



October 15, 2014

Mayor Martin Walsh
City Hall
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mayor Walsh:

On behalf of the MACDC Boston Committee, I am writing to congratulate and thank you for issuing a clarion call for more housing -- especially more affordable and middle income housing -- in the City of Boston. Housing A Changing City: Boston 2030 lays out a strong vision and strategy for ensuring that our City can grow without displacement, provide stable and affordable housing for our hard-working residents and improve the quality of life throughout our City's diverse neighborhoods.

Our members were pleased to have played a role in helping to craft the plan and we are even more excited about working with you and your Administration to effectively implement it. I am writing to offer some thoughts on the plan and to request a meeting with you and your team.

We believe our members can help with several of the critical elements in the plan:

- **Affordable Housing Production** – CDCs have a strong track record of affordable housing production and we stand ready to work closely with the city to build the 8,000 affordable homes called for in the plan. We already have hundreds of units in the pipeline and we are eager to deploy new strategies to expand that pipeline, lower the cost of construction and speed the process.
- **Middle & mixed income housing production** - Like you, CDCs are interested in building more homeownership units and more mixed income properties, and acquiring existing rental properties with the goal of making them affordable for the long term. While we have historically focused most of our efforts on low/moderate income housing, many of our members are also very interested in producing middle income units and there seem to be a few examples emerging in the City's pipeline.
- **Housing Preservation** – CDCs are 100% committed to keeping our existing several thousand unit portfolio in good condition and permanently affordable. We are very interested in acquiring additional expiring-use apartment complexes that might otherwise convert to market rents or fall into disrepair. This is often an unforeseen issue in the housing world but it threatens decades of progress.
- **Homeownership** – In addition to producing new homeownership units, CDCs are educating thousands of first time homebuyers and we are eager to work with you to expand these efforts, help homebuyers obtain downpayment/closing cost assistance and other aid from the City as well as expand the number of mortgage lenders in the City offering high quality products like the One Mortgage Loan and the Mass Housing loan product
- **Transit Oriented Development** – CDCs are actively pursuing TOD opportunities throughout the city and fully support the goal of producing denser but appropriately scaled, mixed-income and mixed-use housing developments near transit nodes.

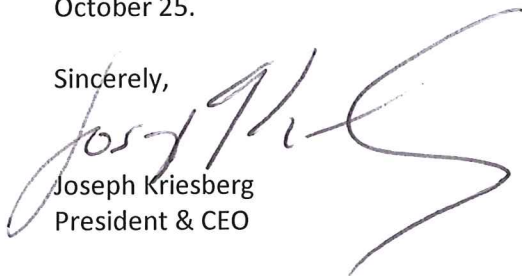
- **Community planning** - CDCs are proven partners who are able to work with the City to build public support for new housing development and to help facilitate neighborhood planning processes that help us "get to YES."
- **Resources** – MACDC applauds your decision to raise an additional \$20 million per year in resources for housing and stand ready to help you achieve this goal as soon as possible. MACDC and its members are interested in working with your Administration to craft thoughtful and balanced changes to the Inclusionary Development Policy and the Linkage Program, while also working with a broad coalition to win passage of the Community Preservation Act. These efforts can help generate the \$20 million in annual new resources called for in the plan. We believe there is a particular sense of urgency regarding the Inclusionary Development program because in this hot market, we believe that sooner we can act, the more funds will be committed to the IDP fund.
- **Student Housing** – CDCs have a long history of working with the City, Universities and local residents to constructively address the challenges of safely housing our City's student population. We are prepared to work with your Administration on a full range of efforts in this regard, including institutional master planning, code enforcement, and new student housing production. You are correct to note this as a serious issue in our vibrant City.
- **Green & Health Housing** – CDCs have always embraced green and health housing designs and can bring our growing expertise to the City's efforts to make Boston a national leader in this regard. All our developments have long-met Energy Star and LEED criteria. Our architects and contractors are well-versed in these practices.
- **Gentrification** – CDCs across the city are working very hard to address the growing challenges of gentrification to ensure that long-term residents are not displaced and that Boston grows in a fair and equitable fashion. Yes, we all want economic diversity, but too many of us are aware of the squeeze being put on working-class families.

We are already working closely with DND Director, Sheila Dillon and her team on many of these initiatives, including the creating of short and mid-term goals against which the city can measure progress. We think now would be a good time to also meet with you and the other senior members of your team, as you suggested in our meeting in July, so we can accelerate and expand these efforts.

We will follow up with your staff to see if such a meeting can be scheduled. In the meantime, please let me know if there is anything we can do to support the next steps in this process. There is clearly much to do and time is of the essence.

Thank you again for your leadership and we look forward to seeing you at the MACDC Convention on October 25.

Sincerely,



Joseph Kriesberg
President & CEO

cc Sheila Dillon, DND