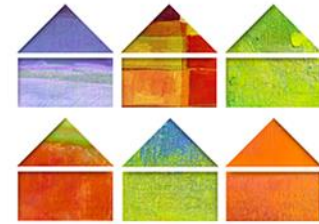




HUD Innovation in Affordable Housing

student design & planning competition
2019



Planning and Design Criteria

As in past years, the HUD 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 program 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 and deconstructing the problem statement, and by asking the insightful questions, we 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 the San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) 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.

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.

Program:

San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) was established in 1937 by the San Antonio City Council and was tasked with constructing and managing homes for low-income working families who were priced out of the post-Depression housing market. From the inception, the intent was to offer residents an opportunity to enrich their lives, make friends, meet neighbors and become involved in their neighborhood. Its Vision Statement today reflects that earliest goal: To create dynamic communities where people thrive. In 2012 that Vision Statement was adopted along with a revised Mission Statement and Strategic Goals.

MISSION STATEMENT: The San Antonio Housing Authority provides quality affordable housing that is well-integrated into the fabric of neighborhoods and serves as a foundation to improve lives and advance resident independence.

STRATEGIC GOALS: 1. Empower and equip families to improve their quality of life and achieve economic stability. 2. Invest in our greatest resource – our employees – and establish a track record for integrity, accountability, collaboration and strong customer service. 3. Preserve and improve existing affordable housing resources and opportunities. 4. Strategically expand the supply of affordable housing. 5. Transform core operations to be a high performing and financially strong organization. 6. Develop a local and national reputation for being an effective leader, partner, and advocate for affordable housing and its residents.

Presently SAHA manages over 27,000 dwellings through its three primary housing programs including: nearly 14,000 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) dwellings; over 7,000 mixed-income rental units at 46 communities; and over 6,000 apartments at the 70 public housing communities it operates throughout San Antonio.

SAHA now has the opportunity to add to its public housing communities with a new site adjacent to the famous River Walk near Downtown San Antonio. The location of the site offers both tremendous opportunities, but also significant challenges. The site is an undeveloped approximately 2.5-acre corner lot at the intersection of Brooklyn Avenue and North St. Mary’s Street. It is in a Form-Based Zoning FBZ T6 – 2 (high density district) with an River Improvement Overlay (RIO-2). [\[link\]](#)

Form Based Zoning Development is a compilation of various special transect districts established to encourage a sustainable pattern of development by concentrating growth in hamlets, villages and regional centers while preserving and protecting prime agricultural land, environmentally sensitive areas, important natural features and open space for large planned developments. Hamlets, villages and regional centers are compact, pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use with a focus on creating communities where the ordinary activities of daily living occur within walking distance of most dwellings. Lot and building standards including building disposition, building configuration, building function, parking standards, architectural standards, landscape standards and signage standards are governed by development pattern plans, the individual transect districts, and the calibrated transect districts, if applicable.

As stated above, zoning is controlled by FBZ T6-2 with RIO-2. The RIO-2 requires that new constructions allow at least 5.5 hours of solar access in the winter solstice and 7.5 in summer. Solar access is to be provided in at least a 30-foot strip parallel to and measured from the River bank. The site has a 20-foot maximum setback along the street sides, 5 on the sides and 10 on the rear. FBZ highly encourages mixed use development and in this case, retail/restaurant/public spaces are highly desirable to vitalize the street and block. Be advised that the competition would rather emphasize innovative approaches, including a wide range of unit types in lieu of maximizing density. In fact, teams should try to maximize diversity -- diversity of uses, diversity of incomes, diversity of unit sizes.

In order to reduce reliance on private automobiles, teams may assume 1.0 parking place per dwelling unit at a minimum. In addition, the competition encourages innovative transportation proposals to meet resident needs. Additional parking accommodations should be provided for the commercial/retail spaces, etc. on a per gross square foot basis; as well as providing bicycle parking at 10% of minimum required parking for a given use.

SAHA’s newest undertaking, and the subject of this design competition, involves a new development to provide workforce housing for families and individuals. SAHA plans to construct approximately 100 new mixed-income dwellings along with commercial mixed-use space and amenities on the 2.58-acre site. Given its location adjacent to the River Walk, and its designation within both the FBZ T6 and River Overlay Improvement Overlay zones, an urban-density and sensitivity to the river front and integration into the desired urban fabric is required. The occupancies for the mixed-use spaces have not been determined, but they should be compatible with the intent of the FBZ, the downtown adjacency, and the residential occupancy desired by SAHA.

