

A Joint Press Release between the iLab and the BSA

The Housing Innovation Lab and Boston Society for Architecture Announce the Results of “Co-creating Boston’s Future-Decker”

Twenty individuals and groups imagined the future of multifamily housing in Boston’s neighborhoods in the first phase of a housing competition

This summer, the Boston Society for Architecture (BSA) and Boston’s Housing Innovation Lab (Housing iLab) released a Request for Ideas (RFI), [Co-Creating Boston’s Future-Decker](#), inviting teams and individuals to imagine and propose new housing for small sites (3,000-8,000 square feet) in Boston. The call closed on Friday, July 30, with a total of 20 submissions. Participants were invited to share ideas for multifamily housing in Boston’s neighborhoods with a focus on affordability, sustainability and community. The RFI marks the first phase of this year’s Housing Innovation Competition and is a continuation of last year’s [triple-decker community conversations](#), where residents and many others shared their stories and experiences with this familiar building type.

Ahead of the submission deadline, residents, designers, architects and others gathered both virtually and in-person to learn more about the competition and begin to form groups for submitting ideas. For the final program of the RFI phase, interested participants met at the Codman Square branch of the Boston Public Library to talk through their ideas with Boston architects and designers, who sketched their suggestions for Future-Decker designs in real time.

“The RFI process allowed us to envision new ways of engaging with individuals and groups to identify how we can introduce innovative housing opportunities for residents. In a way, this process was a direct response to what we heard at our “Anti-Racist Design Workshop” last year, where participants stressed the importance of meaningful engagement prior to the creation of a Request for Proposal,” said Wandy Pascoal, Housing Innovation Design Fellow for the BSA and Housing iLab.

Now, the BSA and Housing iLab are showcasing the ideas [virtually](#), inviting responses and feedback on shared themes from the RFI submissions. The BSA will also showcase the RFI submissions in-person as part of an exhibition, [Imaginations of Home](#), on view beginning November 1, 2021. During the fall and winter of 2021, the BSA and Housing iLab will continue to engage with community members, sharing RFI ideas and soliciting more ideas. The RFI responses will inform the second phase of the competition, which will include a request for innovative proposals for a yet-to-be-selected city-owned lot.

Greg Minott AIA, BSA President 2020 and Co-Founder and Managing Principal at DREAM Collaborative noted, “The work of this housing competition is critically important to building a more equitable and sustainable Boston. Housing affordability is one of the great challenges of our time and the BSA is committed to working with our partners in the building industry and the City of Boston, as well as neighborhood residents to find solutions at all scales. We were

excited by the RFI responses and believe that the next phase will continue to move this work forward.” for the Boston Society for Architecture.

On the evening of Wednesday, November 17, the BSA will host a celebratory RFI showcase event, where participants and others will have the chance to view the work both virtually and in-person, as a hybrid event. Beginning at 5:30pm, there will be a tour of the space, discussion about the response themes, and information on the next steps for the competition. Registration is now open on the [BSA website](#).

Imaginations of Home will be on view at BSA Space starting November 1, 2021. Visitors are welcome during the week during normal business hours. To arrange a tour please contact future-decker@boston.gov.

Visit boston.gov/future-deckers to learn more about this year's Housing Innovation Competition.

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About the Boston Society for Architecture

The Boston Society for Architecture (BSA) is a partnership between the Boston Society of Architects (BSA/AIA) and the BSA Foundation (Foundation). As a member-led association, the BSA is one of the oldest and largest chapters of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in the United States. Comprised of world-renowned architects, designers, engineers, builders, and other industry professionals, the BSA benefits from a committed membership who are some of the leading thinkers and innovators in professional practice today. The BSA serves as a convener, advocate, and partner to ensure that the power of design is fully understood, valued, and leveraged as an essential tool in ensuring Greater Boston is a beacon for equity and climate adaptation and environmental stewardship. For more information visit architects.org.

About the Housing Innovation Lab

The Housing Innovation Lab was established in 2015 as a first of its kind effort to pilot and scale affordable housing innovations within municipal government. The iLab works with experts inside and outside of government to explore new ideas for making Boston's housing more affordable. Taking a prototype driven approach to housing policy, the iLab maintains a diverse portfolio of projects, including [Additional Dwelling Units](#), [Housing with Public Assets](#), and the [Future Decker initiative](#), to experiment with different ways of increasing housing opportunity and affordability. The iLab is embedded within the City's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND), which is the agency responsible for housing creation, preservation and policy and the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics (MONUM), which is the City's innovation team.

For more information, visit: [Housing Innovation Lab](#).