



## TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

### SELECTBOARD

#### Great Barrington Selectboard Meeting via Zoom and in-person at 334 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA – Order of Agenda for Monday, January 26, 2026 at 5:00PM

Link to webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87435677107> | Dial-in: (929) 205 6099 | Webinar ID: 874 3567 7107

*Pursuant to MGL. 7c. 30A sec. 20 (f), after notifying the chair of the public body, any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting of a public body, or may transmit the meeting through any medium. At the beginning of the meeting, the chair shall inform other attendees of any such recordings. Any member of the public wishing to speak at the meeting must receive permission of the chair. The listings of agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the chair, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law*

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER SELECTBOARD MEETING

#### 2. CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION (the Selectboard will return to Open Session)

- 2026-015                    a. Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(6) for the following purpose:  
To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, regarding Housatonic Water Works if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.
- i. **Anticipated Motion:** Move that the Board meet in executive session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A section 21(a)(6) for the following purpose: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, regarding Housatonic Water Works, because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board and the Town.
- ii. Roll Call Vote
- 2026-016                    b. Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(3) for the following purpose:  
To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body.
- i. **Anticipated Motion:** Move that the Board meet in executive session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(3) for the following purpose: To discuss strategy with respect to litigation against the Town concerning host community agreements for marijuana establishments, Theory Wellness, Community Growth Partners (Rebelle), and Highminded LLC (Farnsworth), Middlesex Superior Court civil action number 2481CV00693; and D2N2, LLC d/b/a Calyx Berkshire Dispensary, Berkshire Superior Court civil action number 476CV00041, and then return to open session.
- ii. Roll Call Vote
- c. Adjourn Executive Session and return to Open Session

#### 3. SELECTBOARD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS

#### 4. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

#### 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 2026-001a                    a. November 17, 2025 revised
- 2026-017                    b. January 12, 2026

## 6. CONVENE AS SEWER COMMISSIONERS

- 2026-018 a. Review applications for sewer abatement
- b. Adjourn

## 7. LICENSES AND PERMITS

- 2026-004 a. Application for a New Common Victualler license by Matthew Scott, Optimal Holdings, LLC, D/B/A SoCo Creamery, located at 5 Railroad Street to operate an ice cream shop with 24 seats. Proposed hours of operation are: Tuesday-Sunday, 12pm-9pm **Continued from December 15, 2025**

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

- 2026-019 a. Request from the Town Manager on behalf of The W.E.B. Du Bois Legacy Committee to install displays on the exterior of Town Hall and other Town buildings
- 2026-020 b. Request from Adam Lifshotz of ABL Productions for temporary exception to noise ordinance to conduct two private fireworks displays, each approximately 2 ½ minutes in length on Saturday, January 31, 2026
- 2026-021 c. Presentation on the proposed adoption of a Residential Tax Exemption from Principal Assessor Emily Shilling
- 2026-022 d. Presentation on the proposed adoption of the Seasonal Community Designation from Assistant Town Manager Chris Rembold
- 2026-023 e. Vote to submit 2026 District Local Technical Application (DLTA) to Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
- 2026-024 f. Update Town Roads and Bridges from Department of Public Works Superintendent Joe Aberdale

## 9. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME

- a. *Citizen Speak Time is an opportunity for the Selectboard to listen to town residents, property owners, and business owners. Topics of particular concern or importance may be placed on a future agenda for discussion. This time is reserved for town residents, property owners, and business owners only unless otherwise permitted by the chair, and speakers are limited to 3 minutes each*

## 10. SELECTBOARD'S TIME

## 11. MEDIA TIME

### NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED SELECTBOARD MEETINGS

February 9, 2026 | February 23, 2026 | March 2, 2026 | March 23, 2026 | April 13, 2026 | April 27, 2026 |  
**Annual Town Meeting: Saturday, May 2, 2026 | Town Election: Tuesday, May 12, 2026**

Great Barrington Selectboard and Fire District Prudential Committee Joint Meeting  
via Zoom and in Person at 334 Main Street  
Monday, November 17, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER SELECTBOARD AND FIRE DISTRICT PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE

JOINT MEETING – Selectboard Chair Steve Bannon opened the joint meeting at 5:00pm with members Steve Bannon, Ben Elliott, Eric Gabriel, Philip Orenstein, Garfield Reed present.

Prudential Committee Chair Walter Atwood opened the Prudential Committee meeting with Walter Atwood, William Brinker and Kenneth Schumacher present.

Also present: Town Manager Liz Hartsgrove.

a. Tax classification hearing to determine FY26 property tax rates for the Town of Great Barrington and the Great Barrington Fire District.

i. Open public hearing

E. Gabriel made a motion to open the public hearing; G. Reed seconded. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

W. Atwood made a motion to open the public hearing; W. Brinker seconded. All in favor: 3-0.

ii. Explanation of the project

Emily Schilling, Town Assessor, presented on collective property valuations and calculations for FY26 property taxes noting FY26 value and new growth by class, second home value, tax levy limit/capacity and proposed FY26 tax rate of \$13.24, down \$.55 from last year. She also presented for the Fire District, a total tax levy of \$1.8m and a proposed FY26 tax rate of \$1.51 up \$.01 from last year. She made a strong recommendation to maintain a single tax rate noting a split rate may impact commercial growth.

iii. Public comments and questions, speak in favor or opposition – There were none.

iv. Questions from the Selectboard and Prudential Committee

- P. Orenstein confirmed the second home value is only personal property.
- G. Reed asked about a residential exemption – E. Schilling replied that there are only 391 second homes so it is not a large enough number to cover the difference. She added that the residential tax rate will increase as multi-family and rental properties do not qualify for the exemption.
- B. Elliott added that it would impact second home owners as well as homes assessed at higher values.

It was discussed that an depth analysis could be considered to assess the impact of a residential exemption to understand how, how much and whom it will help. It was agreed that it might be considered in the next budget, but would need to be prioritized from a cost, process and staff time perspective – and would need Town Meeting approval. The low participation numbers for the property tax deferral and senior exemption were discussed and it was agreed the programs would be promoted more broadly.

v. Close public hearing

E. Gabriel made a motion to close the public hearing; G. Reed seconded. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

W. Atwood made a motion to close the public hearing; W. Brinker seconded. All in favor: 3-0.

vi. Selectboard and Prudential Committee discussion – There was none.

vii. Selectboard and Prudential Committee motions to continue/deny/grant

E. Gabriel made a motion to approve a single tax rate for FY26 of \$13.24; P. Orenstein seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

W. Atwood made a motion to approve the Fire District tax rate for FY26 of \$1.51; W. Brinker seconded. W. Atwood asked for any discussion – there was none. All in favor: 3-0.

b. Adjourn joint meeting – The joint meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent of the Selectboard and Fire District Prudential Committee.

## 2. SELECTBOARD’S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS

- B. Elliott acknowledged that the school vote passed by a wide margin and he thanked residents for voting in large numbers.
- G. Reed noted the importance of vocational programs at the new school.
- E. Gabriel provided a reminder about the winter market on Saturday 10am-1pm and stated he would recuse on agenda item #4.

## 3. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

L. Hartsgrove provided updates –

- Announcement of new hires - Deena Gilbert, HR Director; Kate Van Olst, Conservation Agent; Tate Coleman, Director Public Transportation.
- Reminder Town buildings are closed November 27 for Thanksgiving.
- Business license renewals in progress and current licenses expire December 31.
- Donation drives by the Health Department, Police Department and Mason Library, and Transfer Station.
- Grant secured by the Police Department for traffic and pedestrian safety.
- Winter parking ban in effect November 15-April 1 and Seekonk Cross Road closed.
- DPW work with utilities to address low hanging wires on Blue Hill Road.
- MassDOT public hearing for the Bridge on State Road/Routes 7/23 at the Fire Station November 19 at 6:30pm.
- Financial relief efforts for Housatonic Water Works customers include resident-lead filtration purchase/installation initiative and state funds for individual households to be discussed at the December 1 Selectboard meeting.

## 4. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Petition from National Grid and Verizon to install one joint ownership (JO) pole on East Street beginning approximately 50 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Park Street. The proposed installation is necessary to replace existing overhead infrastructure that is currently attached to a tree

- E. Gabriel recused.

i. Open public hearing

G. Reed opened the public hearing; P. Orenstein seconded. By roll call vote the motion was approved 4-0.

ii. Explanation of the project

A representative of National Grid explained wires were currently affixed to a tree and they would be moved to the new pole to be installed.

iii. Public comments and questions, speak in favor or opposition – There were none.

iv. Questions from the Selectboard – There were none.

v. Close public hearing

G. Reed closed the public hearing; P. Orenstein seconded. By roll call vote the motion was approved 4-0.

vi. Selectboard discussion – There was none.

vii. Selectboard motion to continue/deny/grant

G. Reed made a motion to approve the petition from National Grid and Verizon to install one joint ownership pole on East Street beginning approximately 50 feet north of the centerline of the intersection of Park Street; P. Orenstein seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 4-0.

5. LICENSES AND PERMITS

a. Application for a temporary entertainment license and temporary hawkers, peddlers, and vendors license: Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce for their Holiday Stroll, downtown Great Barrington from Mason Library to St. James Place – Saturday, December 13, 2025 from 3PM-8:30PM

- B. Elliott recused.

Betsy Andrus, Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, presented noting there would be 30 activities for kids/families free of charge and she thanked Town departments, Police and Fire for their support.

E. Gabriel made a motion to approve a temporary entertainment license and temporary hawkers, peddlers, and vendors license for the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce for the Holiday Stroll in downtown Great Barrington from Mason Library to St. James Place on Saturday, December 13, 2025 from 3:00PM-8:30PM; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 4-0.

b. Review the Special Permit application and make a recommendation to the Planning Board: application from LSE Sphinx LLC for a commercial scale ground-mount solar energy facility in an R2 zone at 53 Van Deusenville Road.

Mike Vittiglio, representing the applicant, presented the request to install a solar array on 12 acres in an R2 district. He highlighted the property's current state, how it would be cleared and potential visual/sound impact during construction and operation.

S. Bannon asked for public comment –

- Michelle Lobert, 70 Division Street stated this is a large scale commercial development in an R2 zone which is a red flag as it is not a commercial area and R2 zones should be protected and there should not be an exception here. She added that if there are issues with the project, enforcement is difficult and there are complaints about noise from other existing solar projects. She also noted that Housatonic has other solar projects and other issues and that other initiatives like affordable housing and open space should be prioritized.
- Donna Jacobs, 260 Park Street, stated she lives across from a solar project and there is constant noise. She asked that this property be preserved and noted there are already too many solar projects in Housatonic.
- Craig Bailey, 37 Van Deusenville Road – stated the development is very big especially in an R2 zone and the neighbors are not supportive. He added there was not enough lead time for others to attend the meeting.
- John (last name could not be heard), 151 Christian Hill Road, stated clarified there is a solar field behind AmeriGas on Van Deusenville Road.
- Tom Oleary, 41 Van Deusenville Road stated his opposition to the proposed project and noted it is in his backyard.
- Bill Bailey, Housatonic, stated it is in a R2 zone and in plain sight.

- Jen Shumsky, Housatonic, stated a lot of neighbors were not able to attend the meeting, but there are too many solar projects in Housatonic and asked this not be recommended to go forward.  
Selectboard questions/discussion –  
P. Orenstein asked about noise issues and impact on properties on North Plain Road - M. Vittiglio replied there would be a sound study, but the only noise is from the transformer/equipment pad which is closer to Van Deusenville Road and noise would not be heard on the Route 41 side. G. Reed stated the project has no benefit to the community – M. Vittiglio stated the main benefit is tax revenue. E. Gabriel asked about current use of the land and the sound level at the pad – M. Vittiglio replied it was a gravel pit/dumping area but with no hazardous materials and sound is 65 decibels standing next to it. E. Gabriel stated he is not in favor of clearing land for solar. B. Elliott stated his is in favor of sustainability, but there is already too much solar in the area.

E. Gabriel made a motion to not recommend the special permit to the Planning Board due to concerns that there is an abundance of solar in the area, construction and ongoing operational noise issues, and minimal benefit to the community; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

## 6. PREVIOUS BUSINESS

a. Priority Planning discussion: review of and possible vote on updated priority list.

L. Hartsgrove stated the Selectboard has received an updated draft and suggested the final version be approved by year-end so staff can start budget/operations planning.

