



IMAGINING RECOVERY

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AN OPEN INTERNATIONAL DESIGN IDEAS COMPETITION

Between day 45 and 55 of the Obama Presidency, March 5-15, ten select students of the Global Public Policy Network conversed online with designers to unpack the issues of recovery addressing design. The summary below serves as the collectively written brief of the competition, where issues have been divided into five categories, beginning with a primary question, and elaborated by secondary questions. Designers may address any number of issues, in any combination, in their submissions. The order of issues and questions is random.

DAY 65: **COMPETITION BRIEF**

METHODOLOGY IN CHOOSING A MODE OF INTERVENTION, WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS WHEN CONSIDERING THE ROLE OF DESIGN IN RECOVERY?

_____ If recovery is a long road, how can design perpetuate the public confidence and political will, which will be necessary for potential future spending measures and a sustained recovery effort?

_____ How can design address a moment of crisis and awareness where a level of social reformation may be possible?

_____ How can design address the fact that the American recovery is coupled with global recovery, considering bilateral influence and dependence?

_____ If the stimulus bill is an attempt to create jobs, how can design address the fact that over time design has made many operations so efficient, that human labor has been minimized?

_____ How can and should design operate in the areas that have led us to the current crisis, such as housing and banking, amongst others?

SCALE HOW CAN ISSUES OF SCALE — SPATIALLY (URBAN, SUBURBAN, OR RURAL), TEMPORALLY (SHORT-TERM OR LONG-TERM), AND MONETARILY (THE AMOUNT BEING SPENT) — BE ADDRESSED IN DESIGN FOR RECOVERY?

_____ If \$787 billion is not enough to affect fundamental change by traditional means, how can design act to increase the impact of the money spent?

_____ How can design address the preference for intervention in urban areas, and how can it operate in areas where density and other urban characteristics are not allies?

_____ How can design address a preference for “game-changers” in terms of scale of intervention, both spatially and temporally?

_____ How can design address a divide in the philosophy of spending, in terms of scale, methodology and implementation — can design mitigate these differences?

IMAGINATION IF QUALITY OF LIFE IS BOTH IMPLICATED AND AT STAKE IN THE CRISIS AND RECOVERY, HOW CAN DESIGN ADDRESS THE QUALITATIVE IN TERMS OF PUBLIC BEHAVIOR, PERCEPTION AND IMAGINATION?

_____ In areas such as energy, transportation and infrastructure, public perception and behavior are necessary allies on the road to change, how can design address these attitudes?

_____ How can design act to re-imagine American ideals and the American Dream — such as the coupling of independence with the car, and the dream of owning a single-family detached home — that have led us to design our way of life, and our environments around such cultures?

_____ If the metrics used to determine which interventions to make, and how to assess the success of recovery, are to be partly qualitative, how can design act to make these identifiable, intelligible and quantifiable?

_____ In a diverse, large, fractured society, how can design offer a means to see oneself, and one’s actions, as part of a larger responsibility towards recovery?

SUSTAINABILITY THE TIME WITH WHICH STIMULUS PACKAGE PROPOSALS SHOULD BEGIN TO INFLUENCE RECOVERY IS WIDELY DEBATED, BUT THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS IS NOT — HOW CAN DESIGN ADDRESS SUSTAINABILITY WHEN THE SHORT-TERM VS. LONG-TERM ISSUE IS UNDECIDED?

- _____ How do long-term vs. short-term spending goals affect specific design proposals, and can design be used to mitigate the differences between the short- and the long-term, such as integrating capital costs and maintenance costs?
- _____ In areas such as energy, transportation and infrastructure, how can design address the insistence of large corporations and lobbies on maintaining allegiances to declining and un-sustainable, yet still profitable practices?
- _____ How can design address the creation of a sustainable society being built upon an unsustainable existing condition?
- _____ How can design augment measures in the US, a developed economy, to influence measures in developing economies, where goals may be different in terms of the time horizon of returns, and shifts towards sustainable practices?

ANALYSIS THE SUCCESS OF RECOVERY IS DEPENDENT ON HOW IT IS MEASURED, BOTH IN THE PRESENT FOR DETERMINING WHICH MEASURES TO SUPPORT, AND IN THE LONG-TERM FOR ASSESSING PROGRESS — HOW CAN DESIGN ADDRESS THE CREATION, EXAMINATION AND DISSEMINATION OF MODELS FOR ANALYZING RECOVERY?

- _____ If the market has failed us as an indicator, and yet we still look to it to assess the success of recovery efforts, how can design address the creation, dissemination and acceptance of another model of assessment?
- _____ How can design address an expanded cost-benefit-analysis which includes social benefits?
- _____ The population will be divided socially and geographically in terms of benefit received from government spending, how can this be addressed in design?
- _____ If the market responds in real-time, and the American democracy has a built-in lag-time associated with policy implementation (lagging more than, say, the Chinese system), how can design be used to bridge the temporal gap between the indicator, the market, and the effects of policy measures?