



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Charles D. Baker, Governor ♦ Karyn E. Polito, Lt. Governor ♦ Janelle Chan, Undersecretary

**ADDENDUM #1 to Public Housing Notice 2019-26**

To: All Local Housing Authority Executive Directors

From: Ben Stone, Director, Bureau of Housing Development & Construction, Division of Public Housing

Subject: **ADDENDUM #1 – Creative Placemaking NOFA Q&A**

Date: November 27, 2019

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**Notice of Funding Availability – Fiscal Year 2020 Health & Safety Initiative**

**ADDENDUM #1 - Q&A**

Through this notice, DHCD is sharing written answers to all questions submitted by email or asked at the symposium at MA NAHRO Fall Conference on November 19, 2019. Prospective applicants should review these questions and answers and the original NOFA ([2019-26](#)) before sending in their funding requests. The final question deadline is December 13, 2019, but will be accepted before then. DHCD will put out additional questions and answers following that deadline. If there are additional questions about the NOFA, please submit them via email to [ben.stone@mass.gov](mailto:ben.stone@mass.gov), [simone.early@mass.gov](mailto:simone.early@mass.gov), and [Aviva.Rothman-Shore@mass.gov](mailto:Aviva.Rothman-Shore@mass.gov).

As a reminder, the application deadline is April 15<sup>th</sup>.

The presentations at MANAHRO have been added to the DHCD PHN webpage and can be found at these links; each panelist's contact information is on their Powerpoint linked below.

Megan Tompkins – [Resident Engagement Process Ideas for Creative Placemaking](#)  
Margo Saulnier – [Creative Placemaking Strategies in New Bedford](#)  
David Valecillos – [Creative Placemaking for Neighborhood Revitalization in Salem](#)

**Panelists**

Margo Saulnier - Creative Strategist, City of New Bedford  
Megan Tompkins - CBA Landscape Architects  
David Valecillos - Director of Design/Senior Project Manager, North Shore CDC

Ben Stone – Director, Bureau of Housing Development & Construction (BHDC), DHCD  
Simone Early – Director, Architects, Engineers, and Sustainability Unit of BHDC, DHCD  
Aviva Rothman-Shore – Economic Prosperity Manager, DHCD

**Attendees**

DHCD Staff

RCAT Directors

**1. What are the liability issues associated with new community space projects, such as playgrounds?**

Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) should be aware of liability issues associated with new active community spaces. DHCD will evaluate each project on a case by case basis to address liability concerns.

Some tips to mitigate liability and to consider when developing project ideas:

- Public Recreational Use, secured by a notice to Town Selectmen or City Council that the land is being made available for public recreational, conservation, scientific or educational purposes pursuant to MGL ch. 21 § 17C, can shield outdoor recreational areas from liability.
- Appropriate signage – “use at your own risk”, “rules of use”, “authorized users only” can protect owners from liability.
- For indoor uses such as exercise equipment, DHCD strongly suggests a waiver policy.
- Proper maintenance and attention to slip and fall risks can mitigate liability exposure.
- Ensure activities are inclusive and accessible for all community members.

If you have specific concerns, please reach out to DHCD Risk Management Specialist Sarah O’Leary [sarah.oleary@mass.gov](mailto:sarah.oleary@mass.gov) .

**2. Can they apply for multiple developments?**

LHAs may apply for one project that serves multiple developments. LHAs can also submit multiple projects, but if there are more applications than can be funded second applications from the same LHA will be less competitive.

**3. Are they restricted from applying if they have been funded on other special projects?**

In general, LHAs are not restricted from applying if they have received other special funding. Developments that have been comprehensively redeveloped through mixed-finance (LIHTC, PEHO, SEC 8 Vouchers, etc.) are not eligible, however.

**4. How much funding is available?**

DHCD is planning to award approximately \$5 million to be expended in Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023. As always, funding awards are subject to availability.

**5. Can LHAs contribute operating reserves to the project?**

Yes, LHAs can contribute operating reserves, formula funding, or local funds to leverage the DHCD capital award, if available.

**6. What other resources are out there to submit Creative Placemaking Design?**

Panelists noted community partners include TDI fellow, Mass Cultural Council, local community foundations, and the Barr Foundation. City of New Bedford has had success working with UMASS-Dartmouth – panelists suggested working with local higher education institutions to benefit from staff expertise and student internships. DHCD has provided a list of prospective resources in Attachment B of PHN 2019-26.

**7. Does HUD have a similar program?**

DHCD is not aware of a similar program, but some Housing Authorities have done Creative Placemaking projects on their own initiative. Examples include [Seattle Housing Authority's Yesler development](#) and [Chicago Housing Authority](#).