- E. Gabriel stated he liked the new format but asked for additional time to review.
- P. Orenstein noted many of the priorities involve very complex issues.
- L. Hartsgrove stated she would add the residential tax exemption analysis to the list.
- It was agreed this would be discussed at the December 1 meeting.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Board/Committee/Commission Appointments

i. Appointment to the Conservation Commission: Andrew Miano

E. Gabriel made a motion to appoint Andrew Miano to the Conservation Commission; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

ii. Appointment to the Ramsdell Building Committee: Steven Larkin

E. Gabriel made a motion to appoint Steven Larkin to the Ramsdell Building Committee; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

b. Suspension of daytime parking limits in downtown Great Barrington from November 27, 2025 through January 1, 2026

S. Bannon stated this is done every year for the downtown businesses.

E. Gabriel made a motion to suspend the daytime parking limits in downtown Great Barrington from November 27, 2025 through January 1, 2026; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

c. Holiday Displays on Town Property Requests

i. Request to decorate Cottage Street bridge for the December holidays

A presentation was made for decorating the bridge for the holidays and year round with volunteers maintaining flower boxes and planters at the entrance and on the bridge itself.

The Selectboard liked the idea, but raised questions about getting approval from Mass DOT and liability issues especially in light of the bridge's structural issues. It was noted that prior requests for use of the bridge were denied by MassDOT so people should not be encouraged to be on the bridge. The Selectboard agreed to limited decoration for the holidays would be okay if MassDOT approved.

E. Gabriel made a motion to approve decorating the Cottage Street bridge at the entrance on each side while also putting a request into MassDOT for approval to decorate the entire bridge as proposed; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

ii. Request from Rabbi Levi Volovik for placement of an electric Menorah at the Great Barrington Garden from December 1-December 30 – Requestor did not appear.

iii. Request from Larkin LTD to hang holiday signs from light poles on Railroad Street and Main Street – Requester did not appear. S. Bannon stated that National Grid will no longer allow signs on Main Street.

d. Brien Center Future - Discussion and possible vote to direct Town Manager to send letter of concern to President/CEO Diana Knaebe – The Selectboard raised concerns about eliminating mental health services and the impact it would have on residents of GB and surrounding towns. L. Hartsgrove stated it was a state decision and it was noted that the Town could not support the program financially, but it was agreed an offer of other help. Outreach to state officials was suggested.

E. Gabriel made a motion for Town staff to send a letter to the Brien Center and state representatives; G. Reed seconded. S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

e. Review proposed dates for FY27 budget calendar and Annual Town Meeting – S. Bannon stated this would be discussed at the December meeting.

#### 8. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME

- D. Jacobs provided an update on the whole house water filtration system initiative noting there is a plan to raise funds and customers are being surveyed to assess need.
- Charlie Williamson, 48 Blue Hill Road, noted issues with his car excise tax bill and has reached out to the state, but asked if the Town could help.
- Claudia Shapiro, 78 Egremont Plain Road, asked for video recording of the July 21 and August 11 meetings – S. Bannon stated one is available on CTSB website, but the other is not.
- John (last name could not be heard) stated Multicultural Bridge is working to update the 2017 Trust Policy in light of ICE/federal agent activity locally and asked for the Selectboard's support.
- Erica Mielke, 360 Park Street, provided the history, process and outcomes around the 2017 Trust Policy and noted recent work to update the Policy.
- J. Bailey suggested that a way to reduce taxes is to remove the CPA. He also asked about Town ownership of the property at Prosperity Way and noted potential liability issues. He asked for confirmation that the deed has been transferred. He also noted the school vote's impact on taxes.
- M. Loubert raised safety concerns about flooding at the Guthrie Center and Taft Farms. She also stated it should be kept in mind that we have many residents who are house wealthy. They are on fixed incomes but bought their houses decades ago, and now those houses have increased in value. And so they may be "house wealthy" but they don't have the money to pay the taxes on it. To penalize them because they contributed to our town for decades (taxes) that's not right either. She asked if the Town has spoken to Lenox or Pittsfield about their experiences having a split tax rate to lessen the burden on residents. She noted the increase in taxes for the school and that CPA should be looked at.

9. SELECTBOARD'S TIME – No members asked to speak

10. MEDIA TIME – No media asked to speak.

11. ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING AND CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION (the Selectboard will not return to open session)

- a. Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(6) for the following purpose: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, regarding Housatonic Water Works if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.
  - i. E. Gabriel made a motion that the Board meet in executive session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A section 21(a)(6) for the following purpose: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, regarding Housatonic Water Works, because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board and the Town; G. Reed seconded.
  - ii. Roll Call Vote – By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
- b. Executive Session under MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(3) for the following purpose: To discuss strategy with respect to litigation: Galdos-Shapiro vs. Town of Great Barrington, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board and the Town.
  - i. Anticipated Motion: Move that the Board meet in executive session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, section 21(a)(3) for the following purpose: To discuss strategy with respect to litigation: Galdos-Shapiro vs. Town of Great Barrington if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board and the Town.
  - ii. Roll Call Vote  
This item was not addressed.

ADJOURNMENT - Chairman Bannon adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent at 7:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow, Recording Clerk

Great Barrington Selectboard Meeting via Zoom and in-Person at 334 Main Street  
Monday, January 12, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER SELECTBOARD MEETING - Chair Steve Bannon opened the meeting at 5:00pm with Selectboard members Steve Bannon, Ben Elliott, Eric Gabriel, Philip Orenstein, Garfield Reed present.  
Also in attendance: Town Manager Liz Hartsgrove
2. POLICE CHIEF SORTI RETIREMENT RECOGNITION  
S. Bannon read a proclamation in recognition of Chief Sorti's career and achievements and expressing gratitude for his leadership, dedicated service and commitment to safety and community well-being. State Representative Leigh Davis added her thanks and shared additional recognition from the House of Representatives. Chief Sorti thanked the Town, the community, his fellow officers and his family for their support.
3. POLICE DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION  
Chief Sorti introduced Adam Carlotto, the newly appointed Police Chief, and they provided information on the accreditation review process noting the Department was accredited based on its compliance with state policing policies, procedures and standards. The Selectboard offered their congratulations.
4. SELECTBOARD'S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS
  - Members offered their thanks and congratulations to both Chiefs.
  - E. Gabriel reminded residents about the upcoming Farmers Market at the Housy Dome.
  - S. Bannon noted the Henry Knox celebration was great and well attended.
5. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT  
L. Hartsgrove stated her full report will be posted online. Highlights included –
  - Snow plowing procedures/guidance for residents is posted on the Town website.
  - Dog License renewals are in progress and can be completed online or by mail.
  - The MA EPA will keep her advised on any issues with water provision in Town.
  - Housatonic Water customer reimbursements have increased significantly due to additional outreach and promotion.
  - The Affordable Housing Trust will present to the Selectboard on February 9 regarding the Prosperity Way project.
  - Town's Seasonal community designation will be discussed in upcoming meetings.
  - The Planning Board is hosting public input on the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
  - Budget process is progressing along with discussions with department heads.
  - Tate Coleman received a scholarship to participate in a rural transit program.
  - Establishing standards/policy on how unofficial meeting materials are presented online may be a topic for Selectboard consideration.
- 2026-001 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
  - a. November 17, 2025 – on hold
  - b. December 1, 2025
  - c. December 15, 2025E. Gabriel made a motion to approve the December 1 and 15 minutes; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
7. LICENSES AND PERMITS

- 2026-002 a. Application for a Temporary Beer and Wine license by Jessica Eichstedt, GB Fish and Game Association, 338 Long Pond Road for the following events:
- i. Ice Fishing Derby – Saturday, February 14 from 11am-6pm
  - ii. Ham Shoots – Every Sunday from February 22 through March 29 from 11am-6pm
- The applicant appeared and described the events and how to purchase tickets.
- E. Gabriel made a motion to approve a Temporary Beer and Wine license to Jessica Eichstedt for GB Fish and Game Association, 338 Long Pond Road for the Ice Fishing Derby on Saturday, February 14 from 11am-6pm and Ham Shoots every Sunday from February 22 through March 29 from 11am-6pm; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
- 2026-003 b. Application for a New Common Victualler license for Sandra Viviana Moreno, Nelson Lozada, and Betsy Pulido, BNG Patisserie LLC, D/B/A Patisserie GB, located at 313 Main Street to operate a café with 26 tables. Proposed hours of operation are: Monday-Sunday, 8am-7pm
- The applicant appeared and stated the patisserie would be similar to the previous business.
- E. Gabriel made a motion to approve a new Common Victualler license for Sandra Viviana Moreno, Nelson Lozada, and Betsy Pulido, BNG Patisserie LLC, D/B/A Patisserie GB, located at 313 Main Street to operate a café with 26 tables. Proposed hours of operation are: Monday-Sunday, 8am-7pm pending any and all outstanding signoffs from relevant departments and boards; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
- 2026-004 c. Application for a New Common Victualler license by Matthew Scott, Optimal Holdings, LLC, D/B/A SoCo Creamery, located at 5 Railroad Street to operate an ice cream shop with 24 seats. Proposed hours of operation are: Tuesday Sunday, 12pm-9pm Continued from December 15, 2025
- The applicant did not appear and the item was not discussed.
- 2026-005 d. Application for a New Common Victualler license by Jose Hernandez Vasquez, El Mular LLC, located at 284 Main Street, #8 to operate a café without traditional seating. Proposed hours of operation are: Monday-Sunday, 11am 9pm
- The applicant appeared and stated the restaurant would be similar to the one prior in this location.
- E. Gabriel made a motion to approve a new Common Victualler license for Jose Hernandez Vasquez, El Mular LLC, located at 284 Main Street, #8 to operate a café without traditional seating. Proposed hours of operation are: Monday-Sunday, 11am 9pm 7pm pending any and all outstanding signoffs from relevant departments and boards; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
- 2026-006 e. Application for a New Driveway permit by White Engineering Inc. on behalf of Melton Sawyer and Mark Zustovich located at 177 Division Street
- Aaron Biasin, White Engineering, appeared and explained the work complies with all driveway standards.
- E. Gabriel made a motion to approve the driveway permit for 177 Division Street from White Engineering Inc. on behalf of Melton Sawyer and Mark Zustovich; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.
- 2026-007 f. Application for a New Driveway permit by White Engineering Inc. on behalf of Gregg Navins and Dana Forster-Navins located at 172 Division Street
- A. Biasin described some challenges and approaches to the new driveway due to the property’s steep slope noting with switchbacks it is at a 12% incline.

S. Bannon relayed input from Fire Chief Turner stating the incline must be no more than 10% and the top of the driveway should have 20-foot area for Fire vehicle turnaround. A. Biasin stated the plan would have to be reconsidered as more grading and clearing would be needed. It was agreed the item should be removed from the agenda.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

2026-008

a. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application for housing rehabilitation serving residents of Great Barrington, Egremont, and Stockbridge; Vote to submit grant application and Vote to allocate previous CDBG grant income for contingency.

- C. Rembold, Assistant Town Manager stated the block grant was just awarded to the three towns for FY25 and the FY26 program application has just opened. He described the value and success of the housing rehabilitation program locally which allows low/moderate income residents to keep their homes safe and livable. He stated there are generally a total of 14 projects annually with the maximum cost of \$60,000-\$70,000 per project. The program criteria and resident application process/timing was discussed. Regarding the requested \$25,000 allocation, it was stated some of the homes have liens on them that are paid off at sale so the Town recoups the money – and the money can be used to supplement program funds, if needed. It was added that the program is promoted and there are more applicants than funds available. It was confirmed there are 37 GB residents on the waitlist and in FY24 nine GB residents received assistance.

E. Gabriel made a motion to submit an FY26 regional CDBG grant for housing rehabilitation and to authorize the Town Manager or designee to sign the grant application and associated forms, and further, to allocate \$25,000 from the CDBG miscellaneous income account to use as a contingency for the FY26 Housing Rehabilitation Program; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

2026-009

b. FY26 Vote to grant Trail Easement at Elmwood cemetery to Berkshire Natural Resources Council in accordance with the vote under Article 22 of the May 6, 2024 Annual Town Meeting

- C. Rembold presented stating this was approved at Town Meeting to allow the Town to work with BNRC so trail systems can be connected. He noted work would likely begin in the spring and that an agreement has been prepared.

E. Gabriel made a motion to grant the trail easement to BNRC for continuation of the footpath to form part of the Berkshire County High Road Trail Network as authorized by a two-thirds vote on Article 22 at the May 6, 2024 annual Town Meeting; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

2026-010

c. Vote to accept the affordability restriction for two apartments at 268-278 Main Street in accordance with the vote under Article 18 of the May 3, 2025 Annual Town Meeting

- E. Gabriel recused.

- C. Rembold presented stating the affordable housing restriction is required by the Town's Community Preservation Commission in order to receive funding and that two units were previously designated as affordable and these are two additional units. It was clarified that eligibility for an affordable unit is judged at the application date and the resident can remain even if income increases.

