



Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, Inc.

Building Blocks Analysis for FY2018 Senate Ways & Means Budget

May 16, 2017

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BUILDING BLOCKS PRIORITIES

Included below are details on the Building Blocks Coalition budget priorities. The budget language is included when comparisons between the FY2017 budget and the FY2018 Senate Ways and Means (SWM) budget are useful. Highlighted edits to line-item language reflect changes SWM made to FY2017 language.

Click here for the SWM budget: <https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FY2018/SenateWaysMeansBudget>

Line Item	Program	FY18 Request	SWM	House	Gov's FY18 Budget	FY17
7004-9024	MRVP	<i>\$120,000,000</i>	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000	\$97,503,438	\$86,547,706
7004-9030	AHVP	<i>\$7,500,000</i>	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$4,600,000	\$4,600,000
7004-9005	Public Housing Operating	<i>\$72,000,000</i>	\$64,500,000	\$65,500,000	\$64,500,000	\$64,500,000
7004-9007	Public Housing Reform	<i>\$2,000,000</i>	\$800,000	\$1,172,132	\$1,172,132	\$800,000
7004-9316	RAFT	<i>\$18,500,000</i>	\$18,500,000	\$15,000,000	\$13,000,000	\$13,000,000
7004-0108	HomeBASE	<i>\$39,200,000</i>	\$32,579,696	\$31,079,696	\$31,079,696	\$31,943,664
7006-0011	Foreclosure Prevention	<i>\$3,650,000</i>	\$2,350,000	\$1,650,000	\$1,650,000	\$2,350,000
0336-0003	Housing Court Expansion	<i>\$1,200,000</i>	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0
7004-3045	Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP)	<i>\$1,000,000</i>	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
7004-3036	HCECs	<i>\$2,640,000</i>	\$2,791,992	\$2,291,992	\$2,291,992	\$2,291,992
New	Brownfields	<i>\$15,000,000</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
7004-0104	Home & Healthy for Good	<i>\$2,000,000</i>	\$2,000,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
4120-4001	MassAccess Registry	<i>\$80,000</i>	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
New	Fuel Assistance	<i>\$7,500,000</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4000-0007	Unaccompanied Homeless Youth	<i>\$4,000,000</i>	\$2,500,000	\$540,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000

Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (7004-9024)

SWM: \$ 100,000,000

FY2017: \$ 86,547,706

Difference: **\$ 13,452,294**

Building Blocks Request: \$ 120,000,000

Description of Changes:

- Increases income eligibility for the program from 50% AMI to 80% AMI;
- Allows DHCD to target up to 75% of vouchers to extremely low income households;
- Removes language directing housing authorities to transfer voucher holders to another housing subsidy program;
- Requires reporting for the previous 3 years;
- Authorizes DHCD to create a voucher management system; and
- Mandates an August 1, 2017, distribution dates for newly issued vouchers.

Difference between House and SWM:

- SWM included an August 1 distribution date.

Potential Requested Language Changes:

- Clarifying that initial eligibility for MRVP remains at 50% AMI while allowing voucher holders to earn up to 80% AMI;
- Raising the fair market rents to the current year; and
- Allowing prior appropriations to be continued.

Language:

For a program of rental assistance for low-income families and elderly persons through mobile and project-based vouchers; provided, that such assistance shall only be paid under the Massachusetts rental voucher program; provided further, that the income of eligible households shall not exceed ~~50~~80 per cent of the area median income; provided further, that the department shall require that not less than 75 per cent of the vouchers administered by each administering agency under contract to the department be targeted to households whose income at initial occupancy does not exceed 30 per cent of the area median income; provided further, that the department of housing and community development may award mobile vouchers to eligible households currently occupying project-based units that shall expire due to the nonrenewal of project-based rental assistance contracts; provided further, that the department, as a condition of continued eligibility for vouchers and voucher payments, may require disclosure of social security numbers by participants and members of a participant's household in the Massachusetts rental voucher program for use in verification of income with other agencies, departments and executive offices; provided further, that if a participant or member of a participant's household fails to provide a social security number for use in verifying the household's income and eligibility, then that household shall no longer be eligible for a voucher or to receive benefits from the voucher program; provided further, that the monthly dollar amount of each voucher

