



United Communities Building Together
Comunidades Unidas Edificando Juntas

MACDC's 2011-2012 Policy Agenda

Massachusetts, like the entire country, continues to cope with the ongoing economic crisis. The crisis is having a disproportionate impact on low and moderate income neighborhoods and families. These communities, which include urban, rural and suburban areas of the Commonwealth, continue to grapple with the fallout from these hard times including high rates of unemployment, neighborhood decline, ongoing foreclosures and the shortage of safe and affordable housing. MACDC's 2011-2012 Policy Agenda seeks to ensure that all communities and families have a fair opportunity to participate in the economic recovery. Specifically, we will work to:

1. Strengthen the Community Development Field

- Financial support - Building on the successful passage by the legislature in 2010 of a new certification program for CDCs (Chapter 40H), *The Community Development Partnership Act* would spur private investment in state-certified CDCs that develop high quality, multi-year business plans for community improvement and economic development.
- Fully implement the new CDC certification program so that state can better support CDCs as they engage local residents and small businesses to improve communities by leveraging federal and private resources to create vibrant neighborhoods where people can work and live.

2. Fund key community economic development programs, specifically:

- **Foreclosure counseling money - MACDC advocates for \$2.5 million** in foreclosure prevention funding over the next two years from various Massachusetts sources. Based on data from the Massachusetts Division of Banks existing program, \$2.5 million will enable CDCs and other non-profit counseling agencies to provide counseling to 7,000 families to either help them avoid foreclosure or transition to stable rental housing.
- **Small business technical assistance and financing capital -** MACDC advocates for the Massachusetts Growth Capital Corporation (GCC) to fund the Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program **with \$2 million over the next two years** and develop a strategy for supporting local and regional nonprofit micro business lenders. Every dollar the state invests in the technical assistance program it generates \$13 in further investment.
- **State Capital Dollars for Housing** MACDC will advocate that the State's capital budget for privately owned housing **increase from \$81 million per year to \$85 million per year for the next two years**. This additional \$8 million would allow CDCs and other affordable housing developers to produce or preserve over 4,700 rental housing units.

3. Foster Sustainable homeownership

Massachusetts needs an updated, market based approach to homeownership that stabilizes local housing markets, expands economic and asset building opportunities for low and moderate income families, and contributes to stronger neighborhoods – especially in our Gateway Cities. This strategy should include sound lending programs like the Soft Second mortgage program and a market based approach to developing new affordable homeownership units.

4. Implement comprehensive neighborhood strategies and smart growth land use development.

MACDC will advocate for policies and funding that support comprehensive neighborhood improvement strategies that will strengthen regional economies and promote smart land use development. These efforts will include advocating for transit oriented development, comprehensive zoning reform legislation, a stronger Community Preservation Act, and transit finance reform.

For more information on MACDC's Legislative Agenda or our public policy work in general, please contact Allison Staton at 617-426-0303 ext 24 or allisons@macdc.org.