G. Reed made a motion to accept the affordable housing restrictions as presented in the packet to meet the terms and intent of the FY26 Community Preservation Act grant restricting two units in the building as affordable for a minimum of 15 years; B. Elliott seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 4-0.

2026-011

d. Update from Assistant Town Manager Chris Rembold on the Fiber Installation project in Housatonic

- C. Rembold presented stating the project is complete and Berkshire Fiber Connect has been able to string fiber optic cable reaching the center of Housatonic and making wifi accessible. He added that there will be a press release with information about how customers can connect to the network. It was added that hotspots will be in place by spring. It was noted that Fiber Connect has been working with the two Housing Authority sites and they have been very helpful.
- Michelle Loubert, 70 Division St, asked that go forward boards/committees clarify whether Housatonic village core or greater Housatonic is being referred to. She asked about improvement in internet service in her area – C. Rembold replied it depends where the provider can go and Fiber Connect should be contacted directly.

2026-012

e. Board of Registrars

i. Notice to Republican Party of 2 vacant seats

- L. Hartsgrove stated there are two vacancies which need to be filled to represent the Republican party in election administration so there is equal party representation. She stated the correct process is to contact the Chair of the local party to ask for a list of candidates, and if there are none, it will be up to the Selectboard to make the appointments.

E. Gabriel made a motion for the Town Manager to send a certified notice to the local Republican party chair requesting a list of three qualified party members for appointment consideration within 45 days; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

2026-013

f. Annual Authorization of Fire Department Mutual Aid within Berkshire County Fire Chiefs Association, Inc.

- L. Hartsgrove stated this is an administrative item that does not require Town Meeting vote – only for the Selectboard to authorize mutual aid by adopting MGL Chapter 48.

E. Gabriel made a motion to authorize the GB Fire Department to extend such aid subject to such conditions and restrictions as outlined in MGL Chapter 48, §59A; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

2026-014

g. Annual Town Meeting and Annual Town Election

- i. Vote to open the May 2, 2026 Annual Town Meeting warrant for Citizen Petition on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 8:30am, and close it on Friday, February 13, 2026 at 4:00pm
- ii. Vote on 2026 Town Election Calendar and to hold the Annual Town Election on May 12, 2026

- L. Hartsgrove stated the information is in the packet regarding dates for the Town Meeting and election calendar. She added that once this is formally adopted, time for citizen petitions will open the next day.

E. Gabriel made a motion to open the May 2, 2026 Annual Town Meeting warrant for Citizen Petition on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at 8:30am, and close it on Friday, February 13, 2026 at 4:00pm and to vote on the 2026 Town Election Calendar and to hold the Annual Town Election on May 12, 2026; G. Reed seconded, S. Bannon asked for any discussion – there was none. By roll call vote the motion was approved 5-0.

## 9. CITIZEN SPEAK TIME

- Hilary Goldsmith, 1026 Main St, stated property taxes have increased significantly and there are several large projects in the pipeline. She asked that the Selectboard consider a residential tax exemption that would lower the tax burden on residents.

- John, 151 Christian Hill Rd, urged the Selectboard to revise the 2017 Trust Policy. He added that he had sent the Selectboard additional information on past discussions on the topic and asked that they review. He noted the Policy is increasingly important.
- Erica Mielke, 360 Park St, stated the Trust Policy needs to be revisited – S. Bannon replied we are waiting for Gwen VanSant and Multicultural Bridge to make revisions and present to the Selectboard. She added there will be a community conversation on January 19 at 12:30pm at Multicultural Bridge and she invited Selectboard members to attend and noted Police Chief Carlotto will be there. She also confirmed that the DuBois banners have been discussed.
- M. Loubert expressed concerns about redactions of name/address on meeting materials available to the public – S. Bannon stated it was covered in the Town Manager’s report which is online. M. Loubert continued to state her concerns about the recent Planning Board meeting packet, and although an unredacted version could be viewed at Town Hall, she stated it is difficult with only 48 hours notice. She noted that towns locally do not reference the scam and others have prominent notice on their websites. She suggested the redactions are not good optics and impact openness and transparency.
- Eileen Mooney stated the Newsletter asked state Open Meeting Law/Public Records whether redactions are appropriate.
- Bill Meier, 11 George St, asked the Selectboard to consider the residential tax exemption and noted residents are supportive – S. Bannon stated that is on the next meeting agenda.
- Toby Stanton, 69 Division St, stated he does not have a way to pursue any compensation for his loss without the firemen’s report – S. Bannon asked him to send a summary to the Town Manager and she will look into it.
- M. Loubert stated Toby Stanton spoke at a past meeting and it should be reflected in the minutes.

10. SELECTBOARD’S TIME

- B. Elloitt thanked citizens for keeping the Trust Policy top of mind.

11. MEDIA TIME – No media asked to speak.

Adjournment - Chairman Bannon adjourned the meeting by unanimous consent at 6:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Ostrow, Recording Clerk



TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON  
MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

MEMORANDUM

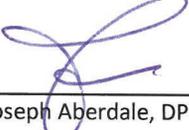
DATE: January 12, 2026  
TO: Liz Hartsgrove, Town Manager  
FROM: Joe Aberdale, DPW Superintendent  
SUBJECT: Sewer Abatements – for the Period 01/01/2025 through 06/30/2025

\*\*\*\*\*

Attached you will find the packet containing the sewer abatement requests for yours and the Sewer Commissioners review and approval,

A total of 14 abatement requests were received. After careful consideration of the information submitted and field data gathered during site visits, 10 are being recommended for a temporary abatement, 1 is being recommended for a permanent abatement and 3 are being recommended for denial. The total temporary abatements for the subject period is \$2,475.00 and the one permanent abatement is \$825.

APPLICANT	SERVICE ADDRESS	CODE	CURRENT BILLING	ABATEMENT	DURATION	DPW RECOMMENDATION	REASON PROVIDED
Michael & Beth Fuchs	15 Berkshire Heights Rd	102	\$825.00	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	No water in the cottage and vacant (Guest Cottage)
Victor M. Cella	88/90 Main Street	102	\$825.00	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	Antique shop on both floors- 1 sink, 1 toilet
Peter Wellauer	29 Cottage St, GB	102	\$825.00	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	Living space in disrepair-requiring complete bathroom rebuild, kitchen cabinet/counter replacement, floor replacement. 1 apartment vacant for 12 years.
Laura Spucches Mahaja	127 Bridge St, GB	102	\$825.00	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	Apt unoccupied.
George Guerrero	127-129 Castle Hill Ave, GB	104	\$1,650.00	\$412.50	Temp	Yes	Apt 129-1(1st floor) & 129-2 (2nd floor) needs repair unoccupied
Westgood	283 Main Street	101	\$412.50	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	Storage no sanitary facilities
Chalkley Trust	541 Main Street	102	\$825.00	\$412.50	Temp	Yes	Under construction - No Sanitary facilities-inspected by WWTP - Verified Water off
Sibeal Trust	506 Main Street	101	\$412.50	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	Under construction - No Sanitary facilities-inspected by WWTP - Verified Water off
Rita Palermo	119 East Street	102	\$825.00			NO	Financial Hardship
Berkshire Pulse, Inc.	410 Park Street	104	\$1,650.00	\$825.00	Perm 2 EDU	Yes	3rd floor and basement are empty- no dwelling units
Jeffrey Gulick	125 Front Street	101	\$412.50	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	Has not lived in residence since fall of 2024- water has been shut off - Verified Water off
John Fitzgerald	114 Cottage Street	101	\$412.50	\$206.25	Temp	Yes	House unoccupied - no water usage
Black Opal, LLC	30 Elm Court, GB	102	\$825.00			NO	Building unoccupied since 2023. To be renovated.
Pauline Dongala	255 State Road	102	\$825.00			NO	Received app 11/13/25 & no water/electric bills included.

  
 Joseph Aberdale, DPW Superintendent      Date 11/12/2026

Elizabeth Hartsgrove, Town Manager      Date

Total Requests:                      14  
 Temporary:                              10                      \$2,475.00  
 Permanente:                              1                              \$825.00  
 Denials:                                      3

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON  
APPLICATION FOR COMMON VICTUALLER LICENSE**

**FEE:** \$100.00 (Payable to the Town of Great Barrington)

**DATE:** 10.27.25

**NOTICE:**

As provided by MGL Chapter 140, the sale of food for immediate consumption has an intimate relation to the public health and such activity cannot be conducted without the proper license and permit.

Please return completed license application to the Selectboard Office: 334 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Great Barrington, MA 01230 | by email: [SBTM@townofgbma.gov](mailto:SBTM@townofgbma.gov) | by fax: 413-528-2290

**TO THE LICENSING AUTHORITY:**

The undersigned hereby applies for a Common Victualler License in accordance with the provisions relating thereto:

OWNER(S) NAME: Matthew Scott

NAME OF BUSINESS: Optimal Holdings LLC

D/B/A (if applicable): SoCo Creamery

LOCATION WHERE LICENSE IS TO BE USED: 5 Railroad Street, Great Barrington MA, 01230

BUSINESS MAILING ADDRESS: 148 Hillsdale Road, Egremont MA

BUSINESS PHONE: [REDACTED] BUSINESS EMAIL: [REDACTED]@optimalicecream.com

DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION: 12 am - 9 pm Tuesday- Sunday

DESCRIPTION OF PREMISES: \_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 62C, Sec. 49A, I certify under the penalties of perjury that I, to my best knowledge and belief, have filed all state tax returns and paid all state taxes required under law.

  
Signature of Individual or Corporate Name

By: Matt Scott  
Corporate Officer (if applicable)

SS# [REDACTED]

OR FID# \_\_\_\_\_



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
 Department of Industrial Accidents  
 Office of Investigations  
 Lafayette City Center  
 2 Avenue de Lafayette, Boston, MA 02111-1750  
 www.mass.gov/dia

**Workers' Compensation Insurance Affidavit: General Businesses**

**Applicant Information**

**Please Print Legibly**

Business/Organization Name: Optimal Holdings LLC

Address: 148 Hillsdale Road

City/State/Zip: Egremont, MA, 01230

Phone #: 860 416 0636

**Are you an employer? Check the appropriate box:**

1.  I am a employer with 6 employees (full and/ or part-time).\*
2.  I am a sole proprietor or partnership and have no employees working for me in any capacity. [No workers' comp. insurance required]
3.  We are a corporation and its officers have exercised their right of exemption per c. 152, §1(4), and we have no employees. [No workers' comp. insurance required]\*\*
4.  We are a non-profit organization, staffed by volunteers, with no employees. [No workers' comp. insurance req.]

**Business Type (required):**

5.  Retail
6.  Restaurant/Bar/Eating Establishment
7.  Office and/or Sales (incl. real estate, auto, etc.)
8.  Non-profit
9.  Entertainment
10.  Manufacturing
11.  Health Care
12.  Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*Any applicant that checks box #1 must also fill out the section below showing their workers' compensation policy information.

\*\*If the corporate officers have exempted themselves, but the corporation has other employees, a workers' compensation policy is required and such an organization should check box #1.

*I am an employer that is providing workers' compensation insurance for my employees. Below is the policy information.*

Insurance Company Name: The Hartford

Insurer's Address: 3600 WISEMAN BLVD

City/State/Zip: SAN ANTONIO TX 78251

Policy # or Self-ins. Lic. # 08 WEC BS0YMN

Expiration Date: 4/17/27

**Attach a copy of the workers' compensation policy declaration page (showing the policy number and expiration date).**

Failure to secure coverage as required under § 25A of MGL c. 152 can lead to the imposition of criminal penalties of a fine up to \$1,500.00 and/or one-year imprisonment, as well as civil penalties in the form of a STOP WORK ORDER and a fine of up to \$250.00 a day against the violator. Be advised that a copy of this statement may be forwarded to the Office of Investigations of the DIA for insurance coverage verification.