shall be the department-approved monthly rent of the unit less the monthly amount paid for rent by the household; provided further, that any household that is proven to have caused intentional damage to its rental unit in an amount exceeding 2 months of rent during any 1-year period shall be terminated from the program; provided further, that if the use of a mobile ~~voucher's~~ use voucher is or has been discontinued, then the mobile voucher shall be reassigned; provided further, that subsidies shall not be reduced due to the cost of inspections; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, each household holding a voucher shall pay at least 30 per cent, but not more than 40 per cent, of its income as rent; provided further, that the department shall establish the amounts of the mobile ~~vouchers~~ and ~~the~~ project-based vouchers so that the appropriation in this item is shall not be exceeded by payments for rental assistance and administration; provided further, that the department shall not enter into commitments which shall cause it to exceed the appropriation set forth in this item; provided further, that the department may impose certain obligations for each participant in the Massachusetts rental voucher program through a 12-month contract which shall be executed by the participant and the department; provided further, that such obligations may shall include, but shall not be limited to, job training, counseling, household budgeting and education, as defined in regulations promulgated by the department and to the extent these programs are available; provided further, that each participant shall be required to undertake and meet these contractually established obligations as a condition for continued eligibility in the program; provided further, that for continued eligibility, each participant shall execute this such 12-month contract ~~no not~~ later than September 1, 2016 2017 if the participant's annual eligibility recertification date occurs between June 30, 2016 2017 and September 1, 2016 2017 and otherwise not later than the annual eligibility recertification date; provided further, that any participant who is over the age of 60 years or who is disabled may be exempt from any obligations unsuitable under particular circumstances; provided further, that ~~no funds shall be expended from this item in the AA object class for the compensation of state employees; provided further, that~~ the department may assist housing authorities at their written request in the immediate implementation of a homeless prevention program utilizing alternative housing resources available to them for low-income families and the elderly by designating participants in the Massachusetts rental voucher program as at risk of displacement by public action through no fault of their own; provided further, that participating local housing authorities may take all steps necessary to enable them to transfer mobile voucher program participants from the Massachusetts rental voucher program into another housing subsidy program; provided further, that the department ~~of housing and community development~~ shall report to the house and senate committees on ways and means and joint committee on housing ~~no not~~ later than December 15, 2016 2017 on the utilization of rental vouchers in during the last 3 fiscal ~~year 2016~~ years under this item and item 7004-9030; provided further, that the report shall include, but not be limited to, the number and average value of rental vouchers currently distributed in the commonwealth, in each county and in each municipality; ~~and~~ provided further, that the report shall comply with state and federal privacy standards; provided further, that the department may expend funds from this item for costs related to the

completion of the voucher management system; and provided further, that the department shall begin distributing any newly-funded vouchers not later than August 1, 2017

Alternative Housing Voucher Program (7004-9030)

SWM: \$ 5,500,000
FY2017: \$ 4,600,000
Difference: **\$ 900,000**
Building Blocks Request: \$ 7,500,000

Description of Changes:

- Removes the word “transitional” from the program language to better align the program language to its actual use; and
- Removes reporting requirement.

Difference between House and SWM:

- SWM removed the reporting requirement

Potential Requested Language Changes:

- Directing DHCD to use current fair market rents for AHVP vouchers

Public Housing Authority Operating Subsidy (7004-9005)

SWM: \$ 64,500,000
FY2017: \$ 64,500,000
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 72,000,000

Public Housing Reform (7004-9007)

SWM: \$ 800,000
FY2017: \$ 800,000
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 2,000,000

Difference between House and SWM:

- House authorizes funds to be used for a centralized waitlist for state-aided public housing

Potential Requested Language Changes:

- Authorizing funds to be used for a centralized waitlist for state-aided public housing

Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (7004-9316)

SWM: \$ 18,500,000
FY2017: \$ 13,000,000
Difference: **\$ 5,500,000**
Building Blocks Request: \$ 18,500,000

Description of Changes:

- Removes the requirement that the same amount of funding from FY17 serve families with children in FY18;
- Removes language requiring an administering agency to make a finding that RAFT assistance will enable a family to retain or find new housing; and
- Provides \$2 million to serve households who qualify under the expanded eligibility.

