



February 4, 2015

Richard Davey
President and CEO
Boston 2024
Boston MA

Dear Mr. Davey,

Congratulations on your appointment to serve as CEO of Boston 2024. We are delighted that someone with your experience and expertise will be taking the helm of this important undertaking. Speaking on behalf of 90 community based organizations from around the Commonwealth, we also wanted to take this opportunity to share our thoughts about the planning process for the Olympic Games. This letter comments on several critical areas where our experiences and constituencies may offer insight and assistance.

The Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC) is an association of mission-driven community development organizations. We work 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 have 90 member organizations across the state and a long track record of effective engagement in public policy, public/private partnerships and providing capacity building and training services to local community development practitioners. MACDC is a member of several statewide coalitions, including Transportation for Massachusetts, The Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance and the Building Blocks Coalition that advocates for affordable housing.

MACDC believes that the Olympic Games offer an extraordinary opportunity to accelerate economic growth and opportunity across the city, region and state. At the same time, the Games, like any major undertaking, come with costs and risks. As Boston 2024 works to put together a final bid to the International Olympic Committee, we believe that two key ideas should be at the center of the process at all times: **Equity** and **Legacy**.

Equity refers to the necessity to ensure that both the benefits that flow from the Games, and the costs, are broadly and fairly shared across the entire Commonwealth. As you know, income and wealth inequality across both people and places are growing concerns here in the Commonwealth and throughout the Country. We must intentionally and explicitly act to ensure that the Olympic Games serve to reduce these inequalities – not exacerbate them. Low and moderate income people and neighborhoods must have the opportunity to benefit from the jobs, housing, businesses and investments that will be generated. At a minimum, we should seek to do no harm to those neighborhoods most directly impacted by the Olympics.

Legacy refers to the imperative of ensuring that the investments made for the Olympic Games in 2024 serve the long term interests of our communities and do not leave us burdened with more debt or a lack of investments in other critical areas such as education, housing and health or in other regions of the state. This can be done with careful and inclusive planning, combined with conservative and transparent budgeting.

We would like to offer some thoughts about how these principles can be applied in four areas: housing, transportation, economic opportunity and community engagement. We do so with the goal of laying the foundation for working with Boston 2024 and other stakeholders to address these questions, seize the opportunities that are available and make this a successful undertaking for our state.

Housing: Mayor Marty Walsh has outlined an ambitious but essential plan to create 53,000 new homes by 2030. Across Greater Boston there is a similar need for substantial new housing construction across all income levels. We are also seeing a growing risk of displacement in many neighborhoods and growing concern that Boston could become a city largely for the very rich and the very poor. Therefore, we would like to see a focus on three key housing issues.

1. **Mixed Income Housing Production:** The land use planning process associated with the Olympics should be structured to accelerate and expand the production of new housing, especially for low and moderate income households. We also see value in the production of on-campus student housing that serves to lessen pressure on neighborhood housing markets such as Allston, Brighton, Mission Hill and Somerville. Areas primed for new mixed income housing should not be put on hold until after 2024. Those areas that are temporarily used for the Olympics should, when appropriate, be slated for permanent housing development after the Games are over. And to the degree that new housing is built for the Games it should be designed to convert to long term housing afterwards.
2. **Smart Transit Oriented Development:** The Games will spark significant improvement in our public transit systems (see below). Therefore, we must take steps to ensure that low and moderate income households are able to enjoy the benefits of this improved public transit. Research by newly appointed Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack has documented that successful transit oriented development needs to focus on serving precisely those populations that rely on public transit, in particular low and moderate income people. This goal needs to be built into the land use planning and zoning updates associated with new transit investments.
3. **Anti-Displacement Measures:** It is essential that we take steps to protect local residents, in particular tenants in private market housing, from being displaced before, during or after the Games. Homeowners may benefit from the opportunity to rent out their homes during the Games and from rising home

values precipitated by Olympic-related investments and real estate speculation. However, tenants will have no such opportunity. Quite the opposite, they are at risk of both temporary and long term displacement. The initial bid submission to the USOC does not address this issue, but does highlight the need for spectator accommodations. Boston 2024 proposes to use off-campus student housing to help meet the need for accommodations for Olympic visitors. The preliminary bid suggests that landlords would be encouraged to sign 9-month leases so the units can be made available to visitors in the summer. The bid further indicates that “regulations would then be in place to support reasonable rates for spectator accommodation for the duration of the Olympic and Paralympic Games”. This raises several questions, most significantly, would Boston 2024 also support regulations that will ensure “reasonable” rents for existing tenants across Greater Boston who might otherwise face eviction? While some students may be able to go live with their parents for the summer, families and seniors cannot simply leave for three months and come back after the Games. What measures can be taken to ensure that all private landlords do not insist on 9-month leases that expire in June of 2024? How can we ensure that short term displacement does not also lead to long term displacement as landlords use the opportunity to significantly increase their rents thereby precluding households from moving back to their homes?

