

Planning and Design Criteria

As in past years, the HUD Innovation in Affordable Housing (IAH) competition focuses on innovation. Understanding innovation provides a foundation for approaching your solution and should be a starting point for each team. Innovation has three basic definitions: a new idea, the act or process of introducing new ideas, and the process of translating an idea or invention into a good or service that increases value. In application, the starting point for innovative design is deconstructing the design requirements and the owner's objectives for the project: What are we attempting to accomplish? What are the performance attributes we wish to improve? How can we improve durability, reduce energy consumption, improve resource utilization, improve indoor environmental quality, reduce environmental impact, increase community integration, increase density, improve resident quality of life, all while reducing first-cost? By analyzing, deconstructing the problem statement, and asking insightful questions, we can place ourselves in a position to uncover, develop, and deploy innovative solutions. It is this journey that constitutes innovative design and the road competitors should travel.

The HUD Innovation in Affordable Housing competition is specifically asking teams to identify and develop innovative ideas and solutions. Innovation should be highlighted in all aspects outlined below, while balancing affordability with resource efficiency, durability, and resiliency. The dwellings should be designed for accessibility and healthy living with natural daylight and indoor environmental quality, as well as defined outdoor community and appropriate recreational spaces. The integration of advanced technologies is encouraged along with renewable and renewable-ready design.

Creative and imaginative solutions are sought. Keep in mind that jurors and housing authorities will be most impressed by original thinking. Teams are encouraged to create a new narrative for affordable housing, reimagining the way we plan for, design, and build affordable housing.

While teams should emphasize innovation in all aspects of their solutions, the following criteria should be investigated:

Environmental

- **Durable:** Long lasting/low maintenance requirements.
- **Healthy:** Design for occupant health, safety, and psychological well-being.
- **Energy and Water Efficient:** Design for low-energy and low-water use requirements.
- **Resource Efficient:** Efficient use of materials; rapidly renewable materials; recycled content/recyclable.
- **Low-impact:** Design that either enhances or does not significantly diminish environmental quality.
- **Resilient:** Design and construction of buildings that resist natural and man-made hazards and provide for the protection of life, safety, and security of all residents.
- **Life Cycle Assessment:** Technique to assess environmental impacts of a product over all stages of its life.

Financial

- **Funding:** Primary sources contributing to financial pro forma; understanding rules, regulations, and guidelines.
- **Leveraging:** Secondary sources making use of or combining various financial instruments, such as tax credits, to increase the potential return of an investment.
- **Cash Flow:** Explore all potential funding sources and create alternative or innovative financing plans.
- **Affordable:** Determine cost effective measures to construct and operate over the long term.
- **Initial Capital Cost:** Fixed, one-time expenses associated with development.
- **Operations and Maintenance:** Day-to-day activities required to ensure that the building, systems, and equipment perform as intended.
- **Design for Replacement:** Ease of replacing systems, equipment, or building components as they wear or fail.
- **Infrastructure Longevity:** Design to remain serviceable well beyond financing term.
- **Feasibility:** Creativity funding is encouraged but proposed funding should be obtainable.

Social

- **Neighborhood:** Allowing for and encouraging social interaction among residents of a distinct community and within the wider surrounding community.
- **Access to Employment and Services:** Provide or make use of existing transportation networks to link the site with commercial centers.
- **Accessible:** Readily usable by individuals with varying degrees of physical ability.
- **Sense of Community:** Emotional connections wherein residents care about the community, value their relationships to community and its members, and are invested in the future of the community.
- **Social Networking:** The ability to connect with people and places, including access to amenities, health care, and supportive services, contributes to overall well-being, helps to lower the risk of isolation, and enhances independence.
- **Sense of Place:** Creating an imageable perception of a unique or special place.
- **Sense of Control and Comfort:** Engendering individual ownership of place to promote physical and emotional well-being.
- **Redressing Past Social Injustices:** Equitably addressing past injustices based on race, income, or other critical demographic and cultural differences.

