

Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation's Community Investment Plan

MISSION 180

Community Contract

'A Call to Action for New Voices and Tomorrow's Leaders'

Resilient Communities/Resilient Families

Roxbury, Massachusetts

2014-2016

Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation's community investment plan is known as the Mission 180 "Community Contract." The contents of this plan are, in order: a description of our neighborhood served, Roxbury; engagement of the community the plan; plan goals; plan activities; success measures; collaborative implementation approach; integration and consistency with a community strategy and vision; financing strategy; consistency with Commonwealth sustainable development principles and Nuestra's past practices and approaches relevant to this plan.

Convened under the auspices of Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation and part of the Resilient Communities/Resilient Families initiative of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Mission 180 was launched in 2011 with strong support from the Boston office of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, the City of Boston, and a cadre of dedicated local and national funders.

Mission 180 is committed to a collaborative community organizing process that connects residents and organizations in order to define the future of the Roxbury neighborhood in general, and the Warren Street Corridor in particular. The Mission 180 process engages residents, business owners, community organizations and other members of the Roxbury community to tap their wisdom, experience and energy in order to take action.

Mission 180's Action Strategies capture two years of careful planning and community process in Roxbury, Massachusetts. The ideas have been shaped by the tireless participation and thoughtful feedback of more than 200 residents, community leaders, business owners, local and state officials, representatives of community organizations, and each person who contributed to the dialogue in at least one of the many Mission 180 meetings (see listing at end of this plan). Interviews, forums, working group sessions, and extensive dialogue among the "champions", helped frame four key action strategies that embody a collective vision for Roxbury moving forward.

(i) Community or Constituency(ies) to be served: the neighborhood and particular constituencies including population and demographics, geographic characteristics

For over 30 years, Nuestra has served our core community of Roxbury. We define Roxbury to include the Grove Hall area, and sometimes explicitly refer to "Roxbury and Grove Hall" for the benefit of those who may assume that Grove Hall is part of Dorchester and not Roxbury.

Roxbury is a majority-minority community; more than half of its residents are Black or African American and 30% identify as Hispanic. The Warren Street Corridor within Roxbury in particular is racially and ethnically diverse and has a relatively high concentration of individuals living below the poverty line. Between 2005 and 2007, the median household income for Boston was nearly \$50,000 as compared to under \$30,000 for neighborhoods such as Roxbury, Mattapan, Mission Hill and Dorchester. At the same time, the percentage of families with children under age 18 living below the poverty line in these communities was more than 40% as compared to 26% for all Boston families.

Fig. 1 -Race, Ethnicity and Age

	Warren Street Corridor		City of Boston	
Total Population	31,355		617,594	
White, non Hispanic	761	2.4 %	290,312	47%
Black/African American, non-Hispanic	18,736	59.8%	138,073	22.4%
American Indian and Alaska native, non-Hispanic	139	0.4%	1,227	0.2%
Asian, non-Hispanic	319	1.0%	54,846	8.9%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	13	0.0%	182	0.0%
Some Other Race, non-Hispanic	959	3.1%	10,078	1.6%
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	1,011	3.2%	14,959	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino	9,417	30.0%	107,917	17.5%
Population, ages 0-17	9,240		103,710	
White, non Hispanic	123	1.3%	23,923	23.1%
Black/African American, non-Hispanic	5,040	54.5%	34,431	33.2%
American Indian and Alaska native, non-Hispanic	26	0.3%	275	0.3%
Asian, non-Hispanic	83	0.9%	7,113	6.9%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	4	0.0%	25	0.0%
Some Other Race, non-Hispanic	269	2.9%	2M515	2.4%
Two or more races, non-Hispanic	320	3.5%	4,219	4.1%
Hispanic or Latino	3,375	36.5%	31,209	30.1%

Source: A Summary of Boston Indicators Report 2009 – Economy, The Boston Foundation

Fig. 2 – Income, Poverty, Employment, and Housing Tenure

	Warren Street Corridor	City of Boston
Median Income	\$41,782	\$74,946
Percent Living in Poverty	35.6%	21.2%
Percent of Children Living in Poverty	49.5%	30.0%
Percent Unemployed	10.5 %	6.3%
Owner Occupied Housing	23.7%	35.0%

Source: 2010 Census data as reported in Warren Street Corridor Data Profile, Resilient Communities/Resilient Families, Local Initiatives Support Corporation – Boston, 2010

Housing. Roxbury is home to several historic properties; many in fact are designated Boston landmarks. At the same time, over the past decade, many Roxbury neighborhoods have been witness to high rates of foreclosure activity due to documented practices of predatory and sub-prime lending along with an increasing lack of affordable housing. Between 2005 and 2009, nearly 80% of Roxbury residents were renters; nearly half of these individuals paid in excess of 35% of their income on housing.

“There is a fear that long-time residents who went through so much will be booted out from the neighborhood due to housing.” (One-on-One Interview Participant)

Children and Young Adults. Young adults comprise a relatively large proportion of Roxbury’s population as compared to Boston as a whole. Added to this, one third of Roxbury’s residents do not have a high school diploma, have limited employable skills, rely on government benefits and/or face significant childcare responsibilities. Over the years, the sheer concentrations of these factors have contributed to higher rates of crime among the young adult population relative to the City as a whole. Today, several neighborhoods within the Roxbury and North Dorchester geographical boundaries are designated as crime “hot spots”.

Transportation. Over the years, growth of what should otherwise be a thriving and vibrant nexus of Boston has been constrained by limited access to public transportation. While Dudley Square is situated in the ‘heart’ of the Roxbury community and boasts an impressive 33,000-plus individuals travelling through the area by bus each weekday, lack of access to rapid rail transit significantly restricts general access to the area and negatively impacts travel times to and from resident homes, jobs and community resources.

