

UHomes | 90 Antwerp Street

BRIGHTON/BOSTON

New mixed-income, energy-efficient homeownership development will add housing, create open space and advance a community's vision for renewal

PROJECT TYPE:

Mixed-income homeownership development and 15,000 sq. ft. of public

DEVELOPMENT TYPE:

New construction

UNITS:

20 condominiums, of which 12 will be deed-restricted affordable units

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COST:

\$9.9 million

HNEF INVESTMENT:

\$900,000

DEVELOPER:

Urbanica

COMPLETION DATE:

April 2021

BRIGHTON—A NEIGHBORHOOD WITH A DEEP AND RICH HISTORY—HAS COME BACK TO LIFE

UHomes is being built in a Boston neighborhood that over the past several years has changed dramatically. Not long ago, it was a largely vacant and underutilized area characterized by an empty former strip mall and other dilapidated buildings or underused structures. The community was, to a large extent, the victim of 1960's-style urban planning and community disinvestment. Now, this neighborhood — at the intersection of Allston and Brighton — is an attractive mixed-income community with both affordable and market rate rental apartments and condominiums, retail establishments, a community center, and inviting public open space.

UHomes was proposed by Urbanica in response to a 2017 Request for Proposals led by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) for the vacant parcel on Antwerp Street — formerly occupied by a machine repair shop — that was donated by Harvard University. The goal was to create affordable homeownership opportunities and publicly accessible open space, including a park, for the benefit of all neighbors. Before issuing the RFP, the BPDA conducted community outreach and a planning study to ensure that the RFP reflected neighborhood, citywide and regional plans as well as local government priorities.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP IN AN ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY CLOSE TO JOBS AND PUBLIC TRANSIT

UHomes, for which HNEF I provided a \$900,000 investment, will consist of 20 homeownership units in three buildings and approximately 15,000 sq. ft. of publicly accessible open space.



Eight of the homes will be market rate and twelve units will be deed-restricted affordable homes, including six units reserved for families with incomes at or below 80% of the Area Median Income and six reserved for families with incomes at or below 100% of AMI. The development is a short walk to the Charles River which has walking and bicycling trails, and the Boston Landing commuter rail stop which provides direct access to downtown Boston. It is close to other public transit, supermarkets, dining, medical centers, schools, colleges and universities and many other amenities.

The project is designed to be compact, yet flexible and environmentally sustainable. To that end, Urbanica is utilizing various sustainable development methods and intends to build to LEED standards, with UHomes being 20-25% more energy efficient than the average new development. The exterior building envelope will be double insulated and all heating and cooling systems are designed for high energy efficiency. The project is also cleaning up a formerly contaminated brownfield site and replacing it with ample green space, including a pocket park and a "living street" that combines parking with landscaping and pedestrian paths. The project is contextually designed to fit in with the surrounding neighborhood and will also improve sidewalks, streetscapes and lighting.

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**IMPROVING COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH AND STRENGTHENING A COMMUNITY**

When considering UHomes as a potential investment, HNEF found considerable potential to positively impact community and environmental health, safety, walkability and activity, and to advance regional equity. In addition to creating new, stable housing, including lower cost homeownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers, the publicly accessible green space will create a welcoming environment for exercise and relaxation. The development is adjacent to and complements the Charlesview Residences, built in 2012, which houses a dynamic community center that offers after school programs and classes which stress learning and healthy living for all. In addition, nearly 28% of the region’s jobs are available within a 45-minute transit commute of the site.

In terms of health and other local demographics, HNEF found significant room for improvement. For example, hospital admissions for diabetes and congestive heart failure were both above the state average for adults between 45 and 64. Hospital admissions were also above the state average for mental health related conditions for people of all ages. The area has a poverty rate 1.2x the state rate and violent crime rate 1.8x the state rate. The project is now underway and is expected to create 40 construction jobs, with 51% targeted to Boston residents and 40% to people of color.

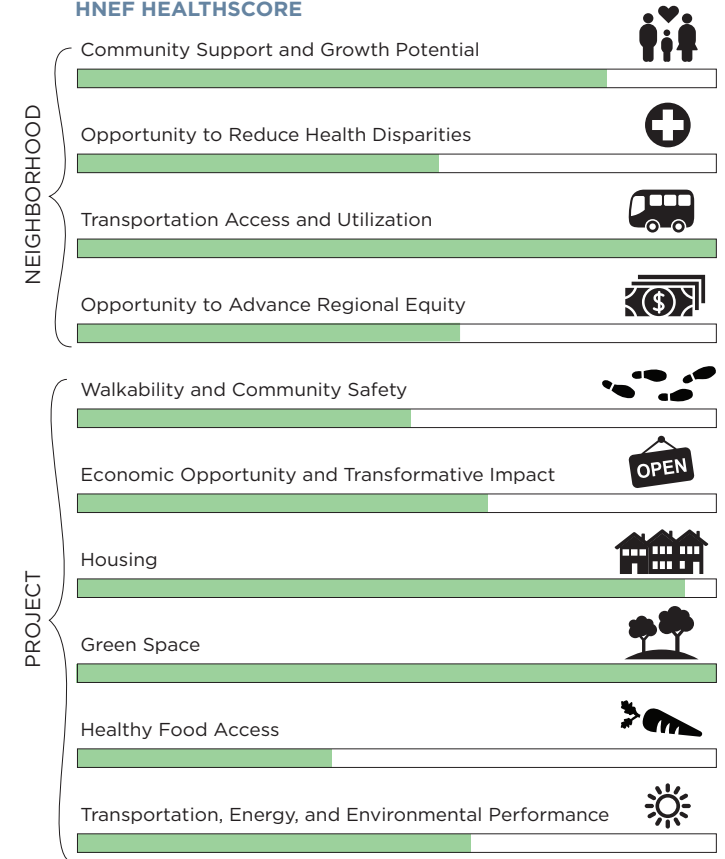
**INVESTING IN THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES IN MASSACHUSETTS**

The Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund I is a \$22 million private equity fund created by the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) and the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) to finance transformative, transit-oriented development in Boston and gateway cities in Massachusetts. See www.hnefund.org



UHomes

HNEF HEALTHSCORE



HEALTH SCORE: 65.56

RATING: High Impact

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