Program:

The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia (“Atlanta Housing” or “AH”) is the largest housing authority in Georgia and one of the largest in the nation. AH provides and facilitates affordable housing resources for over 23,000 low-income households. These affordable housing resources include AH owned residential communities, AH-sponsored mixed-income, mixed-finance residential communities, tenant-based vouchers, Home Flex Program (formerly Project Based Rental Assistance Program), supportive housing arrangements, and

homeownership opportunities. Atlanta Housing has broad corporate powers including, but not limited to, the power to acquire, manage, own, operate, develop, and revitalize affordable housing. AH's programs are funded and regulated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Using its Moving to Work flexibility granted by HUD, AH has implemented an array of innovations that benefit low-income families and expand housing choice. AH's approach to providing quality affordable housing and human development services is based on the belief that people can do better when given access to quality living environments and the tools they need to become self-sufficient. To learn more about AH; its history, mission and business plan, please visit AH's website: www.atlantahousing.org.

Please refer to the [resources](#) provided by Atlanta Housing for additional program information.

Site Development:

Atlanta Housing (AH) is seeking to transform **13.12 acres** of developable land (up to **6M sq. ft.** of as-of-right developable area, **4.3M** of which is allowed for residential) into a vibrant mixed-use community that includes affordable and market-rate housing, office, retail, hospitality, and open space that seamlessly integrates with the existing cultural facilities that will remain on site. The site has the potential to become a new, world-class civic anchor and mixed-use neighborhood in the heart of Atlanta.

The historical significance of the Boisfeuillet Jones Atlanta Civic Center and the land it sits on stretches far beyond recent memory and serves as the driver for the vision of a new, restorative development on the site. The site was originally home to Buttermilk Bottom, a community of approximately 16,000 people that took root in the early 1900s. By the 1940s, the community was well established as an African American enclave. Like other predominantly Black neighborhoods in Atlanta at the time, Buttermilk Bottom was considered a blighted area by city officials and eventually targeted for urban renewal. In the 1960s, the city demolished the neighborhood to make way for a new plan, which prioritized grand civic venues over neighborhood housing. Ironically, the "civic promise" envisioned by city leaders resulted in the dispersion of the existing residents and businesses and the elimination of the community. The resulting plan also established a lasting barrier between the historic Old Fourth Ward and new growth along Peachtree Street; a gap that is still present in the urban fabric today.

Despite its rather disadvantageous beginning, the new Civic Center complex represented the city's effort to establish a civic and iconic home for the arts in the heart of Atlanta. The Civic Center first opened in 1967, serving as an entertainment venue and convention center, hosting local, regional, and national performances and events until its closure in 2014. The complex includes a 4,600-seat Performing Arts Center with and a 125,000 sq. ft. Exhibition Hall. Both buildings' entrances center on a formal plaza and fountain that continue the tradition of cultural institutions serving as both an iconic landmark and public amenity for residents.

In 2017, AH acquired the site from the City of Atlanta aiming to develop affordable housing in a mixed-use, mixed-income setting. The redevelopment of the land adjacent to these cultural facilities offers a unique opportunity to restore the site through the creation of a vibrant residential community. While acknowledging the historical significances of Buttermilk Bottom, it now presents an opportunity to chart a new future for the site. By integrating a new mixed-

income community with regenerated civic anchors, dynamic supporting uses, and the surrounding neighborhood the successful development will be instrumental in realizing the site's civic promise.