Difference between House and SWM:

- SWM includes the expanded eligibility for elders, persons with disabilities, and unaccompanied youth

Language:

For a program to provide assistance in addressing obstacles to maintaining or securing housing for families with: (a) a household income not greater than 30 per cent of [the](#) area median income who are homeless and moving into subsidized or private housing or are at risk of becoming homeless; or (b) a household income greater than 30 per cent but not more than 50 per cent of [the](#) area median income who are homeless and moving into subsidized or private housing or are at risk of becoming homeless due to a significant reduction of income or increased expenses; provided, that assistance shall be administered by the department of housing and community development through contracts with the regional HomeBASE agencies; provided further, that not less than 50 per cent of the funds shall be provided to households with an income not greater than 30 per cent of area median income, subject to the department's discretion based on data reflecting program demand and usage; provided further, that in distributing 50 per cent of the funds, the department shall prioritize those families most likely to otherwise require shelter services under item 7004-0101; provided further, ~~an amount not less than the fiscal year 2016 appropriation shall be made available to eligible families with children under the age of 21; provided further,~~ that the amount of financial assistance shall not exceed \$4,000 in any 12-month period; provided further, that the combined sum of benefits received by a family in a 12-month period from this item and item 7004-0108 shall not be more than the maximum level of short-term housing assistance in said item 7004-0108; provided further, that ~~prior to authorizing a residential assistance payment for a family, the administering agency shall make a finding that the payment will enable the family to retain its current housing, obtain new housing or otherwise avoid homelessness; provided further, that in making these findings the agency shall, unless the facts of the case warrant otherwise, apply a presumption that the payment will enable a family to retain its housing, obtain new housing or otherwise avoid homelessness; provided further, that~~

residential assistance payments may be made through direct vendor payments according to standards to be established by the department; provided further, that the agencies shall establish a system for referring families approved for residential assistance payments, who the agencies determine would benefit from these services, to existing community-based programs that provide additional housing stabilization supports, including assistance in obtaining housing subsidies and locating alternative housing that is safe and affordable for those families; provided further, that the program shall be administered ~~under~~pursuant to guidelines established by the department; provided further, that the department shall report quarterly to the house and senate committees on ways and means detailing the: (a) number of families who applied for assistance; (b) number of families approved for assistance; (c) minimum, median and average amount of financial assistance awarded; (d) total amount of assistance awarded to date, including a breakdown by income category; and (e) number of families falling into each income category; provided further, that the department shall track a family's reason for assistance by the same categories used in item 7004-0101; provided further, that household assistance funds shall be advanced to the administering agencies at the end of each month and before the next month's disbursement, the amount of which shall be estimated based on the prior month's expenditure with a reconciliation not less than annually; and provided further, that ~~for purposes of this item, "families" shall include~~up to \$2,000,000 may be expended to provide assistance to households of all sizes and configurations including, but not limited to, ~~families with children under the age of 21~~, elders, persons with disabilities and unaccompanied youth

HomeBASE (7004-0108)

SWM: \$ 32,579,696
FY2017: \$ 31,943,664
Difference: **\$ 636,032**
Building Blocks Request: \$ 35,000,000

Description of Changes:

- Raises the annual benefit cap from \$8,000 to \$10,000 for HomeBASE or combined HomeBASE/RAFT assistance;
- Requires DHCD to create rules to provide for lowering the 24-month bar to a 12-month bar for families who have been terminated from HomeBASE;
- Removes language that would protect a disabled or elderly housing family from losing eligibility if they are in compliance with a housing stabilization plan;
- Removes language directed DHCD to reallocate HomeBASE funding to high-performing providers;
- For the program allowing families in DV and substance abuse shelter to access HomeBASE:
 - Removes language referring to this program as a "pilot"
 - Allows families living in sober living programs to access HomeBASE, if otherwise eligible for the program;

- Removes eligibility for families staying at DCF shelters (4800-0038) to access HomeBASE; and
- Removes the requirement that spaces vacated in DV and substance abuse shelters because of HomeBASE would be filled by dually eligible families referred by DHCD.

Difference between House and SWM:

- The House removes the requirement that funds shall be used to more rapidly transition families served by the program into temporary or permanent sustainable housing;
- The House removes forward funding for HomeBASE; and
- The House requires reporting on the number of families served by the program for families in DV or substance abuse shelters or sober living programs.

