



**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:
DISASTER
HOUSING**

Response Deadline: Sept. 2, 2022

Updated: August 11, 2022



City of Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu



Emergency Management

LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

Dear Stakeholders,

The City of Boston Office of Emergency Management (OEM) in partnership with the Metro Boston Homeland Security Region (MBHSR) and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) was awarded FEMA's Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program funding focused on medium to long-term disaster housing needs.

This grant affords us the opportunity to plan for and identify housing solutions for a post-disaster environment where existing infrastructure may not be available. Boston is a dense urban area, therefore approaches to housing missions in other parts of the country may not be duplicated in the MBHSR.

The purpose of this Request For Information (RFI) is to leverage subject matter experts, and other partners, to assist Boston OEM in gathering information relating to the following disaster housing topics or share other ideas related to disaster housing recovery for our region:

- Partnerships with Vocational Schools, Colleges, and Trade Schools
- Case Management and/or Tool for Navigating Assistance Opportunities
- Guidelines and Policy Implementation
- Innovative Disaster Housing Design

To support this planning initiative Boston OEM invites you to respond to this RFI. The responses received through this RFI:

- Are public record and will be shared with state and regional housing partners to benefit our overall approach.
- Can be focused on one of the above mentioned areas of disaster housing or other topics related to disaster housing.
- Participation -- or lack thereof -- in this process does not help or hurt any entity's chances for partnership opportunities with us in the future.
- Is for planning purposes only and does not commit OEM or the City to issue a solicitation or award a contract.

After the submission period ends, we may invite respondents to tell us more about their ideas. Also, responses may be showcased at public events so we can share the ideas we received with a broader group. Should the City choose to pursue any specific ideas from the responses to the RFI we will engage in public processes with the Boston community at that time.

We value your input and welcome your response. Please respond via this [Google Form](#), and if you have any questions, contact bostonrcpgp@boston.gov or visit [Our Story Map](#)!

Sincerely,

City of Boston Office of Emergency Management



WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Planning for disaster housing recovery in an already dense urban area creates the need for a creative approach to the topic. This RFI is being released with the intention of receiving ideas and solutions from subject matter experts to help inform the planning process. OEM is committed to ensuring that our plan updates are equitable and inclusive of all residents. As we seek ideas, please note that there are no construction expenses allowed under our current grant. This RFI is open to the following topics or ideas not listed, but related to disaster housing recovery:

Partnerships with Vocational Schools, Colleges, and Trade Schools - Boston and surrounding jurisdictions are home to many schools, colleges, and universities. Potential partnerships with these schools could be made to teach students about emergency management related topics and how they could be applied to their trade or expertise. We are looking for an interdisciplinary take on emergency management and training local talent to be utilized for future recovery efforts both regionally and nationally.

Case Management and/or Tool for Navigating Assistance Opportunities - Navigating assistance that may be available to residents whose homes were damaged or destroyed is often confusing and difficult to manage. From understanding what assistance is available, to having to relive their story time and time again when filling out paperwork and applying for assistance the process can be daunting. This topic seeks to explore technology or other methods that could combine case management and navigating individual assistance options to create a user-friendly interface that is helpful to disaster survivors.

Guidelines and Policy Implementation - Through this topic, we wish to explore what guidelines or policy could be adapted to ensure that medium to long term housing solutions are available and permitted in the City and MBHSR. Possible topics could include:

- Current zoning regulations;
- Disaster overlay districts;
- Affordable housing options post disaster;
- Support for vulnerable populations; or
- Other topics related to guidelines or policy.

Innovative Disaster Housing Design - Given how densely populated the MBHSR is and the limited space available for new development, it is crucial to explore all viable post-disaster housing options for this urban area. *Please keep in mind that there are no construction expenses allowed under our current grant.*



MORE ABOUT US

Boston OEM has been working on a disaster housing project in partnership with the MBHSR and MEMA as part of FEMA's Fiscal Year 2019 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program. The goal of the grant program is to build local and state capacity to manage catastrophic incidents by improving and expanding regional collaboration for incident preparedness. Below are some highlights of what has been achieved through the grant this far:

MIT Urban Risk Lab's Disaster Housing Pre-Planning Toolkit: Partnered with MIT Urban Risk Lab to bring their Disaster Housing Pre-Planning Toolkit to the MBHSR. The Toolkit assists communities in identifying and organizing information related to their unique housing environment and priorities. This process brings together a variety of jurisdictional personnel to look at existing plans, align goals and identify gaps to create a disaster housing plan.

Roundtables to Resilience Series: Created a monthly, virtual, conversation series to bring together emergency management related professionals from across the nation to discuss topics related to disaster housing.

Land Suitability Analysis (LSA): Partnered with Google's Summer of Code to conduct an LSA to identify potential areas for redevelopment and map the areas that are suitable for short-term relocation and long-term redevelopment post-disaster.

Continuity Planning: Developed a Continuity of Operations (COOP) framework, adapted from the City of Boston COOP plan and FEMA COOP template to look at continuity planning as it relates to housing. This framework could be expanded to other functions of recovery, and will allow City departments to continue their operations in a post disaster environment.



RESPONSES

INTRODUCE YOURSELF

Please tell us more about why you are submitting a proposal and how your background qualifies you to make this recommendation. We're open to all types of experience and expertise, whether academic, professional, political, or personal.

SHARE YOUR IDEAS

In the linked [Google Form](#) please share your innovative ideas that will help shape post disaster housing in the MBHSR and the Commonwealth. Your response can be focused on one of the topic areas above or another topic related to disaster housing.



TIMELINE AND PROCESS

IMPORTANT DATES

| Date / Time | Event | Notes |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| July 1, 2022 | RFI Publicly Released | |
| July 20, 2022 from 3 pm - 4 pm EST | Live Chat | We will be hosting a Google Meet to address questions and comments. Please RSVP using this form. |
| July 27, 2022 from 3 pm - 4 pm EST | Live Chat | We will be hosting a Google Meet to address questions and comments. Please RSVP using this form. |
| August 3, 2022 from 3 pm - 4 pm EST | Live Chat | We will be hosting a Google Meet to address questions and comments. Please RSVP using this form. |
| September 2, 2022 at 11:59 PM EST | RFI Responses Due | Submitted via Disaster Housing RFI Google Form |

Questions will be accepted on a rolling basis and should be submitted to bostonrcpgp@boston.gov or visit <https://arcg.is/1OL9iD>. Responses will be posted via the Disaster Housing RFI Google Drive Folder within 3 business days from the receipt of the question.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- This Request for Information (RFI) is for information and planning purposes only and shall not be construed as a solicitation or as an obligation on the part of the City to issue any competitive procurement or award a contract. It will help us develop our strategy for future partnerships and investments, but your participation -- or lack thereof -- in this process does not help or hurt your chances of partnering with us in the future.
- The City will not award a contract on the basis of responses to this RFI nor otherwise pay for the preparation of any information submitted, for any vendor presentation, or the City's use of such information.
- All responses to this RFI will be public record under the Massachusetts' Public Records Law, Mass. Gen. L. Ch. 66 s. 10, regardless of confidentiality notices to the contrary; do not submit confidential information in your response.
- By submitting, the respondent authorizes the City of Boston to publicize, refer to, and use your response as it sees fit.

