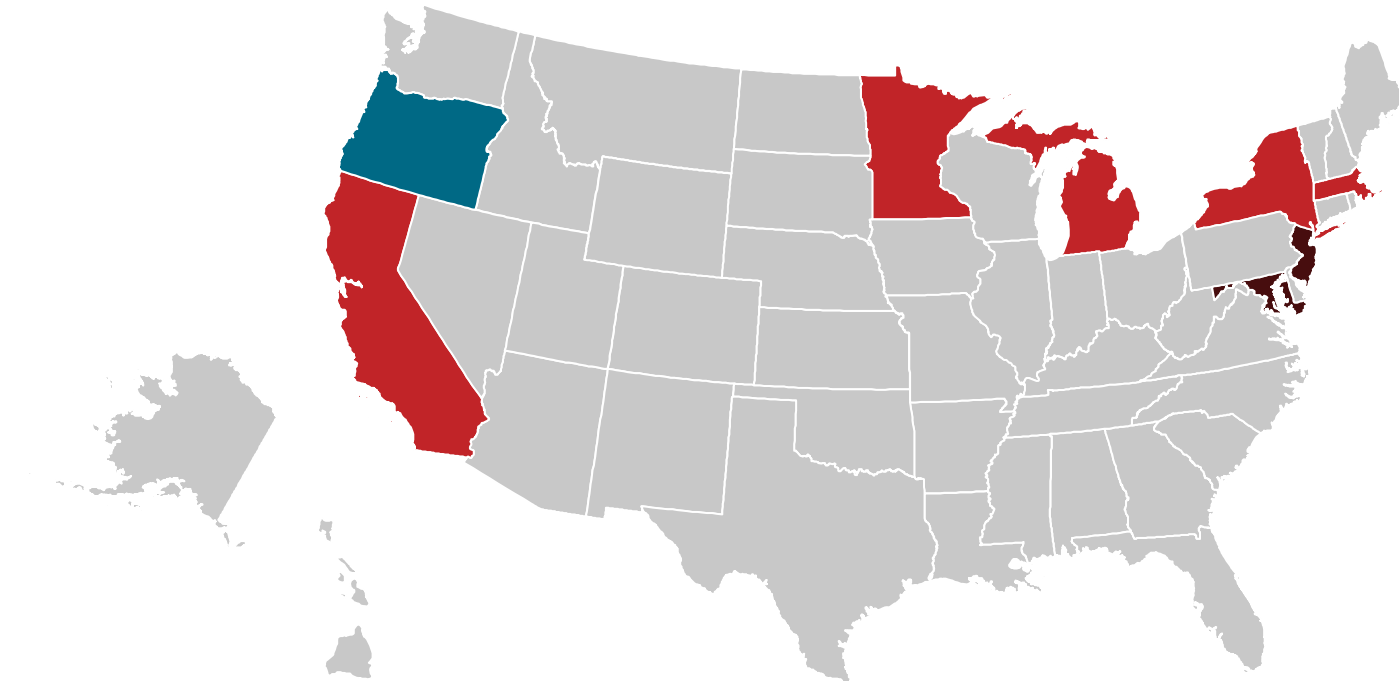
Providing technical assistance to municipalities to ensure they have staff capacity and know-how to expand permitting and planning



Creating accountability among municipalities to ensure responsibility is shared fairly across the state



Several states have publicly announced housing production targets; MA, NY, and CA offer three distinct models for how to structure targets



No state public target identified
 Overall production target only
 Affordable housing production targets
 Overall and affordable housing production targets

RI: requires municipalities to maintain 10% LMIH; no incentives or disincentives; only 6/39 municipalities currently meet 10% requirement

MA: requires municipalities to maintain 10% affordable housing; offers incentives (e.g., safe harbor, additional funding) and disincentives (loss of municipal control)

NY: requires municipalities serviced by MTA to grow housing stock 3% over 3 years, 1% if not serviced by MTA; offers incentives (safe harbor) and disincentives (loss of municipal control)

CA: municipalities/regions set customized production plans in partnership with the state; offers incentives (additional funding) and disincentives (loss of municipal control)



Potential principles to inform housing production targets in Rhode Island

Actual setting of targets will be part of state-wide strategy

Purpose: Catalyze action towards increasing housing production in Rhode Island

Ambitious and achievable

- **Ambitious:** Meaningfully move to close the housing supply gap over next 5-10 years
- **Achievable:** Realistic based on RI's current housing supply and capacity

Supported by enabling policy

- Accompanied by **sustainable funding** for housing production over longer period of time; not a one-off commitment
- **Linked to land-use/zoning reforms** to spur growth and encourage more development
- Supported by investments to **enable infrastructure**

Meets the needs or Rhode Islanders

- Considers **affordability challenges** across RI, particularly at <50% AMI
- Contributes to addressing needs of **core sub-groups:**
 - People of color
 - Older adults
 - Middle-income occupations (e.g., teachers, police officers)
- Provides sufficient flexibility to customize to needs of different municipalities

Fairly rewards municipal engagement

- Clear incentives for **municipalities below 10% threshold** to get to the target
- Rewards municipalities that **continue growth beyond the 10% target threshold**
- **Holds municipalities jointly accountable** for producing new housing in line with RI statewide targets



Key design and process questions to address in the design of housing production targets

Key design/process questions

Target setting

Should RI publicly set an absolute target for total housing production?

Should RI publicly set an absolute target for affordable housing production?

Should RI require that municipalities achieve growth rates in total housing supply?

Should RI require municipalities to have a share of their housing supply be affordable?

Should RI set other enabling actions for municipalities (e.g., zoning, infrastructure investments)

Implementation

Should there be incentives for municipalities to attain targets?

Should the state provide additional support to municipalities?

Should there be accountability measures for municipalities that do not attain targets?

What types of exemptions (e.g., Safe Harbor) are available to municipalities?

Cross-cutting questions:

- Should targets vary for municipalities above and below production goals?
- Should targets vary between urban and rural municipalities?
- How do we incentivize early actions which lead to long-term success?

Homelessness

Overview of
homelessness
content in this
report

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Executive Summary: Homelessness (I/V)

Context and objectives for homelessness effort

Though Rhode Island does not face a **homelessness challenge** of the same absolute magnitude as other parts of the country (Rhode Island ranks in the middle of U.S. states on a per capita basis, at 32nd for unsheltered homelessness and 17th for total homelessness), unsheltered homelessness in Rhode Island has grown ~56% per year since 2020, the second highest growth rate across states. Hundreds of Ocean State residents are unsheltered; more than a thousand require emergency shelter at some point each year; and thousands are housing insecure. Homelessness must remain a key focus area for policymakers moving forward.

At the outset of this engagement, Rhode Island was facing **additional acute short-term challenges** relating to the expiration of contracts and funding for various emergency shelters and homelessness programs:

- Under the status quo, contracts and/or funding for more than 400 emergency beds were due to expire in April alone, with funding for more than one hundred additional beds expiring in September
- The challenges of both measuring various forms of unsheltered and sheltered homelessness and system capacity at any given point in time and navigating multiple sources of funding exacerbated these issues

Against this backdrop, this engagement initially focused on two core efforts in relation to homelessness:

- 1 Analyze the **current state of homelessness in Rhode Island** to understand the number of individuals currently experiencing homelessness in Rhode Island and their basic needs and locations; and synthesize information on the current state of **homelessness data management, funding, and the Continuum of Care**
- 2 Support the development of tactical **short-term options** in response to the major short-term challenges faced by Rhode Island

The team additionally delivered research to support Rhode Island's efforts on homelessness over the longer term, inclusive of :

- 3 Documenting diverse stakeholder input **longer-term options** for reducing homelessness in Rhode Island, which were encountered in the course of conversation with a diverse and experienced set of stakeholders, spanning providers, advocates, governmental bodies and other practitioners across the state
- 4 Conducting an **external landscape scan** to benchmark innovative stakeholder engagement practices adopted in other jurisdictions

Executive Summary: Homelessness (II/V)

Current state of homelessness in Rhode Island

Current state of homelessness in Rhode Island

Nearly 2,000 **individuals** with **diverse needs** were in emergency shelter or unsheltered in Rhode Island as of March 2023 across the state and facing a serious deficit of more permanent housing solutions

- Rhode Island has the **17th highest per capita homelessness** count, and **32nd per capita unsheltered homelessness** count among states, according to HUD per capita point-in-time estimate of homeless individuals conducted in 2022
- As at March 2023, a cumulative total of ~380 individuals had been counted in Rhode Island's homelessness information management system as being unsheltered in the previous 14 days without resolution in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS); Rhode Island served a total of ~1,530 individuals in emergency shelter, an emergency hotel or transitional housing in Rhode Island and nearly ~2,800 individuals in more permanent housing types
- **Vacancies** across all bed types are extremely low, with ~30 emergency beds vacant and a maximum of ~40 permanent beds vacant, largely due to natural transitions
- Although the highest numbers of unsheltered homelessness is seen in Providence, unsheltered homelessness is experienced **across the state**
- Homeless Rhode Islanders have **unique needs**, with ~35% of unsheltered individuals entering the shelter system being families, 15-20% having substance-use disorder, 45% mental health needs, 30% a chronic health condition and 20% a physical disability

To bring insight to housing and homelessness efforts in RI, a scan was conducted to better understand the current homelessness ecosystem, specifically by documenting **data management practices** and **funding availability** in the current system, and by better understanding **key players**

- The Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness manages Rhode Island's **Homeless Management Information System**, producing several regular reports on the state of unsheltered and sheltered homelessness in Rhode Island using several recurring metrics
- The Rhode Island **Continuum of Care** executes several critical HUD-mandated responsibilities, including overseeing Rhode Island's Coordinated Entry System and associated rules for prioritizing a waiting list for individuals seeking shelter and applying for competitively awarded HUD funding. It also periodically produces strategic documents on critical aspects of homelessness and convenes diverse stakeholders

Executive Summary: Homelessness (III/V)

Short-term challenges and options

Short-term challenges and options

At the onset of this engagement in February 2023, Rhode Island was facing **several major challenges** related to homelessness, with contracts and/or funding for more than 400 emergency beds due to expire in April alone under the status quo, and funding for more than 100 additional beds expiring in September

- The Cranston St Armory, which was set up in to operate as an emergency warming center for a limited time period beginning in December 2022, was due to close in mid-April. This represented **potential loss of ~150 beds of emergency capacity**
- Contracts and funding for multiple additional seasonal emergency shelters and warming centers, were likewise due to expire over the course of April, May and June. This represented a **further loss of ~220 beds of emergency capacity**
- Federal funding for more than 100 rapid rehousing vouchers was expected to expire within ~6 months
- Several circumstances exacerbated these major challenges, including the fact that Rhode Island has experienced the **second highest growth rate of unsheltered homelessness** per capita across states since 2020; as well as the serious deficit of longer-term, non-emergency permanent capacity across the state

In response to the state's urgent capacity needs, and based on input from over **40 stakeholder organizations**, the team rapidly synthesized **several concrete steps to be executed and operationalized** imminently. The following outcomes were achieved:

- Reviewed **120+ properties** in order to identify options for addressing immediate shelter needs and building up longer-term permanent capacity
- Reviewed materials from **20+ temporary structure vendors** in order to identify structures for potential temporary beds
- Facilitated a daily meeting on **physical capacity** across Department of Housing stakeholders, in order to push forward collaboration across funding, procurement, legal and other functions
- Engaged **key municipal and state regulators/entities** to secure necessary approvals, including outreach to municipal stakeholders, especially in communities where potential shelter properties have been identified
- Supported **engagement of service providers** in preparation to staff up new physical properties for immediate shelter needs
- Documented a process to **acquire properties** across several property types, including potential timeline and approvals required

Executive Summary: Homelessness (IV/V)

External landscape scan & related observations about innovation from other homelessness ecosystems

External landscape scan and related observations about innovative practices from other homelessness ecosystems

To bring insight to housing and homelessness efforts in Rhode Island, a scan was conducted to benchmark the [structure and roles of Continuums of Care \(CoCs\)](#) within other homelessness ecosystems, as well as document [innovative practices across homelessness ecosystems](#) in the Northeast and across the country

Our scan of the [structure and roles of CoCs](#) in other homelessness ecosystems showed, amongst other observations, that:

- ~85% of collaborative applicants are non-profit organizations or state agencies and ~85% HMIS leads are non-profits or state/municipal governments
- CoCs may execute capabilities beyond HUD-mandated responsibilities, and may coordinate in different ways with state-level housing leadership

Our scan of [innovative practices across other homelessness ecosystems](#) highlighted at least **five notable practices that we would highlight for Rhode Island:**

- These ecosystems **target 'functional zero' homelessness, rigorously measure progress**, and make a concerted effort to **account for every person experiencing homelessness**. For example, **Metro Denver** CoC set a target of "functional zero" homelessness for veterans and maintains a "by name list" to consistently identify and track individuals experiencing homelessness and facilitate improved case management; Denver has achieved a 31% decrease in veteran homelessness over a 2-year time period
- They seamlessly integrate **case navigation and additional supportive services** for individuals. For example, **Houston** CoC introduced "homelessness court," an alternative pathway from traditional court that is designed to assist homeless participants with reintegration into society; alongside other programs it has promoted, Houston CoC's efforts in this regard have helped to decrease homelessness by over 60% in Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties
- They publish and maintain **publicly-available, real-time, interactive data** on homelessness. For example, in **Vermont**, ICA serves as the HMIS administrator appointed by the CoC and produces publicly-available dashboards that organize and display KPIs and allow stakeholders to monitor homeless outcomes
- They create a clear channel to gather stakeholder input on policy. For example, several jurisdictions have established a **dedicated advisory body** charged with providing input on and suggesting policy to the legislature and/or executive branch specifically on homelessness:
 - **Maine's** Governor appoints a Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) to lead statewide strategic planning – together with Maine's CoC, the SHC participates in a non-statutory Joint Policy Committee that advises legislators on state/federal policy
 - In **Michigan**, the state convened an advisory body specifically to advise the creation of the 2023 statewide plan on homelessness
 - In **Massachusetts'** CHAPA is a nonprofit that convenes committees on housing and homelessness topics to discuss policy and initiatives
- Government agencies take leadership in coordinating response. For example, LAHSA in **Los Angeles** is a joint powers authority between the City and County of LA which coordinates regional efforts; **NYC Dept of Homeless Services** is an independent mayoral agency acting on the authority of the mayor; **King County Regional Homeless Authority** is an independent government administrative agency coordinating response in Seattle and across King County

Executive Summary: Homelessness (V/V)

Longer-term options

While the team's focus was on supporting the development of short-term options, this effort also captured insights into **longer-term options** over the course of regular conversations with executive leadership from homelessness service providers in Rhode Island, Rhode Island's Continuum of Care, the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness, and leading homelessness organizations internationally

- Potential longer-term solutions fell into **four categories**:
 - Create additional permanent physical capacity (e.g., partner with State Licensed Facilities such as hospital wings and nursing homes)
 - Scale diversion and placements into housing (e.g., deploy case conferencing, incentivize developers to prioritize units for homeless individuals)
 - Strengthen the service provider ecosystem (e.g., create a provider-led training institute to recruit workforce)
 - Expand homelessness prevention (e.g., expand legal services for tenants facing eviction)
- The team captured these insights in summary pages that document pain points we heard from stakeholders, illustrative actions that the state could take in response and provide illustrative examples

1

Homelessness in Rhode Island

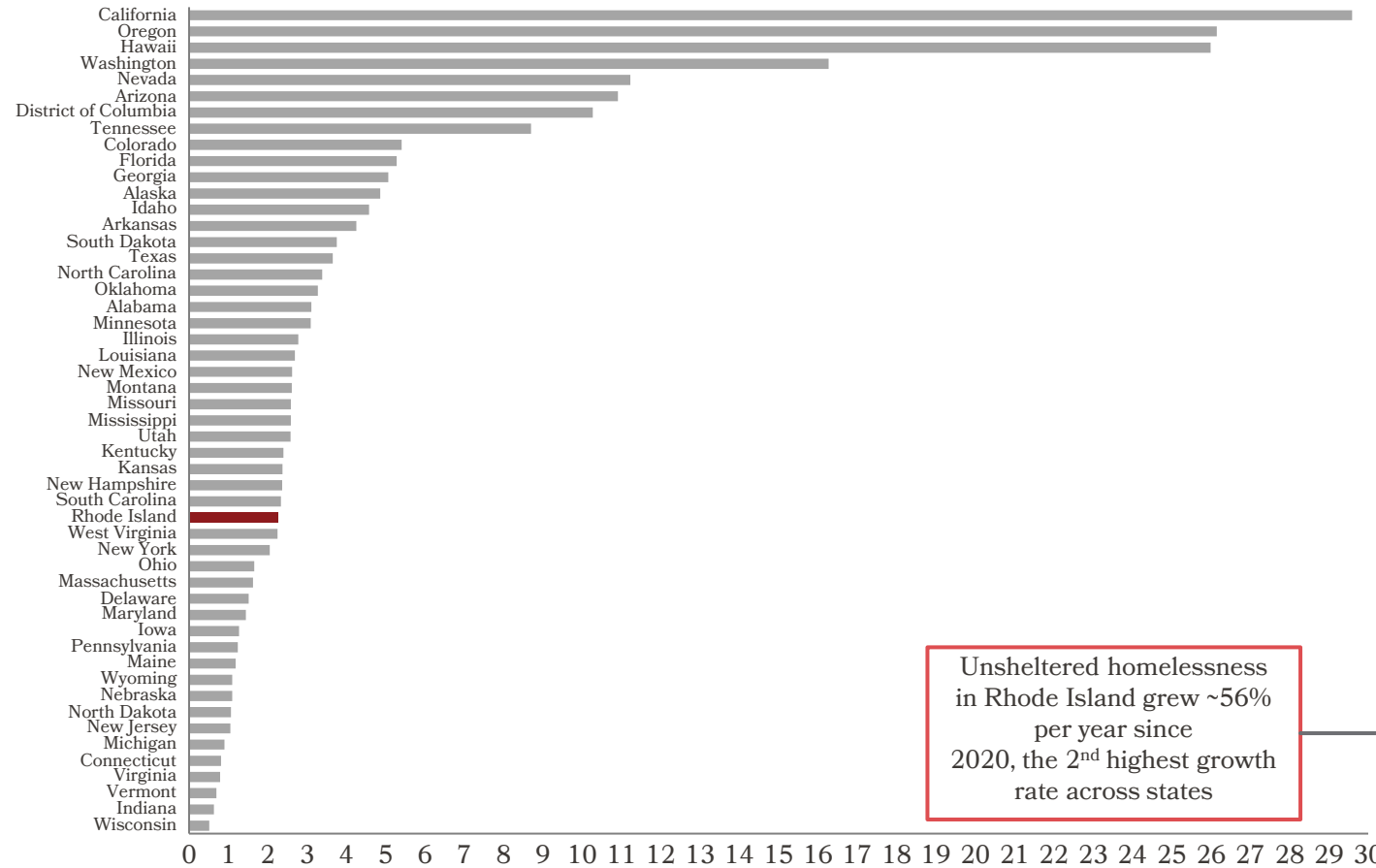
Current state

Current state – Individuals experiencing homelessness in Rhode Island

Context: Rhode Island had the 32nd highest per capita unsheltered homelessness count

According to HUD's latest per capita point-in-time estimate of homeless individuals conducted in 2022

