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Affordable Housing & Affordable Housing Climate Resiliency -
\$3,000,000

I am allocating \$3,000,000 (1) to advance the creation of affordable housing and (2) to assist our already deed-restricted affordable housing properties in the City undertake important energy and electrification retrofits in a timely manner.

In the City of Newton, we are deeply committed to working together to ensure we have more permanently affordable homes and apartments so that our next generation can live here, our older residents have a place to downsize to so they can stay here, and people of all incomes can live here and be our neighbors. Our new Affordable Housing Trust is up and running and our Planning team is working closely with them to invest in affordable housing.

Simultaneously, the City's Sustainability team is actively seeking to help property owners shift away from fossil fuels to electricity to heat/cool their homes, heat their water, cook, and keep on their lights. These actions are essential to meeting the urgency of the climate crisis by reducing greenhouse gas emissions as we can make the electric grid cleaner and greener with renewable energy sources, especially solar and wind.

The City of Newton Planning and Sustainability teams will partner together to develop the Affordable Housing Climate Resiliency Grant Program. The City of Newton has over 2,000 deed restricted affordable housing units, many of which need deep energy retrofits. These energy retrofits will have the dual effect of reducing the property's overall present and future operating costs for energy with efficiency measures, and of aligning with our Climate goals to get to zero carbon emissions through electrification of HVAC systems and conversion to heat pump-based technology. In other words, this funding will help residents "Use Less and Green the Rest," the City of Newton Climate Action Plan's motto. A first round of grants will be awarded next year.

As we convert City-owned buildings to non-fossil-fuel systems and actively promote homeowners to do likewise with the “4ourFuture Program, the City is working with larger commercial building owners and with non-profit affordable housing managers. The City of Newton’s program will be designed to complement State funding opportunities which are also available for deep energy retrofits to affordable housing properties.

We will simultaneously continue to be actively supporting opportunities for the creation of affordable housing, an ongoing effort of our Planning and Development staff.