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#### **BAKER OUTLINES HOUSING AWARDS, TOUTS PRODUCTION BILL**

Gov. Charlie Baker on Wednesday announced \$57 million in direct subsidies for 19 projects to fund the development, renovation and preservation of housing opportunities throughout the state.

The subsidies come amid heightened efforts to pass a Baker bill to make it easier for housing production efforts to gain momentum in cities and towns. Legislators have been calling for solutions to tackle housing affordability problems but have so far failed to move a policy bill through either branch.

"These rental housing awards support our administration's commitment to create more housing opportunities in neighborhoods across Massachusetts," Baker said in a statement. "We have also drafted legislation to develop 135,000 units of new housing by 2025 that has been endorsed by several businesses, local officials, trade organizations and community groups, and encourage the Legislature to pass this bill to build more affordable housing and support economic development in every zip code."

Supporters of a more expansive housing production bill called on the governor Tuesday to support "moderate additions" to his bill and signal his support for those measures to the House and Senate in an effort to get a bill moving before formal sessions end next Tuesday. Baker has not backed the additions.

Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce CEO Jim Rooney wrote a letter to legislative leaders Tuesday urging them to "maintain the simplicity" of Baker's bill.

House Speaker Robert DeLeo has expressed that it's still a "huge question" how the House will handle the housing bill.

For the announcement, Baker was joined by Housing and Community Development Undersecretary Janelle Chan and local officials at the future site of Hearth at Four Corners, a 54-unit, new construction project for seniors. The development, in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood, is meant to be entirely affordable, with 19 units reserved for extremely low-income seniors. - Chris Triunfo/SHNS

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