Homeless individuals per 10,000 people in the general population (2022)



Unsheltered homelessness in Rhode Island grew ~56% per year since 2020, the 2nd highest growth rate across states

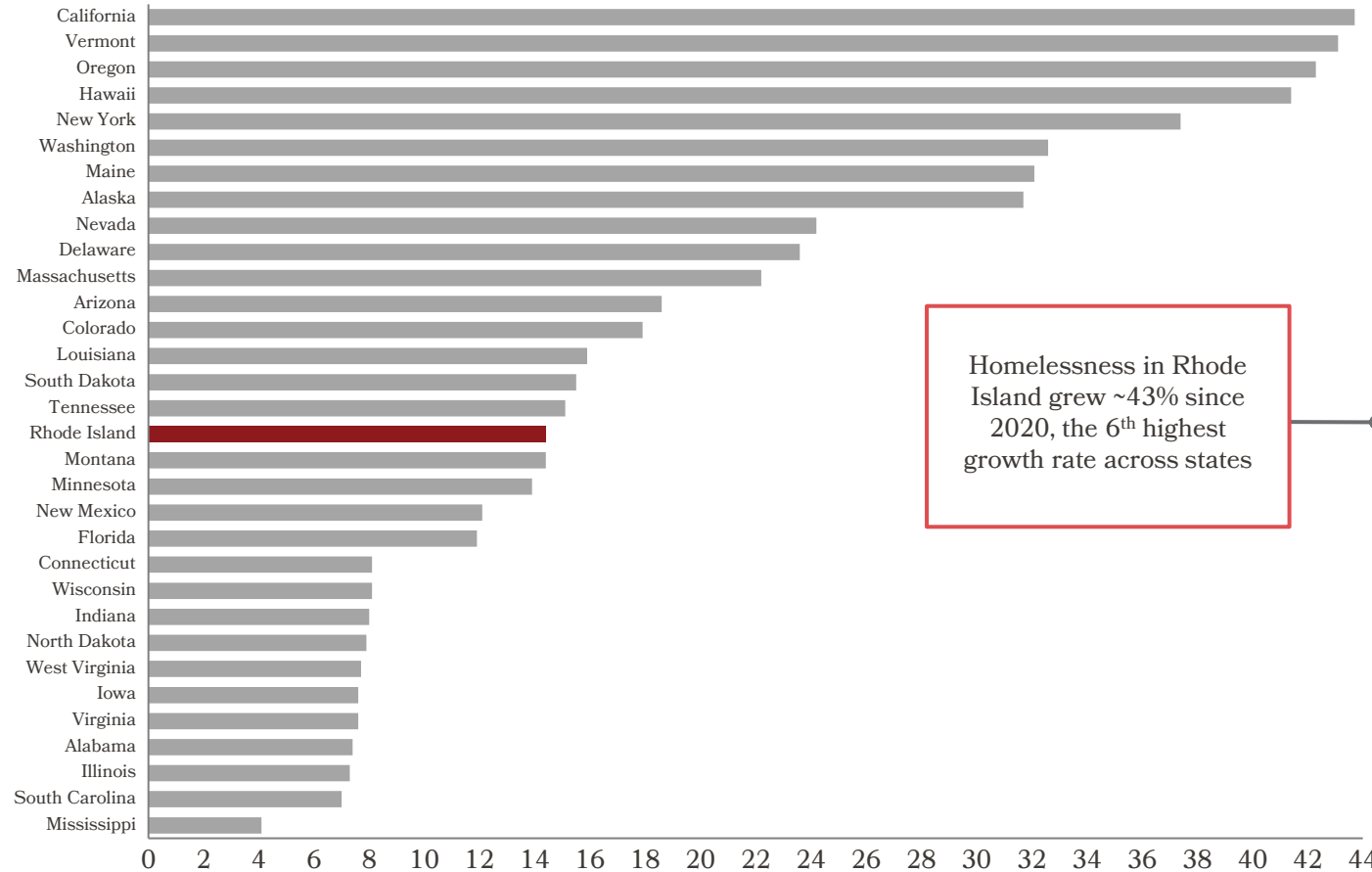
State	# homeless per 10,000 (graphed)	Unsheltered Homeless individuals	Change from 2022
California	29.6	115,491	2%
Oregon	26.2	11,088	20%
Hawaii	26.0	3,743	2%
Washington	16.3	12,668	15%
Nevada	11.2	3,567	-18%
Arizona	10.9	8,027	31%
District of Columbia	10.3	690	5%
Tennessee	8.7	6,133	55%
Colorado	5.4	3,156	8%
Florida	5.3	11,746	-8%
Georgia	5.1	5,535	25%
Alaska	4.9	357	37%
Idaho	4.6	888	-17%
Arkansas	4.3	1,296	2%
South Dakota	3.8	342	28%
Texas	3.7	10,971	-20%
North Carolina	3.4	3,625	29%
Oklahoma	3.3	1,317	6%
Alabama	3.1	1,580	18%
Minnesota	3.1	1,769	-10%
Illinois	2.8	1,901	-20%
Louisiana	2.7	1,235	7%
New Mexico	2.6	554	-127%
Montana	2.6	293	-57%
Missouri	2.6	1,601	-3%
Mississippi	2.6	761	31%
Utah	2.6	873	19%
Kentucky	2.4	1,084	14%
Kansas	2.4	698	31%
New Hampshire	2.4	331	-5%
South Carolina	2.3	1,234	-38%
Rhode Island	2.3	248	56%
West Virginia	2.2	399	31%
New York	2.1	4,038	-13%
Ohio	2.1	4,038	-13%
Massachusetts	2.1	4,038	-13%
Delaware	2.1	4,038	-13%
Maryland	2.1	4,038	-13%
Iowa	2.1	4,038	-13%
Pennsylvania	2.1	4,038	-13%
Maine	2.1	4,038	-13%
Wyoming	2.1	4,038	-13%
Nebraska	2.1	4,038	-13%
North Dakota	2.1	4,038	-13%
New Jersey	2.1	4,038	-13%
Michigan	2.1	4,038	-13%
Connecticut	2.1	4,038	-13%
Virginia	2.1	4,038	-13%
Vermont	2.1	4,038	-13%
Indiana	0.6	799	-21%
Wisconsin	0.5	301	-8%

Note: Count includes only unsheltered homeless individuals. Excludes DC. Counts are typically based on point-in-time estimates of homelessness collected on a single night in January 2022; however, due to COVID, ~1/3 of CoCs conducted the PIT count in late February or early March, potentially leading to a slight undercount due to warmer weather
 Source: The 2022 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, submitted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (December 2022)

Context: Rhode Island had the 17th highest per capita homelessness count

According to HUD's latest per capita point-in-time estimate of homeless individuals conducted in 2022

Homeless individuals per 10,000 people in the general population (2022)



Homelessness in Rhode Island grew ~43% since 2020, the 6th highest growth rate across states

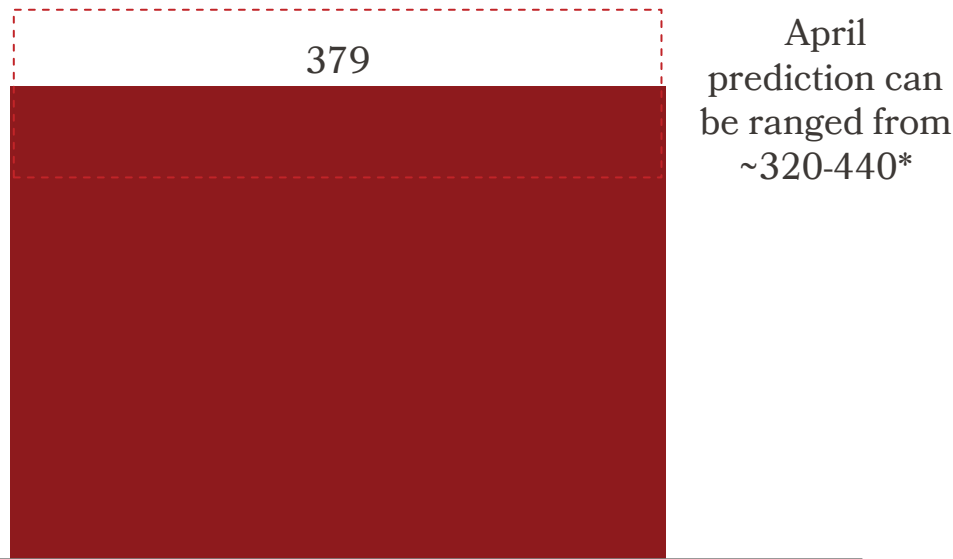
State	# homeless per 10,000 (graphed)	# homeless individuals	Change from 2020
California	43.7	171,521	6.2%
Vermont	43.1	2,780	150.5%
Oregon	42.3	17,959	22.5%
Hawaii	41.4	5,967	(7.6%)
New York	37.4	74,178	(18.7%)
Washington	32.6	25,211	10.0%
Maine	32.1	4,411	110.3%
Alaska	31.7	2,320	19.0%
Nevada	24.2	7,618	10.4%
Delaware	23.6	2,369	103.3%
Massachusetts	22.2	15,507	(13.7%)
Arizona	18.6	13,553	23.4%
Colorado	17.9	10,397	5.6%
Louisiana	15.9	7,373	132.4%
South Dakota	15.5	1,389	31.3%
Tennessee	15.1	10,567	45.6%
Rhode Island	14.4	1,577	42.8%
Montana	14.4	1,585	2.6%
Minnesota	13.9	7,917	(0.3%)
New Mexico	12.1	2,560	(23.2%)
Florida	11.9	25,959	(5.6%)
....			
Connecticut	8.1	2,930	0.9%
Wisconsin	8.1	4,775	5.8%
Indiana	8.0	5,449	(3.1%)
North Dakota	7.9	610	12.8%
West Virginia	7.7	1,375	2.5%
Iowa	7.6	2,419	(8.6%)
Virginia	7.6	6,529	9.6%
Alabama	7.4	3,752	12.0%
Illinois	7.3	9,212	(11.7%)
South Carolina	7.0	3,608	(15.8%)
Mississippi	4.1	1,196	8.0%

Note: Count includes both sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals. Excludes DC. Counts are typically based on point-in-time estimates of homelessness collected on a single night in January 2022; however, due to COVID, ~1/3 of CoCs conducted the PIT count in late February or early March, potentially leading to a slight undercount due to warmer weather

Source: The 2022 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress, submitted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (December 2022)

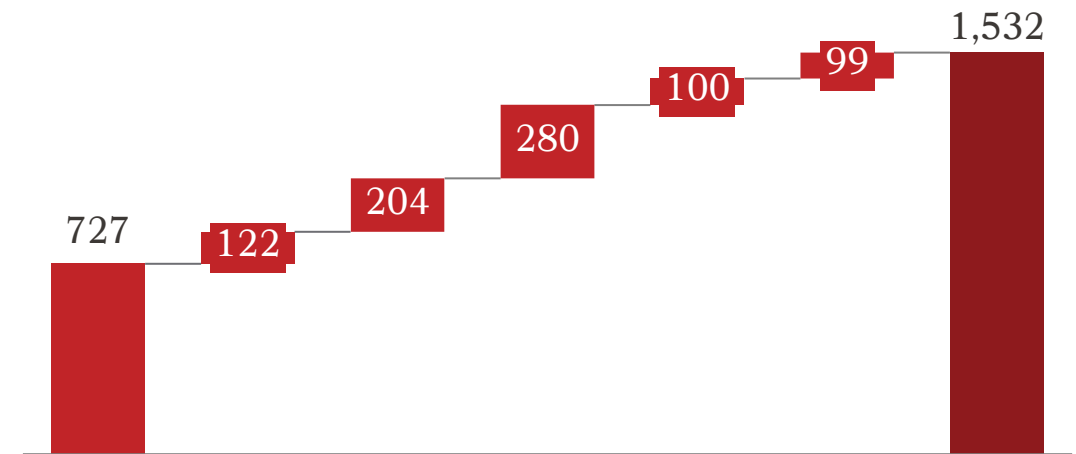
As of March 2023, ~380 individuals estimated to be unsheltered using a 2-week estimate, 1.5k in emergency shelter or transitional housing

Unsheltered



Current living status of unsheltered in the last 14 days (2/26-3/11)¹

In emergency shelter system, emergency hotel or transitional housing



In year-round non-DV shelter ³	In year-round DV shelter ⁴	In seasonal shelter ³	In seasonal warming centers ⁵	In hotel funded by DCYF ⁶	In transitional housing ³	Total
-------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-------

*Number fluctuates significantly week to week e.g., over March-May 2022, number fluctuated from a low of 223 to a high of 294²

1. Coalition, March 2023, CES Call Center Weekly Report of March 18. 2. Coalition, Overview of Homelessness presentation to the RIGA Special Legislative Commission to Study Low Moderate Income Housing 3. HMIS utilization report, point in time (2/28/23), as pulled by Coalition 4. Coalition, Beds Online vs CHF Funded report–note this represents inventory, not confirmed beds; to be validated with individual DV providers 5. Sum of warming center (vs shelter) capacity, including Armory, OpenDoors & Newport warming centers 6. DCYF, February 2023, estimate of number of individuals in families currently in hotel rooms

In addition to shelter, many unsheltered individuals require additional supportive services



Type of capacity needed

Family capacity

SUD-specific capacity (incl sober & low barrier)

Supportive services for mental and physical health needs

Estimated % of unsheltered individuals requiring this capacity

~35%

~15-20%¹

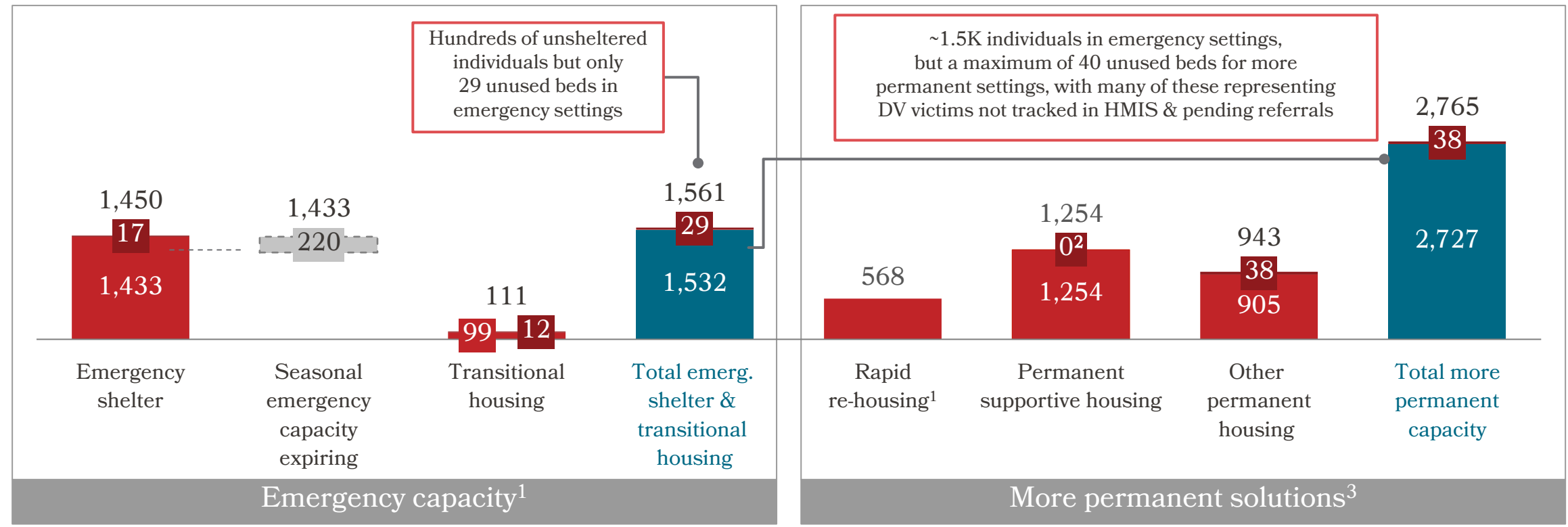
Mental health: ~45%

Chronic health condition: ~30%

Physical disability: ~20%

1. Further validated by self-reported survey conducted by Continuum of Care in 2021, reported in Plan to Address Unsheltered Homelessness
Source: Unless otherwise noted, Coalition data received March 10 2023

Going forward, permanent capacity will need to be expanded, as permanent beds are nearly full or full in current system



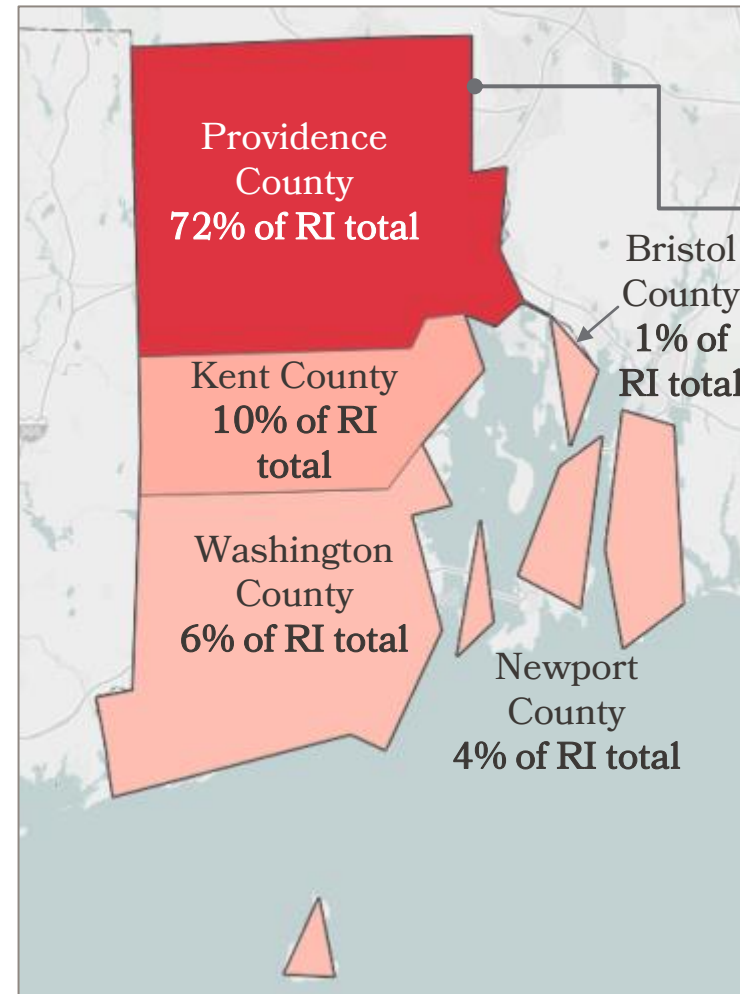
■ Unused capacity
 ■ Individuals currently in housing sub-category
 ■ Individuals currently in housing category

1. Number of vouchers available (vs used) not tracked in HMIS 2. Vacancies are short and typically occur to turn over a bed or in situations where families vary in size (e.g. leading to an unused bunk bed). Providers are asked to report an opening to the CES Help Center which generally makes same day referrals to the available resource. Moreover, larger congregate shelters may need several referrals to a bed, as some clients may no show. This data reflects only those emergency shelters and transitional housing that are tracked in HMIS, does not include warming states (not shelter), domestic violence projects (aren't allowed to participate in HMIS) 3. Not all permanent housing options are tracked in HMIS, as only those with HUD or other funds that require HMIS are in the system. Typically, those projects that serve persons experiencing homelessness are tracked in HMIS, but there are numerous other housing projects that are not restricted to certain populations and therefore not tracked in HMIS

Source: HMIS utilization report, point in time (2/28/23), as pulled by Coalition

Coordinated entry enrollments by unsheltered households are concentrated in Providence County but remain distributed throughout RI

Location of unsheltered households at point of enrollment in CES



Providence County total is dominated by the City of Providence itself, comprising 38% of total unsheltered household coordinated entry enrollments. Overall, >50% of total RI CES enrollments occurred within 5 miles of City of Providence.

