



***The GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS bill (H2420) will make a difference in the communities we call home.***

## **1. Support more affordable housing choices for young families and older adults.**

- Require every community in Massachusetts to provide “*reasonable and realistic opportunities*” for **multi-family housing** sufficient to meet regional demand and in locations defined as smart growth, but leaves the “how” (permitting rules, density, etc.) to each city or town. More multi-family housing in sensible locations creates **more housing options that are affordable for millennials, baby boomers, and all families that struggle to afford the high cost of housing in Massachusetts.**
- Allow for the legal creation of “accessory dwelling units” (ADU) in existing homes. Better known as “**in-law apartments,**” permitting an ADU can add meaningful flexibility for families by allowing them to accommodate a friend, family member, or caregiver in an affordable way. An ADU can make it possible for a homeowner to **age in place** with privacy and independence, or, the unit can be rented for additional income.
- Make it **illegal to discriminate** through land use policy or decisions because some Massachusetts communities still have restrictive zoning. This unfortunate practice not only affects the people who are excluded, but the entire neighborhood suffers in the long term. Restrictive zoning limits housing choice for everyone—fewer apartments and affordable single family homes for millennials, young families and down-sizing seniors who want to stay in their community. The bill would make it illegal for state or local governments to discriminate in land use decisions based **on race, family status or other protected classes.**

## **2. Promote Vibrant, Healthy Places + Protect Open Space and Natural Resources**

- Encourage **more vibrant, walkable places with a mix of business and residential uses,** leading to more and better sidewalks, bike lanes, and foot traffic that support nearby local businesses. The neighborhoods we love are often walkable/bikeable and close to the places we want to visit. Studies show that walkable neighborhoods are healthier.

### 3. Provide Cities & Towns with Tools they Need to Plan a Healthy Future

- Allow for “**development impact fees**” so the developer is responsible for mitigating negative impacts resulting from a construction project. An example of this would be to require a subdivision developer to pay for culverts, rain-gardens and trees to reduce local flooding as a result of more pavement. While developers in Massachusetts are routinely required to pay for infrastructure *on* their properties (e.g. sidewalks), current state laws limit the ability of municipalities to impose fees for nearby impacts.
- Authorize **inclusionary zoning** to promote mixed-income neighborhoods that lead to stronger, more diverse communities. Inclusionary zoning is one way to promote mixed income neighborhoods. Developers provide for a certain percentage of affordable units. The bill would authorize cities and towns to adopt inclusionary zoning. Up to now, lack of state authority discouraged some communities from adopting it.
- Make **master planning easier** so that every community is more likely to periodically have a conversation about its future. Having a vision for the future—a “master plan”—makes it easier to get the zoning and projects that the community wants. Many communities in Massachusetts don’t have current master plans. The *Great Neighborhoods* bill makes it easier and less expensive to create a master plan by making the requirements more flexible. Once a municipality has a master plan, the bill requires the city or town to report whether local zoning codes are consistent with the master plan.

Endorse the Great Neighborhoods bill at [www.great-neighborhoods.org](http://www.great-neighborhoods.org) to show your support and receive updates and action opportunities!

Help us make Great Neighborhoods a reality

**MASSACHUSETTS SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE**

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