

ARCHITECTURAL PRODUCTS

JUNE 2018 // VOL 16 NO 5

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ACOUSTIC PANELS
Snowsound's Flap Wings provide an easy means to add a punch of color to a space and can be attached or oriented in almost any way as needs change.



new+improved: office

As the trend of "residential" continues to expand into office spaces, encouraging conversation and collaboration, addressing acoustics has become a must consideration.

How Gentrification Affects the Gentry

Urban gentrification is a double-edged sword. On one hand, infrastructure and amenities vital to a healthy city emerge; on the other hand, it may raise rents of apartment dwellers, potentially forcing 50% to 60% of city dwellers to less hospitable reaches. Cities faced with unrelenting urbanization rely on designers, private interests and technology to manage growth wisely. Gentrification is one aspect of urbanization, and a buzzword that is many times vilified. With London headlines proclaiming, "Can the Market Deliver Affordable Housing in England?" doubt is created not only in that city, but everywhere as to how gentrification will provide market-rate projects attainable for the masses. *The Fifth Estate*, a business newspaper focused on sustainability and equity in the built environment, recently ran that exact headline.

As far as North America, many cities—some of them involved in natural disasters, such as the flooding in Houston—are undergoing transformations. One thing that is clear is that the urban housing crunch is on the rise, and in most cities, says the National Multifamily Housing Council Research Foundation, apartments are outperforming office, retail and industry. A recent study by the group claims that

investors tend to better understand the true cost of residential vs. commercial and industrial properties. This is fortunate, because 70% of a typical city's land is used for housing, says Aleksander "Sasha" Zeljic, Principal and Design Director at Gensler Chicago and Minneapolis. However, the downside to that, adds Dan Kinkead, AIA, Co-Director, Urban Design Practice at SmithGroupJJR, is that fulfilling the housing demand in burgeoning cities may impact population segments—young people, newcomers and original residents—that are least able to afford the resulting improved property cost increases.

In Boston, the city has introduced policy that identifies government-owned property that can be used to provide affordable housing and workforce housing sites, reports Michael Liu, VP and principal of The Architectural Team, a firm renown for its talent in renovation and reuse for housing, which is presently working on such a project near downtown crossing. "A reduction in land costs coupled with linkage funds—funded as an affordable housing "litte" by market-rate luxury projects, tax credits and other subsidies, can make downtown, high-rise [living] affordable, and workforce housing possible, even in high-rise building formats."



Project: The Kensington
Location: Boston
Firm: The Architectural Team
Client: Kensington Investment Co.
Size: 55,000 sq. ft.

SHARED SPACES

A sculpted modern addition to the Boston skyline, the tower is highly contextual in the massing and materials of its podium, which relate in scale and rhythm to its neighbors. Located in the Boylston Square area, the high-rise includes 381 residential units and 4000 sq. ft. of retail space. The neighborhood is currently undergoing a complete transformation, further enhanced by the tower, which has created an active pedestrian connection between Boylston St. and Washington St. "Opportunities for social interaction and the creation of community can be facilitated or inhibited by different building configurations even in a very tall building," says, Michael Liu VP and principal of The Architectural Team.



URBAN TRANSFORMATION

An authority on San Francisco's built history, Jay Turnbull, FAIA, who leads Page & Turnbull, is featured in the latest edition of *A+U*. Organized by a guest editor, architect Craig Hartman of SOM, the special issue is devoted to the city of San Francisco—a forward-looking examination of critical themes of contemporary relevance. Turnbull's essay provides a useful overview of San Francisco's past. "Lessons to be carried into the future include the daring to undertake formidable building projects, like the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges," he writes. "Other lessons include the acceptance of social diversity and financial risk. A 'second Gold Rush' may have overtaken San Francisco today—innovation and risk characterize the region once again."

70%

A typical city's land area used for housing.