Legend

% of total RI coordinated entry enrollments by unsheltered households

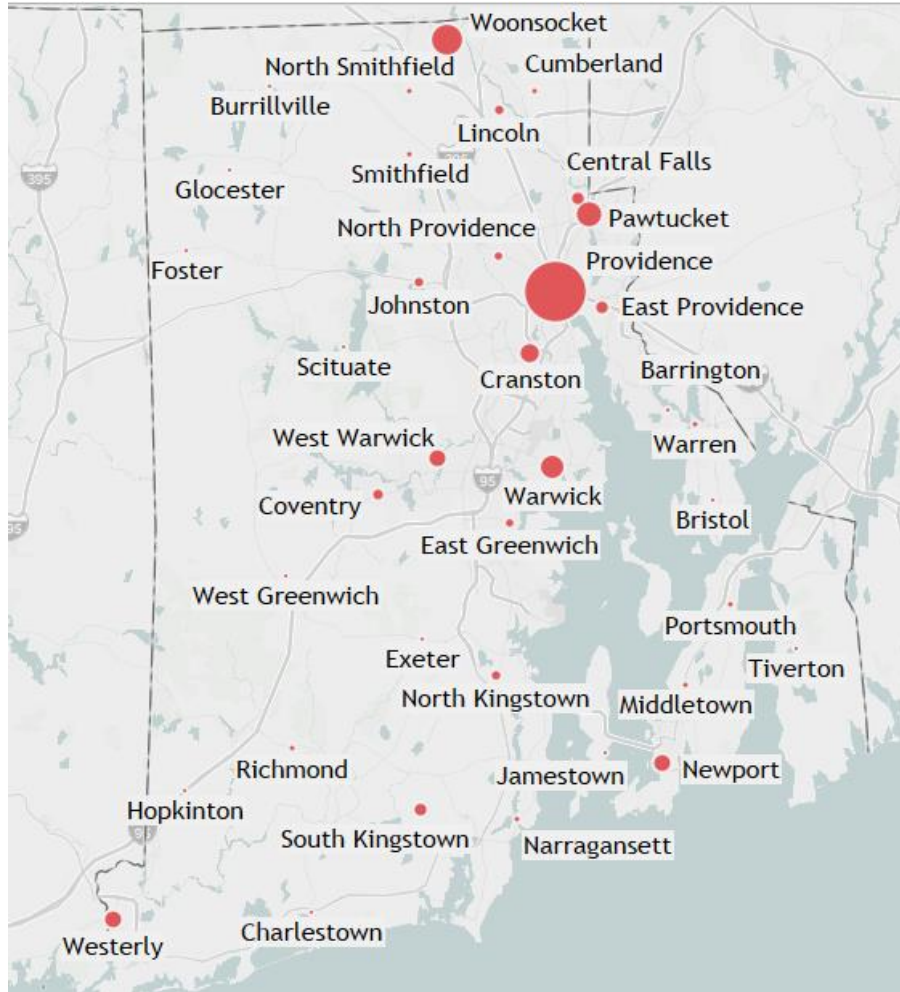


Note: Totals reflect only CES enrollments with known locations; remaining households (~7% of RI total) not pictured

Note: Map captures locations where households enrolled in CES during the month of February 2023 (not necessarily current locations)

Source: HMIS Coordinated Entry Locations Dashboard, February 2023

Back-up: Location of CES enrollment of unsheltered individuals by RI municipality



Cities/towns with greatest CES enrollment of unsheltered individuals

- Providence (38%)
- Woonsocket (9%)
- Pawtucket (6%)
- Warwick (5%)
- Newport (3%)
- Cranston (3%)
- West Warwick (3%)
- Westerly (3%)
- East Providence (2%)
- Central Falls (2%)



Note: Map captures locations where households enrolled in CES during the month of February 2023 (not necessarily current locations)
Source: HMIS Coordinated Entry Locations Dashboard, February 2023

Current state – Data management and key players

RI Coalition to End Homelessness reports 4 “unsheltered” metrics

	1 Unsheltered in last 14 days	2 Unsheltered in the last 7 days	3 Unsheltered, on the waiting list	4 PIT count
Definition	Individuals who have actively been recorded as unsheltered through coming into contact into the system in the last 14 days	Individuals who have actively been recorded as unsheltered through coming into contact into the system in the 7 days	Individuals who are currently on the waiting list for receiving shelter, that have been recorded as being unsheltered at their last interaction with CES (which has occurred in the past 30 days)	Annual point-in-time count conducted as required by HUD on a single night in January, led by the Coalition & supported by trained volunteers
Time period	14 days	7 days	30 days	Single night
Source	HMIS System Shelter Current Living Situation Report	HMIS System Shelter Current Living Situation Report	HMIS System Shelter System Shelter Queue Report	Annual Homeless Point in Time Count conducted by the Rhode Island Continuum of Care submitted to HUD for the Annual Homeless Assessment Report
Value on 3/11	379	229	629	248 (January 2022), TBD for 2023
Value on 2/25	370	170	649	248 (January 2022), TBD for 2023
Purpose	Estimate who is unsheltered over a 2-week period	Estimate who is unsheltered over a 2-week period	Estimate current demand for shelter amongst unsheltered population; intended to capture waitlist/queue	Facilitate comparison in unsheltered counts across states
How individuals are counted	<p>On an ongoing basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Outreach workers making rounds outdoors collect data on individuals in the HMIS app OR + Individuals call in to CES hotline <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an individual is referred to a shelter, called back to report they self-solved their housing crisis or indicated they were no longer in need, they are dropped from the list <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an unsheltered individual hasn't come into contact with an outreach worker/CES within 14 days, they are automatically dropped from the list 	<p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an unsheltered individual hasn't come into contact with an outreach worker/CES within 7 days, they are automatically dropped from the list 	<p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an unsheltered individual hasn't actively been added to or affirmed status on waiting list within 30 days, they are automatically dropped from the list 	<p>On a single night in January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Coalition and trained volunteers conduct a census of unsheltered individuals
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVERCOUNTS any individual who has self-resolved within 14 days or moved into a different uncounted form of homelessness (e.g., couch-surfing), noting that self-resolution within 14 days is rare • UNDERCOUNTS unsheltered individuals who have not come into contact with an outreach worker nor called into CES • UNDERCOUNTS individuals who comes into contact with an outreach worker attached to a provider who is slow to enter their data into HMIS 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDERCOUNTS individuals who are not visible on night of count, especially in low visibility structures (e.g., recreational vehicles) • UNDERCOUNTS otherwise-unsheltered individuals in hospitals, jails, or “doubled up” with friends and family

Note: 37 providers currently participate in the Coordinated Entry System

Source: Homeless Management Information System Shelter Current Living Situation Report, Homeless Management Information System Shelter Queue Report

While 14-day unsheltered metric is unique to Rhode Island, approach is highly variable across other jurisdictions, who frequently use more expansive metrics

Jurisdiction	HMIS owner	Basis of metric	Timeframe	Approach to data entry & validation
MA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various counties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively enrolled in outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90 days—HMIS auto-dismisses Street Outreach clients after 90 days of inactivity, based on guidance from HUD about auto-dismissals regarding street outreach and feedback from providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that street outreach is not available in all communities, so PIT count is likely to be higher than HMIS record
CT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CT Coalition to End Homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively enrolled in outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that individuals are not dropped from the list for not making contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a protocol for a certain number of outreach attempts before individuals are taken off
Pittsburgh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Community & Economic Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively enrolled in outreach, but not based on HMIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observed as being unsheltered over the past 7 days—captured separately from HMIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly meeting of outreach workers across different agencies
ME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MaineHousing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outreach, including clients enrolled in PATH outreach & local street outreach projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No timeframe specified; would run over period requested. At a minimum, projects require that clients are exited within 60 days, regardless of outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly outreach workers do data entry Run outreach groups together to ensure de-duplication across providers There is a risk of duplication from outreach projects to sheltered numbers but a necessary/accurate duplication because clients can fall into both categories in any given timeframe

Illustrative: How an unsheltered individual’s journey is tracked by providers as they come into contact with that individual

Key “interaction points”



Individual calls or texts
Coordinated Entry System helpline



Individual receives services (incl
outreach) or is placed
in accommodation



Individual is enrolled in
federal program



Individual exits from services
or accommodation

What is recorded

First point of contact with system or not in the system—identifying “Universal Data Elements” required by HUD (e.g., name, SSN) ¹

Subsequent points of contact with the system—additional or updated “Universal Data Elements” required by HUD (e.g., ethnicity, race, project type)

Program Specific Data Elements e.g., income and sources, chronic health conditions, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence, if required by associated federal program

Exit from program and new destination

All data has metadata associated with it, including who entered & when

Who records

Coalition Help Center staff

Staff from relevant provider of services or accommodation, only from HMIS-participant providers (37 in Rhode Island)

Who validates and what is validated

Coalition periodically runs & monitors administrator reports, including Duplicate Clients Report, sharing results with agencies & providing training to all HMIS users & helpdesk for resolving suspected errors (including duplication) when encountered

Agency HMIS Administrators are responsible for incentivizing compliance

CoC governs HMIS, including through HMIS Lead Monitoring tool & commissioning third party evaluation of HMIS Lead

1. Recognizing that it can be difficult to obtain full list at the stage of outreach—recorded as “unsheltered” if not yet in another project
Source: HUD HMIS Lead Standards, Coalition HMIS Data Quality Plan, stakeholder interviews; Coalition "HMIS Deduplication Procedure" document shared March 2022

RI's Continuum of Care (CoC) plays a key role in the homelessness ecosystem, carrying out three HUD-mandated tasks and also producing statewide strategic planning materials


3 main roles in RI's homelessness ecosystem are mandated by HUD

... but RI's CoC also periodically statewide strategic planning to inform allocation of funding



Oversee Coordinated Entry System & rules for prioritizing waiting list of individuals seeking shelter & housing

Detail on subsequent page

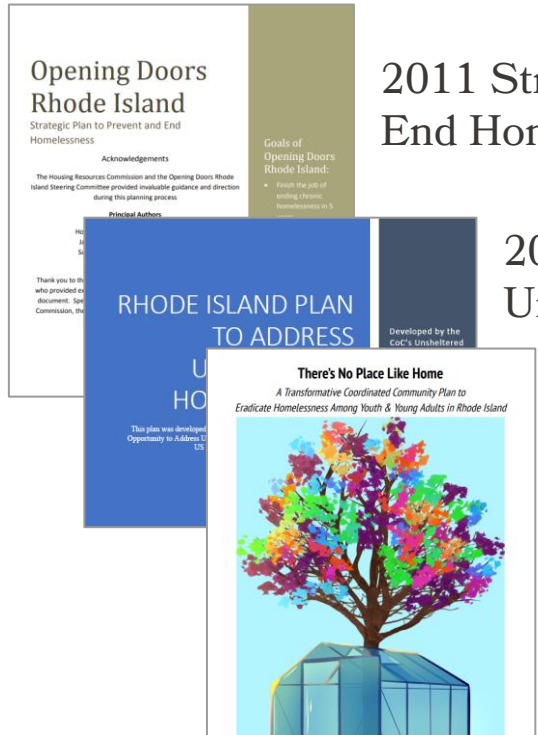


Apply for & allocate HUD funding through collaborative applicant¹ (currently RIHousing), with a focus on more permanent housing solutions, including rapid rehousing & permanent supportive housing

Detail on subsequent page



Designate HMIS² Lead Agency to manage & operate HMIS (currently Coalition)



2011 Strategic Plan to End Homelessness

2021 Plan to Address Unsheltered Homelessness


2022 Plan to End Youth Homelessness


1. Agency who receives HUD funds, since Continuum of Care does not have legal status to receive funding 2. Homelessness Management Information System Source: HUD, [Introductory Guide Continuum of Care \(CoC\) Program](#), validated by stakeholder interviews with RIHousing


A key HUD-mandated task carried out by RI's CoC is to set CES¹ prioritization rules


According to HUD rules, all shelters that receive funding through HUD must adhere to CES, but in RI, all contracts with service providers receiving funding through the Consolidated Homelessness Fund currently mandate adherence to CES

RI uses a Crisis Assessment Tool to inform decisions about prioritization

-  **History of Homelessness:** Higher score if sleeping outside, spent longer time sleeping outside, more time has passed since stably housed

-  **Safety:** Higher score if currently feeling unsafe or staying with anyone who makes individual feel unsafe

-  **Demographic characteristics:** Higher score if resides with children under 6 and no Significant Other; higher score if 55+

-  **Wellness:** Higher score for poor physical health, mental health, and/or substance abuse, with extra consideration for absence of health care or treatment



	Permanent Supportive Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Transitional Housing	Emergency Shelters
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literally homeless² as defined by HUD At least one family member with disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literally homeless² as defined by HUD OR fleeing domestic abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income below 30% AMI Meets HUD definition of homelessness and unable to be diverted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households exp homelessness & unable to be diverted Can be safely accommodated in shelter
Prioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Crisis Assessment Score Length of time homeless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible for PSH but literally homeless and awaiting PSH placement Higher Crisis Assessment Score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households headed by young adults under 25 or foster care history Families with children Families fleeing domestic violence Households not in need of PSH Prior episode of homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsheltered individuals identified by outreach workers or CES lead High acuity households based on standard assessment score

0. Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool

1. Coordinated Entry System (CES) is the process by which people experiencing a housing crisis are identified, assessed for, referred, and connected to housing. <https://www.cesri.info/>

2. Literally homeless households as defined by HUD are living in places not meant for human habitation or in temporary arrangements such as shelters, transitional housing, hotels/motels, etc

Note: Alternatives are illustrated further in these materials

Source: [RI Statewide CES procedure](#) adopted June 2, 2022; CHF policies p23 ([link](#))

RI's Continuum of Care is comprised of a 17-member Board of volunteer directors; consistent with HUD mandate, involvement of RI exec branch is limited within formal governance structure

	Composition	Appointment	Potential roles for Department, Governor's office									
<p>Board (incl Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary) <i>Makes key decisions re: HUD-mandated responsibilities</i></p>	17 volunteer Directors; no more than one from any given agency	Elected by members	Max one elected member of Department, Gov office ¹									
<p>CoC planner <i>Runs operations</i></p>	One full-time, paid planner	Hired by collaborative applicant agency (currently RIHousing)	If Department were collaborative applicant, CoC planner would be Departmental staff									
<p>8 standing committees <i>Advise the Board on key decisions, but no decision rights</i></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Equity</td> <td>Governance</td> <td>Grievance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Recipient Approval & Evaluation</td> <td>System Performance & Coordinated Entry System Advisory</td> <td>Veterans</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Youth Advisory Board</td> <td>Youth and Families Committee</td> <td>HMIS</td> </tr> </table>	Equity	Governance	Grievance	Recipient Approval & Evaluation	System Performance & Coordinated Entry System Advisory	Veterans	Youth Advisory Board	Youth and Families Committee	HMIS	9 Standing committees, each having a Chair, at least one Director & other volunteer members with relevant experience & expertise	Appointed by Board	Department could apply to be a member of the organization, or attend public meetings, but without decision rights
Equity	Governance	Grievance										
Recipient Approval & Evaluation	System Performance & Coordinated Entry System Advisory	Veterans										
Youth Advisory Board	Youth and Families Committee	HMIS										
<p>Broader membership <i>Attend meetings, provide input</i></p>	Any Individuals or organizations with relevant experience or expertise	Any Approved by Board										

1. Board stipulates max one elected member of any agency
Source: Rhode Island Continuum of Care Governance Charter

2

Homelessness in Rhode Island

Short-term challenges & options

Recall: At the onset of this engagement in February 2023, Rhode Island was facing several major challenges

The Cranston St Armory, which was set up in to operate as an emergency warming center for a limited time period beginning in December 2022, was due to close in mid-April. This represented potential loss of ~150 beds of emergency capacity

Contracts and funding for multiple additional seasonal emergency shelters and warming centers were likewise due to expire over the course of April, May and June. This represented a further potential loss of ~220 beds of emergency capacity

Federal funding for more than 100 rapid rehousing vouchers was expected to expire within ~6 months

Several circumstances exacerbated these major challenges, including the fact that Rhode Island has experienced the second highest growth rate of unsheltered homelessness per capita across states since 2020, as well as the serious deficit of longer-term, non-emergency permanent capacity across the state

Team documented several options for combating homelessness

Seven options considered for immediate term

	Option	Timing	
		Immediate-term	Longer-term
 Create additional physical capacity, for both temporary shelter & permanent supportive housing	1 Purchase private property	■	
	2 Transfer/convert government buildings	■	
	3 Lease motel/hotels	■	
	4 Build temporary structures (e.g., pallet shelters, mobile solutions, navigation centers, tents)	■	
	5 Work with current providers to create additional beds or provide different bed types	■	
	6 Pursue extensions of existing seasonal capacity where feasible	■	
	7 Create a dedicated fund for acquisition & development of permanent supportive housing units		■
	8 Partner with State Licensed Facilities (e.g., nursing homes, hospital wings) to create additional space		■
	9 Expand low-barrier shelter options		■
 Scale diversion and placements into housing	10 Increase flexible funding for housing problem-solving/diversion ¹		■
	11 Deploy case conferencing/housing navigation for individual-level housing problem-solving/diversion ¹		■
	12 Incentivize developers to prioritize units for homeless individuals/families		■
	13 Find funding for imminently expiring rapid rehousing vouchers	■	
 Strengthen the service provider ecosystem	14 Create a provider-led training institute to recruit workforce		■
	15 Improve incentives for service provider workforce		■
	16 Partner to bring on additional recovery and aged care providers		■
	17 Improve procurement processes & timelines to better address system & provider pain points		■
	18 Strengthen partnerships between service providers for the delivery of permanent supportive housing		■
	19 Center individuals with lived experience in service provision		■
 Expand homelessness prevention	20 Expand legal services for tenants facing evictions		■
	21 Work with correctional facilities to support transition into housing		■

■ Potentially feasible and desirable to execute option within time period

■ Only relevant to immediate-term – focus of this section

1. Housing problem-solving/diversion involves helping households use their strengths, support networks & community resources to find housing. Financial assistance might be used, for example, for bus, train or airplane tickets to help facilitate return to family

Source: Stakeholder interviews

Undertook key tasks to support pursuit of short-term options



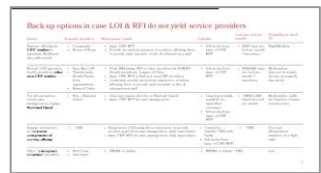
Reviewed 120+ properties in order to identify options for addressing immediate shelter needs and building up longer-term permanent capacity



Reviewed materials from 20+ temporary structure vendors in order to identify structures for potential temporary needs



