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2019–2020 Design Grants Research

Sasaki
Foundation

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Introduction

The Sasaki Foundation is named after Hideo Sasaki, a pioneer of modern design, a landscape architect, a leader, and an educator who articulated—and proved—the value of interdisciplinary design while breaking down the traditional barriers between practice and teaching.



Since its founding in 2000, the Sasaki Foundation has awarded more than $480,000 for those interested in pursuing focused research initiatives that foster diversity and equity in the design field and that connect young people to mentorship and resources.

2019 Design Grants cohort working in the Incubator at Sasaki | Sasaki

The Sasaki Foundation was established by Sasaki, a multidisciplinary design firm founded by Hideo. It includes a bequest from Hideo's family and friends to continue his legacy of advancing rigorous research within an interdisciplinary approach to design, and supporting design education. At the intersection of research, practice, education, and community-driven processes, the Sasaki Foundation is committed to advancing the value of design, inviting diverse partners to co-create change.

The Sasaki Foundation builds its values on over six decades of work by Hideo Sasaki, with a current focus on the following priority areas.

Research & Experimentation

Large-scale, complex challenges require cross-disciplinary thinking. That's why the Sasaki Foundation convenes experts and innovators from all backgrounds. The Foundation's research programs focus on bringing issues of inequity in design to the forefront. This means supporting active research projects that center on inclusion and collaboration with communities who have historically been removed from the design process. Advancing interdisciplinary design research is in service to building more equitable cities and communities.

Community Learning & Engagement

Informed and engaged residents are the central ingredients of a successful community. The Sasaki Foundation invests in ideas and strategies that engage community members in the design process—and contribute meaningfully to its outcomes. To that end, the Foundation works with civic leaders, educators, economists, and technologists to connect design and community-driven action through public programming.

Professional Practice & Growth

A thriving design industry relies on a pipeline of diverse, talented, and passionate practitioners who infuse new ideas and disrupt established patterns. The Sasaki Foundation supports professional organizations and initiatives that prepare such future leaders. The Foundation also advocates for innovative design practice, seeking ways to cross discipline boundaries and amplify impact. Of special interest are educational programs that advance diversity and inclusivity in the next generation of design professionals.

Grants Process

In 2019, The Sasaki Foundation launched a call for proposals for our second annual Design Grants. We received 18 applications representing 42 organizations, 11 institutions, 8 Boston communities, 6 Greater Boston cities, and 2 Gateway Cities.

Finalists pitched their ideas to win grant money and coworking space in the Incubator at Sasaki. The three winning teams spent ten months in the Incubator working on projects that promote equity in design.

THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Resilient communities are strong communities. Unfortunately, some communities—especially those that are primarily people of color or historically low-income—are disproportionately impacted by environmental, economic, and social challenges. And yet, when we design the built environment to address these challenges, the voices of the residents are often left out of the process.

The Sasaki Foundation Design Grants focused on the biennial theme of resilience to highlight the role of design in building stronger communities. From a range of topics and opportunities for more resilient communities—proactive approaches to climate adaptation, housing, transit, and placekeeping—the Sasaki Foundation issued a call for proposals to find projects that engaged with communities in the Gateway Cities, Metro West, and Greater Boston.

Proactive Approaches to Climate Adaptation

Responses to extreme heat, stormwater and flash flooding, and coastal and river flooding

In cities like Boston, climate change issues, especially environments with the urban heat island effect and flooding, disproportionately impact communities of color and low-income communities.

- How can investments in climate resilience do more to meet the environmental and social resilience needs of Greater Boston's neighborhoods?
- How can we increase local awareness of resiliency, and inform systems-level approaches to climate risks and solutions?
- How can we model best practices for reducing carbon emissions, increasing building energy efficiency, and improving urban stormwater management?

New Models for Housing

Strategies to improve housing affordability, promote a more diverse housing stock, and address gentrification and displacement

Like many cities, Boston's housing shortage requires innovative approaches to planning and design. Displacement of families, caused by economic and environmental forces, is exacerbated by the limited supply of affordable, family-oriented housing units.

- How can we improve public health through new housing ideas?
- What strategies can help keep residents in their communities (community land trusts, zoning, accessory dwelling units, re-parcellation of land)?
- What building-scale strategies can be created to accommodate sea level rise in a way that benefits and educates communities and residents?

Innovation in Transit and Access to Mobility Choices

Design strategies and solutions for existing challenges to reliable transit; strengthened public-private partnerships in expanding transportation choices and leveraging technology to provide greater access to transportation options by eliminating barriers

Greater Boston' local mobility networks and regional systems have tremendous potential to improve accessibility and safety for users. Methods for leveraging private-sector innovation to increase transportation access for all communities present a powerful opportunity.

- How can communities of color and low-income communities gain better access to transportation choices and connected transportation networks (car/ride/bike-share, bicycle lanes, rapid transit lines, on-demand transport)?
- How could better access to technology improve mobility for your community?
- How can transportation solutions be applied in new ways to make communities more resilient?

Creative Community Building

Themes of collective memory and community storytelling, investment in historic neighborhood fabric, and local business development

Designing and planning for our Greater Boston communities can extend beyond the concept of placemaking to include the idea of placekeeping—the preservation of local identity through strengthening social bonds, celebrating neighborhood history, and developing strategies for enhancing neighborhood retail, food, and health services.

- How do we maintain authenticity while reinvigorating the social and economic well-being of a given community?
- What are creative opportunities for adaptive reuse of buildings or vacant lots to enrich communities?
- How can we build local capacity for economic development and promote local entrepreneurship?



2019 Design Grants Pitch Night | Sasaki

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Design

We seek proposals that utilize interdisciplinary thinking to challenge the status quo. We support design ideas that actively engage and contribute to communities. Winning teams had actionable ideas. Proposals were judged on both creativity and feasibility, and addressed resilience and equity through the lens of one of the four topics—climate adaptation, housing, transit, and placekeeping.

Equity

We seek proposals that benefit historically underrepresented communities through strategies aimed at eliminating systemic barriers. Winning teams showed how their projects would meet the unique needs of a community through a high level of collaboration with community representatives.

Inclusion

We value diverse perspectives and seek to find inclusive processes that make space for dialogue and difference. We especially encouraged proposals from women; transgender, genderqueer, or gender non-conforming individuals; members of racial or ethnic minorities; and individuals with physical and/or intellectual disabilities.

Innovation

We seek proposals that foster innovation, creativity, and interdisciplinary approaches to design. Special attention was given to teams that proposed forward-thinking, rather than reactive, concepts and ideas.

Impact

We seek proposals that can produce positive impacts within the communities they serve. Winning projects exhibited scalability or replicability across other communities with similar characteristics.

PITCH NIGHT

On June 5, 2019, Sasaki Foundation Design Grants finalists pitched their ideas for projects that address proactive approaches to climate adaptation, new models for housing, innovation in transit and access to mobility choices, and creative community building. More than 120 industry leaders who were in attendance learned how the teams planned to leverage design to address issues of resiliency and equity.

The event, sponsored by Columbia, was an opportunity to network with startups, designers and planners, community groups, artists, civic leaders, and entrepreneurs interested in exploring collaborative ways to strengthen and empower communities.

> "We had a great team of judges, culled from organizations like Boston Harbor Now, MIT, Ad Hoc Industries, and Sasaki, who evaluated the teams on how equitable and impactful teams' ideas were," said Laura Marett, Design Grants Jury Chair and Secretary of the Sasaki Foundation's Board of Trustees.

Both jurors and members from the Sasaki Foundation Advisory Council participated in the review process of teams' proposals and pitches.

COMMUNITY GRANTS

In 2019, the Sasaki Foundation also awarded Community Grants to two additional finalists, to participate alongside the research cohort with a shared goal of creating change through the power of design.

2019 Design Grants Pitch Night | Sasaki

2019 Pitch Night Jury



Laura Marett | Sasaki (Jury Chair)

Laura Marett is a landscape architect and associate principal at Sasaki and serves as secretary of the Sasaki Foundation's Board of Trustees. Her practice includes landscape design and systems planning for cities and campuses, with an emphasis on resiliency. She has particular interest in the design of vibrant urban public spaces through an engaged public process and resilience planning for vulnerable communities.



Kathy Abbott | Boston Harbor Now

Kathy Abbott is the first President and CEO of Boston Harbor Now. Kathy has a history of leading change through public and non-profit organizations including advancing statewide park planning, management and land conservation, educating students and impacting resource-based economies in primarily developing countries through applied environmental studies, and creating a new national park through a first of its kind public-private partnership in Boston Harbor.



Eran Ben-Joseph | MIT

Professor Eran Ben-Joseph is the head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His research and teaching areas include urban and physical design, standards and regulations, sustainable site planning technologies, and urban retrofitting. Eran previously worked as a city planner, urban designer, and landscape architect.