The buildable area on the site is approximately 2.58 acres, generally flat open land [\[view maps\]](#). The site is bounded by North St. Mary’s Street to the North, Brooklyn Avenue to the West, and rights-of-ways to the South and East. The River Walk is approximately 100’ to the South of the site.

Dwellings:

The new apartments shall consist of a mix of studios, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom units, with one half being two-bedroom. The minimum area requirement for each dwelling based on bedroom count is governed by several different governmental agencies. For the purposes of this competition, the minimum dwelling area requirements for new dwellings shall be:

- Studio – 400 square feet
- 1 bedroom – 500 square feet
- 2 bedroom – 750 square feet
- 3 bedroom – 1000 square feet

Each of the provided units are to be self-contained family dwellings including bedrooms, kitchen and dining spaces, living areas, bathrooms, and appropriate storage spaces. In addition, a minimum amount of private use exterior living space must be provided for each dwelling. The use of front-porches, covered balconies and similar amenities, which provide for passive-surveillance opportunities as well as encouraging neighborhood interaction, is highly encouraged.

Each new dwelling should exhibit exceptional environmental performance, including in energy and water use, indoor environmental quality, durability, and resiliency. Although the target level of performance is high, the budgetary constraints are real, and designs must be defensible.

Building Configurations:

There are no explicit requirements for the building types utilized, or the configuration of the building(s). Whatever building types/configurations are selected by the designers, all amenities typically required for residential use must be included, either on a dwelling scale, or as common-use elements. Teams should provide a minimum of 20% of the units at 60% AMI.

Site Development:

The site contains approximately 2.58 acres of developable area as shown on the site plans [[view maps](#)]. The design teams should strive to create a “village” with exterior spaces and areas recognizable as distinct activity settings conducive to informal gatherings and socialization and other desirable social interactions. The relationship of the building(s) to the site and surrounding urban grid is paramount. In accordance with the FBZ implications, street frontage must be directly addressed and integrated into the designs. The activity zone edge between the new development and surrounding urban grid should be defined, articulated, and visually meaningful. Opportunities for casual socialization should be incorporated, as is incorporating the stream as a linear park feature in the design.

Resident pedestrian pathways through the site should be well defined, functional, and pleasant to use with socialization opportunities, and formal and casual connectivity to the outdoor activity settings. Pedestrian paths in particular should be hierarchal from public to private. Vehicular access ways should integrate into to the designs and should be functional and compact as practical. Where pedestrian and vehicular access intersects, pedestrian paths should be visually dominant.

Site Amenities:

The property should be aesthetically appealing with defensible space, but without perimeter security fencing. Boundary defining systems, such as walls and landscaping, need not create hard security barriers but should require that access points onto and through the site are controlled to specific points and locations, and that those access points are easily viewed from the residences within the site. These types of passive security features should be included throughout the property. Similarly, where private-use outdoor spaces exist (i.e., intended to serve one specific dwelling), landscape features should be included to delineate those spaces as not for public use.

On-site parking should be provided for dwelling units plus additional spaces as required to serve the mixed-use/amenities spaces. Transit oriented development solutions may be used to reduce the prescriptive parking requirements, but these reductions must be justified.

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 needs of low-income working families and individuals?
- How does your solution respond to the site, zoning, and building code requirements or restrictions?
- How does your proposed design interact with the site? With the River Improvement Overlay District?
- 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 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 total budget for the residential portion of the project (exclusive of land costs) is eighteen million dollars (\$18,000,000). Financing should consist of LIHTC (either 4% or 9%, or both), and/or other sources with similar terms and benefits. Innovative approaches to financing will be a specific area of evaluation. Any commercial mixed/use spaces must be shown to be self-sustaining financially.

Texas Resident eligibility is income restricted with HUD-specified income limits:

One-person	\$38,550
Two-person	\$44,050
Three-person	\$49,550
Four-person	\$55,050
Five-person	\$59,450
Six-person	\$63,850
Seven-person	\$68,250

Resident rent structure is a sliding scale based on rent of 30% of net adjusted income.

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.
 - o Req 1: Accessible building entrance on an accessible route
 - o Req 2: Accessible public and common-use areas
 - o Req 3: Usable doors
 - o Req 4: Accessible route into and through the unit
 - o Req 5: Controls in accessible locations
 - o Req 6: Reinforced walls for the later installation of grab bars
 - o 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.

State:

The International Building Code (IBC) 2018 is the code that applies in San Antonio. *Chapter 11: Accessibility* of the IBC 2018 includes accessible design and construction requirements that apply to multifamily projects designed and constructed in San Antonio.

Applicable HUD Programs:

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.