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HMFH Architects selected for pre-feasibility study for the city of Newton

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Newton, MA HMFH Architects, an architectural firm focused on the design of student living and learning environments, has been selected by the city of Newton to conduct a pre-feasibility study for the Franklin Elementary School. A critical piece of the city's 10-year plan to modernize its school buildings, the redevelopment of Franklin, whether through new construction or additions and renovations, will create greater neighborhood and school equity.

Franklin is one of 15 neighborhood elementary schools in the city. Originally constructed in 1938 with additions built in 1950 and 1953, the original school façade provides a distinct presence along residential Derby St., while the additions are less successful both in exterior presence and interior

functionality. Franklin lacks sufficient programming space and an appropriate music room, the classrooms are undersized for today's standards, and is not fully accessible or ADA compliant.

"The design of highly efficient and sustainable buildings is a priority for Newton, and the creation of wonderful facilities that promote 21st century teaching and learning environments helps Newton advance our goals and objectives with regards to excellence in education and inclusion," said Alex Valcarce, deputy commissioner of the City of Newton Public Buildings Department.

"HMFH is known for its excellence in educational planning, community process, and sustainable design. We are excited to be working with them to determine the best path forward for Franklin and its community."

To better understand the enrollment, space demands, and physical challenges at the current school, HMFH is beginning with a pre-feasibility phase that includes a facilities assessment, establishment of educational programmatic needs, and development of alternative conceptual design. Moreover, each alternative concept will address educational needs, neighborhood context, and healthy and sustainable principles.

HMFH is well-known for its ability and commitment to engage stakeholders by leading comprehensive community processes. In September, HMFH and New Vista Design will facilitate educational visioning sessions with the Franklin community to assure the program meets the priorities and needs specific to its students, faculty, staff, and parents.

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