*I do hereby certify, under the pains and penalties of perjury that the information provided above is true and correct.*

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 10.27.25

Phone #: Matt Scott

*Official use only. Do not write in this area, to be completed by city or town official.*

City or Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Permit/License # \_\_\_\_\_

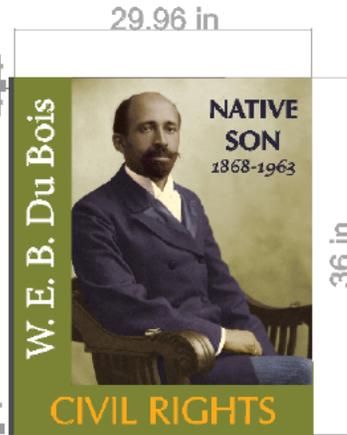
Issuing Authority (check one):

- 1  Board of Health    2  Building Department    3  City/Town Clerk    4  Licensing Board  
 5  Selectmen's Office    6  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_



Aluminum Lamp Post



(2) 30" Fiberglass Rods (3/4" diameter)

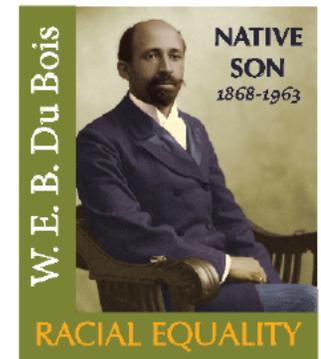
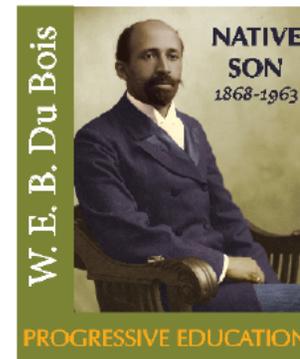
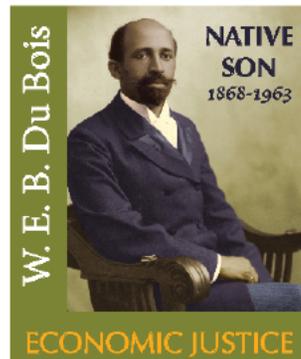
(2) Aluminum Cast Bases

(2) Metal Rings & Pins

(4) 40" Stainless Steel Bands

Banner will be Above Sidewalks  
13' From Grade

Double Sided Banner - All Same Images but Bottom Wording is different



Project Name:

Scale: As Noted

Date:

Phone #:

Proofed By:

Estimated Cost:

Phone: 413-528-██████

Fax: 413-528-██████

Email: ██████@LarkinLTD.com

Address: ██████ Main St STE 1  
Great Barrington, MA 01230



# TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON

## RESIDENTIAL TAX EXEMPTION

Presented by Town Assessor Emily Schilling  
January 26, 2026 Selectboard Meeting

# Exemptions currently offered in GB

Clause 17D Surviving Spouse/Minor/Senior - \$175

Clause 22, 22A-H, 22I - Disabled Veterans- \$412, \$1029, Full.

Clause 37 Blind - \$437.50

Clause 41A Senior Tax Deferral - up to 100%

Clause 41D Low Income Seniors - \$1000

Clause 41K Senior Tax Work-Off Program- up to \$1500

# What is Residential Tax Exemption (RTE)?

Authorized by Mass. General Laws Chapter 59, Section 5C in 1979.

Residential Tax Exemption shifts a portion of a community's residential tax burden from taxpayers who own and occupy their home in Great Barrington as their primary residence to higher valued homes & all other non-primary residential taxpayers such as seasonal residents & owners of vacant lots.

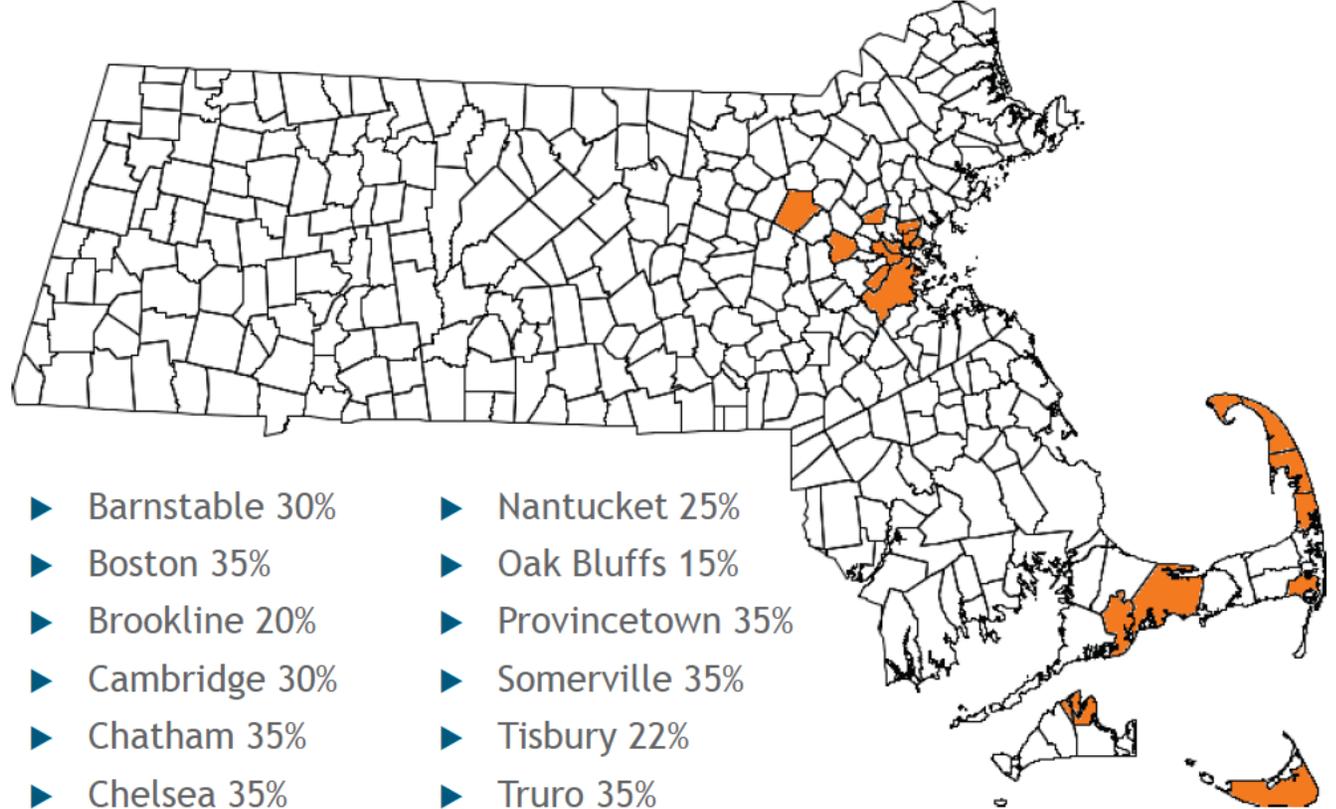
Commercial, industrial, and personal property taxes are not impacted by acceptance of the RTE.

The Select Board must accept or reject it at each annual classification hearing.

# RTE Communities in MA

There are 21  
communities in MA  
that have accepted  
the RTE

There are currently  
no communities  
west of Middlesex  
County with the  
RTE.



- ▶ Barnstable 30%
- ▶ Boston 35%
- ▶ Brookline 20%
- ▶ Cambridge 30%
- ▶ Chatham 35%
- ▶ Chelsea 35%
- ▶ Concord 10%
- ▶ Eastham 3%
- ▶ Everett 25%
- ▶ Malden 35%
- ▶ Mashpee 20%
- ▶ Nantucket 25%
- ▶ Oak Bluffs 15%
- ▶ Provincetown 35%
- ▶ Somerville 35%
- ▶ Tisbury 22%
- ▶ Truro 35%
- ▶ Waltham 35%
- ▶ Watertown 35%
- ▶ Wellfleet 33%
- ▶ West Tisbury 30%

# How does RTE Work?

Properties that qualify will have a portion of their property's assessment exempted from taxation.

The exemption is a fixed amount that is calculated **annually** and is based on the average residential value in Great Barrington for that year.

This amount is subtracted from each qualified property's assessed value before taxes are calculated.

Because the RTE subtracts residential value from taxation, the residential tax rate must be **increased** to collect the full tax levy. The RTE is revenue neutral -it does not change the total amount of money town needs to collect.

Can be combined with other exemptions.

If accepted, taxpayers would see impact of RTE on their Actual Quarter 3 & Quarter 4 tax bills.

# CALCULATING THE EXEMPTION

Determine the town's average residential value.

- $\$1,932,741,370.00$  (FY26 Residential Value) / 3,394 (Residential Parcels) =  $\$569,458.27$

Choose RTE percentage of no more than 35%.

- Using 35% RTE as an example.

Multiply the average residential value by the RTE percentage to get the exemption.

- $\$569,458.27 \times .35 = \$199,299.89$  this is the exemption amount all qualifying properties receive.

Apply the exemption to all qualifying properties.

- Home with value of  $\$448,800$  minus  $\$199,299.89$  exemption =  $249,500.11$  new taxable value

\*Since assessed values change every year, the exemption amount will change as well.

# How to Qualify?

Taxpayers will have a one-time application to complete.

---

Won't need to apply every year.

---

Great Barrington home must be primary residence for income tax purposes.

---

Residents submit most recent federal and Massachusetts state tax returns with application to meet this burden of proof.

---

For residents who don't file tax returns, a combination of documents establishing residency can be handed in. (Motor vehicle excise, voter registration, census form, utility bills, etc.)

---

# Trusts, LLCs and Rentals

Properties in Trusts

- Will qualify if the applicant(s) occupy the property as primary residence
- Has legal & beneficial interest in the trust.
- All applicants must be listed as trustees.
- Trustees that DO NOT occupy the property year-round do not qualify.
- All trusts are different, assessing staff will need to review for eligibility.

Properties in LLCs  
& Other Business  
Entity

- Does not qualify for RTE, even if used as a primary residence by the managers/officers

Rentals

- Does not qualify unless town adopts “Affordable Housing Exemption” local option MGL. Ch. 59, Sec. 50

# Scenario #1 - 5% RTE

\$569,458.27 (Average Residential Value) X .05 RTE = \$28,472.91

# or Residential parcels based upon DLS calculations.

Based upon average residential single-family home as of January 26, 2026

FY26	NO RTE	YEAR-ROUND	SEASONAL
FY26 PROPERTY VALUE(Average)	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 569,458.27
5% RTE	\$ -	\$ 28,472.91	\$ -
TAXABLE AMOUNT	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 540,985.36	\$ 569,458.27
FY26 TAX RATE	\$ 13.24	\$ 13.73	\$ 13.73
FY26 TAX BILL	\$ 7,539.63	\$ 7,427.73	\$ 7,818.66
DIFFERENCE(decrease/increase)		\$ (111.90)	\$ 279.03

\* Amounts subject to change once/if RTE adopted and implemented and # of eligible parcels

# Scenario #2 - 20% RTE

$\$569,458.27$  (Average Residential Value) X .20 RTE =  $\$ 113,897.65$

# of Residential parcels based upon DLS calculations.

Based upon average residential single-family home as of January 26, 2026

FY26	NO RTE	YEAR-ROUND	SEASONAL
FY26 PROPERTY VALUE(Average)	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 569,458.27
20% RTE	\$ -	\$ 113,891.65	\$ -
TAXABLE AMOUNT	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 455,560.62	\$ 569,458.27
FY26 TAX RATE	\$ 13.24	\$ 15.47	\$ 15.47
FY26 TAX BILL	\$ 7,539.63	\$ 7,047.52	\$ 8,809.52
DIFFERENCE(decrease/increase)		\$ (492.10)	\$ 1,269.89

\* Amounts subject to change once/if RTE adopted and implemented and # of eligible parcels