Adrian Gill | Ad Hoc Industries

Adrian Gill is the founder of Ad Hoc Industries. Adrian specializes in building creative brands. He has extensive knowledge on building strong brand connection with consumers, and integrating ambitious business goals with bold design objectives. He currently serves as board advisor to a number of internet/mobile startups on creating consumer and brand equity in the social and digital media space.



Meredith McCarthy | Sasaki

Meredith is a licensed architect with ten years of professional experience. Working in both commercial and higher education practice groups, she excels at taking projects from initial programming through design and construction. Meredith enjoys the problem-solving challenges that design presents, as well as the client relationships that emerge from meeting those challenges together.

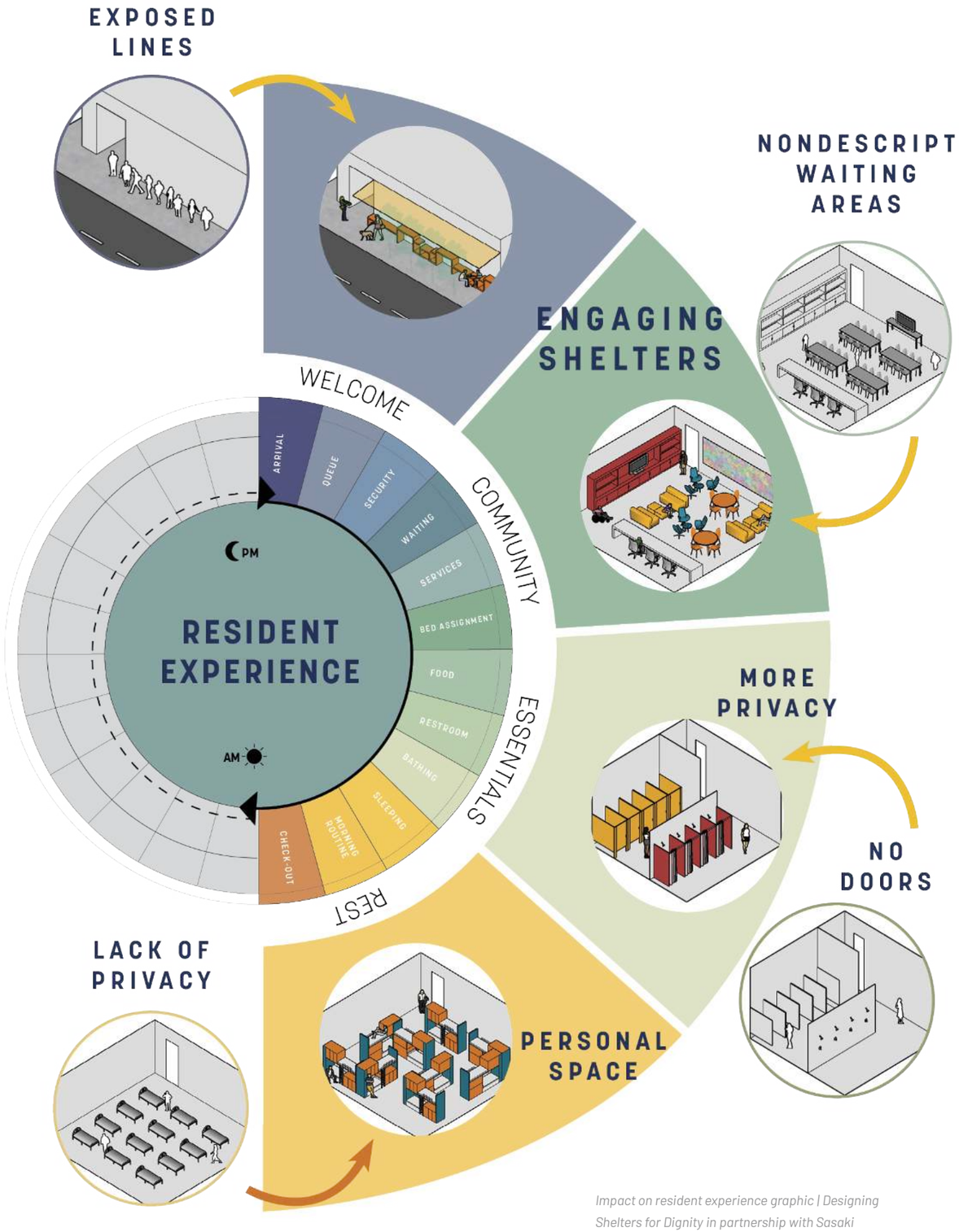


2019 Design Grants Pitch Night jury | Sasaki



2019 Design Grant Pitch Night | Sasaki

Research Teams



Impact on resident experience graphic | Designing Shelters for Dignity in partnership with Sasaki

While Designing Shelters for Dignity believes everyone has the fundamental right to stable housing, the team acknowledges this will take a massive cultural shift and in the meantime many without housing are suffering in dehumanizing and degrading shelter conditions.

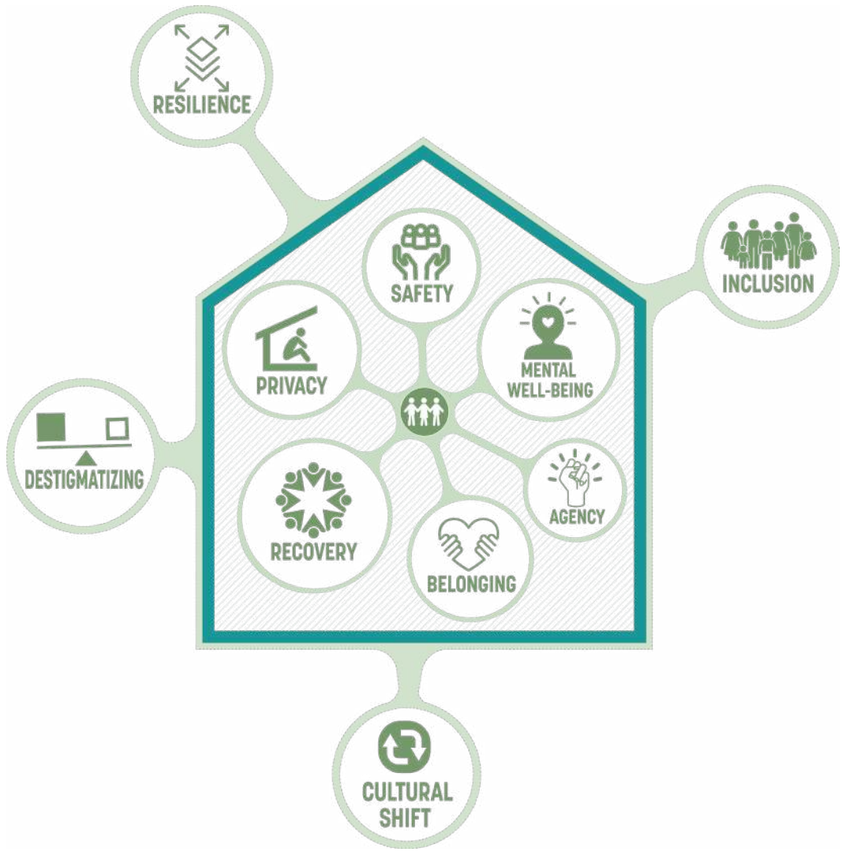
Physical designs of many emergency homeless shelters strip guests of dignity and privacy, and send the message to people without housing that they are not valued by society. The team believes changing the design of these spaces through input from shelter operators, staff, and guests can significantly improve the well-being of individuals sleeping in homeless shelters, at very little cost.

Designing Shelters for Dignity

Laila Fozouni, Elena Clarke

The Designing Shelters for Dignity team designed low-cost, nonstructural physical modifications to shelter spaces that can be easily fabricated and installed in emergency shelter spaces. The team focused attention on four main areas of shelters: the entrance where people queue, the waiting areas and common spaces, the restrooms, and the sleeping areas.

Possible modifications in these spaces include modifying the queue to decrease stigma and exposure to bad weather. They also include making common spaces more vibrant and welcoming, installing physical barriers between beds to increase the sense of privacy and safety, and modifying bathroom doors to protect the dignity of guests while ensuring safety during the addiction epidemic. Through advocacy efforts, the team has worked and will continue to work to promote these design modifications in the hope that they will serve as a model for new design standards implemented across multiple shelters.



Benefits to residents graphic | Designing Shelters for Dignity in partnership with Sasaki

ANALYSIS

1,867

single adults staying in Boston emergency shelters in 2019[1]

DESIGN

4

bedframe modification prototypes being built in summer 2020

OUTREACH

7

relationships with local shelters (unnamed for confidentiality)

ENGAGEMENT

8+

individuals providing feedback on bed modification designs

COMMUNITY

The aim of the project is to better the standards for the physical design of shelter spaces so that the experiences of shelter guests might improve. The behavior and psychology of shelter operators, staff, and guests are inevitably impacted by the spatial design of these spaces. The primary target communities for this project are those who rely on adult emergency homeless services. These groups are undoubtedly the most seriously impacted by current shelter design, but enhancing the physical design of shelter spaces will also impact operators and staff, who are subjected to the negative qualities of shelter space as well.

