

MACDC STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2012

“BUILDING FROM STRENGTH TO SUSTAINABILITY”

The Massachusetts Community Development Field has a proud history of achievement that provides a solid foundation for the field as we tackle the challenges of today and the coming years. We believe that MACDC, our members and the larger community development field will continue to play a critical role in neighborhood revitalization and our collective efforts will help our communities and our state recover from the current economic recession. As a field that was created to spur change in distressed communities, we must embrace the changes occurring in our field and our country and prepare for a future that will likely look very different than our past.

The need for innovation and adaptations has been clear to our members and to MACDC for several years. All around us, the context for our work has been changing in such areas as, real estate markets, neighborhood demographics, public policy, philanthropy, financial services, affordable housing industry, the role of nonprofits, and generational shifts in our leadership.

As the context for our work has changed so too has the field. Our members have adopted new programs, practices and collaborations designed to seize opportunity and manage new risks and challenges. We have seen the entry of many new organizations that have not traditionally seen themselves as “CDCs” but who are increasingly engaged in very similar work. And the lines are blurring between the community development field and related sectors such as the environmental justice movement, the smart growth movement, the asset development sector, public health, and youth development organizations. These are all positive trends that are going to continue as we break out of our old silos and embrace more comprehensive approaches to community development. This will require MACDC to assist a more diverse membership, a challenge that we are ready to embrace as we believe that greater cross-sector collaboration will serve to strengthen our field. We will use the term Community Development Organizations (CDOs) throughout this document to refer to community-led organizations engaged in community development work, including but not limited to groups traditionally considered CDCs.

MACDC designed its strategic planning process this year to build on the substantial work we have done over the past several years to strengthen and transform MACDC. First, this plan should be seen as a follow up to our **2004-2008 MACDC Strategic Plan**. Second, this new plan builds on the work that MACDC undertook from 2006 to 2008 when we participated in Neighborworks **America’s Achieving Excellence Program**. The third piece of work that has significantly informed our plan is the **Community Development Innovation** Forum that MACDC and LISC have co-sponsored since 2008. Fourth, MACDC undertook a formal **organizational** assessment in early 2009 with the assistance of the National Association of Community Economic Development Associations (NACEDA). This work validated our long standing emphasis on public policy, peer learning, member services, training, and network building. It also underscored that MACDC must play a leadership role as the field transitions to the future and that we build upon and expand on our many partnerships and collaborations.

With these efforts completed or well underway, the Board of Directors established a strategic planning committee in July 2009. The Committee worked diligently from August to January to produce this strategic plan that was approved by the Board of Directors on January 15, 2010. During that time, the Committee analyzed the results of this prior work, sought more input from members and stakeholders and crafted our strategy for the next three years. In doing so, the Committee and the Board recognize that we are in a period of great change, so the plan does not lock us into a rigid framework, but rather builds in time for

the organization to dig deeper on some of the larger changes facing the field and the organization. The Committee's approach is to think of strategic planning as an ongoing activity throughout the next three years and beyond. In short, we think of strategic planning as a verb, not a noun.

MACDC's strategic plan is grounded in several key principles that must guide our thinking and our actions over the next three years.

1. Our strategic plan must be rooted in our vision and core values.
2. We must demand high performance from ourselves, our members and the larger community development field
3. Financial Sustainability, Accountability and Collaboration will be key to the field's future
4. We must shed old orthodoxies and lead the field into the future.
5. We must embrace the growing organizational diversity of the field
6. We must build organizations and systems that can continually adapt and adjust.

MACDC further recognizes that creating places of opportunities for people throughout the Commonwealth requires a wide range of action both in "traditional" areas of community development such as housing, business development and asset development, as well as in other arenas such as education, public safety, public health, transportation, and more. We also realize that MACDC cannot be effective across all of these arenas because each one requires the development of expertise, constituency, relationships and resources.

Therefore, we are taking the following approach to best leverage our resources to have the greatest impact. MACDC will seek to be a leader on matters related to affordable housing (including mixed-use development and transit oriented development), small and micro business development, asset development, community reinvestment, community building and environmentally sustainable approaches to community development. These are the areas where we will build our staff capacity, cultivate long-term relationships, build and lead coalitions, and otherwise immerse ourselves in the field.

Our approach to other important community development issues such as public transit, workforce development, public health, environmental justice, immigration, public safety, and youth development will be to work with and through coalitions that can bring greater expertise and power to the effort. In those instances, our role will be to bring the perspective and grassroots constituency of community developers to the table, and strategically deploy relevant members, to support broader efforts. We will also help link our members to organizations in these other fields to foster effective local partnerships.

MACDC Mission Statement

MACDC is an association of mission-driven community development organizations dedicated to working together and with others to create places of opportunity where people of diverse incomes and backgrounds access housing that is affordable, benefit from economic opportunities and fully participate in the civic life of their community. We achieve this by building and sustaining a high performing and adaptive community development sector that is supported by private and public investment and sound public policies.

