



Orleans Housing Update

April 2025

Town of Orleans
Planning & Community
Development

Housing Updates

- **Downtown Orleans Design-Based Zoning Updates:** The Planning Board and Planning Department has been gathering community input in support of new, mixed-use, design-based zoning for downtown Orleans. A Community Meeting on April 11 told the story of how zoning shaped the look and feel of Orleans and participants discussed what changes we could make in the future. You can watch a recording and review the work to date at: www.town.orleans.ma.us/1676/Zoning-Update-Downtown-Orleans
- Orleans is currently assisting 6 (soon to be 7) families through its **Rental Assistance Program**. The program continues to accept applications! haconcapecod.org/program-services/rental-voucher-programs/thrive/
- The US Department of Housing & Urban Development issued **updated income limits** for programs serving income-qualified individuals.
- An **affordable condo unit remains available** at 18 West Road for a qualified 62+ buyer. More information at: mymasshome.org/listing/2986
- Town staff participated in a site visit to the **Governor Prence** property with the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, POAH, Housing Assistance, and Habitat for Humanity, a first step in their application for a 40B Comprehensive Permit.
- Staff submitted an application to the Commonwealth to renew Orleans' designation as a **Housing Choice Community**.

Annual Town Meeting

May 12 | 6pm | Nauset Middle

Look for the following Articles at Town Meeting that support Town housing efforts:

ARTICLE 28: Affordable Housing Trust Definition of Moderate-Income Housing:

A yes vote will allow the Housing Trust to assist with the creation and preservation of housing for households earning up to 120% of the Area Median Income. This change will help serve two-income households and address the impacts of rapidly escalating housing costs on year-round residents.

ARTICLE 32: Accept the Seasonal Community Designation. A yes vote gives the towns access to new housing tools and grant preference. *See the next page for more on this new designation.*

Additionally, Article 22, the annual Community Preservation Act budget, will allocate \$400,000 to the Affordable Housing Trust and support the CDP's Lower Cape Housing Initiative.

Partners in Housing

- The lottery for 19 West Road was held by Pennrose on April 22 at 2pm. [More info here.](#)
- Provincetown adopted new form-based zoning for Shank Painter Road and accepted the Seasonal Communities Designation at their Town Meeting.

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April Spotlight: Seasonal Communities Designation



The Seasonal Communities Designation is a recognition of municipalities in Massachusetts that experience substantial seasonal variations in population and employment. This policy initiative was created as part of the Affordable Homes Act, the landmark legislation passed by Governor Healy designed to counter rising housing costs caused by high demand and limited supply.

The Town of Orleans has been designated as a Seasonal Community by the Commonwealth. This designation must be accepted by a vote of Town Meeting.

Accepting the Seasonal Community Designation will give the Town access to new tools to address our unique housing needs. Some of these tools include:

- The ability to acquire and develop housing with a preference for public employees that are necessary to maintain the health and safety of a year-round community, including teachers, public works employees, and public safety employees.
- Allow for a year-round housing trust to oversee and fund programs and projects for year-round residents;
- The ability to create and/or preserve year-round housing for individuals who produce or support artistic or literary initiatives.

Most importantly, accepting the designation gives the Town guaranteed -- and likely preferential -- access to state grant programs aimed at supporting housing, economic development, and public infrastructure. The Town's eligibility for these grant programs could be greatly reduced without the designation.

A Seasonal Communities Advisory Council was established to provide advice and recommendations to the state on the new policies and programs. Select Board Member Kevin Galligan is a member of the Council.

Seasonal Communities will be asked to take two steps to support year-round housing locally:

- Provide some allowance for "tiny homes" to be used as year-round housing units. *The Town doesn't limit how small a house or accessory dwelling can be now, as long as it meets building code and other requirements.*
- Allow for attainable year-round housing to be built on some existing lots that are smaller than what zoning currently requires for a new lot. *Our current zoning includes several provisions that allow housing on undersized lots.*

If Orleans wants to make any changes to bylaws in response to the Seasonal Communities designation, they will be drafted through a public process and will need Town Meeting approval.