This project additionally impacts communities where shelters are located and communities with large numbers of unhoused adults. By improving shelter design, the team hopes that community members will reflect on the conditions society currently deems acceptable for shelters, and also that this will decrease the not-in-my-backyard mentality.

STAKEHOLDERS

The team anticipates these design changes will result in positive impacts for unhoused individuals, which will serve to benefit their surrounding community as well. Shelter operators, staff, guests, and surrounding communities are therefore key stakeholders in this project as they will likely be eager to improve the physical conditions of shelters.

Given the pressing problem created by the lack of adequate housing in cities and across the nation (and as the project turns more towards advocacy efforts aiming to promote new minimum design standards for shelter spaces), city and state officials will become key stakeholders in the project as well. Additional stakeholders in this project include other networks and coalitions that provide services to unhoused individuals, as well as human rights advocacy groups and harm reduction advocacy groups.

IMPACT

The project is rooted in research on the social and environmental determinants of health, and in environmental psychology. In their current form, emergency homeless shelters are often degrading. Guests are stripped of their dignity and privacy when they are at their most vulnerable—when it should be crucial to instead increase support. Shelters' physical design perpetuates stigma against individuals experiencing homelessness and sends the message that these spaces are what society believes they deserve. Individuals sleeping in emergency shelters can internalize this stigma, which can in turn negatively impact their capacity to overcome mental and physical adversity. For example, studies have linked psychological health with a person's ability to cope with chronic physical conditions. Studies also have demonstrated the profound impact of stigma on limiting a person's ability to overcome significant challenges, such as addiction and obesity. In addition to affecting the mental and physical resilience of shelter staff and guests, poor design can also directly endanger their physical health, as witnessed in 2020 through the rapid spread of COVID-19 in homeless shelters across the nation. The impact that the environment has on a person's well-being can indeed be profound, and poorly



Hex Nuts, U-Bolts, Mounting Plates



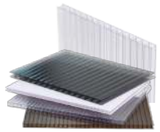
Mending Plates



Adjustable Wrench



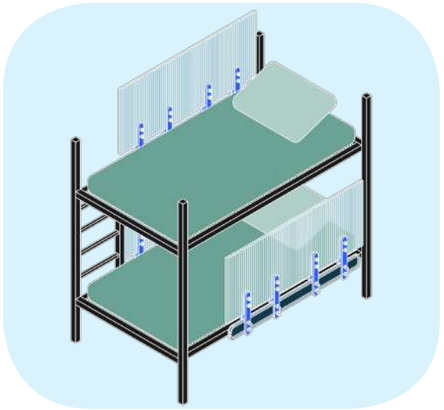
Corrugated Polycarb



Twin-Wall Polycarb

Materials for flexible non-permanent modifications to bedframes | Designing Shelters for Dignity

Flexible Non-Permanent Modifications to Bedframes



Panels Bolted to Plates

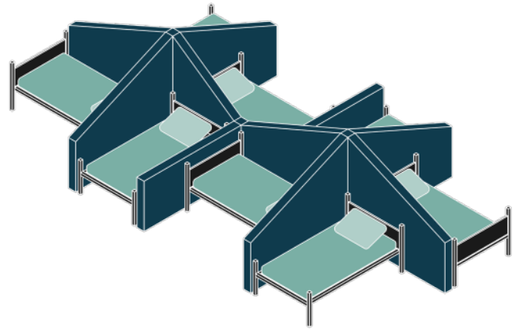
Panels Bolted to Plates:

- Lightweight and versatile
- Easily installed with readily available tools
- Modular design so that it can be shipped in a flat box
- Rounded or Squared U-Bolts or Pole-Mounting brackets to secure to bed-frames

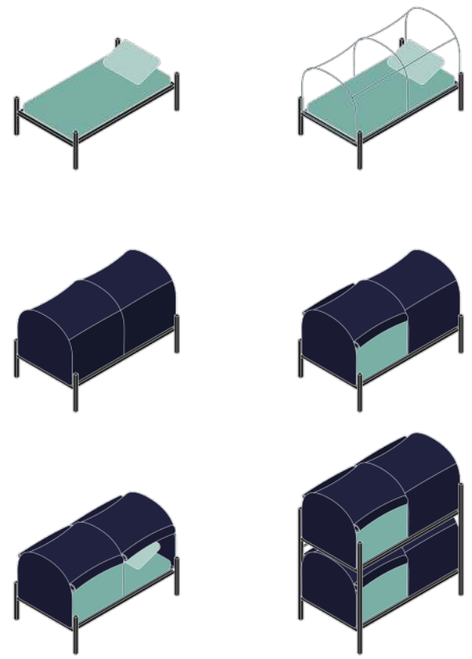
designed or hostile environments can cause harm. The team therefore believes that changes to the physical design of existing emergency shelter spaces will have measurable long-term impacts. Enhancing the spatial design of existing emergency shelters could result in benefits such as decreased hostile behavior inside shelters, improved relationships between shelter guests and staff, and an increase in mental well-being and resilience among those sleeping in shelters. Potential benefits might also include an increase in likelihood that the surrounding neighborhood will accept the presence of the shelter, and perhaps a decrease in the social stigmatization of homeless shelters. The team hopes this endeavor and its impacts will spark conversation around—and a reevaluation of—how we as a society treat community members struggling with homelessness and poverty.

Short-term and immediate impacts of the project have already begun to materialize through efforts to raise awareness around the subject of poorly designed or hostile shelter spaces. The team has met with shelter operators, staff, advocacy groups, and city officials in the Cambridge and Boston area to discuss the current design of these spaces and the need to improve them. They have also been reaching out to their local network to schedule virtual meetings with individuals who have first-hand experience sleeping in shelters, to include their perspectives in the project. Through these meetings, the immediate impact of the project will grow to include the involvement of individuals with firsthand experience sleeping in shelters.

The intermediate impacts of the project will begin to materialize once the team is able to resume in-person activities, suspended in spring 2020 during the COVID-19 crisis. Prior to the crisis, the team had confirmed plans to hold workshops inside a local shelter where operators expressed interest in having their guests provide input in potential design interventions. The team believes this will have an impact on the mental well-being of the guests involved because being included in the process of improving their environment can be empowering. After implementing physical design interventions, benefits will continue to include an improvement in guests' day-to-day experiences within the space.



Low walls for privacy | Designing Shelters for Dignity



Pop-up canopy as a flexible non-permanent modification to bedframes | Designing Shelters for Dignity

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Communities have become aware of the project through the team's efforts to raise awareness around the subject of poorly designed or hostile shelter spaces. During the grant period, and continuing into summer 2020, the team participated in meetings and discussions about emergency shelter design with shelter operators, staff, advocacy groups, and city officials in Cambridge and Boston. The team has also more recently been organizing virtual focus groups with members of advocacy groups, service providers involved in organizing emergency homeless services, and individuals who have first-hand experience sleeping in shelters.

Once in-person activities resume, the team will continue with plans to host in-person workshops with individuals who have experienced sleeping in emergency shelters. These workshops will take place both in shelter spaces and outside of emergency shelters in public spaces. In-person workshops will increase awareness with target communities about the project. Awareness will also increase if any of the physical design interventions are implemented inside shelter spaces.

The team hopes, through these efforts, to grow a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to improving the standards and conditions experienced by individuals who are unhoused.

PROJECT VISIBILITY

Once in-person activities resume, the team's outdoor workshops with individuals experiencing homelessness will gather their input on what design aspects of specific shelters they believe are positive and what general design changes they might like to see. In summer 2020, the team is scheduling workshops via video conference calls with individuals who have experienced or are experiencing homelessness. The team is also gathering information from published work that includes perspectives of populations experiencing homelessness. This will allow the team to adjust the designs—produced using case studies—through empirical evidence. This is crucial because perspectives from these communities are often not included in the design process.

Before the 2020 COVID-19 crisis, the team confirmed plans for workshops inside a local shelter where operators expressed interest in their guests having an input in potential designs. The team will develop physical prototypes of some of the designs and gather feedback from the shelter operators, staff, and guests, which will inform design adjustments. Hopefully, these prototypes will be installed at full-scale in the shelter, creating a visible impact on the shelter's physical space.

Eventually, the team would like to quantify improvements in shelter environments by measuring factors before and after physical changes, including overdoses or substance use in shelters, and hostile incidents between shelter residents or residents and staff.



