


# See the 5 finalist designs for Boston's Martin Luther King Jr. memorial

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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with his wife Coretta Scott King and their first child Yolanda in May 1956. Photo: Getty Images

A year after [first announcing](#) that he would work to erect a Martin Luther King Jr. memorial in Boston, and following a dozen community meetings on the vision, Mayor Marty Walsh has unveiled the five finalists.

The Martin Luther King Jr. memorial will honor the activist as well as his wife, Coretta Scott King, in the [city](#) where they met. The memorial is set to be a permanent piece of art on the Boston Common.

The five final design proposals, revealed Tuesday, vary in their visual homage to the Kings, from a black stone bridge to a brightly-colored mosaic to a bold bronze sculpture.

City officials are working with MLK Boston, a nonprofit founded by entrepreneur Paul English and co-chaired by Liz Walker, to build the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial. In a statement, Walker said that she finds "breathtaking components" in all five finalist designs that "inspire and provoke, and speak to both this country's troubled past and our potential future."

"Even more importantly, each proposal speaks to the many voices Paul and I have heard as we have moved around this city, from neighborhood to neighborhood, inviting people to take part in the project," she added. "Whatever the final choice is, it will represent a collective voice."

Officials say that they held more than a dozen community meetings with activists, youth leaders and residents to discuss the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial. Because of those meetings, the project has been expanded from one element to three: the outdoor memorial on the Boston Common, a Roxbury-headquartered program that oversees "civic, educational and economic equity programming," and an endowment in partnership with Twelfth Baptist Church to educate and train nonviolent activists.

The public will get the chance to weigh in once again on the five final designs, which will be on display at the Boston Public Library (first floor) and Bolling Building (second floor). Residents can leave comments on the Martin Luther King Jr memorial designs there, or online at [mlkboston.org](http://mlkboston.org).

## The Martin Luther King Jr. memorial finalist designs

### **"The Ripple Effects: Resonance of Voices, History, Love and Action"**



This proposal, from the Cambridge-based firms Wodiczko + Bonder and Maryann Thompson Architects, includes two "beacon towers," symbolizing "the continuing presence, inspiration, and impact of the Kings' moral and social leadership." Ripples then radiate from the towers, representing the "ripple effect" of the Kings' actions.

### **"Avenues of Peace"**





By artist Yinka Shonibare, this design proposal includes 22 inscribed benches lining a walkway. Visitors can interact with these by downloading an app and learning about “the couple and their histories.” In the center of the walkway would be a mosaiced fountain featuring the Kings’ names and olive branches.

### **“Empty Pulpit”**



Abstract artist Barbara Chase-Riboud created this proposal for a monument made of light, stone and bronze. The stone pyramid symbolizes the Kings' "mission and collaboration," and the searchlight "represents their message from the top of the mountain they climbed together."

**"The Embrace"**





MASS Design Group and artist Hank Willis Thomas created this proposed design of 22-foot-high arms of Dr. King and Coretta Scott made of mirror finish bronze, meant to remind passersby of “our shared human connection.”

**Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial by artist Adam Pendleton, architect David Adjaye, graphic designer David Reinfurt, Future\ Pace and Gilbane Boston**



Inspired by Dr. King’s “I’ve Been To The Mountaintop” speech, this proposal features a black stone overlook projecting from Beacon Street, looking at the Common. The bridge spans the Common’s walking path and then turns into a handicap-accessible ramp that brings visitors