**8. What has been the cost of maintenance for these projects? How does design take maintenance into account.**

Maintenance is not funded by this NOFA, which is restricted to capital funding for initial resident engagement, design, and construction. Panelists noted that community buy-in to the project is important to prevent vandalism and encourage upkeep. Designers try to be cognizant of ongoing maintenance needs. Resident engagement to build community ownership is important.

DHCD and panelists suggest working with local non-profits and volunteer groups to maintain these projects at reduced cost to Housing Authority.

**9. How should I productively work with artists on a Creative Placemaking Project?**

Panelists recommend that the LHA ask for a portfolio and be familiar with the work that they do. LHAs should request images of previous work and/or their ideas for project under consideration. Additionally, LHAs can seek out “social artists” who are trained and specialize in community processes and community-informed art.

**10. With limited budgets, with is top priority and most impactful for these projects?**

It's hard to say in general, but LHAs should ensure that they are investing in a project that is specific to the available space and the needs of residents. The resident engagement portion of the project is critical. Artists can help with this; North Shore CDC has found that adding an artistic angle often does not have a cost impact but improves project outcomes. Overall, DHCD is looking for projects that provide active spaces for public housing residents, with art informing the project and design – i.e. not an exclusively art project.

**11. How many people applied for New Bedford's Creative Placemaking Funding?**

There were 42 applicants in the first round and 12 awards. There were 39 applicants in the second round and 13 awards. Projects included murals, temporary sculpture, “parklets”, and lighting.

## **12. What is the cost for typical Creative Placemaking projects?**

The panelists gave some examples from their work, including \$450,000 to create a park, including environmental remediation and retaining wall, \$10,000 for “parklets” the size of a couple parking spaces, and \$350,000 to fit out a storefront as community space in Salem. DHCD would caution that every project is different and that LHAs must conform to public bidding laws, which may raise costs.

## **13. Does Public Art Need to be publicly bid?**

Any project altering a public building, including painting, has to be publicly bid if funded with public funds, and will be subject to C.149 or C.30 B procurement thresholds.. In-kind donations of art or artistic services do not need to be publicly bid. Additionally, artists involved in project design and resident engagement can be engaged as sub-contractors by the DHCD-procured House Doctor architect.

## **14. What impacts have been seen from Creative Placemaking Projects on crime, school performance, or other social outcomes?**

Panelists noted that outcomes depend on scale, and there is not a consensus on impact. See links below to white papers on the outcome from several place making projects. Panelists noted that North Shore CDCs efforts in Salem, including community space improvements and murals, made ‘The Point’ neighborhood a Lonely Planet destination and has brought tourist dollars and increased real estate values to the neighborhood. Anecdotally, they have also seen that with more active, attractive community space residents take more pride in their surroundings and assist with trash pick up and maintenance.

Per panelists, the “process matters as much as final product” for making residents feel ownership of the project.

LISC: More Than Storefronts: <https://www.lisc.org/our-resources/resource/more-storefronts>

ArtPlace Field Scan – Exploring the Ways Arts and Culture Intersect with Housing:  
<https://www.artplaceamerica.org/housing>

National Endowment for the Arts – How to do Creative Placemaking:  
<https://www.arts.gov/publications/how-do-creative-placemaking>

National Endowment for the Arts – Evaluation as a Tool for Creative Placemaking:  
<https://www.arts.gov/video/evaluation-tool-creative-placemaking>

PolicyLink – Arts, Culture and Community Development: <https://www.communitydevelopment.art/>

## **15. Is \_\_\_\_\_ type of project an appropriate Creative Placemaking project?**

DHCD has received several inquiries about whether a certain concept would be an appropriate fit for the Creative Placemaking program. In general, DHCD is open to any projects that has a demonstrated resident priority, creates an actively used community space, has a realistic usage and upkeep plan, and has artistic input. DHCD has listed several eligible project types on page two of the NOFA. Several ideas presented to DHCD, with response, are listed below.

- Gazebo-type structure, requested by residents, outside a c.667 development
  - Yes, if this is resident priority it could be considered.

- Outdoor space for a 667 featuring a community garden, bocce court, and reading area
  - Yes, this sounds like a good mix of uses that would be used by residents of a c.667 elderly development.
- Improved indoor community space with kitchen facilities in c.667 development to facilitate cross-cultural events to improve intra-community relations.
  - Yes

Please reach out [ben.stone@mass.gov](mailto:ben.stone@mass.gov), [simone.early@mass.gov](mailto:simone.early@mass.gov), and [Aviva.rothmanshore@mass.gov](mailto:Aviva.rothmanshore@mass.gov)