2″ x 4″ Lumber



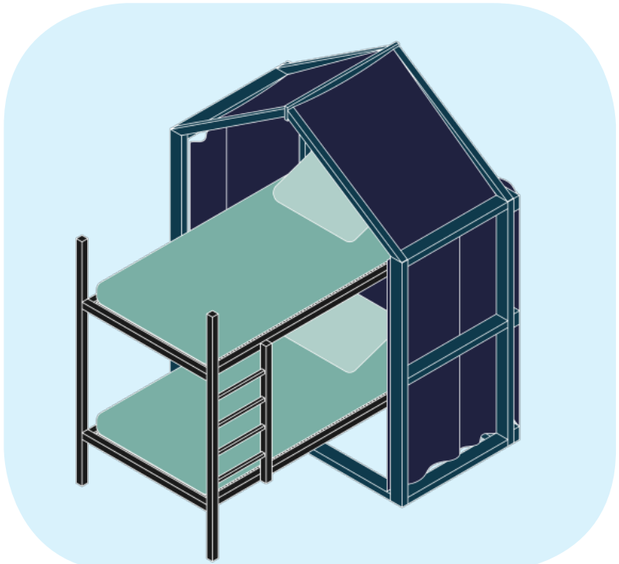
Metal Screws



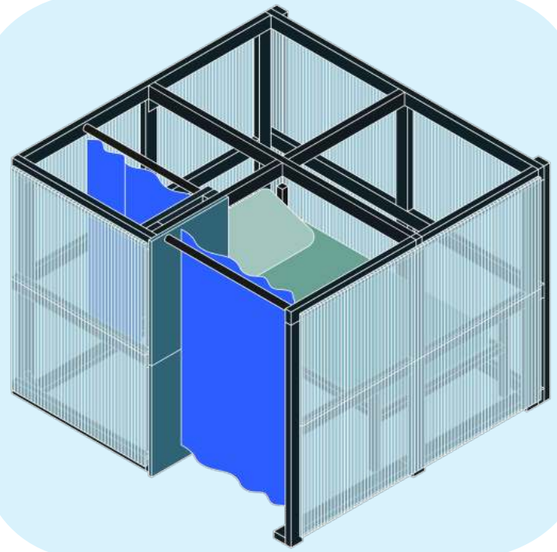
Closet Hooks



Drillbit



Pods at the Head of the Beds



Pods around Beds



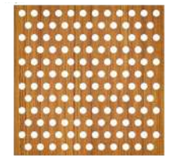
Soundproof Curtains



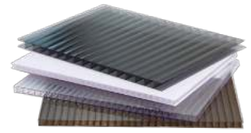
Acoustic Panels



Plywood Panels



MDF Panels



Polycarb Panels

2″ x 4″ Lumber Bed Pods

Materials for lumber bed pods | Designing Shelters for Dignity

COMMUNITY MILESTONES

Though critical in-person aspects of the project were halted due to the 2020 COVID-19 crisis, it did meet significant milestones. First, the team developed a network of shelters, community organizations, and city officials with expressed interest in improving conditions of homeless shelters. This coalition supporting shelter redesign is critical to efforts in implementing these changes in local shelters.

An important obstacle that limits shelter design is inadequate resources and political will to create and maintain well-designed and dignified shelter spaces. Though the team anticipates the design modifications will be low-cost and easily implementable, many shelters often have no flexibility in their already tight and limited budgets.

To overcome this obstacle, the team incorporated as a nonprofit, currently pending 501(c) tax exempt status, to fundraise effectively and financially support shelters that wish to implement the design modifications.

Given the team's limited ability to do workshops in 2020, they turned to ethnographic reports of sleeping in shelters, as well as their observations touring shelters, to design a series of low-cost and easily implementable shelter bed modifications. These modifications include pop-up fabric canopies and bolted polycarbonate panels that use U-bolts to hook around the shelter bed frames. In summer 2020, the team is setting up calls with shelter residents to gather feedback on these designs.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOUNDATION

The project contributes to the Sasaki Foundation's mission of working towards equity and empowering communities through cross-industry and interdisciplinary collaboration. It leverages knowledge from the fields of design, public health, and psychology to work towards improving the conditions of homeless shelters in order to uphold the dignity of shelter guests. Deploying design in shelters not only will improve the wellbeing of unhoused populations but also combat societal stigma against homelessness. By showing that low-cost physical modifications can significantly improve shelter spaces, the team hopes that communities will reflect on the standards society currently deems acceptable for the physical design of emergency homeless shelters, and that this will spark deeper conversations that move communities towards equity and inclusivity.



Designing Shelters for Dignity design charrette in the Incubator at Sasaki | Sasaki

NEXT STEPS

As of July 2020, the team is creating guidelines for non-structural modifications to existing shelters to publish on the project website. These guidelines will include recommendations for types of physical interventions, as well as recommendations for their fabrication and installation. Due to the 2020 COVID-19 crisis, which underscored the urgency for additional physical separations in shelter sleeping areas, the team focused in particular on potential modifications to shelter beds. They have gathered available ethnographic data, supplemented by their own observations from tours of existing shelters, to produce initial designs for potential bed modifications. They will prototype four of these designs in summer 2020, and are setting up virtual interviews with individuals who have firsthand experience sleeping in shelters to ask for their feedback on the prototyped designs.

The team will also host in-person workshops outside of shelters with individuals experiencing homelessness to gather their input on general design changes they might like to see in shelter spaces and to ask for participants' feedback on images of the prototyped designs. The team will eventually host these in-person design workshops inside of emergency shelters.

To push the project forward and develop it in additional locations, as well as accommodate team life changes, the new nonprofit is based in California. A portion of its efforts will involve advocacy work with city and state officials to promote these new design standards, in the hopes that they will be implemented across multiple shelters.

STAY CONNECTED

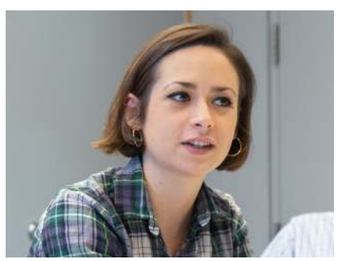
www.designingsheltersfordignity.org

RESEARCH TEAM



Laila Fozouni | team leader

Laila Fozouni is a medical student from the University of California San Francisco and a graduate of the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health. Her research explores issues of stigma and displacement, looking at how the built environment impacts mental health, resilience, and long-term outcomes.



Elena Clarke

Elena Clarke is a designer trained in architecture and urban planning at the Politecnico di Milano and the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her research focuses on integrating ethnographic research into the development of urban policies and practical design solutions with the goal of creating living environments for displaced populations that extend beyond basic shelter.



Energy Shift Boston

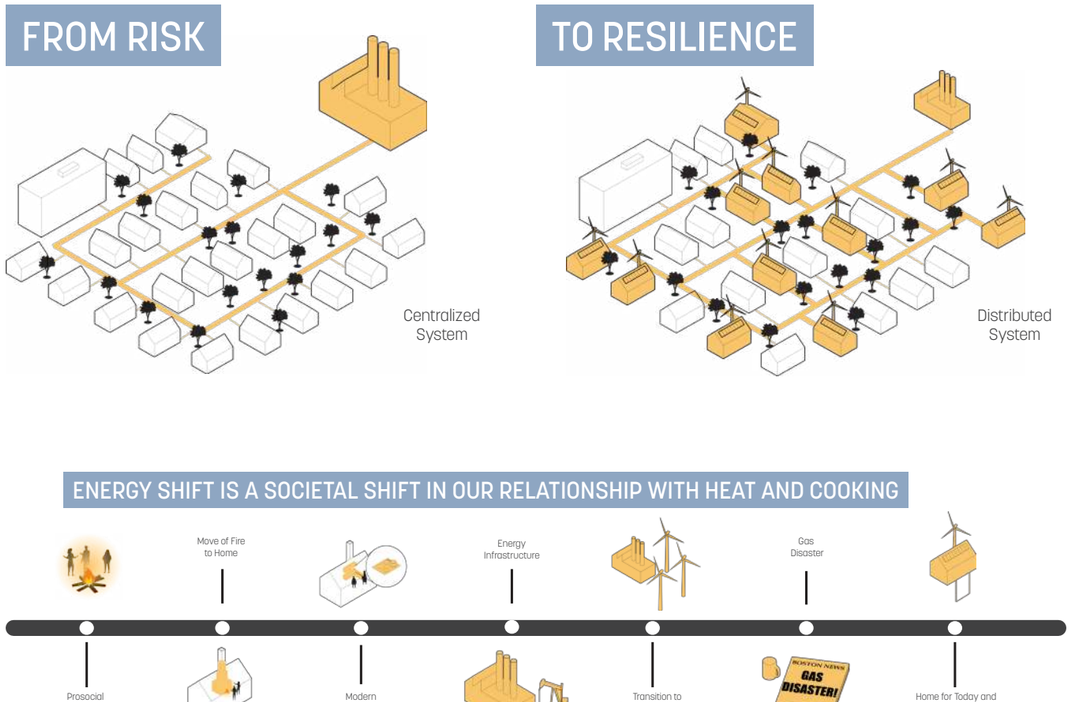
Nathan Phillips, Mary Brady, Ania Carmargo, Rickie Harvey, Audrey Schulman, Zeyneb Magavi, Keeley Bombard, Olivia Ruzzi

Energy Shift Boston applied lessons learned from the 2018 Merrimack Valley Gas Disaster to pilot how communities can proactively develop resilience to energy system failures. The team engaged diverse communities across District 6 of Boston to identify and work with more than 100 households to screen their capacity to temporarily shift to electric heating and cooking in the event of a protracted gas outage, as occurred in the 2018 Merrimack Valley gas disaster.

