The Design Lab at Hitachi America, Ltd.’s R&D in Santa Clara, California, is made up of a handful of designers and social scientists. We develop and use future-oriented tools to help ground co-creation conversations with our customers. When discussing the problem space and possible solutions, these tools help us bring in a critical, systemic, holistic, and ethical lens, which we believe is of growing importance.

The work presented is our latest evolution of the foresight tool - “Foresight 2020: Utopian and Dystopian Futures”. This update moves from the original card format into bifurcated murals and an AR experience that exemplifies the interconnectedness of human society and the potential opportunities and risks of tech solutions. The murals are of two speculative future alternatives of a city – the utopian and dystopian – with the added experiential layer via AR. Tech solutions inevitably influence the way our cities are and will continue to grow into the future – how are we making sure that we grow toward the utopian future and away from the dystopian one?

Foresight 2020 invites participants to question and discuss the meaning and implications of “smart” in smart city and smart technologies by considering the systemic interconnectedness of all the city parts and how they fit into the larger city ecosystem.

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