

MAYOR WALSH RELEASES REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, SEEKING CONCEPTS FOR CO-DEVELOPING CITY ASSETS WITH HOUSING AND OTHER MIXED-USES

BOSTON - Friday, February 2, 2018 - Mayor Martin J. Walsh today announced the City of Boston is seeking innovative ideas about how the City could potentially utilize its capital assets to spur the development of additional housing for Boston residents, while improving the infrastructure conditions of City buildings through redevelopment. In a [Request for Information](#) released today, Boston will measure interest in the mixed-use redevelopment of assets such as community centers, libraries and fire stations. The goal of the RFI is to determine whether this type of development is right for Boston, while identifying how it could be pursued in the future.

"With the right projects and partnerships in place, we believe this model could have the potential to enhance City property by improving our infrastructure and generating new affordable housing options needed in neighborhoods throughout our city," said Mayor Walsh. "I look forward to seeing the ideas that could help us reimagine the future of our civic spaces to maximize the public benefit."

Cities around the country, including Chicago, San Francisco, New York City and Washington, DC, have built affordable and market-rate housing alongside and on top of city assets such as libraries and transit stations. These cities consider this work a critical part of creating more public value with public assets.

"In Washington, DC we are committed to building and preserving neighborhoods that residents can both afford and enjoy, and we're doing this through the creation of public-private partnerships that deliver housing, job opportunities, and community benefits. Recently, we cut the ribbon on a new library that is part of a development that includes a firehouse, retail, and affordable housing; for residents, this means a lot of resources in one location. We look forward to collaborating with Boston as we both work to build safer, stronger communities and put more residents on pathways to the middle class," said Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser.

"As a community-based non-profit in a neighborhood where countless families have been displaced by skyrocketing housing costs, JPNDC has found City land and resources to be instrumental to our efforts to create new affordable homes," said Leslie Boss, Director of Real Estate at the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corp. "The Housing Innovation Lab's concept is intriguing, as it offers the dual benefit of supporting affordable housing development and improving facilities and services that are critical to the safety and quality of life for the entire community. We are excited to see the City continuing to explore creative new approaches."

Boston owns hundreds buildings that could be candidates for these types of development. A preliminary list of these assets is available in the Request for Information for potential respondents to review. The City's primary interest is in proposals that identify how city assets currently used for core city services, such as libraries, fire stations, police stations, and community centers can be combined with housing.

"As a convener of Boston's design and development community, we are happy to see the City explore how innovative design, adaptive reuse, and co-location can help address Boston's housing needs," said Jay Wickersham, FAIA, Board Chair of the Boston Society of Architects. "We commend the Walsh Administration for taking this thoughtful step."

A Request for Information is a call for input, which allows the city to explore new ideas. It does not replace or interrupt the normal community process. If the City chooses to pursue any specific development ideas, the development will undergo a full community process, engaging local residents and community members before any potential redevelopment takes place. All submissions are expected to outline how potential development will remain contextual to the city and the neighborhood.

The City's nationally-recognized Housing Innovation Lab (iLAB), part of the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics and the Department of Neighborhood Development, is leading this RFI. The iLAB is transforming how Boston designs, develops and funds housing, and has been creating housing solutions in collaboration with many diverse constituencies at the City, in our communities, and across industries.

The Walsh Administration continues to be a leader in ambitious and innovative work to build, sustain, and promote affordable housing for its Boston residents. Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030 is the Walsh Administration's comprehensive housing plan. Under this plan, Boston will create 53,000 new units of housing at a variety of income levels throughout Boston, including 44,000 units of housing for the workforce; 5,000 units of housing for senior citizens; and 4,000 units to stabilize the market and bring rents and housing prices under control. During his second inaugural address in January, Mayor Walsh also pledged to increase Boston's targets for low-income homes, moderate-income homes, senior housing, and overall units.

Since the 2014 implementation of Housing a Changing City, 13,551 new units of housing have been completed. With an additional 8,412 units currently under construction, the City has secured housing for an estimated 25,000 residents, making significant progress in meeting Boston's rapid population growth. The City remains on target to meet the production goals. To date, the Walsh Administration has committed more than \$100 million in funding to the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

The City will accept submissions through March 23, 2018; respondents' questions may be submitted to margo.cramer@boston.gov by February 12, 2018. An applicant conference will be held on February 15, 2018 at 26 Court Street, Boston. Responses to this Request for Information will not result in any development agreements or site-specific plans. Additional information is available on the Housing Innovation Lab Request for Information [webpage](#).

About Imagine Boston 2030

Shaped by more than 15,000 resident voices, Imagine Boston 2030 is the first citywide plan since 1965. Mayor Walsh released the plan in July of 2017. The final plan can be downloaded at

<https://imagine.boston.gov/> and can be found at all branches of the Boston Public Library.

About the Housing Innovation Lab

The Mayor's Housing Innovation Lab was facilitated by a collaboration between the Department of Neighborhood Development and the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics (MONUM). The Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics serves as Mayor Walsh's civic innovation group. A City agency that was formed in 2010, New Urban Mechanics pilots experiments that offer the potential to improve the quality of life for Boston residents. The Housing Innovation Lab focuses their work on reducing the cost of housing. To learn more about MONUM, follow the office on [Twitter](#) or visit their [website](#). To learn more about the Housing Innovation Lab, follow the office on [Twitter](#) or visit their [website](#).

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