Through the Energy Shift Boston project, the team discovered that the very starting point for an investigation of the ability of households to use temporary electric heating and cooking appliances—the main household electric service amperage—is both widely recorded and yet not readily accessible to emergency responders or city planners.

The key impact of this project is raising the opportunity for cities and towns to take advantage of discovering this data gap and to act to bring this crucial, simple piece of household information—for disaster resilience and long-term climate action—into a readily accessible manner. Moreover, because energy shift is a societal shift— in that short-term or long-term electrification of cooking and heating requires education and community engagement—this project has successfully piloted a grassroots, community-driven process for a transition to safer, cleaner, and more sustainable energy systems for all.

Energy Shift Boston concept graphic | Energy Shift Boston in partnership with Sasaki



Concept graphic illustrating the shift to resilient energy | Energy Shift Boston in collaboration with Sasaki

ENGAGEMENT

500

Boston residents engaged

ENGAGEMENT

108

households screened for electric service capacity

OUTREACH

6

community, faith, and youth groups

OUTREACH

3

Boston City Councilors or their staff and City of Boston staff reached

COMMUNITY

This project directly focused on District 6 of Boston, which includes the communities of Mission Hill, Jamaica Plain, and West Roxbury. Perhaps no district in Boston contains more disparities in race, income, and housing diversity (renters and owners) than District 6. Ward 10 in the northeast is 38% Black, 56% Hispanic, and is more than 50% rental units; Ward 20 in the southwest has census blocks with over 90% white, majority owner-occupied detached single-family homes. As recently as four years ago, Boston was cited as the most income unequal large city in the nation.

Because of this project's focus on common household electricity specifications, this work has indirect impacts for the entire City of Boston and potential impact in cities and towns across Massachusetts and beyond, including the Merrimack Valley communities that motivated this project. The team anticipates these indirect impacts will become direct impacts going forward.

STAKEHOLDERS

The team partnered with the following individuals and organizations:

Boston Ward 6 Councilor Matt O'Malley was an early and consistent champion of this work, including having agreed to have his household used and videotaped to illustrate the screening process.

Bethel AME Church in Jamaica Plain provided outreach to its congregant householders, which grew into an exploration of how the team could support enhanced resilience of the church's kitchen with a beneficially-redundant and educational cooking solution.

The South Street Youth Center in Jamaica Plain, advised by Director Corey Stallings, connected the team with local youth to create a series of three short videos on induction cooktops and the project; the videos are in production as of July 2020.

Brenda Pike, Climate Advisor to the City of Boston, is linking her and the team's mutual efforts to document and understand the electric capacity and electrification needs of Boston's building stock. As of July 2020, this partnership is active and will continue.

IMPACT

Most immediately, the impact of this grant has been to educate and raise awareness in more than 100 households in District 6 of Boston about energy security issues in their own homes and community, which are important for them to know. Equipped with the information the team has provided to households, they are empowered to consider how they may better prepare their own households against potential energy shocks—even if that simply means being able to confidently operate a portable electric cooktop in their home—and what support, if any, they would like to see from their city. They also are prepared to communicate their new understandings to neighbors. The team anticipates medium-term impacts to accrue across the City of Boston beyond District 6 over the next year. The team will continue to reach out to the City of Boston to explore how advocacy groups and coalitions, like those that make up the project team, can contribute



South Street Youth Center Director Corey Stallings (third from left) and helpers, commissioned by Energy Shift Boston to create three short educational videos | Nathan Phillips

household-volunteered data to the City of Boston in its climate action and clean energy efforts. In particular, the team is excellently poised as volunteer advocates to assist the City of Boston in understanding the condition of its housing stock in planning for broad electrification of its building sector. Going forward, work by the project's coalition—the Boston Clean Energy Coalition, HEET, and Mothers Out Front—will require work with a wide array of Boston stakeholders including community groups, ward and at-large councilors, city staff, and the Mayor's Office.

The long-term impacts of this project are anticipated to be the inclusion of household electric capacity information in municipal assessors' data bases, and in municipal vulnerability assessment planning projects in cities and towns across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond. One of the team's most important and potentially longest-impact findings from this project is also one of the simplest: finding that no assessors database or municipal vulnerability assessment in the Commonwealth includes household-scale electric service capacity. This is relatively easy to incorporate into these key municipal resources for readily accessible use by emergency management personnel as well as climate and clean energy planners.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

The team raised community awareness of project impacts in several demonstrable ways, including community outreach with presentations to and follow-up with the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council, the West Roxbury Civic and Improvement Association, the West Roxbury Neighborhood Council, the Back of the Hill Community Development Corporation in Mission Hill; the Bethel AME Church in Jamaica Plain, and most recently the South Street Youth Center in Jamaica Plain.

The team estimates they communicated the impact of the project to at least five times the 108 households that signed up in the above engagements, so awareness of the project has reached at least 500 people through this outreach. The team is excited about the most recent engagement with the South Street Youth Center, which is producing short videos about the project for wide public dissemination and impact.



Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Council presentation and recruitment (October 22, 2019) | Nathan Phillips

PROJECT VISIBILITY

Because this project concerns mostly equipment on the inside of households, which is usually not conspicuous to residents, project visibility is challenging. Therefore, the project visibility has been achieved primarily non-visually, through the public presentations listed previously and through word of mouth from approximately 500 household members the team has reached in community meetings. The project videos the team has commissioned to the South Street Youth Center will provide highly beneficial project visibility; they are in production as of July 2020.

COMMUNITY MILESTONES

The most significant project milestone in the target community was successfully screening 100 households for electric service capacity. As of project completion in July 2020, the team has screened 108 households. This work contributes significantly to two major and inter-related City of Boston initiatives: Climate Ready Boston and Carbon Free Boston. The project mirrors the goals of these two initiatives in simultaneously addressing community resilience (readiness) and longer-term climate action.



Peg Preble leading electrician volunteer training session for photographing household electric panels | Nathan Phillips

ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOUNDATION

The Sasaki Foundation is focused on contributing to vibrant, resilient communities by elevating design to an inclusive profession, practice, and participatory endeavor. This project contributes to the success of the Sasaki Foundation's mission both in what the project accomplished and in how the team accomplished the work. The project, centered on community resilience—specifically disaster preparedness against energy system failures—contributes to the Sasaki Foundation's emphasis on promoting community resilience: "resilient communities are strong communities."

The team also advanced the mission of the Sasaki Foundation in how they accomplished the work, and in the nature of the team. The Sasaki Foundation mission speaks of "blurring the boundaries that separate practice and research, academia and industry, the profession and the public," and finding the best ideas from design "and beyond." The team embodied this ethic, as it was composed of students, teachers, advocates, researchers, scientists, consultants, and community leaders, all of whom were united in a shared objective. That the Sasaki Foundation supported this team, which did not have a bona fide designer or architect, speaks to the truth of its assertion to go beyond the profession and practice of design.

NEXT STEPS

The team is committed to continuing to build on the momentum of this project, for several reasons and in several ways. First, the team has a long-standing and continuing commitment to advancing community resilience and climate action in Boston and across the Commonwealth, as part of the work in the Boston Clean Energy Coalition, HEET, and Mothers Out Front. Electrifying the building heating sector and building community resilience are natural parts of this work. Therefore, the team's human resources are intact and committed to seeing this work through over the coming years, and the next two critical decades.

Second, this project, like all successful projects, has opened up more opportunities than it has had time to seize. This includes reaching out to metropolitan planning organizations like Greater Boston's Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to explore how household electric service capacity can be made readily accessible to emergency managers and city planners; exploring with Boston stakeholders how the team can help scale this work in a more concerted manner beyond District 6 to the entire City of Boston; and expanding this work to cities and towns as they apply for and conduct Municipal Vulnerability Assessments, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.



GeoMicroDistrict Workshop with 100 experts and stakeholders in attendance, including local and state officials, utility professionals, engineers, and advocates (October 28, 2019) | Nathan Phillips

SPONSOR ORGANIZATION

In 2008, a handful of local people, terrified by climate change, organized work parties on weekends to cut emissions and energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. The Home Energy Efficiency Team (HEET) was born. Inspired by this direct action, over 30 sister groups formed around greater Boston, resulting in lowered energy bills for homes, preschools, houses of worship, and community centers.

HEET's mission is to cut carbon emissions by now driving systems change. We use energy that comes from fossil fuel in every aspect of our lives, businesses, and communities. As HEET takes on new efforts to lower emissions, they are guided by integrity, practicality, nimbleness, innovation, and compassion.