Facilitated a daily meeting on physical capacity across Department of Housing stakeholders, in order to push forward collaboration across funding, procurement, legal and other operational functions



Engaged key municipal and state regulators/entities to secure necessary approvals, including outreach to municipal stakeholders, especially in communities where potential shelter properties have been identified



Supported engagement of service providers in preparation to staff up new physical properties for immediate shelter needs



Documented a process to acquire properties across several property types, including potential timeline and approvals required

In order to create additional physical capacity, team explored multiple property types, transaction types, and potential uses



Property types explored

- 1 Private **buildings**
- 2 State-owned **buildings**
- 3 Private or state-owned **vacant lots** (appropriate for temporary structures such as tents or pallet shelters)



Transaction types explored

- 1 **Leases** of private property
- 2 **Purchases** of private property
- 3 Intra-agency **transfers** of state-owned sites (permanent or temporary)



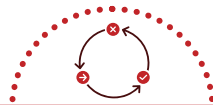
Potential uses for new physical capacity

Properties can be used to create shelter capacity for the short and long term via:

- 1 **Emergency shelter**
Temporary shelters such as pallet shelters and tents
- 2 **Permanent supportive housing**
Long term affordable units that add to permanent housing stock
- 3 **Navigation centers**
Low-threshold shelters that focus on delivering a high level of services (i.e., housing navigation, mental health counseling)

Site planning, permitting, and site preparation factor into timeline and cost considerations across all options

Site planning, permitting and site preparation **processes can take from days to months** depending on the complexity of the structure and site as well as the force of political will. It often takes more time to ready the site than for the vendor to produce and ship the temporary structure



Site planning



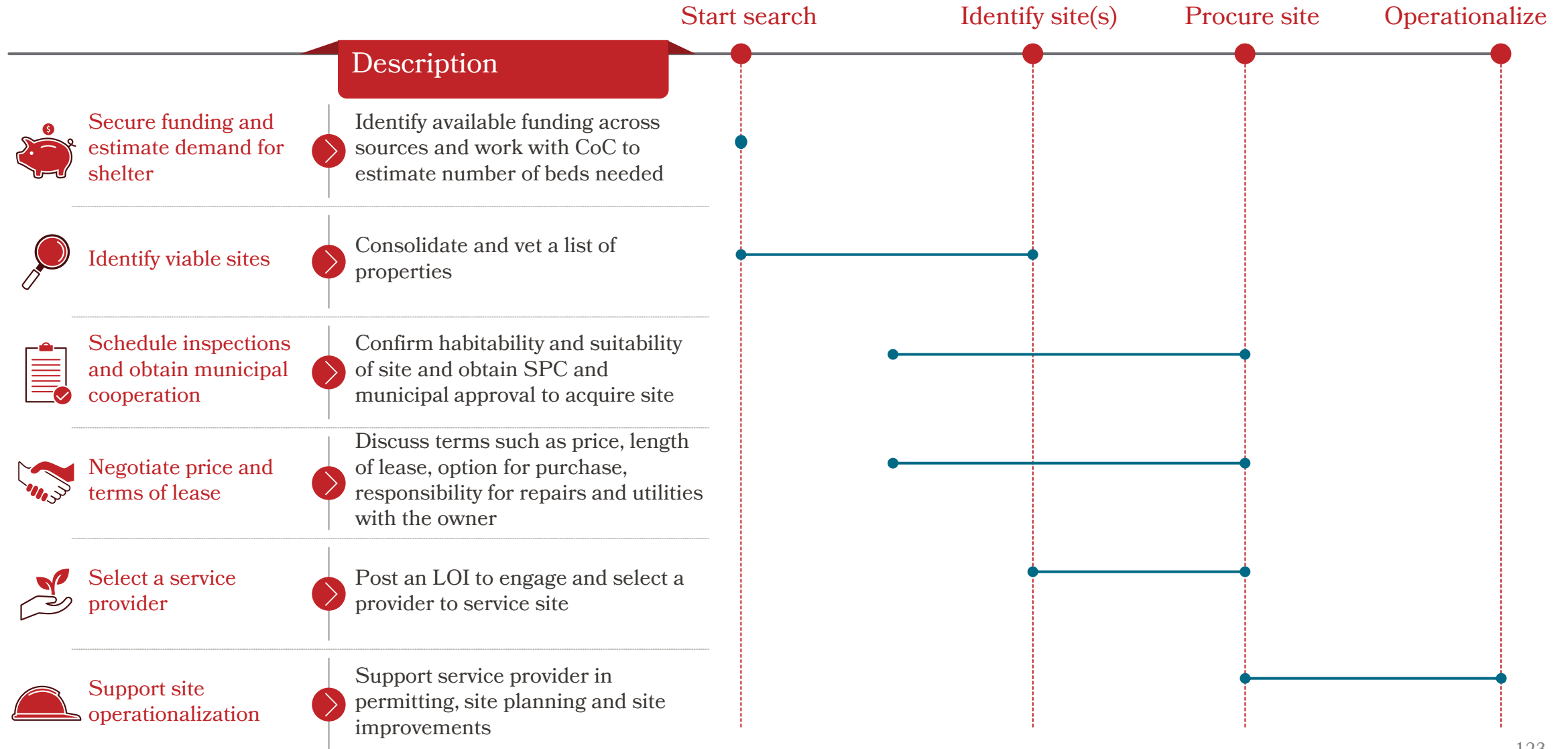
Permitting



Site Preparation

	Site planning	Permitting	Site Preparation
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire stamped engineered drawings of structure Create a site plan detailing plans for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site layout Electrical, plumbing, building (non structural and structural) Energy conservation and accessibility Fire protection systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit site plan review by city or state and make any necessary changes Zoning review if necessary Public notice if necessary Apply for permit and submit site plan and engineered drawings of structures Conduct any necessary inspections (life safety, fire, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic sitework includes leveling, clearing debris, water drainage, ensuring access for freight and emergency vehicles Additional sitework based on site and structure in question such as capping (paving or adding gravel) may be required
Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire professional engineer or architect (separately or through vendor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permitting fee assessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a contractor for site work Costs depend on complexity of site work
Paths to expedite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-screens and consultation for site planning with building officials if they are willing Emergency contracting of A&E, shortened bidding process, and/or borrowing of DCAMM resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency hearings and political will of building officials can expedite code variance approvals & inspections Code exemptions are possible through city vote or emergency order Community meetings may reduce NIMBYism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency contracting, shortened bidding process, and/or borrowing of DCAMM resources Hire additional workers or pay overtime Basic sitework can be done at any point after site procurement

Team documented 6 main interdependent steps to acquiring properties



Several categories of temporary structures and mobile solutions that could be sited on vacant lots were explored to complement search for buildings



Mobile solutions

Flexible option that sleeps 8-20 people with climate-controlled sleep pods, storage space, and sometimes bathrooms and security



Tent structures

Tents designed for disaster relief that can be rapidly deployed and used temporarily as a congregate shelter



Rapidly deployable options



Pallet shelters

Individual units that can be rapidly deployed with beds, climate control options and locking doors, often situated in a network of on-site social services, food, showers, laundry and more



Navigation centers

Large durable structures designed for low-barrier¹ access to services such as housing navigation and healthcare, and usually features office, classroom, and common spaces in addition to beds



Modular buildings

Highly customizable buildings (from dorms to dining halls to kitchens) with modular design that allows it to be moved and repurposed



Tiny homes

Small houses complete with a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and laundry meant to serve as permanent supportive housing, often situated in a village offering supportive services and community spaces

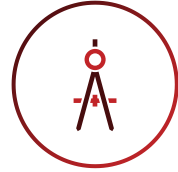


1. Low-barrier shelters rarely turn clients away (e.g. no sobriety requirements) and have few restrictions (e.g., no curfew)
Sources: Conversations with temporary structure vendors

Backup | High-level comparison of temporary structure types for shelter/ PSH use



Mobile solutions



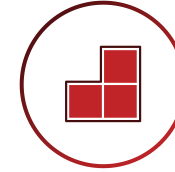
Tent structures



Pallet shelters



Navigation centers



Modular buildings



Tiny homes

Advantages

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be easily moved, i.e., to meet geographic demand shifts or pass from provider to provider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapidly deployable (ships and deploys within a month) • Large capacity • Highly customizable | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapidly deployable (ships and deploys in 1-2 months) • Non-congregate, dignified option | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed as low barrier, high service solution • Built to spec, durable mid to long term solution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorm-style, dignified living that could be converted to PSH • Durable and can be built to spec • Faster to build than traditional construction due to modular design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly dignified long-term PSH • Homes are complete with amenities, i.e., full kitchen with appliances, bathroom, bedroom, usually with ADA design |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Considerations

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited capacity • Limited amenities and services; should ideally be placed near a managed shelter site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers and clients raise concerns about desirability and durability of solution; congregate not preferred | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential complexities in site planning and permitting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy design period • High demands on service provider to run / coordinate services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex site planning and permitting process required due to electrical wiring intricacies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May consider weighing costs of tiny homes to other PSH options |
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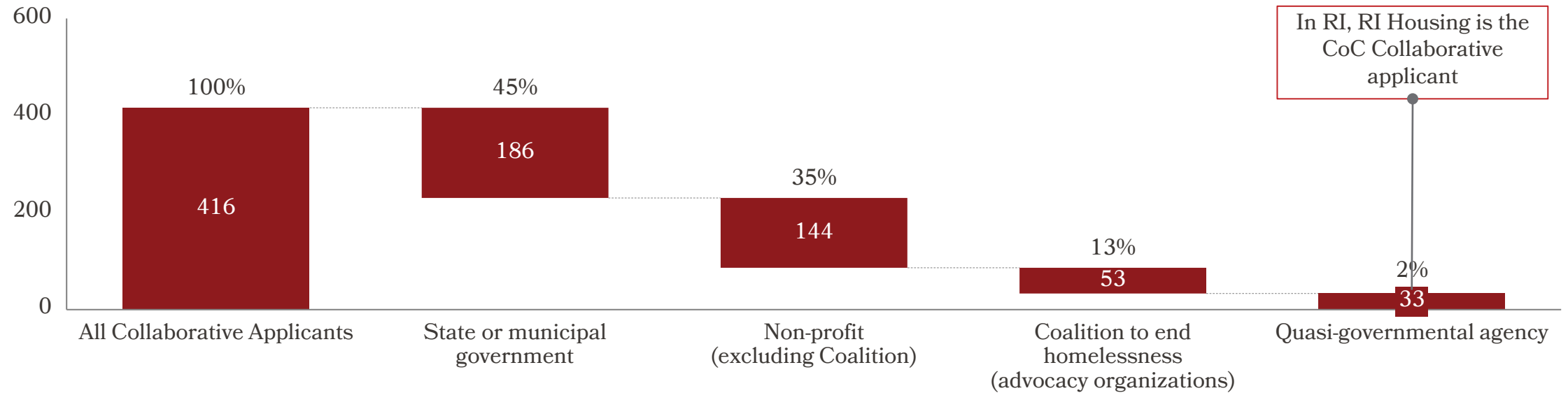
Homelessness in Rhode Island
Landscape scan—CoC
benchmarking & innovative
practices

Landscape scan—benchmarking of CoC roles & responsibilities

Summary of CoC findings, and observations/takeaways for Rhode Island

Question	Observations from other states and takeaways for Rhode Island
<p>A Are CoCs elsewhere most commonly administered and governed by states, quasi-gov. agencies, or by NGOs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across 416 CoCs in the US, ~85% collaborative applicants appear to be non-profit organizations or state agencies
<p>B Which types of entities do CoCs in other jurisdictions typically select to manage HMIS systems, specifically?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Across ~400 HMIS leads in the US, ~85% HMIS leads appear to be non-profits or state/municipal governments; however, the Coalition to End Homelessness is the HMIS lead in ~40 CoCs (as it is in Rhode Island)
<p>C How do CoCs in other jurisdictions coordinate with state-level housing leadership?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmarking suggests a range of coordination between CoCs and State executive branches, from limited board membership to joint councils & reporting responsibilities; from an outside-in lens, RI's Executive Branch and CoC appear less formally coordinated than other states • For example, Maine has a Joint Policy Committee formally comprised of its CoC and a Governor-appointed Statewide Homeless Council; Connecticut's Dept of Housing formally leads strategic planning with heavy input from CoCs through regular, ongoing meetings • In other jurisdictions, such as Houston, CoC takes the lead in coordinating action and works hand-in-hand with local leaders to ensure alignment in deployment of resources
<p>D What prioritization rules do other CoCs set for their Coordinated Entry Systems (CES)? How does this differ than RI's model?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VI-SPDAT is the most common assessment tool, while Rhode Island uses a Crisis Assessment Tool, having departed from the VI-SPDAT in accordance with the latest guidance from advocates • Limited jurisdictions, including Massachusetts for families only and New York City, have a "right to shelter," but it is very difficult to enforce in practice

Across ~400 CoCs in the US, ~85% of collaborative applicants appear to be non-profit organizations or state/municipal agencies¹

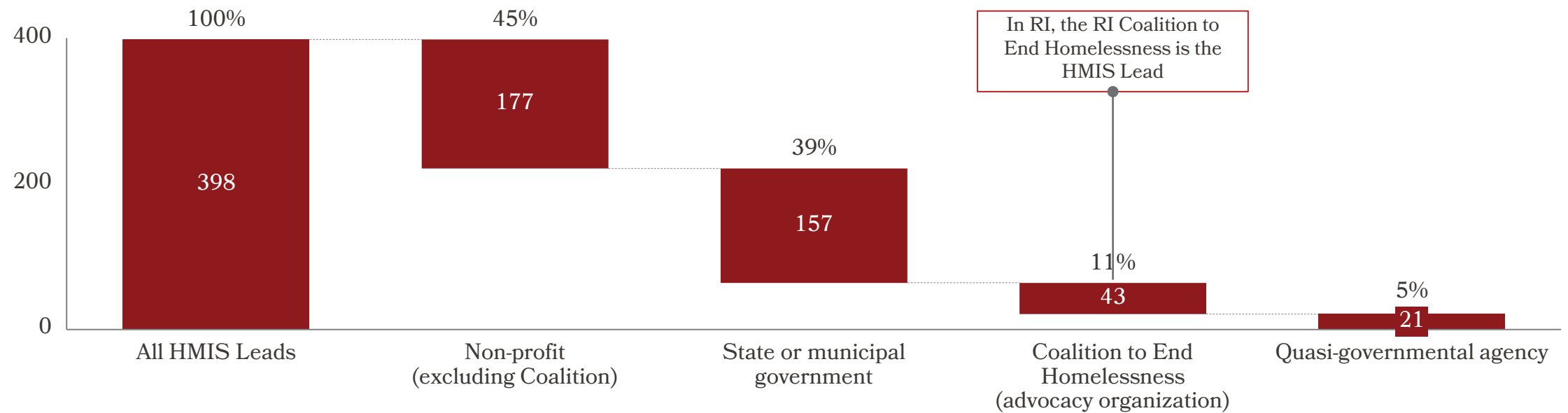


Example organizations

- City of Little Rock (AK)
- Arizona Department of Housing (AZ)
- City of St Louis (MO)
- City of Philadelphia (PA)
- One Roof (AL)
- United Way of North Central Florida (FL)
- Families in Transition (NH)
- Twin City Mission, Inc (TX)
- Open Doors Homeless Coalition (MS)
- Long Island Coalition of the Homeless (NY)
- El Paso Coalition for the Homeless (TX)
- MaineHousing
- Northwest Arkansas Continuum of Care (AK)
- Community Action Partnership of Solano (CA)

1. Collaborative applicant is the eligible applicant designated by the CoC to collect and submit the CoC registration and application and apply for funds on behalf of the CoC
Source: HUD CoC Contacts ([link](#)); Desk research

Across ~400 HMIS leads in the US, the majority are non-profits and local governments, similar to the breakdown of Collaborative Applicants










Example organizations

- WellSky (AK)
- Partners in Care (HI)
- Goodwill Industries of Northern Michigan (MI)
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs (GA)
- City of Baltimore—Mayor's office (MD)
- Napa County (CA)
- Chattanooga Regional Homeless Coalition (TN)
- Coalition of Homeless Services Provider (CA)
- Homeless Coalition of Polk County (FL)
- University of Nebraska - Lincoln Center on Children, Families, and the Law (NE)
- Embarras River Basin Agency (IL)

1. The HMIS lead is the eligible applicant designated by the CoC to manage the CoC's HMIS on the CoC's behalf
 Source: HUD CoC Contacts ([link](#)); Desk research

Range of models for how CoCs coordinate with state government

	 VT	 IA	 MA	 CO	 CT	 ME	 DC
	VT “Balance of State” CoC	IA “Balance of State” CoC	Metro Denver CoC	CT “Balance of State” CoC	ME “Balance of State” CoC	MA “Balance of State” CoC	DC CoC
Collaborative Applicant	Non-profit organization (VT Coalition to End Homelessness)	Non-profit organization (Institute for Community Alliances)	Non-profit organization (Metro Denver Institute for Homelessness)	State agency (CT DMHAS)	Quasi-state agency (MaineHousing)	State agency (MA DHCD)	Non-profit organization (The Community Partnership - TCP)
Formal coordination mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency of Human Services attends Coalition meetings on an ad-hoc basis, but of ten leads homelessness strategy without CoC input Statutory Interagency Council on Homelessness is inactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CoCs present bimonthly at the Iowa Council on Homelessness (ICH), a governor-appointed body that leads statewide strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide Tableau dashboard aggregates data across CoCs Data sharing agreements TBD with Dept. of Education and Human Services Ad-hoc local coordination with Technical Advisory Committees consisting of local officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOH formally leads strategic planning with heavy input from CoCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor-appointed Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) leads statewide strategic planning with reps from CoC CoC and SHC comprise a Joint Policy Committee (not statutory) advising legislators on state/federal policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State planners, CoC chair and coordinator all report to same director at DHCD CoC provides input at monthly meeting with DHCD staff CoC attends DHCD's quarterly Data Warehouse Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director of TCP has a seat on the statutory Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), along with members of mayor's cabinet ICH leads homeless strategy for CoC with 20+ subcommittees that meet regularly ICH provides input on CoC funding awards
Informal coordination mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic/ad hoc coordination as AHS is close with Coalition leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic coordination due to overlap of CoC and ICH members and status of ICH as previous collaborative applicant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic coordination due to overlap between CoC and state players /resources DOH convenes general discussions before drafting of RFP to solicit community input¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic coordination due to strong overlap between CoC and state players and homelessness planning resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State consults with CoCs and municipal partners about their needs for ESG funding using an RFI process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong organic coordination as TCP is the HMIS lead, Collaborative Applicant, and receives/allocates local homelessness and housing funding from Dept. Human Services
State representation on CoC board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 board seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Past board membership but none currently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 board seats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 board seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 board seat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No data available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 board seat
Minimal coordination						Tight coordination	

1. State Exec. Office of HHS, State Department of Housing

Source: Interviews with Martin Hahn (VT BoS CoC), Courtney Guntly at ICA (Iowa BoS CoC), Dr. Jamie Rife (Metro Denver CoC), Steve DiLella (CT BoS CoC), Kelly Watson at MaineHousing (ME statewide CoC), Gordon Calkins (MA), Tom Frederickson and Jose Lucio (DC CoC),