Language:

For a program of short-term housing assistance to help families eligible for temporary emergency shelter under item 7004-0101 in addressing obstacles to maintaining or securing housing; provided, that the assistance provided under this item shall include not less than 12 months of housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services for each family receiving benefits under this item; provided further, that no other assistance from this item shall exceed \$810,000 in a 12-month period; provided further, that a family shall not receive more than a combined sum of \$810,000 in a 12-month period from this item and item 7004-9316; provided further, that so long as they meet the requirements of their housing stabilization plan, a family that received household assistance under this item whose income exceeds 50 per cent of the area median income shall not become ineligible for assistance due to exceeding the income limit for a period of 6 months from the date that the 50 per cent level was exceeded; provided further, that a family shall not be deemed ineligible as a result of any single violation of a self-sufficiency plan; provided further, that the department shall take all steps necessary to enforce regulations to prevent abuse in the short-term housing transition program, including a wage match agreement with the department of revenue; provided further, that a family that was terminated from the program or did not make a good faith effort to follow its housing stabilization plan during the term of its assistance shall be ineligible for benefits under said item 7004-0101 and this item for ~~24 months from the last date~~ 24 months from the last date that the family received assistance under said item 7004-0101 and this item, including housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services; provided further, that not later than January 1, 2018 the department shall promulgate rules which shall provide that a family that was terminated from the program or did not make a good faith effort to follow its housing stabilization plan during the term of its assistance shall be ineligible for benefits under said item 7004-0101 and this item for 12 months from the last date that the family received assistance under said item 7004-0101 and this item, including housing stabilization and economic self-sufficiency case management services; provided further, that a family's housing stabilization plan shall adequately accommodate the ages and disabilities of the family members;

provided further, that ~~no family with a head of household who is over 60 years of age or who is disabled and who is in compliance with the requirements of a housing stabilization plan that accommodates disabilities shall be denied short-term housing assistance; provided further, that any such family with a head of household who is over 60 years of age or who is disabled shall not have engaged in, or be engaged in, any activity that threatens the health, safety or security of the family, other program participants or program staff; provided further, that~~ families receiving benefits under this program who are found ineligible for continuing benefits shall be eligible for aid pending a timely appeal under chapter 23B of the General Laws; provided further, that families who are denied assistance under this item may appeal that denial under said chapter 23B, including subsection (F) of section 30 of said chapter 23B and regulations adopted to implement said chapter 23B; provided further, that benefits under this item shall only be provided to residents of the commonwealth who are citizens of the United States or alienspersons lawfully admitted for permanent residence or otherwise permanently residing under the color of ~~the~~ law in the United States; provided further, that the department, as a condition of continued eligibility for assistance under this program, may require disclosure of social security numbers by all members of a family receiving assistance under this item for sole use in verification of income with other agencies, departments and executive offices; provided further, that if a family member fails to provide a social security number for use in verifying the family's income and eligibility, then the family shall no longer be eligible to receive benefits from this program; provided further, that the department shall administer this program through the following agencies unless administering agencies are otherwise procured by the department: the Berkshire Housing Development Corporation; Central Massachusetts Housing Alliance, Inc.; Community Teamwork, Inc.; the Housing Assistance Corporation; the Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority; HAP, Inc.; the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, Inc.; the Lynn Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development; the South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.; the South Shore Housing Development Corporation; and RCAP Solutions, Inc.; ~~provided further, that the department shall reallocate financing based on performance-based statistics from under-performing service providers to above average service providers in order to move as many families from hotels, motels or shelters into more sustainable housing;~~ provided further, that the department shall use funds provided for this program for stabilization workers to focus efforts on housing retention and to link households to supports, including job training, education, job search and child care opportunities available and may enter into agreements with other public and private agencies for the provision of such services; provided further, that a stabilization worker shall be assigned to each such household; provided further, that funds shall be used to more rapidly transition families served by the program into temporary or permanent sustainable housing; provided further, that notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, 90 days before promulgating or amending any regulation, administrative practice or policy that would alter eligibility for or the level of benefits pursuant to this program to less than the benefit level available on June 30, ~~2016~~2017, the department shall file with the house and senate committees on ways and means and the clerks of the house of representatives and senate a