Transportation: Perhaps the biggest long-term opportunity generated by hosting the Olympics is the substantial investment that would occur in our public transit system. As you well know from your tenure as Secretary of Transportation, the MBTA desperately needs that investment. As you also know, we do not have enough funding to support all of the investments needed to sustain our current public transit systems in Greater Boston and across the state. The passage of Question 1 only makes the situation worse. Therefore, in planning for and potentially hosting the Olympics, we need to consider the following.

1. **Long-term planning:** We must ensure that our decisions regarding public transit investments are made with an eye both toward the needs of 2024 and the needs of the next several decades.
2. **Equitable investment:** As important as the Olympics would be to the region, we cannot sacrifice the rest of the state in order to prioritize investments in Greater Boston. Investments in Greater Boston need to be paired equitably with investments throughout the state.
3. **Sound financing:** You have forcefully argued in the past that Massachusetts needs new revenue to simply meet our existing transportation needs and plans. We will need even more new revenue to meet those needs and accommodate the Olympics. Boston 2024 needs to forcefully advocate for new transportation revenue. A failure to secure new revenue could leave the Commonwealth burdened with more debt and put our overall transportation system in even worse financial condition.

Economic Opportunity: We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to benefit from the jobs and business growth opportunities that will emerge from the Olympic Games. Therefore, we urge Boston 2024 to support the following:

1. **Job Access:** There should be significant outreach to help targeted populations access the thousands of jobs to be created before and during the Games, including job training programs that are needed to help individuals obtain the necessary skills. We would also support the establishment of specific goals similar to those established as part of the Boston Jobs Residency Program.
2. **Business Opportunities:** We support the establishment of specific goals to ensure that MBEs and WBEs gain access to the many contract opportunities to be generated through this process. For example, MACDC is partnering with the Mass. Minority Contractors Association to help our members meet ambitious goals of 30% MBE and 10% WBE contracting on 11 CDC-sponsored construction projects in Boston. We also think that there may be significant opportunities to partner with nonprofit social enterprises, like CDCs, to undertake some of the development and other business opportunities associated with this process.

Community Engagement: Boston 2024 has already recognized the importance of a robust and inclusive community engagement process in preparing the final bid submission to the IOC. While the community meetings now scheduled are a good start, it is not enough. Simply holding large public meetings where relatively few people get to speak, where meaningful interaction is impractical and where attendees generally don't reflect the full diversity of our region will not get the job done. It is essential that this process include meaningful and significant efforts to ensure that all voices are heard in this process, including the voices of those who are often not heard – lower income tenants, immigrants, people-of-color, youth, seniors and the disabled. Community based organizations should be enlisted to reach specific populations or to engage residents around specific areas of concern. We encourage Boston 2024 to adopt a collaborative approach to this engagement process.

Finally, we believe that these four issues will impact certain neighborhoods more significantly than others. South Boston, Dorchester, Chinatown, Cambridge and other places could experience significant and often negative impacts from having the Games in their immediate neighborhoods. While the regional benefits can be widely shared, some of the negative impacts will inevitably be felt most intensively at the local level. Therefore, we would encourage the development of specific mitigation measures and perhaps formal community benefit agreements to ensure that those who bear the brunt of the impacts also receive significant benefits.

We understand that the initial Bid submitted to the USOC was only a "proof of concept" and that the real work to develop a final Bid to the IOC begins now. This process, regardless of the final outcome, will have a major impact on the future of our City and our Commonwealth. MACDC is eager to work with Boston 2024 to address the challenges and concerns identified above and to help seize the opportunities presented by this moment. As community

developers, we have a long track record of balancing competing interests and managing complex public/private initiatives. We have extensive experience with many of the issues raised in this letter and could be a helpful partner as you undertake this process. Therefore, we respectfully request the opportunity for you and your team to meet with a group of CDC leaders from around the region to discuss these issues. We are confident that you will find their experience, expertise and insights helpful to your process.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,



Gail Latimore
Board Chair



Joseph Kriesberg
President & CEO