# or Residential parcels based upon DLS calculations.

Based upon average residential single-family home as of January 26, 2026

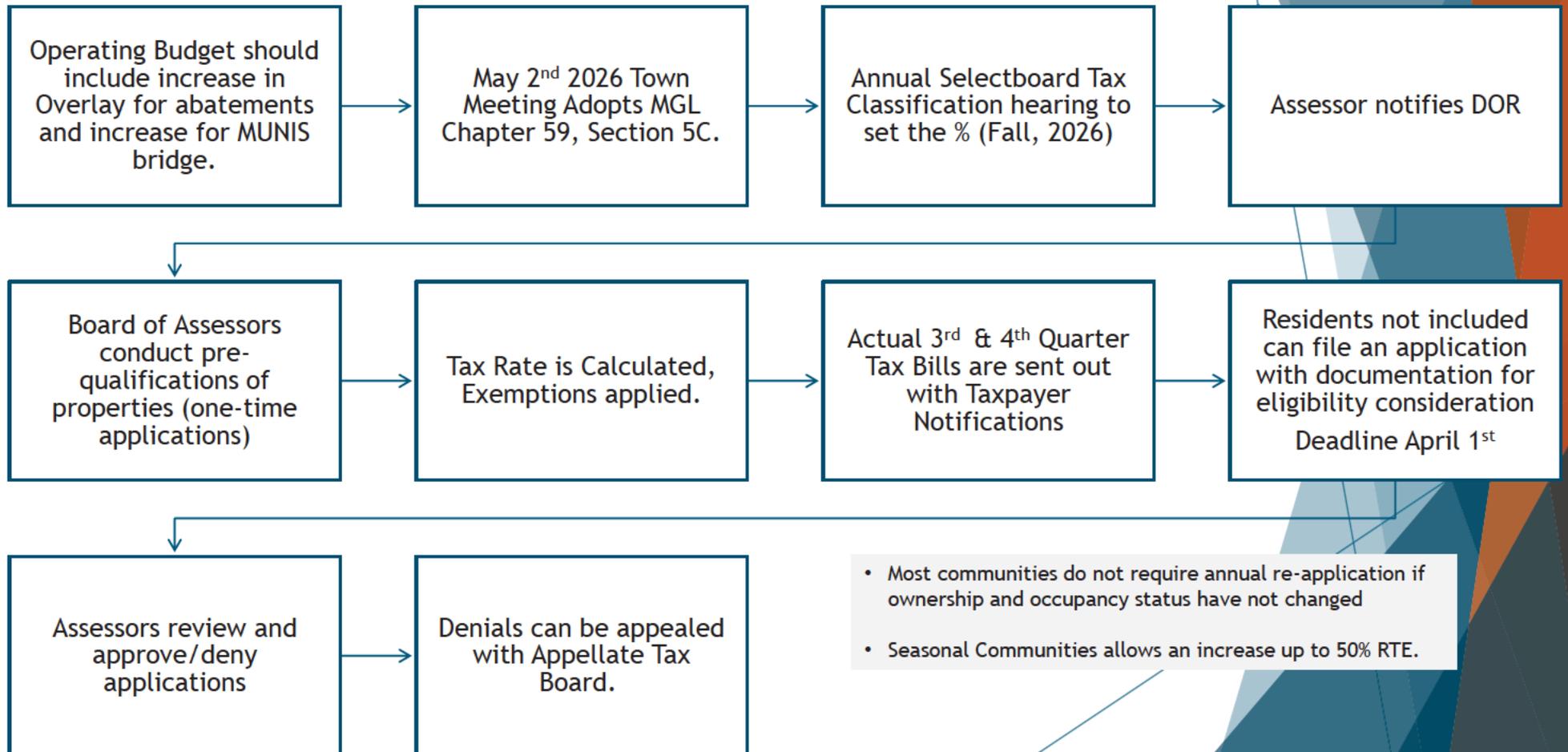
# Scenario #3 - 35% RTE

$\$569,458.27$  (Average Residential Value) X .35 RTE =  $\$ 199,310.39$

FY26 TAX BILLS	NO RTE	YEAR-ROUND	SEASONAL
FY26 PROPERTY VALUE(Average)	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 569,458.27
35% RTE EXEMPTION	\$ -	\$ 199,310.39	\$ -
TAXABLE AMOUNT	\$ 569,458.27	\$ 370,147.88	\$ 569,458.27
FY26 TAX RATE	\$ 13.24	\$ 17.70	\$ 17.70
FY26 TAX	\$ 7,539.63	\$ 6,551.52	\$ 10,079.41
DIFFERENCE(decrease/increase)		\$ (988.01)	\$ 2,539.78

\* Amounts subject to change once/if RTE adopted and implemented and # of eligible parcels

# If Adopted in 2026, Steps to Implement







Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING &  
LIVABLE COMMUNITIES**

Maura T. Healey, Governor ◆ Kimberley Driscoll, Lieutenant Governor ◆ Edward M. Augustus Jr., Secretary

December 10, 2025

Town Manager Liz A. Hartsgrove  
Town of Great Barrington  
334 Main Street  
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Dear Town Manager Hartsgrove,

I am writing to notify you that pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(b) (“Seasonal Communities Statute”), the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (“EOHLC”) has designated Great Barrington as a Seasonal Community. Specifically, Great Barrington has received the Seasonal Communities designation because the community has both (1) a rate of short-term rentals in relation to the overall housing inventory over 3.25% and (2) a percentage of housing stock that is used for seasonal, occasional or recreational use or is otherwise not used as a primary residence by the property’s owner over 12.5%, as determined by EOHLC.

The Statute requires a municipality that receives a Seasonal Communities designation to accept or deny the designation by a vote of its legislative body in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth and the Municipality’s charter. I am writing to ask that your town vote on the Seasonal Communities designation at an upcoming Town Meeting. Suggested language for a warrant article to accept the designation is included at the end of this letter.

We are proud that Governor Healey created the Seasonal Communities designation when she signed the Affordable Homes Act in August 2024. The designation makes new tools available for towns to address the unique housing challenges of Seasonal Communities. The town must vote to accept the designation to use these tools provided by the Statute.

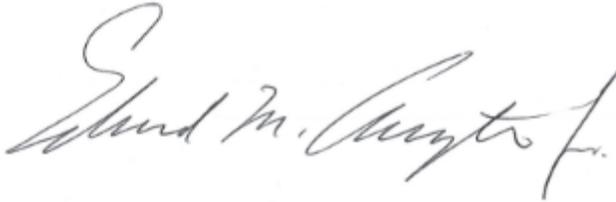
For example, the Statute allows Seasonal Communities to acquire year-round housing occupancy restrictions, develop housing with a preference for essential public workers, create year-round housing for artists, establish a year-round housing trust fund to create affordable and attainable housing, and increase the property tax exemption for homes that are the owner’s primary residence.

The Statute also requires Seasonal Communities to adopt local zoning bylaws to permit undersized lots to be used to create attainable year-round housing and to adopt local zoning bylaws to permit

the construction of tiny houses to be used as year-round housing. Additional regulations detailing these tools and requirements will be promulgated soon.

More information about the Seasonal Communities law, regulations, and tools the designation offers to municipalities can be found at [www.mass.gov/seasonalcommunities](http://www.mass.gov/seasonalcommunities). If you have any questions, please email our Seasonal Communities team at [EOHLCSeasonalCommunities@mass.gov](mailto:EOHLCSeasonalCommunities@mass.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward M. Augustus, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.  
Secretary

cc: Senator Paul Mark  
Representative Leigh Davis

Suggested Language for Warrant Article:

**ARTICLE XX**  
**(Acceptance of Massachusetts General Law: Seasonal Community Designation)**

To see if the Town will vote to accept on behalf of the Town of \_\_\_\_\_, the Seasonal Community Designation as provided for in General Laws Chapter 23B, Section 32(b); or to take any other action relative thereto.

## Seasonal Community Tools- SUMMARY

*Summary of Seasonal Communities Tools as specified in the Affordable Homes Act and subsequent draft regulations from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities*

The Affordable Homes Act provides Seasonal Communities that accept their designation with unique tools to address the housing crisis facing their communities.

### **Year-Round Occupancy Restrictions**

Communities can acquire legal restrictions that require certain homes to be used as year-round primary residences (at least 10 months annually). This helps protect existing housing stock from being converted into seasonal or short-term rentals.

### **Attainable Housing**

The regulations specify a new type of housing category called attainable housing. This refers to a year-round housing unit that is subject to a restriction that limits occupancy to an individual or household with income that does not exceed 250% of area median income, or a lower limit as determined by the local community. This is intended to help households with more moderate incomes remain in their community that may not qualify for traditional affordable housing.

### **Year-Round Housing Trust Funds**

Towns may create a local or regional housing trust fund dedicated to producing and preserving year-round affordable or attainable housing. These trusts can receive money or property from a variety of sources and use it flexibly for housing purposes. Regional trusts allow multiple towns to pool resources to develop affordable housing.

### **Housing Preference for Essential Public Workers**

Communities may adopt housing preferences for local essential public employees (like teachers, first responders, and public works staff) in properties that they acquire or develop. Towns have discretion in determining who is an essential public employee, but any preferences must comply with fair housing laws and be documented with clear data and selection plans.

### **Housing Preference for Local Artists**

Communities can expend funds designated for the creation and preservation of Artist Housing. This housing preference requires complying with fair housing laws and maintaining records describing the need for this housing and how eligibility is determined.

## **Property Tax Exemption Adjustments**

Communities that use the state's residential property tax exemption can increase it up to 50% of the average assessed home value, providing stronger incentives for homes to remain primary residences.

## **Zoning Changes**

Seasonal communities must amend zoning to allow the development of undersized lots (i.e. lots smaller than a municipality's minimum lot size) if they are used for year-round, attainable housing purposes. The housing must still be in a residential zone and comply with floor to area ratio and wastewater requirements, but lot size alone can't be used as a reason to bar development.

Communities also must allow by-right development of tiny houses (a detached dwelling unit of 400 square feet or less), provided they are restricted for year-round occupancy and meet health and safety standards. Communities still have the flexibility to allow, further regulate, or prohibit movable tiny houses.

Both changes give towns and local residents more tools to unlock small-scale housing production, while keeping reasonable community protections in place.

## **Waivers**

A municipality may apply to EOHLC for a waiver if it faces undue hardship in meeting certain requirements.

The full text and details of these new regulations are available on EOHLC's website: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/eohlc-regulations-current-regulations-and-proposed-amendments>

The public comment on these draft regulations is available until October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Town website

Create a Website Account - Manage notification subscriptions, save form progress and more. Website Sign In



TOWN OF **Great Barrington**  
MASSACHUSETTS

Government

Residents

Services

How Do I...

Search... Q

Town Manager Reports

FY2027 Budget +

Annual Town Reports

FY 26 Budget

Budget Presentations

General Bylaws / Town Code

Seasonal Communities

[Home](#) > [Government](#) > [Departments](#) > [Town Manager](#) > Seasonal Communities

## Seasonal Communities

### Seasonal Communities Designation

#### Overview

Great Barrington has been identified by the Commonwealth as meeting the eligibility criteria for designation as a **Seasonal Community** under the Massachusetts Affordable Homes Act. This designation recognizes communities that experience significant seasonal housing pressures and provides additional tools to help stabilize year-round housing, support the local workforce, and sustain vibrant, resilient communities.

The Seasonal Communities designation is optional and requires local acceptance by Town Meeting vote.

The purpose of this webpage is to provide residents, boards, and stakeholders with clear, accessible information about what the designation means, why Great Barrington is eligible, and what opportunities and considerations it may present.

---

#### Why Great Barrington Is Eligible

The Commonwealth evaluates eligibility for Seasonal Community designation using housing and seasonal-use metrics, including:



760 CMR 76.00: Seasonal Communities

Section

- 76.01: Statement of Purpose
- 76.02: Definitions
- 76.03: Designation and Acceptance
- 76.04: Zoning Requirements
- 76.05 Year-round Housing Trust Fund
- 76.06 Housing Preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees
- 76.07 Artist Housing
- 76.08 Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment
- 76.09 Year-round Housing Occupancy Restrictions
- 76.10 Residential Exemption
- 76.11 Waivers
- 76.12 Revocation of Designation by EOHLC

**76.01: Statement of Purpose**

The Seasonal Community designation was established by St. 2024, c. 150 § 5 (the Act) and creates a framework for designating communities with substantial seasonal variations in employment and developing policies and programs to help them unlock housing production opportunities. The designation is designed to recognize the unique challenges in these municipalities and to create distinctive tools to address their housing needs. To effectuate the Act, 760 CMR 76.00, establishes frameworks for the implementation of the powers made available to, and the requirements placed upon, a Seasonal Community.

**76.02: Definitions**

Acquired. To purchase or obtain ownership of a Dwelling Unit in fee simple or to otherwise purchase or obtain a leasehold interest in a Dwelling Unit.

Affordable Housing Restriction. As defined in M.G.L. c. 184, § 31.

Affordable Housing Unit. A Year-round Housing Unit that is subject to a restriction in its chain of title that limits occupancy to an individual or household with income that does not exceed 100% AMI, including, but not limited to, an Affordable Housing Restriction. Nothing in 760 CMR 76.02 changes the Subsidized Housing Inventory eligibility criteria, and no Affordable Housing Unit shall be counted on the Subsidized Housing Inventory unless it satisfies the requirements under 760 CMR 56.03(2) or any other regulation or guidance issued by EOHLC.

Area Median Income or AMI. The area median household income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Artist Housing. An Affordable Housing Unit or an Attainable Housing Unit that is designed for occupancy by households containing at least one person who by vocation produces or supports

artistic and literary activities as may be defined by a Seasonal Community and will use the Dwelling Unit in pursuit of the artistic or literary vocation.

As of Right. Development that may proceed under a zoning ordinance or by-law without the need for a special permit, variance, zoning amendment, waiver or other discretionary zoning approval.

Attainable Housing Unit. A Year-round Housing Unit that is subject to a restriction in its chain of title that limits occupancy to an individual or household with income that does not exceed 250% AMI, or such lower limit as may be established by a Seasonal Community. Nothing in 760 CMR 76.00 changes the Subsidized Housing Inventory eligibility criteria, and no Attainable Housing Unit shall be counted on the Subsidized Housing Inventory unless it satisfies the requirements for the Subsidized Housing Inventory under 760 CMR 56.03(2) or any other regulation or guidance issued by EOHLIC.