Based on benchmarking, CoC board composition has a heavier emphasis on service providers and advocates

CoC	State agency leads	Local agency leads	Service providers	Coalition/Advocates
Rhode Island Housing	15% ¹	5%	60%	20% ²
Los Angeles, CA (LA Homeless Services Authority)	-	40%	40%	20%
Metro Denver, CO (MD Homeless Initiative)	35%	10%	35%	20%
Fairfield County, CT (Opening Door Fairfield County)	20%	-	60%	20%
Houston, TX (The Way Home)	-	35%	50%	15%
New York City, NY (NYC CoC)	25% ³	25% ³	15%	60%
Vermont Balance of State	15%	20%	25%	40%
Iowa Balance of State	-	5%	45%	50%
Maine Balance of State	10%	-	30%	60%

1. State Exec. Office of HHS, State Department of Housing 2. RI Homeless Advocacy Project, Youth Action Board

3. NYC CoC steering committee requires a total of 4 government representatives counting all of local, state, and federal representatives

Source: [Rhode Island](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Metro Denver](#), [Fairfield County](#), [Houston](#), [NYC](#), [Vermont Balance of State](#), [Iowa Balance of State](#), [Maine Balance of State](#)

Going forward, CoC & Department of Housing can play complementary roles

CoC's capacity to set statewide strategy is strong but limited in important ways



CoC's funding remit **does not automatically extend to emergency and temporary shelter**, so does not need to be an area of focus or rulemaking



It also **shares remit to provide rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing with the Department**, but Department has historically not had capacity to provide robust input



CoC is a rich source of volunteer resources who can provide lived experience and expertise, but **paid resources to synthesize outputs into a plan are limited** (receiving a fixed amount of dollars for CoC planning annually, used predominantly for salary of CoC planner)

Opportunity for CoC to act as a critical resource for Department, as Department sets strategy

- Department can step into role of **leading development of statewide strategy**, providing dedicated strategic planning capability to drive synthesis of outputs across multiple levers and demographics
- CoC could be leveraged as **critical resource** for informing strategy, including through input from **advocates, specific communities & demographics** e.g., young people, & individuals with lived experience
- Collaboration could be achieved through **Departmental attendance at Committee meetings**, regular meetings between CoC planner & Departmental strategic planner

CoCs set different prioritization rules for housing assistance; most do not prioritize or have minimal criteria for emergency shelter beds, unlike RI

Prioritization rules

	Assessment Tool	Permanent Supportive Housing	Rapid Rehousing	Transitional Housing	Emergency Shelters
Rhode Island	Coordinated Entry Assessment, comprising the Crisis and Housing Assessment Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Assessment informs shelter referrals Housing Assessment informs housing referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility¹: At least one family member with a disability Prioritization: length of time homeless, high CEA score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility¹: N/A; previously households in non-congregate shelter Prioritization: Eligible for PSH but literally homeless & awaiting PSH placement; higher CEA score 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility¹: Income below 30% AMI, not able to be diverted Prioritization: Young adults or households headed by young adults, history of foster care involvement, families with children, not in need of PSH, fleeing DV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligibility¹: Cannot be diverted, no other safe place to sleep; can be safely accommodated in shelter, not present danger to self or others Prioritization: Unsheltered, identified by outreach workers or CES lead, high CEA score
Peer organizations²	Different – Peer organizations largely use VI-SPDAT or variants of VI-SPDAT	Different – Peer organizations prioritize chronically homeless and those with high VI-SPDAT scores ² Additional considerations include disabling conditions	Different – Some peer organizations use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower VI-SPDAT score than PSH Different in other states – RR is reserved and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritized for special subpopulations³ 	Variable – Prioritization rules for TH is highly variable amongst peers. Most meet any of 3 classific.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific policy for TH prioritization Prioritized for special subpopulations³ Lowest category of VI-SPADT scores 	Different – Unlike RI most do not have prioritization. In our case studies, North East states with low shelter capacity do try to divert individuals, without additional prioritization schemes

1. Most projects also require meeting HUD's definition of literal homelessness or be at risk of homelessness (e.g., fleeing domestic violence) and meet any other conditions required by funding source 2. Peers considered include NYC, Worcester, Burlington County, Prince Georges County, Los Angeles, Metro Denver, and Connecticut 2. Chronically homeless as defined by HUD refers to a homeless person with a disability who lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a Safe Haven, or an emergency shelter; AND has been homeless continuously or cumulatively for 1 year or 4+ times in the last 3 years. 3. Special sub-populations can include disabilities, street homeless, youth, families, and survivors of domestic violence, etc Source: Statewide CES for Homeless Services Policies & Procedures Manual, updated June 2, 2022. [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

Landscape scan – Benchmarking of innovative practices

Recall: Five innovative practices documented from landscape scan of other homelessness ecosystems

Given the complexity of the homelessness challenge, effective policy and action requires coordination across multiple levels and agencies of government, community organizations, and other stakeholders. To bring insight to housing and homelessness efforts in Rhode Island, a scan was conducted to document **innovative practices across homelessness ecosystems** in the Northeast and across the country

This scan showed that homelessness ecosystems have advanced at least **five notable practices that we would highlight for Rhode Island:**

- 1 They **target 'functional zero' homelessness, rigorously measure progress**, and make a concerted effort to **account for every person experiencing homelessness**. For example, **Metro Denver** CoC set a target of "functional zero" homelessness for veterans and maintains a "by name list" to consistently identify and track individuals experiencing homelessness and facilitate improved case management¹ ; Denver has achieved a 31% decrease in veteran homelessness over a 2-year time period
- 2 They dedicate significant resources to seamlessly integrate **case navigation and additional supportive services** for individuals . For example, **Houston** CoC— which dedicates more than \$15M to operating supportive services, including \$13M from city, county, and state sources— operates "homelessness court," an alternative pathway from traditional court that is designed to assist homeless participants with reintegration into society; alongside other programs it has promoted, Houston CoC's efforts in this regard have helped to decrease homelessness by over 60% in Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties
- 3 They publish and maintain **publicly-available, real-time, interactive data** on homelessness . For example, in **Vermont**, ICA serves as the HMIS administrator appointed by the CoC and produces publicly-available dashboards that organize and display KPIs and allow stakeholders to monitor homeless outcomes
- 4 They create a clear channel to gather stakeholder input on policy. For example, several jurisdictions have established a **dedicated advisory body** charged with providing input on and suggesting policy to the legislature and/or executive branch specifically on homelessness:
 - **Maine's** Governor appoints a Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) to lead statewide strategic planning – together with Maine's CoC, the SHC participates in a non-statutory Joint Policy Committee that advises legislators on state/federal policy
 - In **Michigan**, the state convened an advisory body specifically to advise the creation of the 2023 statewide plan on homelessness
 - In **Massachusetts'** CHAPA is a nonprofit that convenes committees on housing and homelessness topics to discuss policy and initiatives
 - In **District of Columbia**, the Interagency Council on Homelessness is a cabinet level statutory body that sets strategy for the DC CoC and oversees 20+ subcommittees working to addressing homelessness issues
- 5 Government agencies take leadership in coordinating response. For example, LAHSA in **Los Angeles** is a joint powers authority between the City and County of LA which coordinates regional efforts; **NYC Department of Homeless Services** is an independent mayoral agency acting on the authority of the mayor; **King County Regional Homeless Authority** is an independent government administrative agency coordinating response in Seattle and across King County

1. "Functional zero" means This means that the number of people experiencing homelessness at any time does not exceed the community's proven record of housing at least that many people in a month

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Case study | Denver achieved a 31% decrease in veteran homelessness by focusing on targets

“Built for Zero” methodology aligns sub-regions around a shared target and focuses on producing a “quality by name” list



Context

- ~7K people experiencing homelessness on a given night and ~28K people accessing homelessness services in metro Denver in a year
- Metro Denver’s CoC is administered by **Metro Denver Homelessness Initiative (MDHI)** and covers **7 counties** that MDHI further divides into **9 sub-regions**
- Like ~105 other communities in the US, Metro Denver's CoC¹ aligned itself with the “**Built for Zero²**” model in 2021, which targets “**functional zero³**” homelessness by directing **community-wide, data-driven efforts**
- Metro Denver is currently focused on **homeless veterans** specifically, aligned with Built for Zero’s methodology of focusing on **one sub-population at a time**
- **Metro Denver CoC leads local homelessness efforts** while the State provides support



Outcomes

- Metro Denver achieved a **31% decrease** in veteran homelessness over a two year time frame, a reduction rate nearly **3x** the national average
- Boulder County became the **first to achieve quality data** for homeless individuals in August 2022



How Metro Denver is achieving success

- **Coordinates 9 sub-regions** around the “Built for Zero” model to target “functional zero³,” where homelessness is **rare, brief, and non-recurring**
- Each sub-region:
 - Convenes **Homeless Coordination Team** weekly, made up of agencies like housing authorities, providers, and VA, thereby reducing any siloed/redundant efforts. Teams coordinate with and seek ad-hoc assistance from **Technical Advisory Committees**, consisting of City/County managers & local elected officials
 - Maintains a “**quality by name list**” (QBNL) which identifies and tracks homeless individuals in real-time, and stores information such as their name, medical needs, and housing preferences
 - Uses QBNLs to inform and **tailor homelessness interventions** to the needs of unhoused people in each region
 - **Regularly tracks and report progress** towards “functional zero³”
- Publicizes the “Built for Zero” QBNL **scorecard** that guides and tracks sub-regional progress towards producing QBNLs, defined as having
 - Comprehensive community **participation** in data-reporting and geographic **coverage**
 - Well-defined **policies & procedures** for maintaining QBNLs
 - Sufficient **data infrastructure** for maintaining QBNLs
- Asked state/local officials to sign a **pledge** in support of efforts

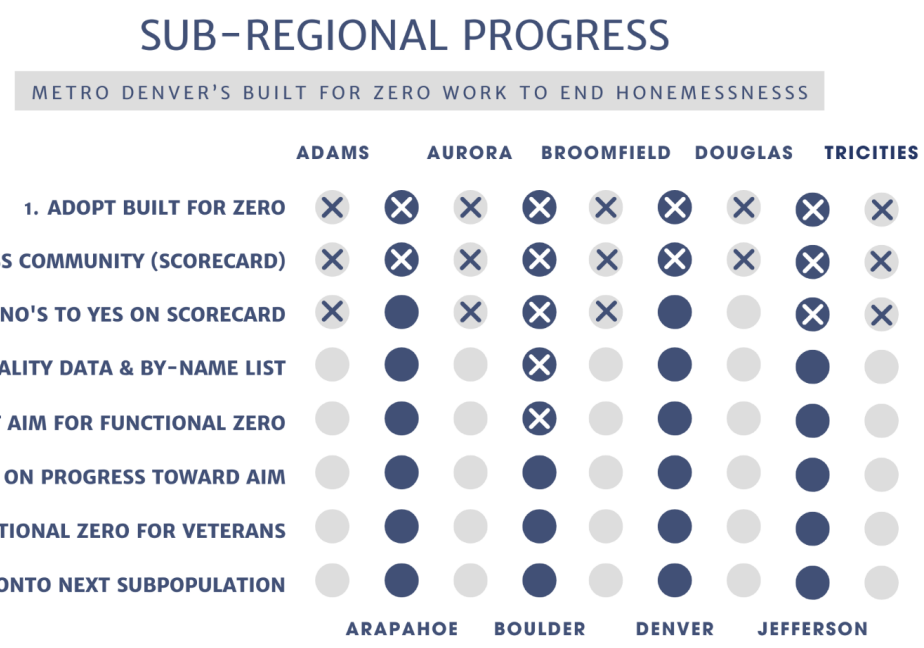
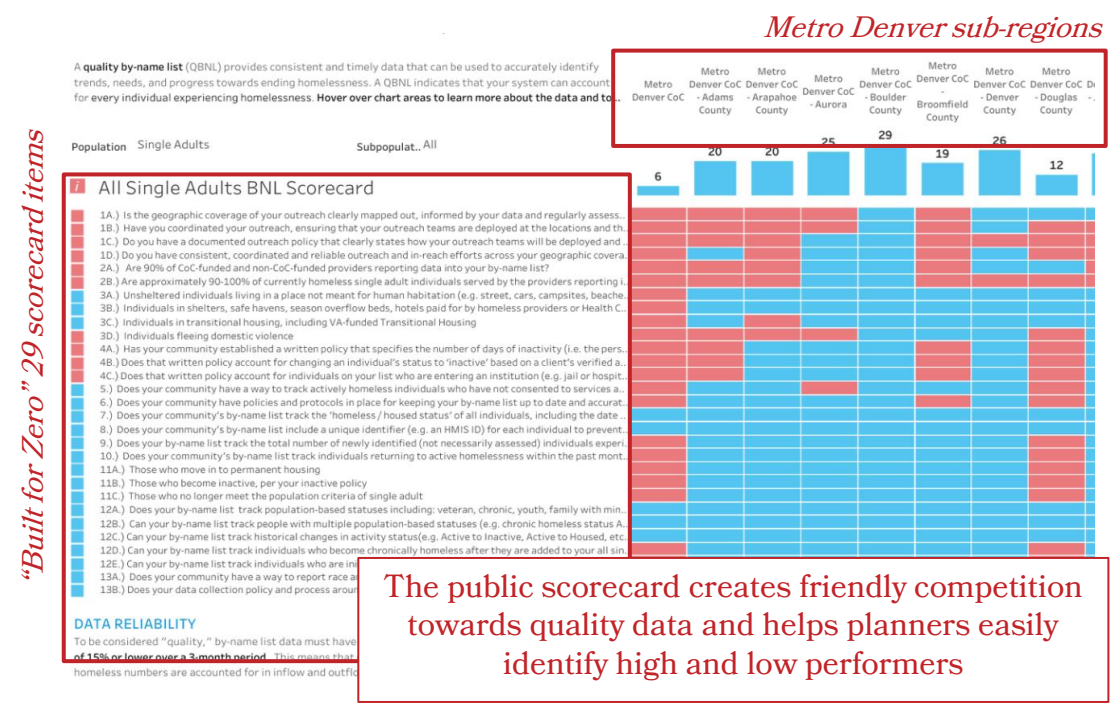
1. In partnership with CO Dept. of Local Affairs, Metro Mayor's Caucus, and Veteran Affairs 2. Built for Zero is a methodology developed by Community Solutions that involves consolidating efforts into a single community-wide team that meets weekly; checking off the Built for Zero quality By Name List scorecard; setting goals, tracking and reporting progress based on robust data; achieving functional zero through data driven housing/homelessness investments and a lens of racial equity; repeating the process one sub-population at a time 3. Functional zero is a dynamic milestone that indicates there are fewer people experiencing homelessness than can be routinely housed in a month.

Source: Metro Denver CoC [website](#); interview with Dr. Jamie Rife at MDHI, MDHI state of homelessness [report](#); Built for Zero [website](#) (Community Solutions); Metro Denver Built for Zero [convening](#) 138

Backup | Metro Denver CoC publicly tracks sub-regional progress towards “functional zero”

Metro Denver has a public dashboard tracking the progress of each sub-region towards completing all 29 items required to achieve a quality By Name List

Additionally, Metro Denver tracks high-level sub-regional progress within the "Built for Zero"¹ model with the target of achieving functional zero² for veterans



1. Built for Zero is a methodology developed by Community Solutions that involves consolidating efforts into a single community-wide team that meets weekly; checking off the Built for Zero quality By Name List scorecard; setting goals, tracking and reporting progress based on robust data; achieving functional zero through data driven housing/homelessness investments and a lens of racial equity; repeating the process one sub-population at a time 2. Functional zero is a dynamic milestone that indicates there are fewer people experiencing homelessness than can be routinely housed in a month.

Source: Metro Denver CoC [website](#); interview with Dr. Jamie Rife at MDHI, MDHI state of homelessness [report](#)

Case study | Houston's CoC has achieved 60% decrease in homelessness by providing system-wide support around homelessness



Context

- The 2022 point-in-time count saw 3,200 people in Houston experiencing homelessness
- Houston's CoC, The Way Home, is led by Coalition for the Homeless, which organizes >100 regional organizations
- The Way Home publishes a five-year plan to end homelessness setting out strategic approaches to achieve articulated goals: end chronic homelessness, maintain an end to veteran homelessness, end family & youth homelessness, **build strong cross-system partnerships**
- Houston CoC **incentivizes positive outcomes** by awarding points to partner applications for achieving set targets in NOFO grants
- Houston CoC **leverages data to pinpoint specific areas to target** with additional resources. For example they noted that the population from encampments has poorer outcomes than those not displaced from encampments



Outcomes

- Since 2011, **these collective efforts have helped decrease homeless by over 60%** in Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery counties
- By demonstrating continued success, Houston has increased funding from HUD CoC grant competitions from **\$25 million to \$46 million** (between 2012 and 2023)

1. Homeless courts have been established all over the country to counteract the effect of criminal cases pushing homeless defendants further outside society. Court clerks research cases for participants referred into the Homeless Court. The defense attorney meets with the participant in advance of the hearing to review their case and then discuss what program activities will help transform their lives for the better. More than 90% of cases are dismissed as accomplishments are reconciled against offenses

Source: [Coalition for the Homeless, The Way Home, The Way Home Financials](#)



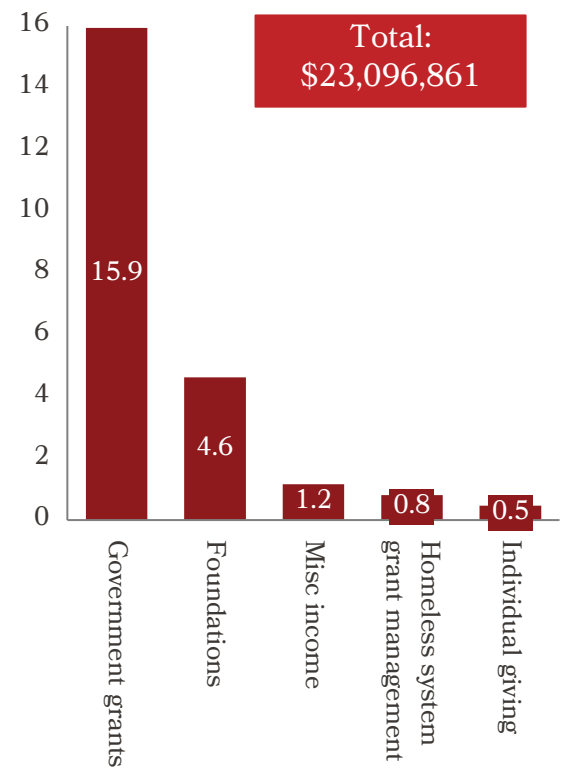
Services Houston is providing to achieve success

- **Case navigation:** “The Way Home” and “Coalition for the Homeless” partner to run Homeless Court (HC) —one of the first in the country, an alternative pathway from traditional court that is designed to assist homeless participants with reintegration into society. Individuals can opt to go through HC instead of the traditional City of Houston court system¹
 - HC is an initiative in partnership with the City of Houston, designed to address all class C misdemeanor offenses
 - Local shelters and agencies are the gateway for participants to enter this court
 - HC gives “credit for time served” for the participant’s accomplishments in shelter activities. These activities include: life skills, chemical dependency or AA/NA meetings, computer and literacy classes, training or searching for employment, medical care (physical and mental), counseling, and volunteer work
- **Workforce training:** Through programs like SOAR and Income Now, The Way Home provides support in areas such as computer training, workforce development training, GED preparation, interview preparation, and immediate and long-term employment opportunities
- **Supportive services:** Outreach programs focused on community outreach and encampment response, allow more people to access programs and support. Realtime data and reporting helps monitor and track progress