STAY CONNECTED

www.heetma.org/electric-capacity-assessment

HEETMA

@EnergyShiftBos

@EnergyShiftBos



Energy Shift Boston design charrette in the Incubator at Sasaki | Sasaki

RESEARCH TEAM



Nathan Phillips | team leader

Nathan Phillips, Project Director, is a professor in the Department of Earth and Environment at Boston University, researching land-climate interactions through a lens of infrastructure ecology. Nathan was involved in relief work distributing portable induction cooktops in the immediate aftermath of the 2018 Merrimack Valley Gas Disaster.



Mary Brady

Mary Brady organizes with Mothers Out Front, resides in Jamaica Plain, and is retired Director of Professional Development, Center for Social Development and Education at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Mary is a key liaison with emerging partners Bethel AME Church and the South Street Youth Center.



Ania Carmargo

Ania Camargo is founder and co-coordinator of the Gas Leaks Allies and a state leader with Mothers Out Front. Ania organized the distribution of cooktops in the Merrimack Valley after the 2018 gas disaster, and is most recently leading logistics for a COVID food relief initiative in Lawrence called Our Table.



Rickie Harvey

Rickie Harvey is board member of the Boston Clean Energy Coalition and founded West Roxbury Saves Energy. She is Energy Shift Boston's designated community stakeholder in District 6 of Boston. Rickie has led efforts to move the City of Boston toward a net zero building code.





Audrey Schulman and Zeyneb Magavi

Audrey Schulman and Zeyneb Magavi are co-Executive Directors at HEET, a Cambridge nonprofit organization dedicated to cutting carbon now through systems change.





Keeley Bombard and Olivia Ruzzi

Keeley Bombard, majoring in Environmental Analysis and Policy, and Olivia Ruzz i, co-majoring in Economics and Environmental Analysis and Policy, are Boston University students interning on the Energy Shift Boston team.



Chinatown Historical Trail map | Rentify Chinatown

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Understanding Boston's Chinatown is at risk of gentrification and displacement, which exacerbates the loss of identity and memory, Rentify Chinatown aims to leverage the joint power of data analytics, digital tools, and in-depth interviews to document and explain the place-based identity of Chinatown.

Boston's Chinatown is both home and the cultural and service hub for local communities as well as Chinese and Chinese American communities in outlying towns. The Rentify Chinatown team has created a shared database of quantitative and qualitative data for Boston's Chinatown community organizations. At the same time, the team offers insights about local identity challenges and opportunities in the neighborhood.

Rentify Chinatown

Tianyu Su, Weiyi Cao, Zhuangyuan Fan, Ruichen Ni, Helena Rong, Juncheng Yang

In order to achieve these goals, with the help of community organizations including Chinatown Community Land Trust and Chinatown Progressive Association, Rentify Chinatown first collected historical information such as maps, numbers, and stories about the development and evolution of Chinatown. The team leveraged the data collected to create the Chinatown Historical Trail map, which featured significant places carrying the neighborhood's identity. Then, to better understand how people visited and utilized Chinatown places, the team collaborated with their project partners and identified the patterns of people's visits to Chinatown and how this valued Chinatown as a service and cultural hub. The team also developed WOW Chinatown, a crowdsourcing mapping tool embedded in WeChat—the messaging application widely used among Chinatown residents. In fall 2020, the Rentify Chinatown research team, along with community groups in Chinatown, will introduce this tool to residents and their friends and families, encouraging individuals to identify, post, and share their memories and sentiments about specific locations in Chinatown.

Combining this historical information, quantitative data, and personal perspectives, the team shared the layered results that document the identity of Boston's Chinatown as an essential cultural and service hub, featured by a series of critical destinations. To preserve this significant identity, the team will document and exhibit those vanished locations online while advocating to protect the still existing places and physical structures.

Additional project funding provided by:

Barr Foundation

ANALYSIS

80.7%

of Chinatown housing units
rent-burdened or severely burdened

ENGAGEMENT

50

participants at first
community meeting



Community outreach | Rentify Chinatown

COMMUNITY

The project research focuses on the Boston neighborhood of Chinatown, a community which dates back to the 1870s. Boston's Chinatown has been the only surviving historic ethnic Chinese enclave in New England since the 1950s.

Being one of the most densely populated residential areas in Boston, Chinatown serves as the largest cultural center for East Asian and Southeast Asian populations. However, the community has been facing challenges in housing affordability, displacement, and loss of cultural identity. According to the 2018 American Community Survey[2] (five-year estimate), 3,171 Asian Americans live in Chinatown, accounting for 56.4% of the neighborhood's total population. However, the share of the Asian population has seen a continuous decrease, down from 87.6% since the 1990s. In addition, the housing cost burden in Chinatown has been more severe than other areas of downtown Boston, with 51.4% of housing units rent-burdened, and 29.3% severely burdened.

STAKEHOLDERS

While developing the Rentify Chinatown project, the team received generous support and help from many teams at Sasaki, notably the Sasaki Strategies team led by Ken Goulding. With Sasaki Strategies, Rentify Chinatown developed the first version of CoMap Chinatown, which then evolved into the prototype of the WOW Chinatown mini-program. With the help of David Hirzel and Chris Hardy, the team has been able to create initial connections with the Boston Planning and Development Agency and San Francisco's Chinatown, which affords the team the potential to expand the impacts of the project.

Also, to leverage the possibilities of emerging technologies to tackle community challenges, the team has been actively working with technology firms. They are working with SafeGraph through its COVID-19 Data Consortium to understand people's visits to Chinatown before and during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. SafeGraph is a data company that aggregates anonymized location data from numerous applications in order to provide insights about physical places. To enhance privacy, SafeGraph excludes census block group information if fewer than five devices from a given census block group visited an establishment in a month.

IMPACT

Rentify Chinatown advances diversity and inclusion of marginalized Chinese communities by enhancing visibility of the issue of displacement and gentrification, with three main impacts.

Enhanced Visibility: The project delivers visualization products through a combination of big-data and microdata approaches to represent a holistic story of the ongoing gentrification in Chinatowns across the United States, beginning with a pilot investigation in Boston. Big data, from web sources such as Social Explorer, Zillow, and Airbnb, offers an overall spatial and quantitative understanding of the issue of displacement over time. Microdata gathered through in-person interviews and online crowdsourcing generates granular images and exposes variabilities behind the story that big data fails to capture.

Improved Communication and Connections: Employing

ENGAGEMENT

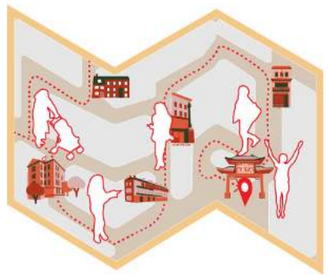
25

local visitors interviewed
on the street

ANALYSIS

4,140

business POIs included
in Boston dataset



Chinatown Cultural Trail



On-site Interview



WOW Chinatown with community partners

Microdata approaches | Rentify Chinatown

both an online platform and an on-site event, the project aims to improve community real-time communication around the issue of gentrification. This combined approach attempts to include people with limited access to technology or to community engagement meetings.

Strengthened Identity: The final project impact is to strengthen the sense of belonging in Chinatown. The team aims to develop the web platform and on-site activity into an open-source database that supports local organizations in coming up with policy interventions and sustaining the community in the long run.

In the short term, Rentify Chinatown utilizes the platform provided by the Sasaki Foundation to rapidly spread knowledge about Chinatown's local identity and existing crisis with a wider general audience by using the tools built and by physically engaging with the audience in the form of community events such as the Boston Chinatown Historical Trail Walk. As more users participate in both online and offline activities, the team aims to foster stronger connections for local community groups with each other and with the cultural arena of Chinatown and its past, present, and future. In the long term, the project vision is to use both the quantitative and qualitative findings to promote effective policy changes in local planning strategies that would benefit the local communities.

The research provides conducive insights and proofs for existing advocacy strategies and policy interventions. The project addresses a dire issue that has been exacerbated over the years, and experienced not only by communities in Boston's Chinatown, but in Chinese communities in Chinatowns across the United States. The project creates a pilot that could serve as a model for other communities undergoing similar problems elsewhere in the country. From this first-year pilot project, the team aims to expand further into other American Chinatown communities and make an impact across the entire country. The team aspires to ultimately help Chinese families under the threat of displacement and eviction in American Chinatowns fight against such challenges, especially during the age of COVID-19. As of summer 2020, the team plans to expand its scope to New York's Chinatown, and potentially San Francisco's Chinatown, over the next two years.