Board. The board of trustees for a Trust.

Building Code. The Massachusetts state building code, 780 CMR.

Commissioner. The Commissioner of the Department of Revenue.

Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment. A biannual assessment of housing needs in a Seasonal Communities in accordance with 760 CMR 76.08.

County Agency. Any department or office of county government and any division, board, bureau, commission, district, institution, tribunal, authority or other instrumentality thereof or thereunder.

County Employee. A person holding an office, position, employment, or membership in a County Agency that serves a Seasonal Community, whether by election, appointment, contract of hire or engagement, whether serving with or without compensation, on a full, regular, part-time, or intermittent basis.

Detached Dwelling Unit. A Dwelling Unit that shares no common or contiguous wall with another building or structure.

Developed. The construction or rehabilitation of a Dwelling Unit, which may include direct financial assistance, property tax relief or donation of municipal land; provided, however, that the term “developed” shall not include technical assistance or other supportive services.

Dwelling Unit. A single housing unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.

Endorsement. Approval of a plan of land by the Planning Board of a Seasonal Community pursuant to M.G.L. c. 41, § 81K to § 81GG, inclusive.

EOHLC. The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities established pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B.

EOHLC Office of Fair Housing. The office of fair housing established pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 31.

Fair Housing Complaint. A complaint alleging housing discrimination pursuant to a state, federal, or local anti-discrimination law, including but not limited to, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), and M.G.L. c. 151B, as amended, brought through any of the following: (i) private right of action filed in state or federal court or with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, or similar local agency with authority to investigate, adjudicate, and enforce such complaints, or (ii) brought by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the United States Department of Justice, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, or a local agency with similar authority to bring such complaints.

Floor Area. The sum of the areas of a Dwelling Unit of compliant ceiling height pursuant to the Building Code, measured from the interior faces of exterior walls but excluding crawl spaces, lofts, enclosed porches and similar spaces.

Internal Revenue Code. The United States Internal Revenue Code.

Local Building Code. Rules and regulations imposing more restrictive standards than those established by the Building Code for construction, alteration, repair, demolition, and removal in a city or town that have been approved by the Board of Building Regulations and Standards pursuant to M.G.L. c. 143, § 98.

Lot. An area of land with definite boundaries that is used, or available for use, as the site of a structure, or structures, regardless of whether the site conforms to the requirements of zoning.

Movable Tiny House. A Tiny House that is a House Trailer or Auto Home, as defined in M.G.L. c. 90, § 1 or has been determined by the registrar of motor vehicles to be a motor vehicle, as defined in M.G.L. c. 90, § 1 and is required to be registered pursuant to M.G.L. c. 90.

Municipal Agency. Any department or office of a city or town government and any council, division, board, bureau, commission, district, regional school district, institution, tribunal, authority or other instrumentality thereof or thereunder.

Municipal Employee. A person holding an office, position, employment or membership in a Municipal Agency of a Seasonal Community, whether by election, appointment, contract of hire or engagement, whether serving with or without compensation, on a full, regular, part-time, or

intermittent basis, but excluding (1) elected members of a town meeting and (2) members of a charter commission established under Article LXXXIX of the Amendments to the Constitution.

Planning Board. As defined in M.G.L. c. 41, § 81L.

Primary Residence. The primary place of residence for an individual or household as determined by a Seasonal Community.

Recording. Title to a Lot that has been duly recorded in the registry of deeds or registered in the district of the land court in the county where the Lot is located.

Regional Trust. A Year-Round Housing Trust Fund created pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, §32(d)(iv) for the participation and benefit of more than one (1) Seasonal Community.

Residential Property Tax Exemption. The residential property tax exemption for class one, residential properties adopted pursuant to M.G.L. c. 59, §5C that is applied only to the principal residence of a taxpayer as used by the taxpayer for income tax purposes.

Seasonal Community Essential Public Employee. A household where at least one person is a Municipal Employee, County Employee or State Employee whose employment is necessary to the public health and public safety of maintaining a year-round community in a Seasonal Community, including, but not limited to, teachers at public institutions, public works employees, public safety employees, publicly employed first responders, town administrators and other employees essential for municipal operations.

Seasonal Community. A municipality that has been designated as a seasonal community and has accepted such designation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(b).

Secretary. The Secretary of EOHLC.

Single-family Residential Zoning District. Any Zoning District where single-family residential dwellings are a permitted or an allowable use, including any Zoning District where single-family residential dwellings are allowed As of Right or by Special Permit.

Special Permit. A permit issued by a Municipality's special permit granting authority pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40A, § 9.

State Agency. Any department of state government including the executive, legislative or judicial, and all councils thereof and thereunder, and any division, board, bureau, commission, district, institution, tribunal, authority or other instrumentality within such department, and any independent state authority, district, commission, instrumentality or agency.

State Employee. A person holding an office, position, employment, or membership in a State Agency, whether by election, appointment, contract of hire or engagement, whether serving with or without compensation, on a full, regular, part-time, or intermittent basis.

Subsidized Housing Inventory. As defined in 760 CMR 56.02.

Tiny House. A Detached Dwelling Unit that is not more than 400 square feet in Floor Area.

Trust. A Year-Round Housing Trust Fund created pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(d)(iv), including Regional Trusts.

Undersized Lot. A Lot located in a Single-family Residential Zoning District that does not meet the minimum Lot size requirements for such Zoning District.

Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction. A restriction in the chain of title for a Dwelling Unit that limits occupancy to individuals or households who have executed an agreement with a Seasonal Community to occupy the Dwelling Unit as their Primary Residence for not less than 10 months in a 12-month period, subject to reasonable exceptions for temporary absences as may be included in such agreement. Such agreement shall be recorded with the registry of deeds or registered in the district of the land court in the county where the Dwelling Unit is located and shall be made part of the deed that encumbers such Dwelling Unit.

Year-round Housing Unit. A Dwelling Unit located in a Seasonal Community that is subject to a Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction.

Zoning. Ordinances and by laws, including base, underlying, and overlay zoning, adopted by cities and towns to regulate the use of land, buildings and structures to the full extent of the independent constitutional powers of cities and towns to protect the health, safety and general welfare of their present and future inhabitants.

Zoning District. A geographic area within a Municipality which, pursuant to Zoning, is subject to use and structure requirements that are uniform within the area.

### **76.03 Municipal Acceptance or Denial of a Seasonal Communities Designation**

(1) A municipality that has received a Seasonal Community designation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(b) shall accept or deny such designation by majority vote of the municipal legislative body pursuant to M.G.L. c. 4, § 4 and shall notify the Secretary of the result of said vote within ten (10) business days via certified mail, or any other method specified by the Secretary.

(2) A municipality that has accepted a designation pursuant to 760 CMR 76.03(1) may revoke such designation in the same manner as acceptance.

(3) A municipality that votes to deny a designation under 760 CMR 76.03(1) may subsequently accept the designation by majority vote of the municipal legislative body and notify the Secretary pursuant to 760 CMR 76.03(1) without the need for redesignation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(b).

### **76.04 Zoning Requirements**

(1) (a) A Seasonal Community shall amend its Zoning to allow the following uses As of Right in Single-family Residential Zoning Districts, in accordance with the procedures for Zoning adoption and amendment set forth in M.G.L. c. 40A:

(i) A Tiny House that is a Year-round Housing Unit and complies with all applicable requirements of the Building Code and all applicable requirements of the Local Building Code, if any. A Seasonal Community may allow, further regulate, or prohibit Movable Tiny Houses.

(ii) Residential uses on Undersized Lots, subject to the following limitations:

1. The residential use shall be for an Attainable Housing Unit;

2. The Undersized Lot shall, at the time of Recording or Endorsement, be located in a Single-family Residential Zoning District;

3. Any single-family residential use on an Undersized Lot shall adhere to any applicable floor to area ratio requirements of the Seasonal Community and comply with all applicable laws governing wastewater and sewer systems;

4. Any residential use on an Undersized Lot shall comply with any applicable prohibitions, limitations, or other requirements of the Seasonal Community related to seasonal homes or short-term rentals, provided that in no event shall a Seasonal Community allow the use of any residential housing on an Undersized Lot as a seasonal home or short-term rental for less than six (6) months in a year.

(2)(a) A Seasonal Community shall:

(i) Submit, not later than 60 days from adoption, the text of Zoning adopted pursuant to 760 CMR 76.04(1);

(ii) Maintain a record of all development permitted under such Zoning established pursuant to 760 CMR 76.04(1), which shall include, but not be limited to, the address, gross floor area, and any income restrictions that apply to Dwelling Units developed under such Zoning, and make such record available to EOHLC upon request.

### **76.05 Year-round Housing Trust Fund**

(1) (a) A Seasonal Community may establish a Trust to provide for the creation and preservation of Affordable Housing Units and Attainable Housing Units for the benefit of year-round residents.

(b) A Seasonal Community may establish a Trust by a majority vote of the municipal legislative body under M.G.L. c. 4, § 4 and may establish a Regional Trust with other Seasonal Communities, provided that each Seasonal Community participating in such

Regional Trust accepts their participation in the Regional Trust by a majority vote of their respective municipal legislative body.

(c) A Regional Trust shall expire after a set term of calendar years agreed upon by all members to said trust, measured from the date of its creation or reauthorization, unless specifically reauthorized for a subsequent period by all Seasonal Communities participating in such Regional Trust. If EOHLC revokes the designation of a Seasonal Community participating in a Regional Trust pursuant to 760 CMR 76.12, the Seasonal Community that has had their designation revoked may continue to participate in said Regional Trust only until the expiration of such term, or after five (5) years from the creation or authorization of said Regional Trust, whichever is sooner.

- (2) Each Trust shall have a Board, which shall include not less than five (5) trustees, including the chief executive officer, as defined by M.G.L. c. 4, § 7, of the city or town, or their designee, and where the chief executive officer is a multi-member body, that body shall designate one (1) of its members to serve on the board. Trustees shall be appointed in a city by the mayor or by the city manager in a Plan D or P an E municipality, subject in either case, to confirmation by the city council, and in a town by the board of selectmen, shall serve for a term not to exceed three (3) years. Boards representing Trusts where more than one Seasonal Community participates shall ensure, to the extent practicable, representation from each community participating in the Trust.
- (3) A trustee of the Trust may, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by law, serve on any other municipal board or committee, including, but not limited to a board of trustees established pursuant to M.G.L. c. 44, § 55C.
- (4) (a) The powers of the board, all of which shall be carried out in furtherance of the purpose of the Trust and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 44, shall include, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by law, the following powers, which may be modified or omitted to the extent authorized by law:
  - (i) To accept and receive real property, personal property or money, by gift, grant, contribution, devise or transfer from any person, firm, corporation or other public or private entity, including but not limited to money, grants of funds or other property, including a Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction, tendered to the Trust in connection with any ordinance or by-law or any general or special law or any other source, including money from M.G.L. c. 44B; provided, however, that any such money received from M.G.L. c. 44B shall be used exclusively for community housing, as defined in M.G.L. c. 44B, § 2, and shall remain subject to all the rules, regulations and limitations of that chapter when expended by the Trust, and such funds shall be accounted for separately by the Trust; and provided further, that at the end of each fiscal year, the Trust shall ensure that all expenditures of funds received from said chapter 44B are reported to the community preservation committee of the city or town for inclusion in the community preservation initiatives report to the department of revenue;

- (ii) To purchase and retain real or personal property;
- (iii) To sell, lease, exchange, transfer or convey any personal, mixed, or real property at public auction or by private contract for such consideration and on such terms as to credit or otherwise, and to make such contracts and enter into such undertaking relative to Trust property as the board deems advisable notwithstanding the length of any such lease or contract;
- (iv) To execute, acknowledge and deliver deeds, assignments, transfers, pledges, leases, covenants, contracts, promissory notes, releases, grant agreements and other instruments sealed or unsealed, necessary, proper or incident to any transaction in which the Board engages for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Trust;
- (v) To employ advisors and agents, such as accountants, appraisers and lawyers as the Board deems necessary;
- (vi) To pay reasonable compensation and expenses to all advisors and agents and to apportion such compensation between income and principal as the Board deems advisable;
- (vii) To apportion receipts and charges between incomes and principal as the Board deems advisable, to amortize premiums and establish sinking funds for such purpose, and to create reserves for depreciation depletion or otherwise;
- (viii) To participate in any reorganization, recapitalization, merger or similar transactions; and to give proxies or powers of attorney with or without power of substitution to vote any securities or certificates of interest; and to consent to any contract, lease, mortgage, purchase or sale of property, by or between any corporation and any other corporation or person;
- (ix) To deposit any security with any protective reorganization committee, and to delegate to such committee such powers and authority with relation thereto as the Board may deem proper and to pay, out of Trust property, such portion of expenses and compensation of such committee as the Board may deem necessary and appropriate;
- (x) To carry property for accounting purposes other than acquisition date values;
- (xi) To borrow money on such terms and conditions and from such sources as the Board deems advisable, to mortgage and pledge trust assets as collateral;
- (xii) To make distributions or divisions of principal in kind;
- (xiii) To comprise, attribute, defend, enforce, release, settle or otherwise adjust claims in favor or against the Trust, including claims for taxes, and to accept any property,