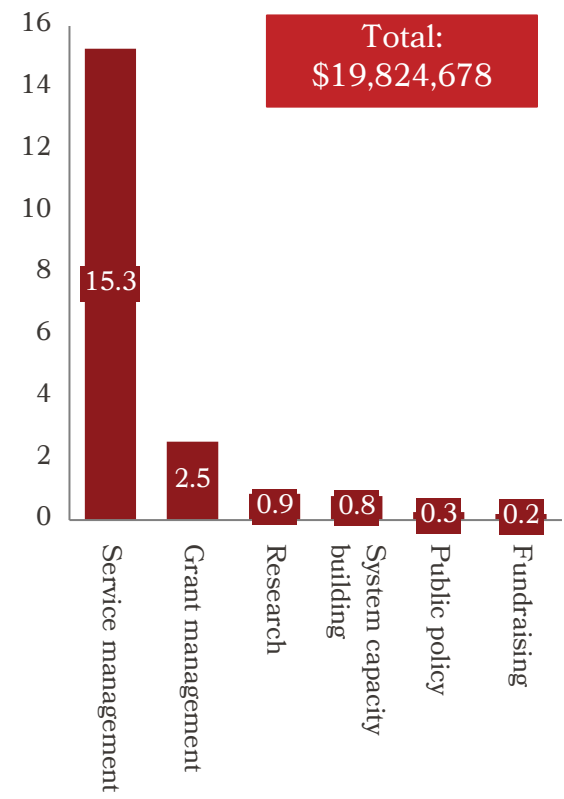
Backup | Houston has mobilized \$23M for these efforts ,with at least \$13M from city, county, and state sources and an additional \$4.6M through foundations



Revenue FY2022 (\$M)



Expenses FY2022 (\$M)



Funding context

- Significant portion of Coalition income is received from HUD grants that are controlled and administered by local and state entities
 - City of Houston grants contribute \$4.8 million
 - Harris County grants contribute \$1.6 million
 - Harris County Housing Authority grants contribute \$230k
 - Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs grants contribute \$6.6 million
- Annual cost to provide supportive services total ~\$15 million (this figure does not include housing programs funded through CoC competition grants)
- Funding from HUD CoC competition grants (\$2.8 million) makes up ~12% of total Coalition income and ~18% of total government grants
- Total expenses has nearly doubled between FY2021 (\$10,958,871) and FY2022 (\$19,824,678)

Source: [Coalition for the Homeless Audit Report](#)

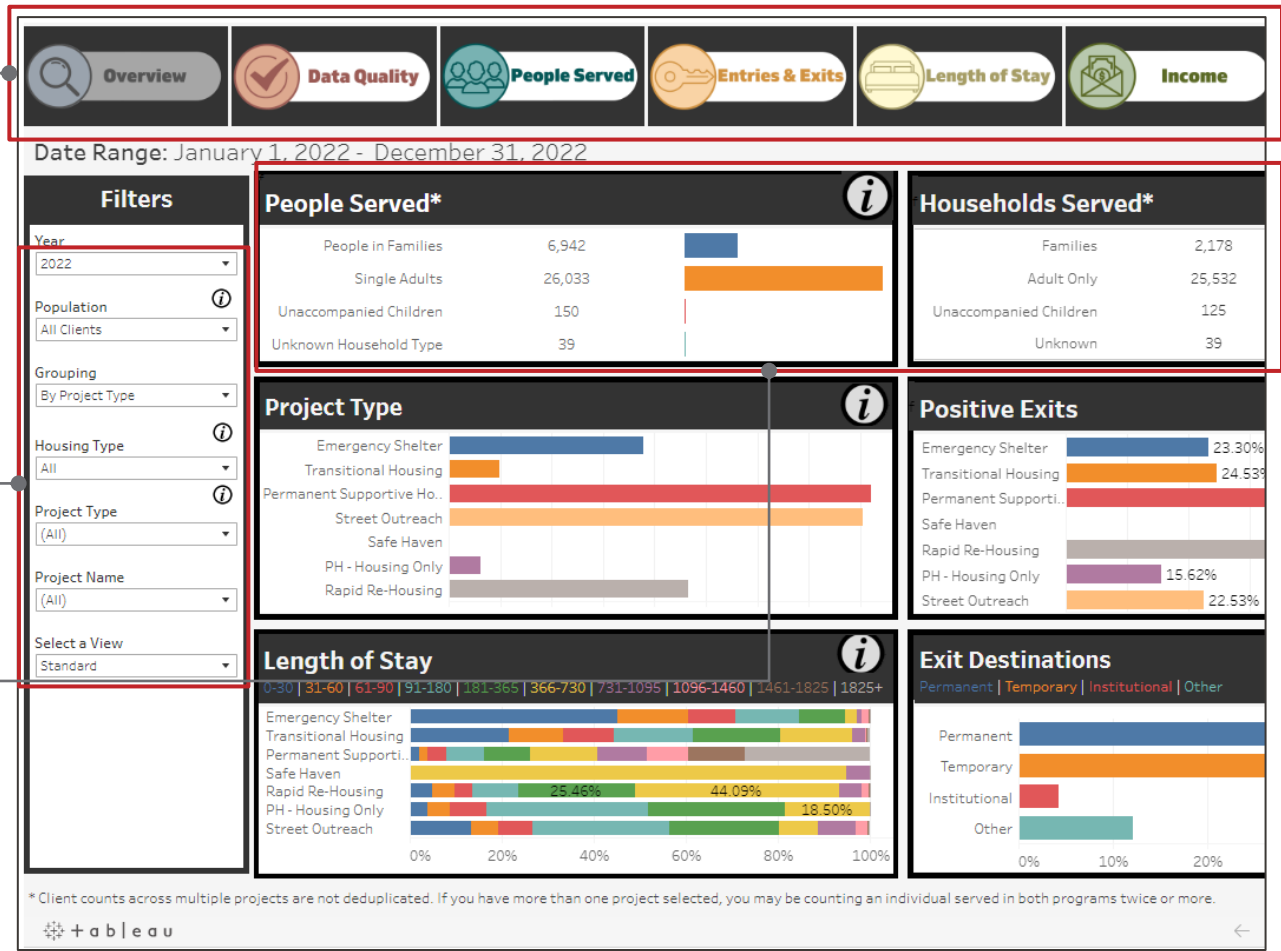
Backup | Houston's CoC leverages data and dashboard tools to monitor progress



KPIs tracked: Data quality, people served, entries & exits, length of stay, income, outcomes

Ability to interact with data and filter by: year, population, project type, housing type

Breakdown of people and households served



Case study | Vermont CoC saw a >25% one-year drop in total persons experiencing homelessness the year it partnered with ICA to administer its HMIS



Context

- Works with Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) as the HMIS lead agency to coordinate data entry and monitor performance
- ICA worked to standardize statewide reporting and data quality to ensure timely and accurate collection of HUD-required data
- ICA produced "real time" interactive dashboards to organize and display KPIs to monitor outcomes
- ICA is the HMIS lead for 14 CoCs in the US (AK, Atlanta, Boise City, IA, MN, NH, ND, Omaha, Northern Illinois, SC, VT, WI, WY)



Outcomes

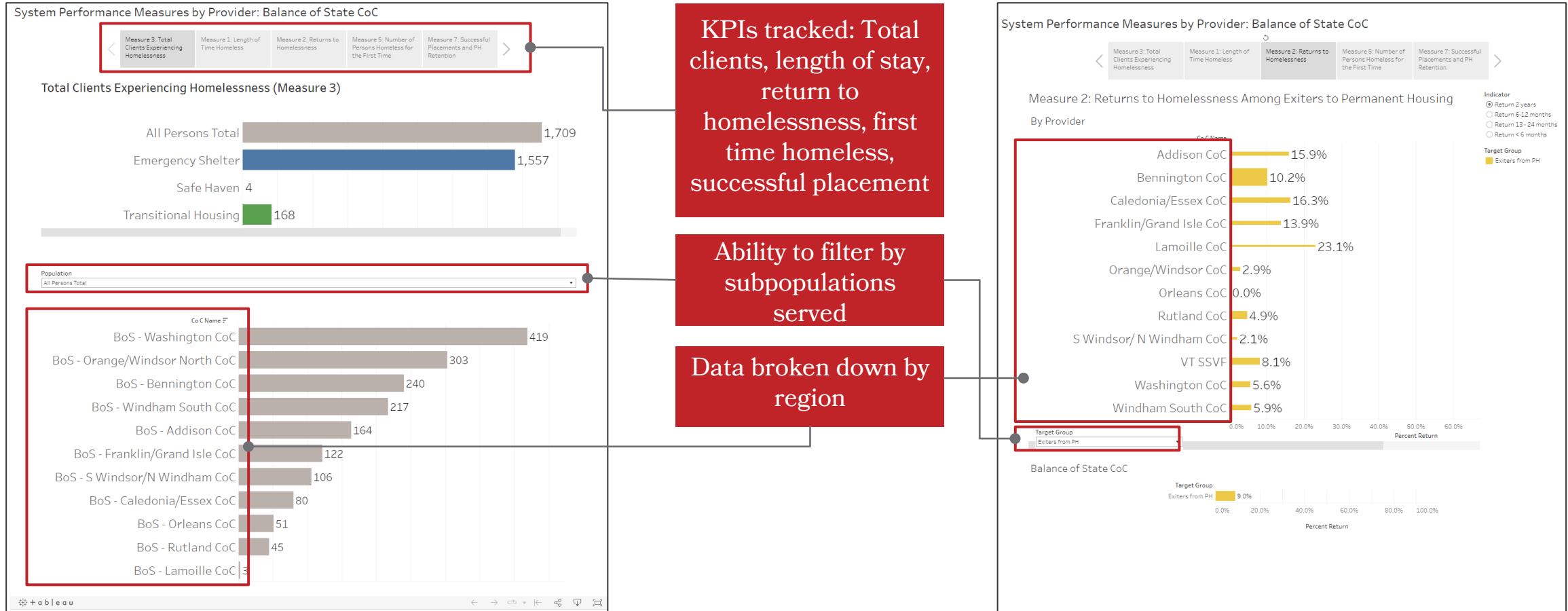
- ICA was able to increase data collection, quality, and reporting standards for Vermont, helping it remain eligible and competitive for federal funds
- After beginning work with ICA, in 2016, Vermont saw a >25% drop that year in total persons experiencing homelessness



Services Houston is providing to achieve success

- ICA supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based practices and helps assess effectiveness through data collection
- ICA publishes a state-wide interactive dashboard with up-to-date data and statistics about the people currently experiencing homelessness. Key dashboard features include
 - Reporting of statistics on number of unsheltered people segmented by age, gender, race, family structure, length of stay, special subcategories (i.e., veteran status)
 - Ability to interact with and filter dashboard data by year, project, region, housing type, conditions and barriers
 - "Realtime" updates to dashboard data as data is collected

Backup | Vermont CoC works with ICA to administer its HMIS and produce “real time” interactive dashboards to organize and display KPIs and monitor outcomes



CoCs may take on additional capabilities besides HUD-mandated responsibilities (I/II)



Providing trainings & technical assistance to providers and the community as a whole

- **Dallas** City and County, Irving CoC offers in-person, virtual and on-demand training for service providers
- **CT** BoS CoC offers trainings across topics such as Housing First, Public Benefits, HUD Annual Progress Reports, and HUD/CoC requirements
- ✓ **Rhode Island's** statewide CoC offers trainings across topics like housing retention, assessment training, and homelessness systems like HMIS
- **Central Virginia** CoC's Community Commitment committee aims to increase public awareness and support of homelessness efforts and expand CoC membership
- **LA** County CoC holds Community Info Sessions to educate on homelessness issues
- ☆ **Vermont** BoS CoC offers asynchronous trainings around homelessness systems and solutions



Conducting additional research and analytics

- ☆ Institute for Community Alliances (lead agency and HMIS admin for **14 states**) offers technical assistance/training for HMIS, creates data visualizations, and engages in homelessness-related research
- **District of Columbia** CoC collects, analyzes, and provides access to HMIS data and offers HMIS trainings
- ☆ **Houston** CoC utilizes HomelessnessData (by Simtech Solutions) to dashboard CoC projects and outcomes
- **DC's** CoC surveys and reports data on sub-populations (i.e. through partnerships with public schools) such as youth, women, and LGBT/trans people



Setting homelessness strategy

- ✓ **Rhode Island's** statewide CoC sets statewide homelessness strategy and releases action plans targeting specific groups such as unsheltered populations and youth
- ☆ **Houston's** CoC releases a 5-year plan to end functional homelessness in the CoC's jurisdiction, in addition to action plans targeting specific groups such as veterans and youth
- **Albany's** CoC has an Ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee that builds out homelessness strategy in Albany County
- **Central Virginia's** CoC launched a 3-year, community-wide strategic plan to end homelessness



Case study



RICoC capabilities

Source: LAHSA ([link](#)); Metro Denver MDHI ([link](#)); Housing Forward TX ([link](#)); Central Mass Housing Alliance ([link](#)); CT BoS CoC ([link](#)); Institute for Community Alliances ([link](#)); NYC CoC ([link](#)); DC CoC ([link](#)); Houston CoC ([link](#)); Chicago CoC ([link](#), [link1](#)); Albany CoC ([link](#)); Central Virginia CoC ([link](#)); Interview with Martin Hahn at VCEH; Interview with Tom Frederickson and Jose Lucio

CoCs may take on additional capabilities besides HUD-mandated responsibilities (II/II)



Coordinating across other social services

- **Houston** CoC has a working group focused on cross-system planning, data-sharing, targeting, and coordination with other systems like healthcare
- **Chicago** CoC has a “line of action” focused on strengthening cross-system connections to workforce services system
- **Iowa** BoS CoC is working to educate other systems of care (correctional, workforce, healthcare, etc.) on CoC mission and resources



Channeling voices of those with lived or other experience

- **NYC** BoS CoC staffs committees for people with lived experience and stakeholders servicing special sub-populations (e.g., veterans)
- ☆ **Metro Denver** CoC staffs committees of people with lived experience to advise on homelessness efforts
- **Worcester** City & County CoC's lead agency participates in raising homelessness awareness through its Hope for Housing program
- **Manchester** CoC (NH) staffs committees to address needs of sub-populations like veterans & youth



Providing direct-to-individual funding for housing stability

- ☆ **Metro Denver** CoC's lead agency has a Housing Stability Flex Fund that provides one-time assistance for move-in, prevention, & landlord mitigation
- **Dallas** City and County, Irving CoC's lead agency has a Flex Fund offering assistance for various rental/housing needs
- **Worcester** City & County CoC's lead agency provides access to donated furniture
- **Chicago** CoC's Expedited Housing Initiative provides financial and support services to rapidly house individuals in response to Covid



Building a street outreach strategy

- **Dallas** City and County, Irving CoC's lead agency participates in local encampment decommissioning efforts
- **Manchester** CoC (NH) has a Homeless Outreach Collaborative subcommittee that discusses encampment trends and resources
- ☆ **Houston** CoC has a working group focused on community outreach and encampment response



Case study



RICoC capabilities

Some jurisdictions have larger groups that advise the state on housing and homelessness topics

	Massachusetts	Michigan	Maine	District of Columbia
Example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Massachusetts, Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) is a nonprofit that serves as an ad-hoc advisory group to the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan Partner Advisory Council is a large stakeholder body created to assist with state-wide plan development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Maine, Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) is a statutory, advisory body that leads statewide homelessness strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DC's Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) is a statutory body that leads homelessness strategy in DC
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocates for affordable housing and community development activities through policy recommendations, technical assistance, collaborating with other agencies etc. Convenes stakeholders for listening sessions on new programs/policies Convenes committees, most notably the Homelessness committee meets to discuss potential initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advises an external policy consultant team and MSHDA's¹ strategic planning team on stakeholder outreach and engagement approaches, helps to interpret stakeholder input, and generates ideas for strategies to address the state's housing and homelessness needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops and refines Maine's Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness Advises Maine State Housing Authority, the Governor, the Legislature, DHHS and DOC on homelessness matters Educates the public on on homeless issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads homelessness planning in DC and publishes strategic documents outlining plans for CoC services Conducts needs assessment across populations such as youth, women, and LGBTQ
State support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings coordinated by MSHDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings attended by representatives of state agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings attended by mayor's cabinet
State role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointed by MSHDA strategic planning team in consultation with MSHDA director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SHC members are appointed by the governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor-appointed director, and cabinet-level members
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20+ members of the nonprofit board include development corporations, PHAs, Banks, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 52 housing experts and partners including community organizations, PHAs, local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 members including service providers and representatives from State agencies (MaineHousing, DHHS, DOC, etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35+ members representing service providers, local businesses, community organizations and 16 state agencies
Meeting Cadence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ED and senior staff meet with DHCD to provide feedback as needed Has standing committees that cover housing issues which meet regularly and are often attended by state housing staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly during planning activities (~1x per month) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets monthly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICH meets quarterly ICH's executive committee coordinates 20+ subcommittees and working groups, which all meet monthly

1. MSHDA or Michigan State Housing Development Authority is MI's housing organization. MI does not have a department of housing. Five of the board members are appointed by the Governor, with confirmation by the State Senate, for terms of four years. The remaining members are directors of state departments.