COMMUNITY

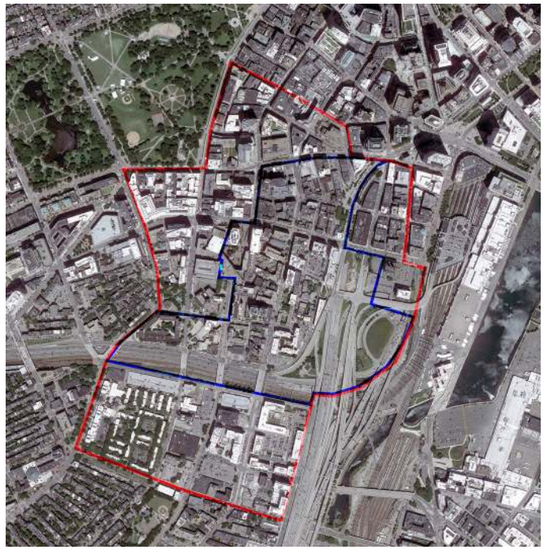
AWARENESS

The Boston Chinatown community is aware of the Rentify Chinatown initiative. This project focuses on Asian Americans who are impacted by gentrification or displacement in American Chinatowns. During the interview and initial engagement with Boston's Chinatown community, the team identified four groups of people impacted by these issues:

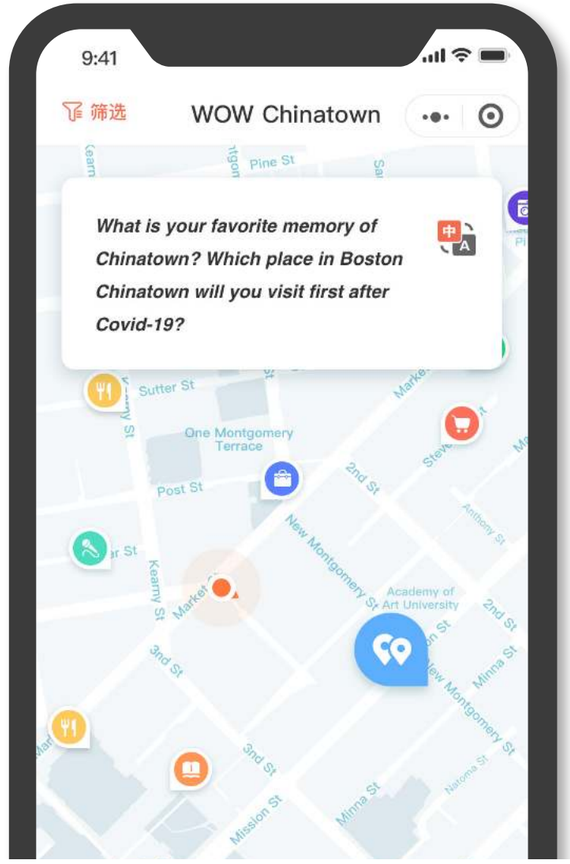
- Chinatown's local residents experience physical displacement as rents rocket to unbearable prices and, as a result, they gradually relocate to far more remote locations on the peripheries of the city.
- Immigrant workers are slowly disconnected with Chinatown as a place since they only spend their time working in Chinatown, choosing to spend leisure time elsewhere in the city.
- Small business owners are hit by decreasing yearly revenues as the Asian population slowly decreases.
- Visitors find a loss of authenticity in Chinatown as older, iconic restaurants and cultural locations disappear or relocate.

During the 2019-2020 grant period, the team conducted multiple in-person interviews on site to raise awareness of the initiative as well as to gather community input on the research. The project allows these different groups of people to share, learn about, and preserve meaningful narratives with each other as a collective memory about Chinatown's unique cultural arena.

PROJECT VISIBILITY



Chinatown boundary | Rentify Chinatown



WOW Chinatown mini-program | Rentify Chinatown

Since June 2019, Rentify Chinatown has been working with the Sasaki Foundation on kickstarting and developing the pilot project in Boston's Chinatown. As of July 2020, the team has formed partnerships with key stakeholders in Boston such as the Chinatown Progressive Association and the Chinatown Community Land Trust, who serve as key players in connecting the team with local Chinatown residents. The team has built prototypes to visualize the gentrification issues faced by local communities, engaged low-income and aging communities in the planning and decision-making process in the form of interviews and surveys, and introduced the history and narratives of Boston's Chinatown to the public via the online mapping portal. In fall 2020, the team will launch the WeChat mini-program WOW Chinatown to gather community input on Chinatown's cultural values and identity. The interactive map, accessible through the popular social media platform WeChat, will serve to connect the initiative with the target communities and serve as a key portal for crowdsourced opinion data from the community.

COMMUNITY MILESTONES

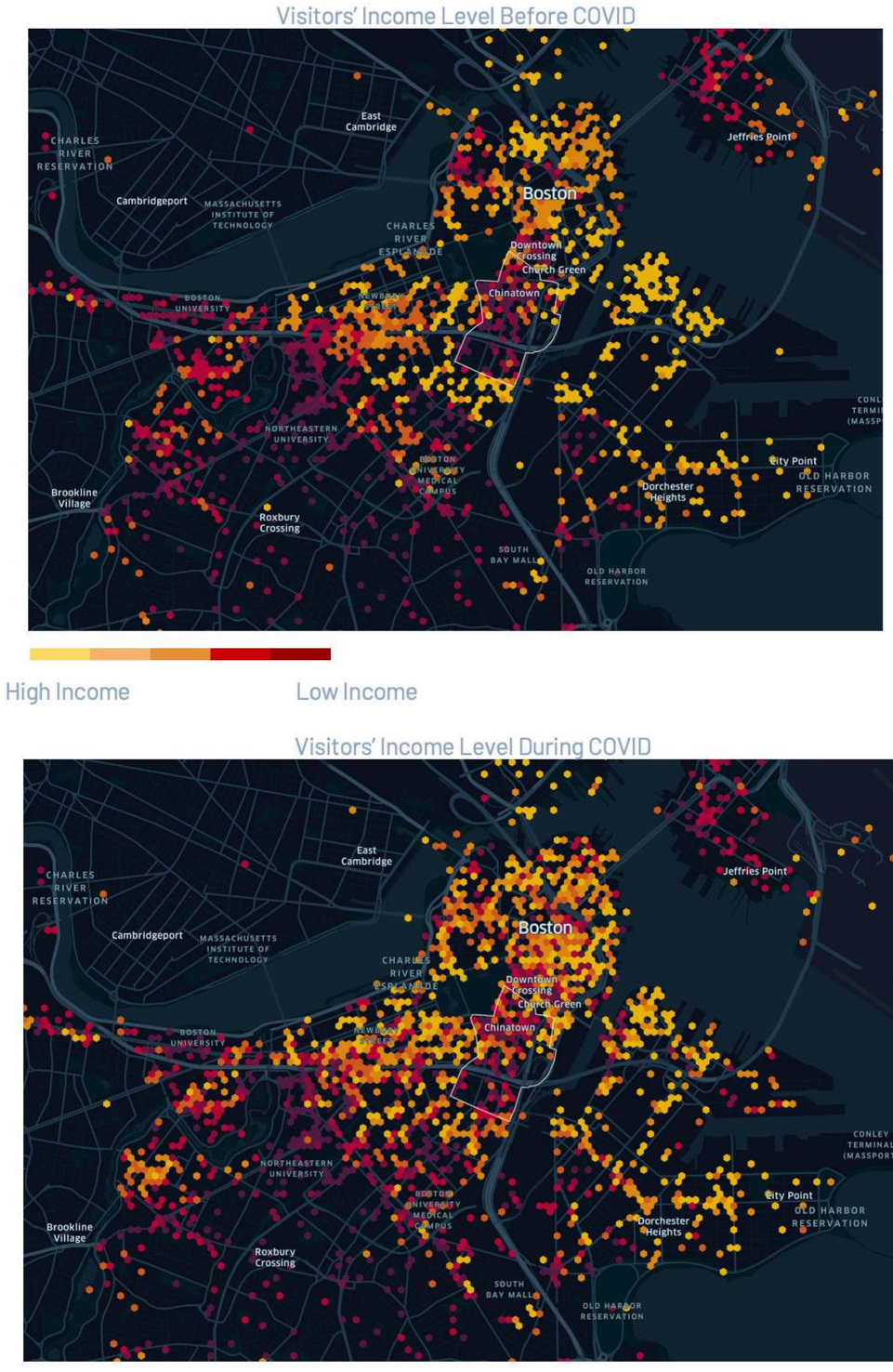
Rentify Chinatown has contributed to several community milestones. The team participated in key community meetings for the Boston Chinatown 2021 master plan project, where the team gave advice and insights based on the research. In fall 2020, they will officially launch the WeChat mini-program WOW Chinatown to gather community input, asking participants to map out what they consider the most valuable place in Chinatown and share a memorable story with the community, in the form of texts or images. The team will measure progress by accumulating user data and measuring the likelihood that users will attach to it. The data collected will be useful in the rezoning endeavor of Boston's Chinatown.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE FOUNDATION

Rentify Chinatown leverages the available dataset and computation power to reveal the hidden pattern of inequity in Boston. Through the combination of big-data analysis and microdata gathering, the team highlighted that Boston's Chinatown bears both the cultural identity and life necessity for local immigrants.

NEXT STEPS

The team will use the WOW Chinatown app they developed to gather further input from the local Chinatown community and compile a booklet. The documentation and analysis results will help the local community organizations to strengthen their voices during future planning meetings.