- either in total or partial satisfaction of any indebtedness or other obligation, and to continue to hold the same for such period of time as the Board may deem appropriate;
- (xiv) To manage or improve real property, including but not limited to subdividing said real property; and to abandon any property which the Board determined not to be worth retaining;
  - (xv) To hold all or part of the trust property uninvested for such purposes and for such time as the Board may deem appropriate; and
  - (xvi) To extend the time for payment of any obligation to the Trust;
  - (xvii) Any additional powers authorized by any general law or special law.
- (5) To the extent authorized by law, moneys paid to the Trust in accordance with any zoning ordinance or by-law, exaction fee, or private contribution may be paid directly into the Trust and need not be appropriated or accepted and approved into the Trust. General revenues appropriated into the Trust may, to the extent authorized by law, become Trust property and, to the extent authorized by law, need not be further appropriated. All moneys remaining in the trust at the end of any fiscal year, whether or not expended by the Board within one (1) year of the date they were appropriated into the Trust, may, to the extent authorized by law, remain trust property.
  - (6) To the extent required by law, the Trust shall be a public employer and the members of the board shall be public employees for purposes of chapter 258.
  - (7) To the extent required by law, the Trust shall be deemed a municipal agency and the Trustees special municipal employees, for purposes of chapter 268A.
  - (8) The books and records of the Trust shall be audited annually by an independent auditor in accordance with accepted accounting practices.
  - (9) To the extent required by law, the trust shall be a governmental body for purposes of sections 23A, 23B and 23C of chapter 39.

#### **76.06 Housing Preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees**

(1)(a) A Dwelling Unit Acquired or Developed by a Seasonal Community may include a preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees, subject to the following limitations:

- (i) A Seasonal Community Essential Public Employee preference for a Dwelling Unit shall not violate state and federal fair housing laws, which include but are not limited to, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), and M.G.L. c. 151B, as amended, including through discriminatory effects on classes of persons protected under such state or federal fair housing laws; and

(ii) A Seasonal Community Essential Public Employee preference for a Dwelling Unit that is otherwise eligible for the Subsidized Housing Inventory or is assisted by EOHLC shall comply with all of the following:

1. EOHLC Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Resident Selection Plan Guidelines or other related EOHLC guidance or directives pertaining to affirmative fair housing marketing and resident selection, as may be required by EOHLC, and as may be amended from time to time; and

2. Applicable state and federal subsidy program requirements.

(2) A preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees under 760 CMR 76.06(1) may be cited as a state program or policy supporting housing for a specified group for the purposes of the general public use requirement under § 42(g)(9) of the Internal Revenue Code so long as the preference otherwise complies with applicable law and the Seasonal Community has complied with the requirements under 760 CMR 76.06(3).

(3)(a) A Seasonal Community implementing a Housing Preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees under this section shall gather and maintain records including:

- (i) A narrative describing the need for the preference, supported by data collected by the Seasonal Community and any public input presented to the Seasonal Community as may be available.
- (ii) A narrative describing how the Seasonal Community determined the employment types that are necessary to the public health and public safety of maintaining a year-round community in the Seasonal Community.
- (iii) A narrative describing how the preference will be applied to tenant selection for a Dwelling Units subject to such preference.
- (iv) The number of Dwelling Units within the Seasonal Community that the preference applies to. For each Dwelling Unit where the preference applies, the Seasonal Community shall gather and maintain the following:
  1. The date that such preference was applied to the unit;
  2. Whether the unit is an Affordable Housing Unit or Attainable Housing Unit;
  3. Whether the unit is a rental unit or owner-occupied; and
  4. The number of bedrooms in the unit.

- (v) To the extent feasible, a summary of demographic information of applicant and resident households of Dwelling Units subject to the preference, in a form as may be designated by the Secretary.

(4) A Seasonal Community implementing a Housing Preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees under this section shall make available all records gathered and maintained pursuant to 760 CMR 76.06(3) upon reasonable request by EOHLC, in a form that may be designated by the Secretary.

(5) A Seasonal Community implementing a Housing Preference for Seasonal Community Essential Public Employees under this section shall provide written notice to the EOHLC Office of Fair Housing within ten (10) days of any of the following: (i) receipt of notice of any Fair Housing Complaint against the Seasonal Community pertaining to such preference and (ii) receipt of any information that demonstrates, or may demonstrate upon reasonable investigation, the existence of a Fair Housing Complaint against an owner, manager or agent thereof of a Dwelling Unit subject to such preference.

#### **76.07 Artist Housing**

(1)(a) A Seasonal Community may expend funds designated for the creation and preservation of Artist Housing, subject to the following limitations:

- (i) Artist Housing shall not violate state and federal fair housing laws, which include but are not limited to, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), and M.G.L. c. 151B, as amended, including through discriminatory effects on classes of persons protected under such state or federal fair housing laws;
- (ii) Artist Housing that is otherwise eligible for the Subsidized Housing Inventory or is assisted by EOHLC shall comply with all of following:

1. EOHLC Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing and Resident Selection Plan Guidelines or other related EOHLC guidance or directives pertaining to affirmative fair housing marketing and resident selection, as may be required by EOHLC, and as may be amended from time to time; and
2. applicable state and federal subsidy program requirements.

(2)(a) A Seasonal Community expending funds designated for the creation and preservation of Artist Housing under this section shall gather and maintain records including, but not limited to:

- (i) A narrative describing the need for the creation and preservation of Artist Housing, supported by data collected by the Seasonal Community and any public input presented to the Seasonal Community as may be available;

(ii) A narrative describing how the Artist Housing will be designed to support the pursuit of artistic or literary vocations; and

(iii) A narrative describing how a household's qualification for Artist Housing will be fairly determined and applied to tenant selection for Artist Housing.

(3) A Seasonal Community expending funds for Artist Housing under this section shall provide written notice, in a form provided by EOHLIC, to the EOHLIC Office of Fair Housing within ten (10) days of any of the following: (i) receipt of notice of any Fair Housing Complaint against the Seasonal Community pertaining to Artist Housing and (ii) receipt of any information that demonstrates, or may demonstrate upon reasonable investigation, the existence of a Fair Housing Complaint against an owner, manager or agent thereof of Artist Housing.

#### **76.08 Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment**

(1) (a) A Seasonal Community may expend funds to develop, on a biannual basis, a Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment, that shall at a minimum examine the following:

- (i) The Seasonal Community's existing demographics and housing stock, along with a projection of future population and housing needs;
- (ii) The capacity of existing infrastructure to accommodate current population and anticipated future growth in the Seasonal Community;
- (iii) Housing development constraints and limitations on its current and future needs, including but not limited to availability and capacity of water and sewer infrastructure, availability of developable land, and environmental factors limiting housing development;

#### **76.09 Year-round Housing Occupancy Restrictions**

(1) (a) A Seasonal Community, a Trust, or a Regional Trust of which it is a member, may acquire a Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction for rental or other housing.

(b) A Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction held by a Seasonal Community shall, to the extent authorized under M.G.L. c. 184, be exempt from the following:

- (i) the requirements under MGL c. 184, §§ 27 to § 30, inclusive; and
- (ii) the procedural requirements under M.G.L. c. 184, § 32.

(c) A Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction held by a Seasonal Community shall be subject to the thirty (30) year limitation imposed by M.G.L. c. 184, § 23, unless eligible for exemption pursuant to said § 23.

(d) If a Dwelling Unit is subject to an Affordable Housing Restriction, the holder of the Year-round Housing Occupancy Restriction shall execute an agreement to subordinate obligations and covenants under the Year-Round Housing Occupancy Restriction to the obligations and covenants under the Affordable Housing Restriction.

- (2) A Seasonal Community shall maintain a record of all Year-round Housing Occupancy Restrictions within the Seasonal Community, including the address and any income restrictions placed on Dwelling Units subject to said Year-round Housing Occupancy Restrictions, and shall make said record available to EOHLIC upon request.

#### **76.10 Residential Exemption**

- (1) Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(f), a Seasonal Community that has adopted the Residential Property Tax Exemption, may, at the option of the board of selectmen or mayor, with the approval of the city council, as the case may be, increase such exemption to not more than 50 per cent of the average assessed value of all class one, residential, parcels within such city or town.
- (2) Upon request by the Commissioner, a Seasonal Community shall provide to the Commissioner evidence of its acceptance of the Seasonal Community designation and evidence of its vote to increase the residential property tax exemption under 760 CMR 76.10(1). The Commissioner may require modifications to a proposed increase to ensure efficient and lawful administration of local property tax collection, including but not limited to, establishing an effective date for the exemption increase.
- (3) A city or town that has revoked a Seasonal Community designation pursuant to 760 CMR 76.03(2) or had a Seasonal Community designation revoked by EOHLIC pursuant to 760 CMR 12.00 shall not continue to provide an increase to the Residential Property Tax Exemption pursuant to 760 CMR 76.10(1) and shall be limited to a Residential Property Tax Exemption that does not exceed the maximum exemption provided under M.G.L. c. 59, § 5C.
- (4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to modify any other requirements of M.G.L. c. 59, § 5C.

#### **76.11 Waivers**

- (1) A Seasonal Community may apply to EOHLIC for a waiver from any of the requirements under M.G.L. 23B, § 32 and any of the requirements under 760 CMR 76.00 by submitting a form developed by EOHLIC which shall require the Seasonal Community to provide a written statement of facts on which such waiver request is based and any supporting documentation, and any additional information as may be required by EOHLIC. In deciding whether to grant a waiver, EOHLIC may consider whether the requirement that the Seasonal Community has requested a waiver for can reasonably be carried out by existing staff or a regional staff person performing equivalent duties and whether compliance with the requirement will result in undue hardship.

## **76.12 Revocation of Designation**

- (1) (a) EOHLC may revoke a Seasonal Community designation under any of the following circumstances:
- (i) The Seasonal Community fails to adopt zoning pursuant to 760 CMR 76.04(1) within 18 months from the effective date of 760 CMR 76.00 or 18 months from the local acceptance of the designation pursuant to 760 CMR 76.03, whichever is later;
  - (ii) The Seasonal Community does not meaningfully permit new residential units under zoning established pursuant to 760 CMR 76.04(1). For the purposes of this section, EOHLC may use the following factors to determine whether a Seasonal Community has meaningfully permitted new residential units:
    - 1. The number of Year-round Housing Units in the Seasonal Community;
    - 2. The number of Year-round Housing Units permitted under zoning adopted by a Seasonal Community pursuant to 760 CMR 76.04(1);
    - 3. The annual percentage increase in Year-round Housing Units in a Seasonal Community;
    - 4. The annual gross number of Year-round Housing Units in a Seasonal Community;
  - (iii) EOHLC determines that the Seasonal Community no longer satisfies the criteria for designation pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(b), on which data may be reassessed from time to time, provided, however, that EOHLC may only revoke a Seasonal Community's designation based on that community's consistent failure to satisfy said criteria over five (5) or more consecutive years.

### **Regulatory Authority**

St. 2024, c. 150 s. 5; M.G.L. c. 23B, § 32(h).

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

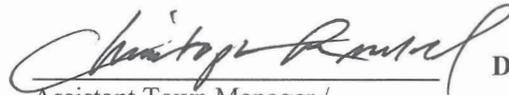
**TITLE:** Application to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)

**BACKGROUND:** The BRPC receives funds from the state each year to provide technical assistance to communities on eligible projects. Communities do not receive the funds directly; rather, BRPC receives the funding and their staff does the work, which is above and beyond what the municipalities can usually do alone. Some examples of past DLTA projects in Great Barrington include a the 40R Smart Growth Overlay District, a Housing Needs Study, zoning review in Housatonic, Master Plan technical assistance, and economic development surveys. Proposals are brief, but, each application must fall within the guidelines of the each year's DLTA program, must be submitted by January 30, and must be signed by the Chief Elected Official.

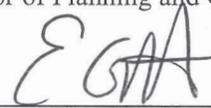
This year the Planning Department is considering a few projects to put forward in a DLTA application, including: support for updating our zoning to be compliant with Seasonal Communities regulations, updating our zoning to be compliant with clean energy facility siting guidelines, and/or support to begin a Master Plan update.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Authorize the Chair to sign the DLTA application.