Source: Stakeholder interviews, expert interviews, MSHDA website, CHAPA website, Maine Homeless Planning website

4

Homelessness in Rhode Island

Landscape scan—Longer-term options

Recall: team documented several options for combating homelessness

Several options determined to be feasible only beyond the immediate term

Option	Timing	
	Immediate-term	Longer-term
1 Purchase private property	■	■
2 Transfer/convert government buildings	■	■
3 Lease motel/hotels	■	■
4 Build temporary structures (e.g., pallet shelters, mobile solutions, navigation centers, tents)	■	■
5 Work with current providers to create additional beds or provide different bed types	■	■
6 Pursue extensions of existing seasonal capacity where feasible	■	■
7 Create a dedicated fund for acquisition & development of permanent supportive housing units	■	■
8 Partner with State Licensed Facilities (e.g., nursing homes, hospital wings) to create additional space	■	■
9 Expand low-barrier shelter options	■	■
10 Increase flexible funding for housing problem-solving/diversion ¹	■	■
11 Deploy case conferencing /housing navigation for individual-level housing problem-solving/diversion ¹	■	■
12 Incentivize developers to prioritize units for homeless individuals/families	■	■
13 Find funding for imminently expiring rapid rehousing vouchers	■	■
14 Create a provider-led training institute to recruit workforce	■	■
15 Improve incentives for service provider workforce	■	■
16 Partner to bring on additional recovery and aged care providers	■	■
17 Improve procurement processes & timelines to better address system & provider pain points	■	■
18 Strengthen partnerships between service providers for the delivery of permanent supportive housing	■	■
19 Center individuals with lived experience in service provision	■	■
20 Expand legal services for tenants facing evictions	■	■
21 Work with correctional facilities to support transition into housing	■	■

■ Potentially feasible and desirable to execute option within time period



Create additional physical capacity, for both temporary shelter & permanent supportive housing



Scale diversion and placements into housing



Strengthen the service provider ecosystem





Expand homelessness prevention

1. Housing problem-solving/diversion involves helping households use their strengths, support networks & community resources to find housing. Financial assistance might be used, for example, for bus, train or airplane tickets to help facilitate return to family

Source: Stakeholder interviews

Team documented longer-term options raised by stakeholders for combating homelessness (I/II)

Deep-dive: options determined to be feasible only beyond the immediate term

	Option	Illustrative pain points we heard from stakeholders	Illustrative actions the Department could take	Illustrative examples
 Create additional physical capacity	7 Create a dedicated permanent supportive housing fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a deficit of project-based permanent supportive housing (PSH) units in Rhode Island, driven in large part by a deficit of units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with legislature to allocate funding expressly for development of PSH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County of Santa Clara Supportive Housing Fund
	8 Partner with State Licensed Facilities (e.g., nursing homes) to create additional temporary space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several State Licensed Facilities have expressed willingness to provide space to accommodate homeless individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with EOHHS to identify and procure space from State Licensed Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial survey recently released by EOHHS to identify potentially willing facilities
	9 Expand low-barrier shelter options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are not enough shelter options and supportive services for individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procure additional physical space expressly for low-barrier shelter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of New Orleans, Low Barrier Shelter Project
 Scale diversion and placements into housing	10 Increase flexible funding for housing problem-solving/diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is need for a "much expanded" diversion program that can be delivered by all providers, and with less strings attached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a state-funded diversion program, with fewer strings attached 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WA Centralized Diversion Fund
	11 Expand case conferencing /housing navigation for individual-level housing problem-solving/diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is difficult to track every individual who has been identified as unsheltered over time and across providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint a dedicated lead to work through a "by-name" list, in addition to data maintained in HMIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynchburg, Virginia's "huddles", with a focus on functional zero for veteran homelessness¹
	12 Incentivize developers to prioritize units for homeless individuals/families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little incentive for developers to prioritize individuals who are experiencing homelessness; much of the burden of developing a tenant selection plan falls on developers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award additional bonus points for special needs projects through QAP and other funding rubrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorado State Affordable Housing Tax Credit, prioritizing homeless individuals²

1. Community Solutions, 2022, "Lynchburg, Virginia: Functional Zero Case Study," <https://community.solutions/case-studies/case-study-lynchburg-virginia-reaches-functional-zero-for-veteran-homelessness/> 2. Novogradac, 2022, State LIHTC Program Descriptions, <https://www.novoco.com/resource-centers/affordable-housing-tax-credits/application-allocation/state-lihtc-program-descriptions>

Team documented longer-term options raised by stakeholders for combating homelessness (II/II)

Deep-dive: options determined to be feasible only beyond the immediate term

Option	Illustrative pain points we heard from stakeholders	Illustrative actions the Department could take	Illustrative examples
14 Create a provider-led training institute to recruit workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding qualified candidates is a central obstacle to recruiting staff; individuals without university qualifications are an untapped resource¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene workforce development professionals (incl providers) to support new training pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing partnership between Community College of Rhode Island and House of Hope
15 Improve incentives for service provider workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salaries and burnout are central obstacles to recruiting & training staff² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund initiatives to increase remuneration and benefits for hard-to-recruit positions e.g., case manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respondents to Coalition salary survey cited piloting benefit increases as sources of improvement in retention
16 Partner to bring on additional recovery and aged care providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is not enough housing in RI for seniors, including newly single seniors after loss of a partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit innovative approaches to funding permanent housing for seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearth Housing, Boston, operates PSH for formerly rent-burdened seniors
17 Improve procurement processes & timelines to better address system & provider pain points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State procurement and contract management are not outcomes-focused, and the procurement planning cycle is too short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore multi-year contracts and a longer-term planning cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> California is exploring a move toward multi-year contracts³
18 Strengthen partnerships between service providers for the delivery of permanent supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One key driver of insufficient PSH in Rhode Island is a lack of comprehensive supportive services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a taskforce to work collaboratively with healthcare & employment providers on meeting workforce shortages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chicago Homelessness and Health Response Group for Equity
19 Center individuals with lived experience in service provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals with lived experience "are experts in areas that no textbook could ever teach" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the CoC to appoint leader with lived experience to lead efforts to recruit greater lived experience into workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sacramento Persons with Lived Experience Coordinator role
20 Expand legal services for tenants facing evictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 90% of tenants without legal representation are unable to defend against eviction⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute an expanded Statewide Eviction Defense Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Providence Eviction Defense Program
21 Work with correctional facilities to support transition into housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incarcerated individuals are 10 times more likely to experience homelessness than the general public⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solicit innovative approaches to creating more transitional housing for returning citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MeckFUSE program, North Carolina



Strengthen the service provider ecosystem



Expand homelessness prevention

1. Per 2022 Coalition Salary Survey, 40% of respondents cited finding qualified candidates as central obstacles. 2. 60% & 27% of 2022 Coalition Salary Survey respondents cited salaries and burnout 3. Per stakeholder interview with HUD technical expert 4. HousingWorks RI, 2022 Housing Fact Book 5. Prison Policy Initiative, 2018

Making meaningful progress on homelessness will require investment

Figures illustrative – directional for discussion

Ensuring that every Rhode Islander is sheltered requires investment...

Three scenarios of investment:

- Recent years: **726 year-round beds plus winter shelter, \$4-5m annually**¹
- Maintain recent capacity expansions year-round: **1,150 beds, ~\$25-30m² annually**
- Add capacity for ~400 unsheltered Rhode Islanders: **1,550 beds, ~\$40-60m² annually**

... while Rhode Island creates more permanent capacity over time...

As with shelter beds, this strategy is scalable and can be incremental, but requires time and up-front investment

Three scenarios for investment:

- Maintain current investment supporting **1,254 units of PSH**
- Adding **400 units** would cost ~\$8m per year in addition to up-front capital of **~\$60m³**
- Adding **800 units** would cost **~\$16m per year** in addition to up-front capital of **~\$120m³**

... and invests in diversion and rapid rehousing to prevent further increases

For individuals and families who experience short-term disruptions and emergencies and may have lower acuity, other interventions can be more cost-effective

- Homeless problem-solving and one-time emergency assistance often requires less than **\$5,000 to house a family**⁴
- Rapid rehousing can help those who are experiencing homelessness due to economic circumstances at approximately **\$1,500 per bed per month**⁵

1. Assumes 726 beds funded at \$4.5M per FY23 CHF RFP, ~220 additional temporary beds (incl DV, transitional) funded at \$1,500 per bed per month. Does not include funding for a range of other non-shelter projects awarded through the FY23 CHF RFP e.g., street outreach, rapid rehousing and diversion, 2. Assumes ~290 beds of seasonal non-Armory capacity based on actual FY23 seasonal extension contracts, ~300 beds of replacement capacity for Armory and DCYF-funded hotels at \$5,000 per bed per month incl lease & supportive services; additional 380 beds for unsheltered population based on same cost estimate 3. Low-end capital cost represents illustrative acquisition cost and operating costs estimated to be between \$900-\$1800 per bed per month, drawing on estimates from National Council to End Homelessness, HUD studies 4. Estimate informed by interview with Crossroads 5. Estimate informed by engagement with Naomi Sweitzer, consultant with Technical Assistance Collaborative
Note: Highly preliminary, illustrative estimates

RI housing ecosystem and department capabilities

Executive Summary: RI housing ecosystem and department capabilities (I/II)

The following section summarizes observations on the current Rhode Island housing ecosystem and options to guide the organizational design and capabilities of the newly formed Rhode Island Department of Housing. To inform this work, 40+ RI stakeholders were interviewed and 25+ states and jurisdictions were researched, including conducting interviews with 14 current or former staff members in other housing departments.

Rhode Island stakeholders identified five main pain points within the current housing ecosystem:

- Many potential housing developments are unable to get to the construction stage due to a lack of support throughout the development process
- The Department of Housing has limited formal/informal structures to coordinate across housing and homelessness programs managed by other state agencies
- The Housing Resources Commission (HRC) in its current state is not optimally positioned to execute on its broad mandate
- Municipalities feel the state should provide more direction, support and technical assistance (e.g., help navigating permitting, federal funding)
- There is a lack of statewide long-term goal-setting, planning, and coordination on housing

To inform the potential responsibilities of the Department of Housing and the organization of state government beyond the Department, the organizational structure of several other states was benchmarked:

- All housing departments studied take a leadership role in housing development and affordability
- For individual/family supports, strategy is often organized across agencies and key programs and data tracking owned within the housing dept
- Across the departments studied, there is a similar model for climate and sustainability with key programs in the housing dept (e.g., weatherization)

Executive Summary: RI housing ecosystem and department capabilities (II/II)

To guide decision-making on the best way to improve stakeholder engagement in Rhode Island, several effective stakeholder engagement models were benchmarked:

- Benchmarking across five dimensions indicated that there are two archetypes of effective stakeholder models:
 - Large, representative bodies that serve primarily in an advisory function
 - Small, representative bodies with clearly defined decision-making authority
- RI's stakeholder body, the Housing Resources Commission (HRC), does not fit cleanly into either of the two archetypes, with some inconsistencies in design and function

To understand capability gaps within the newly formed Department of Housing, the size and budget of other Northeast states was benchmarked:

- Of the states used to benchmark, the RI Department of Housing has the smallest number of per capita full-time employees and the second-lowest per capita state budget
- RI has significantly fewer full-time employees focused on housing production and homelessness than peer states



Pain points in RI housing ecosystem



Rhode Island stakeholders have articulated five main pain points around the housing ecosystem in the state

- 1 Housing development has stalled in Rhode island due to **lack of support throughout the development process**
- 2 The Department of Housing **has limited formal/informal structures to coordinate** across housing and homelessness programs managed by other state agencies
- 3 The HRC in its current state is **not optimally positioned to execute on its broad mandate**
- 4 **Municipalities feel the state should provide more direction**, support and technical assistance (e.g., help navigating permitting, federal funding)
- 5 There is **a lack of statewide long-term goal setting, planning and coordination** on housing

Note that specific homelessness-related pain points are summarized in the homelessness section earlier in this report

Housing development is not advanced in Rhode Island by proactive support throughout the development process

Lack of pro-active pipeline building, technical assistance, and inflexible housing financing has limited housing development

- Within the current ecosystem, **no person or party is proactively building a pipeline of potential developments** that align with state priorities
- There is **limited technical assistance** for development activities such as property acquisition, site planning and navigating the permitting/regulatory process
 - Developers note that the **RI permitting process** is complicated and leads to low success, which deters many from pursuing development projects
- **RI's current approach to housing financing lacks flexibility**, which results in delays in financing and makes the system less attractive for developers
 - Current procurement processes are rigid, with no ability to adapt financing applications, which slows down the development process, prevents necessary iteration, and creates uncertainty for developers
 - Strictly defined funding buckets make the financing process more complex for developers and limit RI Housing's flexibility to finance projects that align with housing needs

See housing supply section of this report for additional details on this pain point and potential solutions

Voice of stakeholders

- “ Current financing is reactive, not proactive – they see what comes in and try to find projects that pass the criteria
– *RI housing expert (gov't)*
- “ The permitting process is the most difficult part of developing in RI, and the state provides limited support
– *RI developer*
- “ Many affordable housing developers are not even bothering to apply for funding in Rhode Island
– *RI developer*

The Department of Housing has limited formal and informal structures to coordinate across programs managed by other state agencies

Many agencies touch on housing and homelessness, but there is no clear structure to coordinate

- Beyond the Department of Housing, there are three categories of state agencies that relate to housing and **homelessness without any active central coordinating mechanism**:
 - Agencies that directly or indirectly finance housing production, including
 - RI Housing
 - Department of Environmental Management
 - Housing Resource Commission
 - Department of Commerce
 - Office of Energy Resources
 - Department of Revenue
 - Infrastructure Bank
 - Agencies that are involved in zoning, permitting, and planning for housing, including
 - Department of Business Regulation
 - Department of Administration
 - Department of Transportation
 - Public Transit Authority
 - Department of Public Safety
 - Agencies that provide or need housing and homelessness services, including
 - Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Voice of stakeholders

- “ Other state agencies can help the Department of Housing to make sure programs are working, but they are not being used as resources
– *RI gov't employee*
- “ Everyone just does their own thing
– *RI housing expert (gov't)*
- “ BHDDH and the Department of Housing should be collaborating more
– *RI gov't employee*



The Housing Resources Commission (HRC), in its current state, is not optimally positioned to execute on its broad mandate

HRC has significant legislatively mandated responsibilities, but does not have the resources or structure to carry them out

- The HRC is a 28-person committee that includes a wide range of state agencies, as well as housing and homelessness stakeholders and business partners.
- The HRC's legislatively mandated responsibilities, which were established in the absence of the Department of Housing, have not been meaningfully reconciled, and include:
 - Policy, planning and coordination of state housing functions
 - Establish, implement, and monitor state performance measures and guidelines for housing programs
 - Administer the programs pertaining to housing resources that may be assigned by state law
- Several HRC members and RI stakeholders have noted that the HRC is currently unable to carry out these mandates due to various pain points:
 - Unclear formal relationship and in some instances a duplicative charge with new housing department
 - A lack of administrative and staffing support from the state
 - Many conflicts of interest, forcing a significant number of members to recuse themselves from funding decisions regularly

Voice of stakeholders

“ The HRC isn't set up in a way that allows for stakeholder voices to be heard
– Former HRC member

“ I'm on the HRC and I don't understand what we do
– HRC member

“ We are wasting the capabilities of the HRC and putting people on the backburner who could be useful resources
– RI housing expert (non-gov't)

Municipalities ask that the state provide more direction, support and technical assistance

Municipalities play a core role in housing development, but report feeling unsupported and under-resourced

- Municipalities often have **limited staff** within permitting and planning functions, which can make it **difficult to move developments** forward at pace
 - Municipalities feel they need **additional financial / non-financial resourcing** to accompany state requirements to increase housing production
- Town planners struggle to find the **right information quickly** (e.g., answers on funding sources, and regulatory questions), resulting in additional delays to permitting
 - Municipalities identified the need for a **"one-stop shop"** that centralizes information
 - Municipalities **do not have a point of contact within the state to direct questions to**
- Municipality staff members **do not receive adequate technical training** on key housing topics, including navigating funding sources, understanding regulatory policy, and estimating impacts of development on infrastructure needs
 - To execute new land-use policies, municipal staff would require significant training **opportunities and technical assistance**
 - Lack of municipal **planning post-secondary education programs** in RI has limited the pool of incoming talent for municipalities to hire from

Voice of stakeholders

- “ There needs to be ongoing funding for TA assistance to municipalities otherwise we will not be able to carry the load
-RI town mayor
- “ There is no contact at the state level that can help us problem solve when we run into issues
-RI town planner
- “ We don't always know how to best estimate the impact new development will have on schools and other infrastructure
RI town planner

There is a lack of statewide long-term goal setting, planning and coordination on housing

RI has many capable organizations/agencies, however without clear alignment on objectives, it is difficult to complete work effectively

- There is **limited statewide goal setting for housing in RI**
 - There are no clearly articulated goals to address current housing gaps in the state, which limits stakeholders' ability to coordinate towards a common objective
- There are **few planning activities** conducted at the state level to achieve and monitor state goals, missing capabilities include:
 - **Data analysis and research** to inform strategic planning on a statewide level around topics such as:
 - Housing production needs and gaps across the state
 - Potential policy levers and initiatives to address gaps
 - **Overarching data systems** to track progress on key housing and homelessness goals
- There is a **lack of statewide coordination of activities across all RI stakeholders** (including developers, community orgs, municipalities, state agencies, constituents) to support state goal setting and planning

Voice of stakeholders

- “ There has been limited state leadership to guide a system that requires intentionality on setting strategy and targets
– *RI housing expert (non-gov't)*
- “ We lack granular data to be able to drive policy making and production strategy
– *RI housing expert (non-gov't)*
- “ There are limited department staff dedicated to research and policy so there is no capacity for analysis
– *RI housing expert (gov't)*



Benchmarking of organizational structure







State housing departments may perform four functions across six key policy areas



Source: Expert interviews, stakeholder interviews, ny.gov, mass.gov, ct.gov



Detail on potential functions of state housing departments

	Housing Development	Housing Affordability	Housing Preservation	Individual/Family Supports	Climate and Safety	Homelessness
 Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set housing production targets (incl. affordable housing) Coordinate plans with stakeholders (e.g., municipalities, social sector, developers) Coordinate master development plan across other agencies (e.g., transportation, economic development) Manage real estate taxes Create housing finance capabilities (e.g., HFA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set affordable housing production targets in tandem with housing development planning Set strategy for public housing Mandate tenant protections if affordability restrictions terminate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for long-term housing updates Mandate regular upkeep of housing Mandate tenant protections from landlords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate program planning across topic of homelessness and housing development with goal of homelessness prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for long-term health and safety updates Prepare state housing for climate disasters (e.g., emergency action plan and prevention) Mandate climate conscious building choices Mandate safe building practices Mandate lead abatement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set strategy to end homelessness Solicit input from community stakeholders
 Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce zoning activities Enforce municipality level housing mandates Manage housing finance capabilities (e.g., HFA) Enforce affirmative fair housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce affordability quotas Enforce acceptance of vouchers at rental properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce maintenance of affordable housing Enforce necessary structural renovations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce climate conscious building choices Review/approve new developments for environmental considerations (e.g., California Coastal Commission) Enforce safe building practices Enforce home safety inspections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce availability of permanent housing options for homeless individuals
 Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for and manage federal programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) (Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program) LIHTC HOME Housing Trust Fund Housing stabilization fund Developer subsidies (e.g., market rate and affordable housing) Manage grants for downtown revitalization Encourage new construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for and manage federal programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Supportive Housing for Elderly Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities Public housing Rental assistance programs Mortgage/homeowner assistance Utilities assistance Section 8 voucher Veteran financial assistance Real-estate taxes programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for and manage federal Housing Trust Fund Structural renovations HVAC/utilities updates Electrification Historic building preservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eviction prevention programs Tenant advocacy program Homeless prevention program Fair housing public education and enforcement Disabled/elderly programs Design website with resources available to individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for and manage federal programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Climate related renovations Energy efficiency programs Lead abatement Structural integrity Weatherization program (WAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for and manage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuum of Care Program Emergency Solutions Grants Fund emergency shelters Fund permanent housing for adults experiencing homelessness Coordinate use of emergency shelters Coordinate wraparound services
 Data tracking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyze data (e.g., housing production targets met, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track housing affordability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyze data (e.g., which buildings need support, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyze data (e.g., effectiveness of programs, etc.) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyze data (e.g., number of homeless, effectiveness of programs, etc.) Coordinate collection across homeless and housing service providers (HMIS)



Housing dep'ts vary in their roles on individual family supports, climate and homelessness; consistent responsibilities across development and affordability