Data Source: Weekly POI visit pattern from Safegraph

Visitor income map before and during the 2020 COVID-19 crisis | Rentify Chinatown

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Chinatown Community Land Trust (Chinatown CLT) works for community control of land, development without displacement, permanently affordable housing, and shared neighborhood spaces.

The **Chinese Progressive Association** is a grassroots community organization that works for full equality and empowerment of the Chinese community in the Greater Boston area and beyond. Their activities seek to improve the living and working conditions of Chinese Americans and to involve ordinary community members in making decisions that affect their lives.

STAY CONNECTED

www.chinatowns.site

@RentifyChinatown



Rentify Chinatown design charrette in the Incubator at Sasaki | Sasaki

RESEARCH TEAM



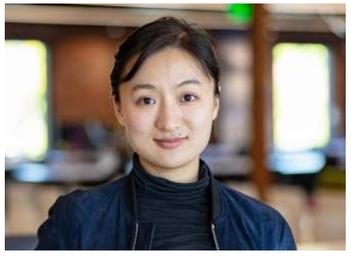
Tianyu Su | team leader

Tianyu Su is a LivingLine Researcher at MIT Media Lab City Science research group, and a Master in City Planning candidate at MIT. With strong data analysis skills, he is leading the data analytics and visualization of the project. Tianyu gained abundant experience with geospatial data through his research at MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT Media Lab, and Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard Kennedy School.



Weiyi Cao

Weiyi Cao is a second-year Master in Design Studies candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, with a concentration in Critical Conservation. With strong experience in cultural and social preservation in vulnerable communities in China, Southeast Asia, and the United States, she is leading the work on zoning regulation investigation and policy recommendation design.



Zhuangyuan Fan

Zhuangyuan Fan is a second-year Master in City Planning student at MIT. Her work primarily focuses on applying computational methods to address issues involving urban inequality and resource allocation. Her recent research attempts to measure the qualitative urban phenomenon and reexamine urban design methods with computational techniques. She currently works as a research assistant at MIT Senseable City Lab and MIT Civic Data Design Lab.



Ruichen Ni

Ruichen Ni is a second-year graduate student in MIT's dual degree program of city planning and real estate development. She works as a research assistant at MIT Real Estate Innovation Lab and MIT Sustainable Urbanization Lab. Trained as a landscape architect and urban designer, she is interested in the process of value creation, delivery, and capture for technological innovations in industries associated with the built environment, design, real estate development, and asset management.



Helena Rong

Helena Rong is an interdisciplinary designer and researcher from China and Canada working in the intersection of urbanism, technology, and data science, with previous training in architecture. Her experience working with design across scales, from digital products to urban design proposals, provides the necessary skills to contribute to this project. Helena is a co-founder of a map-based social media app platform startup incubated at MIT.



Juncheng Yang

Juncheng Yang is an architect by training but with great interest in the relationship between social institutions, economic development, and design. Through his experiences at MIT and the London School of Economics and Political Science, he gained extensive field research experience on urban governance, planning, and sociological studies with a focus on contemporary Chinese cities.

Community Grants Teams

The Mobility Hubs Toolkit, intended for local and national distribution and use, explains mobility hubs, their benefits, and the various structural elements that can make up a mobility hub. For each element, the toolkit will include information on siting requirements, expected cost magnitude, who is the likely implementer of that piece of infrastructure, and examples. The toolkit also will walk readers through next steps if they would like to advocate for mobility hubs in their own neighborhoods.

East Boston Mobility Hubs

Kirstie Hostetter, Matthew Petersen, Alex Yamron

The Mobility Hubs Toolkit, a TransitMatters project, will be written and presented to capture the interest of a non-technical audience, focusing on community organizations and members. The document will be eye-catching with a bright color scheme based on East Boston—the original community that inspired it; will only use open source fonts that can be properly read on any device; and will not include technical jargon. From a broader perspective, the toolkit will engage its audience by creating a vision, using illustrative user stories and mobility hub images to bring the benefits and possibilities of mobility hubs to life.

The team intends to contextualize the toolkit in today's realities by including a prologue that describes why mobility hubs lie at the center of sustainable mobility, racial justice, and economic recovery. The toolkit will highlight how the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic and protests against police violence have made the need for modal choice and freedom of mobility more urgent than ever, and preview how mobility hubs help accomplish those goals by providing clear, actionable information about the modes available, and gathering those modes of transport all in one place. Additionally, when done well, the process of evaluating a site for a mobility hub guides people through a process of thinking about how different community members move through and reside in a space, which can reveal other inequities or safety concerns to address.

The toolkit will serve as an intellectual anchor for the team's work promoting sustainable mobility in East Boston, Somerville, and Everett, and hopefully as a resource for advocates in these communities and elsewhere. While completing the research and writing, the team has been working to support city leaders who want to build mobility hubs in their cities and engage other community groups. The toolkit will advance the conversation across the region about what mobility hubs are and why they are necessary, just as TransitMatters advanced the conversation about Regional Rail.

Mobility hub illustration | East Boston Mobility Hubs



Collective resilience touches every aspect of our shared lives and is only possible when owned and enacted by the people of the place in partnership with professionals, nonprofits, and government representatives. Knitting the Alewife is building a resilience learning community of community actors, municipal and state governments, university researchers, and local and regional nonprofits. The goals are to collaboratively understand and steward the Alewife as an eco-social system, find shared meaning in climate data, explore and evaluate alternative futures, and co-implement knitting projects across borders and boundaries of all kinds.

Knitting the Alewife: from Vulnerable to Vibrant

Doug Brown, Sarah Howard,
Patricia Schroeder Loheed, Steven Nutter

The project focuses on how to build the missing social and political infrastructure and frameworks that can support co-creation by all. Without these, design projects can be rooted in Power Over* techniques without realizing the full potential that leads to true resiliency in a Power With process.

Creation of the following supported this process:

- An Alewife cross-boundary housing study and visualization to inform resilient stewardship of the whole system by all
- Resilient whole-systems mapping and communication materials to co-create across boundaries
- A reframing of working design methods to enable community actors, government, and professionals to co-construct knowledge and action about resilience together across boundaries, to transform Power Over to Power With, towards greater spatial justice.

**Power Over is systemic injustice in which dominant cultural norms, behaviors, values, and identities are privileged in professional and everyday practice. Power With prioritizes mutualism and co-creation. (Concept from Patricia Evans)*

Menotomy Manor (Arlington Housing Authority) case study flood risk due to sea level rise | Knitting the Alewife

A Look Ahead



SHARED FUTURES:
CHARTING A COURSE FOR ACTION

In 2019, the Sasaki Foundation's Design Grants program continued with a focus on advancing design as a tool for building more resilient and equitable communities. The active research projects accomplished by the three teams in the program's second cohort offers innovative solutions to address social inequities, climate change, and community identity, with an ongoing impact in Greater Boston and beyond.

The Sasaki Foundation has developed a research agenda based on the mission of promoting equity in design, which has allowed the Foundation to maintain a leadership position in contributing to the design industry and local communities. Through the Design Grants program, we aim to test new models and projects that can meaningfully work within communities, in Greater Boston and beyond.

"We are extremely impressed with and inspired by the work our second Design Grants cohort was able to accomplish in the areas of climate change, housing, and community building in just ten months during their residency in the Incubator at Sasaki, despite needing to spend the last three months of that residency working remotely due to COVID-19. All three teams have already made a visible impact in their communities, and are poised to further their impact in the coming months and years. We are excited to continue to co-create change through our growing research community," says Mary Anne Ocampo, Sasaki principal and Sasaki Foundation Board Chair.

The Sasaki Foundation was thrilled with the response to the 2020 call for proposals, with a theme of Shared Futures: Charting a Course for Action. This theme recognizes that multiple futures are at stake, and we can make a difference by acting now.

The Sasaki Foundation invited six research teams to present at Pitch Night 2020, and awarded Design Grants to three: the Columbia Road Gender and Mobility Initiative (Dorchester and Roxbury); Economic Development: Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Co-creation, and Design (Codman Square in Dorchester); and the Mattapan Mapping Project (Mattapan).

"We are excited to welcome these new teams as part of our growing research cohort, tackling projects that will empower communities within Massachusetts. And with the geographic proximity of this year's three projects in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan, we're expecting the opportunities for collaboration to create an even deeper impact," says Laura Marett, Sasaki principal, Sasaki Foundation Board Secretary and Design Grants Jury Chair.

As we move forward, the Sasaki Foundation Design Grants program will continue to bring new, local solutions to global challenges, empowering our communities and creating lasting change through the power of design.

2020 Design Grants Call for Proposals | Sasaki

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Christopher Winkler
Lanmuzhi Yang
Eric Youngberg

A special thanks to Dhaya Lakshminarayanan, comedian and storyteller, for her Storytelling for Social Impact and Philanthrophy presentation

ENDNOTES

1. City of Boston, Department of Neighborhood Development, 39th Annual Homeless Census, https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/document-file-05-2019/2019_homeless_census_5-15-19_190515.pdf
2. US Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey (ACS), https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs

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