MACDC Vision Statement

We envision a Commonwealth of interconnected communities where people of different incomes, ethnicities, races and backgrounds live with dignity and fulfillment. We envision communities that encourage all residents, including those who traditionally have less power, to participate in civic processes that define the physical, economic, educational and cultural characteristics that distinguish these communities. We see a Massachusetts where all people build assets and wealth and realize the benefits of a healthy economy which provides full employment at good wages, stable housing at affordable prices, a clean and sustainable environment, and strong public supports for human needs. We see a community development field comprised of a diverse network of locally accountable organizations that devise smart, sustainable strategies that meet the particular opportunities and needs of their communities. We see these local organizations working with regional and statewide partners to achieve sustained excellence in their programs and projects with a focus on building homes that people can afford, strengthening local businesses, advancing family economic security and enhancing the quality of life. We see the entire community development field working in partnership with other social change organizations, government and the private sector to achieve comprehensive and transformative change in local communities and across the Commonwealth.

MACDC Values Statement

Community Leadership:

We believe in building the power and leadership of communities in Massachusetts by fostering connections and supporting civic participation by all residents, in particular those who have traditionally had less power such as people of modest income, people of color, tenants, immigrants, youth and the disabled. We believe community residents should have a decisive voice in shaping the future of their communities and their own lives and the ability to create local organizations through which they can work together to achieve common goals.

Economic Opportunity:

We believe that everyone deserves a fair and genuine opportunity to participate in the economic mainstream and achieve economic security. This means that we must provide the access and the tools that enable people to succeed and address structural obstacles that prevent many of us from fully benefiting from the economic opportunities available in our communities.

Inclusion:

We seek to create inclusive communities where all people are welcomed regardless of their ethnicity, race, income, age or abilities. We seek to create a community development field that is reflective of the people we serve.

Innovation:

We value inventiveness, ambition, creativity and the ability to take risks as distinguishing characteristics of the community development field. We are committed to finding new and innovative ways to achieve our goals in response to the changing context for our work.

Performance and Accountability:

We believe in promoting excellence in both process and production. Our field is defined by our ability to achieve tangible, sustainable results -- new homes, jobs, businesses and investment -- while upholding a participatory and transparent process that ensures accountability to the local community, public agencies, private investors and other stakeholders.

Collaboration:

We believe that collaboration is essential to building stronger communities and achieving our vision for greater economic opportunity. We build and sustain local, statewide and national collaborations and networks that enable our members and others to make more efficient use of limited resources while achieving greater impact and addressing regional and national challenges.

GOAL #1: MACDC will offer high quality programs and services that strengthen a diverse network of locally accountable, adaptive and sustainable community development organizations that deliver tangible results.

Rationale: MACDC believes that it is critical for Massachusetts to retain a diverse network of locally-based CDCs and CDOs in order to achieve sustainable community development outcomes at the local and regional level. Therefore, MACDC will work to ensure such a diverse network of organizations continues to successfully operate in Massachusetts by helping existing and new organizations adapt to meet the needs of today and the future. We will use our leadership position to respond to today's threats and challenges—not by digging in or fading away, but by supporting each member organization to seriously examine its strengths and weaknesses and develop realistic strategies for moving forward. We know that new approaches, organizations, business models, and collaborations will be needed.

Objective 1: Provide high quality, relevant training through the Mel King Institute.

Objective 2: Facilitate peer learning and collaboration among our members and provide timely and helpful technical assistance to individual groups.

Objective 3: Expand public and private funding available to support local community development organizations, programs and projects.

Objective 4: Advocate for a new state definition of the term CDC that is broadly inclusive and help DHCD implement a certification program for CDCs.

Goal #1: Measurements of Success

- The Mel King Institute has firmly established itself as a center for learning with at least 25 days of training per year, 150 students per year, a robust and well used web site, and 10 partnerships with universities, public agencies and non profits.
- The Mel King Institute establishes and implements a robust program evaluation system, including an external third party evaluation in 2011, and annual tracking of key performance indicators.
- We successfully operate 6 – 8 peer learning groups each year that meet a total of 24-30 times per year, with annual participation exceeding 100 people.
- MACDC's members increase their annual productivity in all six areas measured by the GOALs Initiative between CY 2009 and CY 2012.
- Community development organizations are more financially stable in 2012 than they are today as measured by a study to be conducted in 2012 that measures progress from our 2010 report by the Non Profit Finance Fund.
- At least 75% of our members deploy environmentally sustainable strategies by 2012.

GOAL #2: MACDC will be a leader in efforts to create community development networks in the Commonwealth that enable stakeholders to work collaboratively and efficiently to achieve comprehensive community building outcomes.

Rationale: Everything that our member organizations seek to accomplish in their communities requires that they work collaboratively with a broad network of stakeholders and partners in government, the private sector and the nonprofit sector. Their ability to succeed, and the ability of communities to improve, depends on having a functional, collaborative and well organized set of systems and networks. This is why MACDC has increasingly looked to create "sector-wide" initiatives such as the **Community Development Innovation Forum** and the **Alliance: Advancing Community Development by Confronting Racism**, rather than simply focusing all of our efforts on our members. Just as local organizations need to change and adapt, so too must the public agencies, intermediaries, foundations, and other partners with whom we work. We see the power in working through ever-expanding networks rather than trying to accomplish our goals simply by ourselves.