		Housing Development	Housing Affordability	Housing Preservation	Individual/Family Supports	Climate and Safety	Homelessness
NY	Strategy	Owned	Owned	Owned	Influenced	Influenced	Not department of housing
	Enforcement	Owned	Owned	Owned	Not applicable to topic area	Not department of housing	Not applicable to topic area
	Programs	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Influenced
	Data tracking	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Not applicable to topic area	Not department of housing
MA	Strategy	Owned	Owned	Influenced	Influenced	Influenced	Owned
	Enforcement	Owned	Owned	Influenced	Not applicable to topic area	Not department of housing	Not applicable to topic area
	Programs	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Influenced
	Data tracking	Owned	Influenced	Influenced	Owned	Not applicable to topic area	Owned
CT	Strategy	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Influenced	Owned
	Enforcement	Owned	Owned	Owned	Not applicable to topic area	Not department of housing	Not applicable to topic area
	Programs	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Owned	Influenced
	Data tracking	Influenced	Influenced	Owned	Owned	Not applicable to topic area	Not department of housing

Key observations of different housing departments

- All housing departments studied take a leadership role in housing development and affordability
- For individual/family supports, strategy is often organized across agencies and key programs and data tracking owned within the housing dept
- Across all three depts studied, there is a similar model for climate and sustainability with key programs in the housing dept (e.g., weatherization)
- Ownership of homelessness varies; NY is an example where homelessness is completely managed by another agency

Note: These observations are based on an initial search through state websites and 8-10 conversations with state experts
 Sources: ny.gov, mass.gov, ct.gov, expert interviews



Capabilities needed in the Rhode Island Department of Housing



When benchmarked against its Northeast peers, RI Dept of Housing has the smallest number of full-time equivalents per capita and is less-funded per capita

☆ Cabinet level

	☆ Rhode Island	Massachusetts	☆ New York	☆ Connecticut
Hsing Deparoutment	Department of Housing	Department of Housing and Community Development	Division of Housing and Community Renewal	Department of Housing
Population (M)	1.1	7.0	19.8	3.6
State housing budget '23 (\$M)	24	716	598	102
State housing budget per 1M population (\$M)	21.9	102.5	30.1	28.3
Federal housing budget '23 (\$M)	TBD	752	463	143
Housing FTE	17	344	625	84
FTE per 1M population	15.5	49.3	31.5	23.3

Sources: NYS 2024 Financial Plan, Mass.gov EOHED FY23 Budget, Mass.gov open payroll, CT.gov FY 22-23 Governor's Budget, Rilegislature.gov, RI Operating Budget 2023, ACS Census 2021, See Through NY payroll



RI Department of Housing has fewer staff members per capita across all functions, with the largest gaps in housing production and homelessness

	Rhode Island		Massachusetts ¹	
	FTEs	FTEs per 1M population	FTEs	FTEs per 1M population
Homelessness	2	1.8	85	12.1
Housing Production /Preservation	0	0.0	120	17.1
Affordability/Community Development	6	5.5	35	5.0
Policy/Research	2	1.8	4	0.6
Admin/Upper leadership	2	1.8	10	1.4
Legal/IT/HR/Finance/ Other	5	4.5	60	8.6
Total FTEs	17	15.5	344	49.1




MA has an HFA and several quasi-government agencies that work on housing production, in addition to the state staff summarized here

Divisions such as admin, legal, IT, HR, and finance may lack economies of scale, suggesting RI may require a larger number of FTEs

1. MA FTEs are estimates from an expert interview Sources: Expert interviews, RI Dept of Housing organizational chart



Stakeholder conversations helped identify three sets of potential capabilities missing from the emerging RI Department of Housing in addition to basic infrastructure

	 Housing Development	 Homelessness Prevention	 Research/Analytics
Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-development planning activities (e.g., setting production strategies, identifying property, etc.) Housing finance expertise (e.g., state and federal tax credits, managing bonds and other funding programs) Municipal and developer financial support and TA for planning activities 	<p>Overseeing and expanding state-funded homeless programs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing and approving state and federal RFPs Monitoring grantee progress Coordinating funding and strategic priorities with CoC Helping to ensure adequate physical capacity for interested providers across both emergency shelters and PSH <p>Pursuing medium-term, preventative measures (for example, workforce support for service providers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-wide goal-setting on housing production targets, homelessness initiatives, coordination of expertise across organizations/agencies Regular data analysis/tracking to measure goal progress and develop new programs to achieve goals
Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MA has 120 people in their housing development division and leads the NE in housing units produced¹ DHCD² has dedicated staff to manage key functions of housing development including planning and financing, tax incentives, managing state and federal grant programs etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In MA, 85 MA DHCD staff are dedicated to homelessness MA DHCD has sufficient staff to manage RFPs and coordinate planning activities across municipalities that don't have the necessary programs/organizational structures in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 3 departments studied closely³ have an overarching research, policy, and analytics division that helps set strategy and evaluate programs In NY, the Chief Research Officer and team of data analysts are critical to their policy development and helped inform the 2022 New York Housing Compact
Stakeholder input	<p>"The [RI] housing department doesn't have the in-house expertise needed to develop new financing tools or work closely with developers to support projects"</p> <p>- RI housing expert (gov't)</p>	<p>"In RI, the current staffing model is entirely inadequate to cover the minimum homelessness functions necessary, let alone begin any homelessness prevention programs"</p> <p>- RI housing expert (gov't)</p>	<p>"It's Bananas – with a capital B – that we don't have a clear understanding of how many housing units we need at each bedroom size, [area median income] level, and degree of service enrichment, in each region of the state."</p> <p>- RI housing expert (non-gov't)</p>

1. 29.1 units per 1000 people from 2012-2021; U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey; Up For Growth (2012-2021) 2. Department of Housing and Community Development 3. MA, NY, CT Source: Stakeholder interviews, expert interviews



Benchmarking stakeholder bodies



Analysis looked at five key dimensions that define a stakeholder body



Responsibility

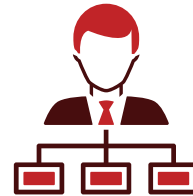
Does it have decision making authority or is it solely advisory?

What programs and funding sources is it responsible for?



State support

Does the state provide resourcing (e.g., administrative support, operational funding)



State relationship

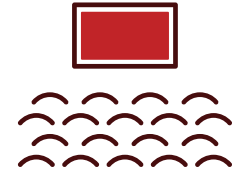
Who appoints the members?
Who do they report to?



Membership

How many members are there?

Where do they come from?



Meeting cadence

How often does the organization meet?

What prompts meetings (regular or specific topics)?



Among states with strong stakeholder bodies, two primary archetypes emerged

A Larger representative body that serves as an advisory group to state housing functions

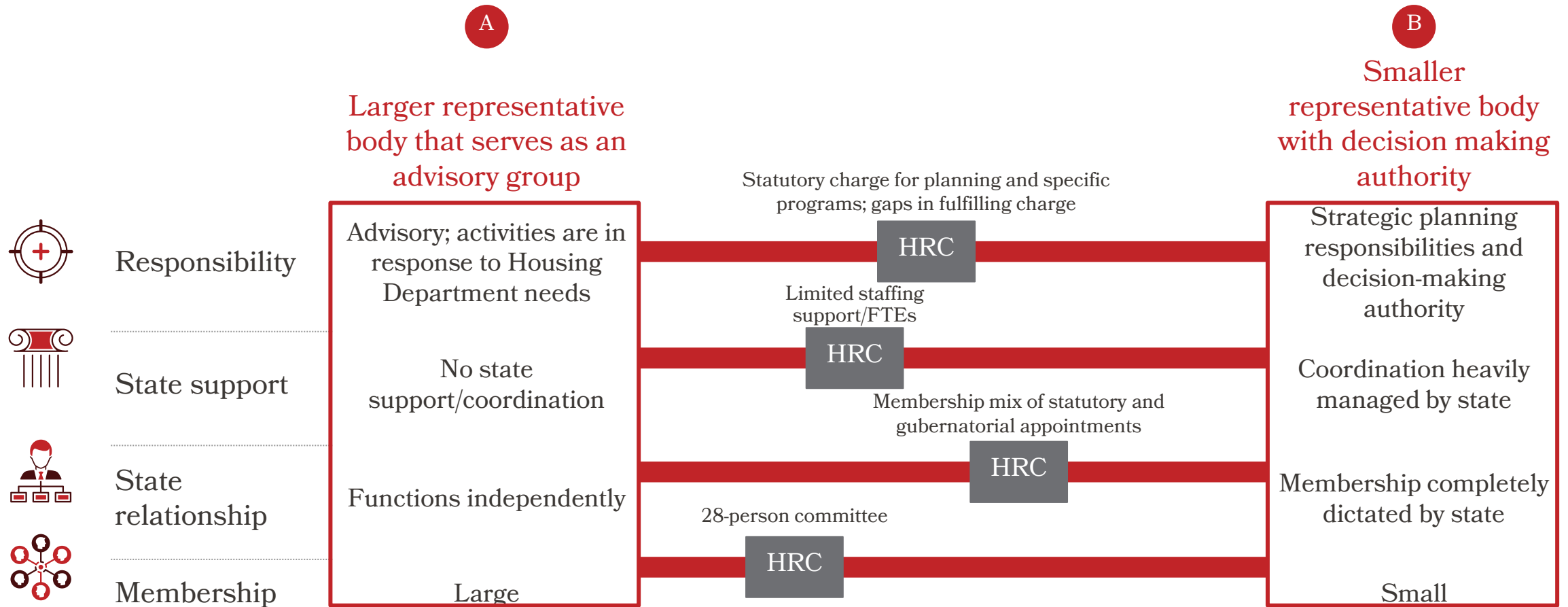
B Smaller representative body with decision making authority

Example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Massachusetts, Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) is an independent nonprofit that serves as an advisory group to the state as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan Partner Advisory Council is a large stakeholder body created to assist with state-wide plan development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Colorado, the State Housing Board is a small board of stakeholders with geographical representation that has decision making authority on key housing decisions, including sign-off gap financing
Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocates for affordable housing and community development activities through policy recommendations, technical assistance, collaborating with other agencies etc. Convenes stakeholders for listening sessions on new programs/policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advises an external policy consultant team and MSHDA's strategic planning team on stakeholder outreach and engagement approaches, helps to interpret stakeholder input, and generates ideas for strategies to address the state's housing and homelessness needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advises the General Assembly, the Governor and the Division of Housing on housing needs Reviews financing requests, adopts regulations, and sponsors research reports
State support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NA Independent organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings coordinated by MSHDA Appointed by MSHDA strategic planning team in consultation with MSHDA director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings coordinated by state admin. assistant Appointed by governor Director of Division of Housing attends meetings
State relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20+ members of the nonprofit board include development corporations, PHAs, Banks, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 52 housing experts and partners including community organizations, PHAs, local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 members, one from each congressional district with experience in housing (e.g., public housing leaders, housing lenders, realtors, construction inspection services etc.)
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ED and senior staff meet with DHCD to provide feedback as needed Has standing committees that cover housing and homelessness issues which meet regularly and are often attended by state housing staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly during planning activities (~1x per month) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet 2x a month
Meeting Cadence			

1. MSHDA or Michigan State Housing Development Authority is MI's housing organization. MI does not have a department of housing. Five of the board members are appointed by the Governor, with confirmation by the State Senate, for terms of four years. The remaining members are directors of state departments
 .Source: Stakeholder interviews, expert interviews, MSHDA website, CO DOLA website, CHAPA website



RI's stakeholder body, the housing resources commission (HRC), does not fit cleanly in either archetype and has attempted to play multiple roles



Appendix

Regulation | Potential Policy Levers (I/II)

	Policy	Detail
1	Eliminate LMIH Act Exemptions	Eliminate exemptions for municipalities not required to hit 10% LMIH thresholds (due to deed-restricted housing)
2	Create actionable goals within Comp Plan	Create actionable housing goals or growth metrics within the Comp Plan process that include affordable housing
3	Mandates in commercial/transit zones	Mandate mixed-use, multi-family, elderly, and affordable housing by right in commercial zones and along transit corridors; need to establish precise parameters
4	Targeted up-zoning	Mandate zoning within village/town centers to allow for infill/redevelopment that matches existing building type
5	Amend ADU legislation	Strike language that requires ADUs to be removed after family member leaves; allow ADUs by-right
6	Reduce parking requirements	Identify areas where future residential development could benefit by reducing parking requirements; take into consideration siting near transit, ALFs, etc.
7	Building conversions	Establish by-right parameters for internal conversions, zoning for mixed-use development in town centers / commercial zones
8	Multi-family housing requirements	Require each municipality to reserve a certain percent of by-right multi-family housing; tie to services / capacity, not population
9	Implement density bonuses	Incentivize density by allowing bonuses for multi-family and/or affordable housing
10	Create flexible development legislation	Remove density barriers through allowing for more flexible zoning (e.g., specific by-right modifications for certain density percentages)
11	Identify "transition zones"	Identify areas between commercial/single-family housing where mixed-use/multi-family housing could be developed

Regulation | Potential Policy Levers (II/II)

	Policy	Detail
12	Standardize/clarify zoning process	Standardize/make transparent standards/definitions for variances, modifications, merging, state support for capacity-challenged municipalities, etc.
13	Codify Zoning Code	Zoning code should become regulation in order to empower the Comp Plan and FLUM
14	Regulate short-term rentals	Enable municipalities to regulate short-term rental market; ban the use of ADUs for short-term rentals
15	Streamline zoning process	Authorize certain decisions to be made at a staff level to streamline variance application process; eliminate public hearings for developments that conform to zoning
16	Establish statewide hearing officer	Establish statewide hearing officer for development appeals; establish clear regulations for appeals process
17	Review and revise permitting pain points	Review/revise the procedural pain points within the Comprehensive Permitting process
18	Allow third-party support for municipalities	Enable municipal staff to use third-party experts at developer expense
19	Institute universal forms/e-permitting	Introduce Universal Forms/E-permitting statewide to expedite review process/cut down on paper
20	Standardize / clarify zoning process	Standardize/make transparent standards/definitions for variances, modifications, merging, state support for capacity-challenged municipalities, etc.
21	Address municipal capacity challenges	Lower the number of zoning board members in certain communities; fewer members needed to vote in municipalities where reaching a quorum is difficult
22	Review and revise permitting pain points	Review/revise the procedural pain points within the Comprehensive Permitting process
23	Amend ADU legislation	Strike language that requires ADUs to be removed after family member leaves; allow ADUs by-right
24	Zoning for assisted living	Include language in zoning codes such as "assisted living facility", "congregate care facility" and "continuing care retirement community" to reduce need for zoning variances and special use permits for developers building senior housing

Housing financing | Potential policy levers (I/III)

	Policy	Detail
1	Implement statewide “Super TIF”	Reward growing municipalities by allowing them to finance redevelopment with incremental tax revenue (e.g., sales tax)
2	Municipal tax benefits	Create municipal tax benefits for communities making progress towards growth goals
3	Social bond program	Introduce taxable general obligation bonds to support housing
4	Carry over applications for Federal LIHTC	For developers that apply for 9% competitive LIHTC grants but do not get selected, carry over applications into the 4% non-competitive pool
5	Centralize key resources / improve RFP process	Centralize information on funding / development process, streamline grant requirements, increase frequency of RFP process, improve intra-governmental communication, etc.
6	Fortify tax stabilization agreements (TSAs)	Standardize TSA program to create predictable process for municipalities and developers
7	Workforce development	Create workforce development/upskilling opportunities to incentivize development; collaborate with universities
8	State level Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)	Provide tax credits to developers for acquisition, rehabilitation, and development of housing to match federal LIHTC program
9	Workforce tax abatements	Incentivize investment in workforce housing by offering property tax abatements to developments that reserve a certain percentage of units as affordable housing
10	Developer-based tax bonds	Bonds for developers (that meet certain affordability criteria) where interest earned on properties is tax exempt
11	Affordable housing trust fund	Introduce dedicated annual bond/tax fund earmarked for affordable housing production and preservation
12	Additional financing for non-profits/CDCs	Standardize/make transparent standards/definitions for variances, modifications, merging, state support for Ensure funding for community-based developers building affordable housing

Housing financing | Potential policy levers (II/III)

	Policy	Detail
13	Introduce right of first refusal for CDCs	Offer CDCs first refusal for newly listed multi-family properties; include funding
14	Land-acquisition loan program	Provide low-interest loans to help developers (that meet certain affordability criteria) purchase land
15	Acquisition opportunity fund	Fund developers to purchase units off the private market/create long-term affordable housing
16	Public-private housing preservation fund	Collaborate with private corporations to fund the development / preservation of affordable housing
17	Comprehensively assess need when awarding funds	Award funding / tax credits (e.g., LIHTC) on a need-by-need basis prioritizing getting projects over the line (i.e., if a developer only needs 4% credit to build, don't offer them 9%)
18	Tax abatements for rebuilds	Incentivize investment in housing rebuilds by offering property tax abatements to rebuilds; prioritize those that reserve a certain percentage of units as affordable housing
19	Housing development loan funds	Issue loans to non-profits/housing authorities for development/rehabilitation of low- or moderate-income housing
20	Developer-based tax bonds	Bonds for developers rebuilding condemned housing where interest earned on properties is tax exempt
21	Acquisition opportunity fund	Fund developers to purchase condemned housing to create long-term affordable housing
22	Expedited permitting process for rebuilds	Expedite the permitting process for developers who are willing to rebuild condemned housing stock
23	Public-private housing preservation fund	Collaborate with private corporations to fund the development / preservation of affordable housing units
24	Housing development loan funds	Issue loans to non-profits/housing authorities for rehabilitation of low- or moderate-income housing

Housing financing | Potential policy levers (III/III)

	Policy	Detail
25	Tax credits and incentives for housing repair	Incentivize investment in housing repairs by offering property tax incentives for repairing and improving properties
26	Home rehabilitation financing	Financing assistance in the form of grants or loans to homeowners who would like to repair and rehabilitate existing housing units
27	Public-private housing repair fund	Collaborate with private corporations to fund the repairs / preservation of affordable housing units
28	Support home-sharing programs	Support programs that match homeowners with prospective tenants looking for affordable housing. E.g., 55+ homeowners matched with young tenants - older adults can receive home assistance and in return provide discounted rent to young tenants

Production targets | Potential policy levers

	State	Enforcement mechanisms	Outcomes
1	New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hochul Housing Compact: Affordable housing is assigned double weight in housing production assessment ➤ Hochul Housing Compact: In localities that fail to meet housing targets, developers of affordable housing can use a fast-track approval process to avoid existing zoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hochul Housing Compact is not yet law; too early to assess outcomes
2	California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Accountability Unit within Department of Housing and Community Development has authority to review local government actions that are inconsistent with state housing plans ➤ "Builder's remedy" allows developers of affordable housing to bypass zoning in cities not in compliance with housing laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically limited enforcement of housing laws by the state blamed on slow-moving bureaucracy, although new changes are designed to enable greater enforcement by allocating additional resources to enforcement agencies
3	Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Housing Choice Initiative: Rewards municipalities that have produced certain rates of new housing units with exclusive access to apply for grants; \$4M in funding available in FY24 ➤ Chapter 40B: If communities fail to meet standards, developers can appeal adverse local decisions to the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Choice Initiative is so far on track, meeting annual housing production goals through 2021 • Chapter 40B is considered a success as research has shown it increased the availability of affordable housing significantly
4	Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section 8-30g: If less than 10% of a community's housing stock is affordable, affordable housing proposals can appeal local zoning denials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the design of 8-30g is similar to Chapter 40B, its impact is more controversial, which some attribute to differences in local expertise and 40B's inclusion of streamlined permitting processes attracting greater developer interest

➤ Incentive ➤ Disincentive/mandate



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