report setting forth the justification for such changes; including, but not limited to, any determination by the secretary of housing and economic development that available appropriations will be insufficient to meet projected expenses; provided further, that the department shall submit quarterly reports to the house and senate committees on ways and means; which shall include the number of families served, the type of assistance given, the number of families assisted through this program, the average, minimum and maximum cost per family of such assistance, the current housing stability of each family who received assistance within the prior 12 months and any obstacles encountered with the administration of this program; provided further, that ~~as a one-year pilot program,~~ the department may expend not more than \$300,000 under this item ~~7004-0108~~ on families residing in ~~time-limited~~ temporary emergency ~~shelters~~ shelter under item 4513-1130 and residential treatment or sober living programs under ~~items~~ item 4512-0200, ~~4513-1130, and 4800-0038~~ if such families otherwise meet all eligibility requirements applicable to emergency shelter under item 7004-0101, except that, solely for the purpose of this item, the fact that a family is residing in a temporary emergency ~~domestic violence~~ shelter under ~~items~~ item 4513-1130 or ~~4800-0038~~ ~~or~~ in a residential treatment or sober living program under item 4512-0200 shall not preclude such family from receiving assistance; provided further, that guidance shall be developed by the department, in consultation with the department of public health, to provide that any unit in such temporary emergency ~~shelters~~ shelter or residential treatment ~~programs under items 4512-0200, 4513-1130, or 4800-0038~~ program vacated through use of funds under this ~~pilot~~ program shall have an opportunity to be filled by a family: (i) eligible for both ~~for~~ emergency shelter under item 7004-0101 and for ~~entry into such~~ temporary emergency shelter ~~or under item 4513-1130 and~~ residential treatment ~~program~~ or sober living programs under item 4512-0200, ~~4513-1130, or 4800-0038~~; and (ii) referred to such temporary emergency shelter or family residential treatment or sober living program ~~under item 4512-0200, 4513-1130, or 4800-0038~~ by the department; provided further, that this item shall be subject to appropriation and, in the event of a deficiency, nothing in this item shall give rise to or shall be construed as giving rise to any enforceable right or entitlement to services in excess of the amounts appropriated in this item; and provided further, that household assistance funds shall be advanced to the administering agencies at the end of each month and before the next month's disbursement, the amount of which shall be estimated based on the prior month's expenditure with a reconciliation not less than annually

Foreclosure Prevention Counseling (7006-0011) – Retained Revenue

SWM: \$ 2,350,000
FY2017: \$ 2,350,000
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 3,650,000

Difference between House and SWM:

- The House requires at least \$500,000 to be used to support Housing Consumer Education Centers (HCECs) (7004-3036)

Housing Court Expansion (0336-0003)

SWM: \$ 1,000,000
FY2017: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 1,000,000
Building Blocks Request: \$ 1,200,000

Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP) (7004-3045)

SWM: \$ 500,000
FY2017: \$ 500,000
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 1,000,000

Housing Consumer Education Centers (7004-3036)

SWM: \$ 2,791,992
FY2017: \$ 2,291,992
Difference: **\$ 500,000**
Building Blocks Request: \$ 2,640,000

Description of Changes:

- Removes earmarks from the line-item; and
- Removes requirement for HCECs

Difference between House and SWM:

- SWM does not include a reporting requirement

Brownfields Redevelopment Fund (NEW)

SWM: \$ 0
FY2017: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 15,000,000

Home and Healthy for Good (7004-0104)

SWM: \$ 2,000,000
FY2017: \$ 2,000,000
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 2,000,000

Description of Changes:

- Removes requirement

Difference between House and SWM:

- SWM does not include a reporting requirement

Mass. Access Affordable Housing Registry (4120-4001)

SWM: \$ 80,000
FY2017: \$ 80,000
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 80,000

Fuel Assistance (NEW)

SWM: \$ 0
FY2017: \$ 0
Difference: \$ 0
Building Blocks Request: \$ 7,500,000

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (4000-0007)

SWM: \$ 2,500,000
FY2017: \$ 2,000,000
Difference: **\$ 500,000**
Building Blocks Request: \$ 4,000,000