Objective 1: Promote innovation and provide thought leadership for the community development field through research, events and the Innovation Forum.

Objective 2: Advocate for and facilitate the creation of new infrastructure, systems and collaborations that improve the field's effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

Objective 3: Expand the number of people of color serving in the field, in particular in leadership positions.

Objective 4: Build and support linkages between the community development field and related sectors such as smart growth, workforce, youth, immigrants, etc.

Goal #2: Measurements of Success

- The Innovation Forum (or any potential successor program) is a nationally recognized leader in promoting innovation and sustains high levels of participation throughout the three year period.
- Five new programs, policies or partnerships are created that will help the field to operate more efficiently, more effectively and/or more sustainably.
- A significant increase in collaboration within the field and between our field and other sectors occurs by 2012 and is documented by a research report that year.
- MACDC is engaged in at least four formal partnerships with organizations from other sectors that also contribute to creating places of opportunity.
- We see a 20% increase in the number of people of color serving in leadership positions in the community development field by 2012, to be documented by annual surveys of our members and partners in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

GOAL #3: MACDC will engage its members and allies to advocate for public policies that support community-led efforts to create places of opportunity for everyone.

Rationale: Public policy at the local, state and federal level plays a central role in the ability of MACDC, our members and our partners to achieve our shared vision for the families, communities and the Commonwealth. This strategic plan calls for MACDC to continue to play a *leadership* role as *the voice* for community development practitioners and to further deepen our efforts to engage members and local residents in our policy campaigns.

Objective 1: Remain a prominent leader in shaping Commonwealth and City of Boston policy related to community development, affordable housing, small business development and asset development.

Objective 2: Work through coalitions to link our sector to related advocacy efforts on such issues as smart growth, transportation, energy, public health & workforce development.

Objective 3: Continue to increase the participation of our members and their constituents in our advocacy efforts, both in setting our agenda and winning its passage.

Objective 4: Increase our engagement in and leadership on federal community development policy issues through the Massachusetts delegation and through our national partners.

Objective 5: Evaluate our community reinvestment advocacy efforts and determine best approach in light of changing context.

Goal #3: Measurements of Success

- We will secure a 20% increase in state capital funds directed to affordable housing and community development from FY 10 to FY 13 and a 20% increase in state funding for key community development programs from FY 10 to FY 13.
- We will win at least one major policy victory each year, such as passage of priority legislation or the expansion or preservation of a critical budget item.
- We will win at least three additional policy victories each year at the Boston, state or federal level, including legislative wins achieved in coalition with others or non-legislative wins such as new regulations or the design or redesign of important programs.
- We will maintain our leadership role in three state policy coalitions, be an active member of two others, and play a leadership role in NACEDA and with other national organizations.
- At least 50 members will be engaged in our state and federal policy work by the year 2012, including 35 that are significantly engaged as measured by our “engagement metric” developed in 2009.
- By 2012, MACDC will have implemented a new approach to CRA advocacy that expands access to capital in our communities.

GOAL #4: MACDC has the organizational capacity, financial resources and membership base to effectively steward and lead the field for years to come.

Rationale: MACDC’s ambitious goals, outlined in the sections above, will not be easy to achieve. By design, we have laid out a strategic plan that requires a major stretch for MACDC – one that will force us to do business differently and one that will require additional staffing and financial resources. Indeed, we may need to fundamentally rethink both who we are and what we do. In the course of implementing this strategic plan, we intend to consider profound changes to our name, our members and our relationship to them, our role in both serving the field but also in leading the field, and our role in program implementation and administration. This section of the plan lays out some of the specific changes we need to make to our organization and identifies some of the areas that we will be exploring in the next three years.

Objective 1: Expand our membership from 86 to 100 organizations by 2012 by including a broader array of local community development organizations and retaining existing members.

Objective 2: Enhance our research capacity internally and through partnerships.

Objective 3: Maintain an exciting and rewarding place to work with effective systems for operations, financial management, technology and communications.

Objective 4: Refine our business and revenue model for long term financial sustainability.

Goal #4: Measurements of Success

- MACDC increases its membership to 100 organizations, including 75 full members and 25 associate members, with an overall retention rate of 98%.
- MACDC publishes two “policy briefs” each year, the GOALS Initiative Report and at least two substantial research papers from 2010 to 2012.
- MACDC works with Action Media to refine its messaging and story and has developed up-to-date communication tools, including its web site, blogs, e-newsletters, contact management systems and other communications systems.
- MACDC attracts and retains a superior and diverse staff, including interns and consultants, by creating a supportive work environment with effective technology, office systems, professional development opportunities, and welcoming environment. Staff diversity is increased by at least one person.
- MACDC raises sufficient revenue to grow our staff to 9 FTE from our current 8 FTE staff (including interns and Americorps member), increases its unrestricted net assets by \$30,000 from FY 2009 to FY 2012 and has a clean audit each year.