The Civic Center is located at 395 Piedmont Ave NE. Bounded to the east by Piedmont Avenue, it offers prime access from I-85 and direct connections between Downtown and Midtown. Pine Street and Ralph McGill Boulevard form the site's edges to the north and south, respectively, connecting it directly to the thriving historic Old Fourth Ward Park district to the east and SoNo/Downtown to the west. The site is located less than a mile from Emory University's expanding Midtown Hospital and 1.5 miles from Ponce City Market. It is a 10-minute walk from both the Civic Center MARTA station (Red and Gold lines) and the Downtown/Peachtree Street hotel district. The site is comprised of two parcels, both controlled by AH, which together are a combined 17.9-acres on which the Civic Center buildings sit. These combined parcels are referred to as Tract 1. As will be described further in this briefing, there is a third parcel that is not in AH's control ("Tract 2"). This .69-acre parcel completes the Pine Street Frontage and is owned by Southface Energy Institute. Southface has communicated to Atlanta Housing that it is open to discussions regarding partnerships with potential developers to incorporate both their operations and land in the overall development.

Please refer to the [resources](#) provided by Atlanta Housing for additional site information.

Critical Considerations:

Successful projects will address the program, solve for the design criteria, and will respond to the following questions:

- What aspects of your design innovatively address the need for a true mixed-use, mixed-income community, in the heart of a major city, in a neighborhood that is rapidly gentrifying and losing its supply of affordable housing?
- How does your solution respond to the site, zoning, and building code requirements or restrictions?
- How does your proposed design interact with the site?
- What innovative approaches did you employ in developing your design relative to the restrictions or opportunities presented by the site?
- What innovative energy efficiency, water conservation, and renewable energy strategies did you incorporate into your design?
- What innovative approaches did you employ in order to integrate your design into the neighborhood and community?
- How are themes of transit-oriented development emphasized?
- What services and activity settings are planned and provided for to improve the quality of life for the population served?
- How does your solution equitably address past injustices based on race, income, or other critical demographic and cultural differences?
- What does your cultural and social considerations look like, and how does diversity, equity and inclusion play a role?

- How are you planning to finance the project?
- What innovative financing solutions did you explore for leveraging and partnerships?
- Explain how your design and financial solutions innovatively integrate best practices and technology into your solution.

Financial Considerations:

The overall project should concentrate on one-through four-bedroom units serving households primarily at or below 60 percent of the average median income (AMI). The developments may be financed by a variety of state and federal funding sources. None of the proposed properties have committed funding sources at this time.

As a public housing authority, AH has access to a wide range of HUD programs to incentivize efficient housing development, including but not limited to:

- Updated energy efficient codes and building standards
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/economic_development/eegb/standards
- Public Housing Environmental & Conservation Clearinghouse (PHECC)
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/phecc
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/phecc/resources
- Programs that support energy efficiency for public housing authorities
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/economic_development/eegb/programs#s1
- Multi-family Better Buildings Challenge (a voluntary partnership with the Department of Energy, of which Atlanta Housing is a member)
https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/economic_development/eegb/challenge

The State of Georgia

- The Department of Community Affairs (Georgia's tax credit allocating agency)
<https://www.dca.ga.gov/safe-affordable-housing/rental-housing-development/housing-tax-credit-program-lihtc>
- Solar and other energy rebate programs and incentives (some of which are applicable to particular localities)
<https://www.cleanenergyauthority.com/solar-rebates-and-incentives/georgia>

Please refer to the [resources](#) provided by Atlanta Housing for additional financial information.

Accessibility Regulations:

Federal:

Fair Housing Amendments Act (FHA)

- In newly constructed non-elevator buildings containing at least 4 dwelling units, all ground floor units must comply with the FHA's seven design and construction requirements.
 - Req 1: Accessible building entrance on an accessible route
 - Req 2: Accessible public and common-use areas

- Req 3: Usable doors
- Req 4: Accessible route into and through the unit
- Req 5: Controls in accessible locations
- Req 6: Reinforced walls for the later installation of grab bars
- Req 7: Usable kitchens and bathrooms
- There are 10 HUD-approved ‘safe harbors’ for FHA compliance. They can be found here: <http://www.fairhousingfirst.org/faq/safeharbors.html>

