



## Creating Strategies for Flood Preparedness Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program (Boston, Massachusetts)

*This program is one of 12 featured in our Creating Strategies for Flood Preparedness profile series. The flood assistance/preparedness programs highlighted in this series represent state and local efforts across the country to make homes and communities flood resilient and to aid in recovery efforts after flooding events. When possible, each program's background information, funding, impact, eligibility, services, and challenges/lessons learned are summarized in the series. These examples can be used as models for other states and local agencies as they consider local possibilities to develop, fund, and implement their own programs.*



**Program Background.** Boston's Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program was created as an example to show other U.S. cities how to fund resilient investments in affordable housing using U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 4 Capacity Building Program grants. Through the grant program, resiliency assessments were conducted for vulnerable properties, such as those located in a floodplain or at risk for extreme heat. Also, emergency management and training plans were created through the program.



**Funding.** In 2019, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) provided the HUD Section 4 Capacity Building Program with up to \$9,000 to assist with community development. Also in 2019, a Partners for Places matching grant provided \$50,000, and LISC matched with another \$50,000.



**Impact.** Boston's Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program funds up to five multifamily affordable housing organizations or more until funds are exhausted. Often, the properties that completed efficiency upgrades demonstrated energy cost reductions.



**Program Eligibility.** Vulnerable multifamily affordable housing organizations are eligible for the Boston's Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program. Multifamily affordable housing organizations are considered vulnerable if the properties are located within a 100-year floodplain, would be flooded during a Category 1 Hurricane or higher, or are at higher risk of overheating during extreme heat events as a result of their urban location or population. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until funding is depleted.



**Program Services.** The purpose of the grants are to prepare Boston's affordable housing communities for extreme weather, sea level rise, and overall climate change. Boston's Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program provides the awarded properties with resiliency assessments and creates emergency preparedness plans for property owners. Awarded multifamily affordable housing organizations will work with New Ecology, a Boston-based nonprofit that assists with making built environments more resilient, healthy, efficient, and durable. New Ecology will assess their property's climate resiliency and collaborate with property owners to develop emergency preparedness plans to prepare for extreme weather events.



**Challenges and Lessons Learned.** One lesson learned from the program is that it's critically important to identify resiliency opportunities and plan for upgrades; planning can simplify the improvement process. It's noted that flood resiliency improvements can be made over time and identifying opportunity can encourage conversations and lower resistance to change. Also, housing improvements can happen during unit turnover—such as the removal of carpet or replacement of a heating system at the end of the system's life cycle. For more about lessons learned, read this memo: *Resilience Needs of Coastal Multifamily Affordable Housing*.

For information on the Boston's Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program, visit [LISC Boston 2021 Request for Proposal](#) or [Resilient Affordable Housing Grant Program—Adaptation](#).

*For additional examples and resources related to flood preparedness, visit...*

<http://bit.ly/NCHHpubsCSFP>



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