WRITTEN BY:

 DATE: 1/21/20  
Assistant Town Manager /  
Director of Planning and Community Development

APPROVED BY:

 DATE: 1/21/20  
Town Manager



**BRPC**  
Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

MALCOLM FICK, Chair  
BUCK DONOVAN, Vice-Chair  
SHEILA IRVIN, Clerk  
SAM HAUPT, Treasurer  
THOMAS MATUSZKO,  
Executive Director

---

Memorandum

TO: BRPC Delegates and Alternates

FROM: CJ Hoss, Community Planning and Development Program Manager

SUBJ: DLTA Applications Now Available

DATE: December 5, 2025

This memorandum is to inform you that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is soliciting eligible projects from its member communities to receive technical assistance under the 2026 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. Under this program, BRPC staff provides technical assistance to communities, at no cost to the community, on eligible projects. Project eligibility is outlined in the enclosed documents.

Applicants must be municipalities and applications must be signed by the chief elected official. Applications must be emailed and are due no later than January 30, 2026. Information and application material is on the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission website, [www.berkshireplanning.org](http://www.berkshireplanning.org) under News & Announcements. A fillable version of the application is also provided to facilitate the application process.

Please feel free to reach out to me ([choss@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:choss@berkshireplanning.org) or 413-442-1521 x44) if you or your staff have any questions or wish to discuss potential projects.



MALCOLM FICK, Chair  
JOHN DUVAL, Vice-Chair  
SHEILA IRVIN, Clerk  
BUCK DONOVAN, Treasurer  
THOMAS MATUSZKO, A.I.C.P.  
Executive Director

---

December 5, 2025

## District Local Technical Assistance 2026

### Notice of Available Technical Assistance

The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) is soliciting eligible projects from its member communities to receive technical assistance under the 2026 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program. Under this program, BRPC staff provides technical assistance to communities on eligible projects at no cost to the community.

#### **Description of the DLTA Program**

The DLTA fund is an annual grant established via Massachusetts General Law. For fiscal year 2026, this fund received an annual appropriation to be distributed statewide to regional planning agencies to support local and regional planning and service provision projects. Please note that any awards made under this solicitation are contingent on the availability of funds provided to BRPC from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

#### **Priority Funding Areas for Technical Assistance**

A proposed project must fall into one of the priority categories listed below to be considered eligible for technical assistance (please see Attachment # 1 for examples of eligible projects for each priority funding area):

- 1) Planning Ahead for Housing
- 2) Planning Ahead for Growth
- 3) Housing Choice Initiative

While related to categories #1 and #2, an additional category is included this year for communities explicitly requesting assistance related to the new Seasonal Communities program:

- 4) Seasonal Communities Support

#### **Application Deadline**

Applications for technical assistance must be received via email to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission by 5:00 PM on **Friday, January 30, 2026**. **Submissions before this deadline are very welcome and encouraged.**

## **Instructions**

Please complete and return the attached "Request for Technical Assistance" form before the application deadline. **The Select Board Chairperson or Mayor must sign all applications.**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss potential projects with BRPC staff **before** submitting an application. Potential applicants are welcome to also reach out to discuss community needs and projects that may be larger in scope than a typical DLTA project. Staff can assist in evaluating whether DLTA or other funding sources may be the most appropriate fit for a project. If a project requires funding outside of or in addition to DLTA, staff can potentially assist in preparing grant applications to other funding sources at no charge to the community.

## **No Local Match Requirement**

There is no local match requirement to receive technical assistance under the 2026 DLTA program. However, municipalities are encouraged to provide a voluntary cash or in-kind match.

## **Evaluation of Applications**

Preference will be given to applications that meet the following criteria:

### **Primary Criteria**

- *Supports municipalities seeking assistance to achieve designation under the Housing Choice Initiative*
- *Achieves the objectives of the two priority funding areas, especially COVID-19 recovery activities that fall within the priority categories*
- *Regional Cooperation and/or resource sharing (e.g., involves multiple (2+) municipalities and supports collaboration)*
- *Responds to a regional development need*
- *Enhances the region's economic competitiveness, including local permit streamlining, assessing economic development opportunities in a community or region, downtown economic revitalization, mixed-use development, establishment, expansion, or utilization of a Ch. 43D priority development site*
- *Addresses the housing needs of a community and/or the region, especially related to 40R districts*
- *Implements components of local plans or previous studies related to housing or development*
- *Is likely to catalyze changes "on the ground" (redevelopment, approved zoning changes, new by-laws, regulation, service delivery cost savings, inter-municipal collaboration on service delivery or renewable energy use/production, etc.)*
- *Serves as a model for other municipalities*

### Secondary Criteria

- *The extent to which the project can be completed by BRPC staff*
- *Efforts will be made to distribute projects to different municipalities throughout the region*
- *Multiple projects in a single municipality will only be awarded if funding allows, not including participants in a regional application*
- *Receipt of and performance on past DLTA projects*
- *Availability of other funding sources*
- *Provision of voluntary cash, especially municipal funds, or in-kind match*

### Decisions & Notice of Awards

- All decisions are at the discretion of BRPC staff based upon its interpretation of the evaluation criteria and funding availability.
- BRPC reserves the right to request additional information before a decision is made.
- If a proposed project exceeds BRPC's ability to undertake a project through the DLTA program, BRPC and the applicant may engage in a strategic discussion about reducing the scope of the project or obtaining additional funding (e.g. local contribution, other grants) to complete the portion of the project that exceeds the DLTA-funded elements of the project.
- BRPC anticipates selecting projects for technical assistance by February 13, 2026. Applicants will be notified in writing (via email) of the decisions shortly thereafter.

**NOTE: Funds cannot be used for routine administrative tasks of municipalities, including, but not limited to, grant application preparation, and cannot substitute DLTA funds for which other state resources are available.**

### BRPC Contacts:

If you have any questions or wish to discuss a project idea, please contact:

CJ Hoss, Community Planning and Development Program Manager - (413) 442-1521 ext. 44, [choss@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:choss@berkshireplanning.org)



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

## Request for Technical Assistance District Local Technical Assistance Program 2026

### PART 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Lead Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Point of Contact, Lead Municipality, as designated by the governing body (please print):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Partner Municipalities: (List all partner municipalities, contacts and contact information (email and phone) from those municipalities:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has your Municipality received or is it seeking Housing Choice Initiative designation?

- Yes
- No

### PART 2. TYPE OF ASSISTANCE

Please check the type of assistance requested:

- Housing Choice Initiative
- Seasonal Communities Support
- Planning Ahead for Housing (see Attachment 1)
- Planning Ahead for Growth (see Attachment 1)

### PART 3. ASSISTANCE PROPOSAL

Please attach a brief (one-page) summary of the project that addresses the following topics **or use the form at the end of this document:**

1. **Purpose:** Provide a concise statement of the purpose and type of assistance requested.
2. **Priority Funding Areas:** Provide a concise description of how your assistance request addresses one of the priority funding areas.
3. **Project Background:** Briefly describe how the proposed project fits with other municipal objectives, such as implementing activities outlined in a master plan or other planning document. If applicable, please describe

any related projects recently completed or currently underway that directly relate to the proposed project. Please also note any planned action or investment that would or could potentially result from the successful completion of the proposed action.

- 4. **Project Scope & Timeline:** Please list and provide a short description of the major tasks and anticipated timeline to achieve the proposed project, including the anticipated starting date.
- 5. **Desired Results:** Please describe the desired results (deliverables or products) as an outcome of this project.
- 6. **Local Official/Staff Commitment:** Please describe the municipal officials/committee members/staff members who will be involved with this project, clearly identifying their roles.
- 7. **Local Match:** Please identify any voluntary in-kind or cash match (no match required).

**PART 4. APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS**

Applications are due by 5:00 pm **Friday, January 30, 2026.**

**IMPORTANT:**

*Application packets must be sent via email only to:*  
CJ Hoss, Community Planning and Development Program Manager  
[choss@berkshireplanning.org](mailto:choss@berkshireplanning.org)  
Tel (413) 442-1521 x44

Please feel free to reach out to CJ with any questions or to discuss potential projects prior to submission. Please note that any awards made under this solicitation are contingent on the continuing availability of funds provided to BRPC from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

**PART 5. AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE**

Please include the signature of the Chief Elected Official authorizing you to submit this request.

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

(MAYOR/SELECT BOARD CHAIR)

**PART 3. ASSISTANCE PROPOSAL**

Please attach a brief (one-page) summary of the project that addresses the following topics or complete this form:

8. **Purpose:** Provide a concise statement of the purpose and type of assistance requested.

---

---

---

9. **Priority Funding Areas:** Provide a concise description of how your assistance request addresses one of the priority funding areas.

---

---

---

10. **Project Background:** Briefly describe how the proposed project fits with other municipal objectives, such as implementing activities outlined in a master plan or other planning document. If applicable, please describe any related projects recently completed or currently underway that directly relate to the proposed project. Please also note any planned action or investment that would or could potentially result from the successful completion of the proposed action.

---

---

---

---

---

---

11. **Project Scope & Timeline:** Please list and provide a short description of the major tasks and anticipated timeline to achieve the proposed project, including the anticipated starting date.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

12. **Desired Results:** Please describe the desired results (deliverables or products) as an outcome of this project.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

13. **Local Official/Staff Commitment:** Please describe the municipal officials/committee members/staff members who will be involved with this project, clearly identifying their roles.

---

---

---

---

---

---

14. **Local Match:** Please identify any voluntary in-kind or cash match (no match required)

---

---

## Attachment # 1

### Examples of Eligible Projects for Each Priority Funding Area

- a. **Planning Ahead for Housing:** Planning and implementation activities that encourage and support affordable and market-rate housing production opportunities.:
- The development of market, mixed-income and affordable multi-family housing in transit-oriented-development locations, employment centers, downtown locations, and state endorsed Priority Development Areas (PDAs) within the RPA's jurisdiction, including any "Gateway municipality" (see MGL, c. 23A, s. 3A);
  - The creation of as-of-right zoning districts, such as those eligible under DHCD's Compact Neighborhoods policy or the Chapter 40R/Smart Growth statute, including starter homes;
  - Consideration of Transfer Development Rights zoning districts, including areas that may qualify as sending and receiving areas.
  - Development of Workforce housing under the Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP) and Urban Center Housing TIF areas.
  - The creation of prompt and predictable permitting through an Expedited Permitting Priority Development Site using Chapter 43D for Residential;
  - Identifying challenges and solutions with respect to infrastructure requirements that affect the ability to construct multi-family residential projects in as-of-right zoning districts and parcels;
  - Identifying multi-family residential projects subject to the Permit Extension Act (as amended), assessing impediments to such projects, and recommending steps that the Commonwealth and/or the applicable municipality could realistically take to enable those projects to go forward;
  - Regional analysis of affordable and market-rate housing needs to include, for example, preparation of a *Housing Production Plan* pursuant to 760 CMR 56.00 et. seq., and similar undertakings that may guide the execution of a compact among communities for locating affordable and market-rate housing;
  - Assisting one or several municipalities who must comply with requirements under the new Fair Housing regulation issued by HUD;
  - Assisting one or more communities to analyze their qualifications to be designated as a Housing Choice Community (including improvements to existing reporting related to Building Permits to the US Census) and/or apply for Housing Choice Initiative capital grants.
- b. **Planning Ahead for Growth:** Planning and implementation activities that encourage and support economic development opportunities that may include, but are not limited to:
- Identification, assessment and mapping of Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) at the local and regional levels, including discussion of specific areas for multi-family housing growth.
  - Supporting prompt and predictable permitting through the Chapter 43D Expedited Permitting Program for Economic Development projects;
  - Identifying challenges and solutions with respect to infrastructure requirements that affect the ability to advance economic development activities;
  - At a city or town's request, identifying economic development projects subject to the Permit Extension Act (as amended), assessing impediments, and recommending steps that the state

and/or the applicable municipality could realistically take to enable those projects to go forward; and

- Developing or updating components of municipal master plans and providing technical assistance that supports the implementation of strategies that are designed to advance well-planned growth and development policies and practices.
- c. **Supporting Seasonal Communities:** Assisting communities eligible for the Seasonal Communities designation to understand the requirements for those communities that accept the designation, programs created by the state to benefit these communities, as well as requirements from the state in order for communities to maintain the designation.
- d. **Supporting the Housing Choice Initiative:** Supporting the Housing Choice Initiative (HCI) and communities seeking assistance to achieve Designation under the HCI. The HCI will designate communities that have produced certain housing levels and have best practices that allow for compact housing development. Priority shall be to support Designated Housing Choice Communities. The activities under "Planning Ahead for Housing" qualify as best practices under the HCI.