Section 504 of the Rehab Act of 1973 (Section 504)

- Section 504 requires access to programs which receive HUD funding. When a newly constructed HUD-funded housing development contains at least 5 units, ‘the project’ is subject to Section 504. Housing developed by a Housing Authority is subject to Section 504. Among other requirements of the Section 504 regulations; no less than 5% of the total number of dwelling units in ‘the project’ must comply with the accessible design and construction requirements of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design; these must be disbursed throughout the building(s) and site and among the various unit types available. An additional 2% of the total number of dwelling units in ‘the project’ must accommodate the needs of people with hearing and visual disabilities (H&V units). The Section 504 regulations can be found here:
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/disabilities/sect504faq; UFAS can be found here: <http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-aba-standards/ufas>; the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design can be found here:
https://www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index.htm

Americans with Disabilities Act Title II (ADA)

- Title II of the ADA applies to activities of states and local governments. A housing authority is considered part of a local government. As a result, Title II applies to all housing developed by a housing authority. No less than 5% of the total number of dwelling units in ‘the project’ must comply with the accessible design and construction requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design; these must be disbursed throughout the site and among the various unit types available. An additional 2% of the total number of dwelling units in ‘the project’ must accommodate the needs of people with hearing and visual disabilities. The 2010 ADA Standards can be found here:
http://www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index.htm

NOTE: Use of the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design in lieu of UFAS will satisfy the accessible design and construction requirements of Title II of the ADA and Section 504.

Applicable HUD Programs:

The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)

- The Housing Authority plans to use HUD’s RAD program to help finance the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the property.

- RAD allows proven financing tools to be applied to at-risk public and assisted housing and has two components:

1st Component - Allows Public Housing and Moderate Rehabilitation (Mod Rehab) properties to convert, under a competition limited to 60,000 units, to long-term Section 8 rental assistance contracts;

2nd Component - Allows Rent Supplement (Rent Supp), Rental Assistance Payment (RAP), and Mod Rehab properties to convert tenant-based vouchers issued upon contract expiration or termination to project-based assistance.

- RAD is a central part of the Department's rental housing preservation strategy, which works to preserve the nation's stock of deeply affordable rental housing, promote efficiency within and among HUD programs, and build strong, stable communities.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program

- FSS is a HUD program that enables families assisted through the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program and Public Housing (PH) residents...to increase their earned income and reduce their dependency on welfare assistance and rental subsidies.
- Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) work in collaboration with a Program Coordinating Committee (PCC) to secure commitments of public and private resources for the operation of the FSS program, to develop the PHA's FSS Action Plan, and to implement the program.
- FSS was established in 1990 by section 554 of the National Affordable Housing Act, which amended Title I of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 by adding Section 23 for the FSS program. It is a successor program to project self-sufficiency and operation bootstrap. It was modified by the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHRWA) of 1998.
- FSS regulations are found at 24 CFR Part 984.

Housing Choice Voucher Program Section 8

- The housing choice voucher program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, participants are able to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments.
- The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.
- Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the voucher program.
- A family that is issued a housing voucher is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. This unit may include the family's present residence. Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety, as determined by the PHA.
- A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the PHA on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. Under certain circumstances, if authorized by the PHA, a family may use its voucher to purchase a modest home.

Other Applicable Federal Programs:

LIHTC

- The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program uses tax policy to help develop affordable rental housing for low and very low-income families. Originally part of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, the LIHTC program leverages private capital and investor equity to support the development of new and rehabilitated affordable rental housing.
- In general, state governments can adapt the LIHTC program to meet their housing needs under broad federal guidelines.
- The private sector carries all development and marketing risk and enforces strong oversight and accountability. Investors only get to claim and keep the tax credits if their units are built, leased and maintained as affordable housing throughout a 15-year compliance period.
- Many states enforce a 15-year extended-use period to require that properties stay affordable beyond the first 15 years.
- States use a competitive process to award developers with credits.