Community Assets. Notwithstanding these challenges, the Roxbury community in general, and the Warren Street Corridor in particular, are home to a large number of capable and committed service organizations and faith-based institutions, attractive homes, arts and cultural centers, two major business districts, and a vast network of elementary, secondary and higher education institutions. The community has also been fortunate to enjoy a long and rich history of community activism and engagement.

Under the power of eminent domain during the 60's, thousands of Roxbury homes and businesses were destroyed and entire neighborhoods were demolished to make room for an eight-lane Boston highway (I-95) with a cloverleaf to be placed at the center of Roxbury. A broad coalition of community advocates organized themselves to stop the highway through large-scale demonstrations and collaboration on a land-use plan that focused on modernizing mass transit systems and strategically redeveloping vacant parcels. After more than two decades of sustained pressure and engagement, the community was successful and a moratorium was declared on further highway development. In so doing, it was mandated that the affected communities be part of the planning and re-development process going forward; a mitigation which helped set precedent for community development of the area for years to come.

And in the early years of the 21st Century, a collaborative group of community members, resident groups, city and state elected officials and other key stakeholders launched a three-year effort to create a community-based blueprint for economic and social change for the people of Roxbury. The result of those efforts, the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan, is a long-term strategic framework to guide change and economic growth in Roxbury over a two-decade period.

“Roxbury is a very resilient and striving neighborhood.” (One-on-One Interview Participant)

(ii) Involvement of community residents and stakeholders: description, evidence and degree of resident and stakeholders' engagement in the development of the Plan; and the role of residents and stakeholders in monitoring and implementing Plan activities

CALL TO ACTION FOR NEW VOICES AND TOMORROW'S LEADERS

The concept of “Mission 180” speaks to the goal of using positive community action to turn the challenges facing the Roxbury community around a full 180 degrees. In the spring of 2011, a Steering Committee comprised of Roxbury-based nonprofit organizations detailed a road-map for implementation of a community process directed at development of “actionable” short-and-long-term community-driven projects building on existing resources and planning efforts that have shaped community development efforts over the years. During the winter of 2011-2012, a core group of 16 volunteers representing the breadth of the coalition held 114 individual interviews with residents, community leaders, business owners and other key stakeholders in the project's catchment area. In February 2012, the Steering Committee presented at a community-wide forum attended by over 100 individuals to gather feedback on both findings from the interviews and suggestions for improving Mission 180's ongoing community process.

In the past, Roxbury and Grove Hall had to react to redevelopment plans coming from outside the community. Today, the new voices engaged in the Mission 180 coalition have an historic opportunity to proactively transform Roxbury around a shared community vision.





Based on interview findings and outcomes and feedback from small-group break-out sessions, participants identified six Action Group Topics for moving the Mission180 process forward: (1) Arts, History, and Activism; (2) Community Safety; (3) Cultivating Hope and Pride; (4) Economic Development; (5) Housing; and (6) Young Adults. A call went out for “new voices” to join the process, and over the spring, 130 individuals participated in working sessions of action teams focused on the selected topics. The Mission 180 community

action contract is the fruit of their work. A number of the participants are now members of the steering committee charged with monitoring and implementing this contract. The steering committee and the over 200 participants in the Mission 180 planning process are listed at the end of this plan.

“There is a place for everyone at the table.” (One-on-One Interview Participant)

(iii) Plan goals; identification of the Community Contract goals; how low and moderate income households, other constituencies and the entire community will benefit from achieving the goals.

WORKING GROUPS’ STRATEGIES AND OUTCOME GOALS

The following summarizes the Community Contract’s four action strategies including the key outcome goal for each strategy.

Arts, Activism, and Community Growth

Action Strategy I Outcome: Advance Roxbury and Grove Hall as a cultural destination district through support of activities that celebrate the area’s rich cultural diversity, history, and economic viability

The Arts, Activism, and Community Growth action team seeks to highlight Roxbury and Grove Hall as one of Boston’s most culturally diverse, economically viable and historically rich destinations through the use of arts, local partnerships and family-friendly community events within the neighborhood business districts. By including residents in the developmental and implementation stages of this process, Roxbury and Grove Hall residents can have a hands-on role in turning their own community back into an artistic and economically vibrant, safe space for residents, visitors, and businesses.



The specific goals are:

- Creating a cultural promotions committee
- Hosting a Roxbury Cultural Food Festival

- Supporting Discover Roxbury’s arts tours to showcase history through art, and creating a permanent late night poetry and jazz venue in Dudley Square.
- Supporting arts programming for young adults

Community Safety

Action Strategy II Outcome: Enhance public safety by unifying neighborhoods along the Warren Street Corridor



The goals of the Community Safety action strategy are:

- To connect community residents and increase public safety in individual blocks by unifying neighborhoods along the Warren Street corridor.
- To connect independent block associations with each other, and with areas currently not served by a block association.
- To recruit in each area a contact person who will work with other contact people as a neighborhood engagement team (NET). Each of them will be a NET Connector.
- Through the NET Connectors, to bring more training, neighborhood-building activities, municipal services, community policing and other resources to their neighbors, in order to more effectively tackle neighborhood community safety and quality of life issues.

Economic Development

Action Strategy III Outcome: Encourage innovative business growth and investment in the Roxbury and Grove Hall economy



The goal of the economic development action strategy is the creation of a “Roxbury Innovation Institute” dedicated to promoting business innovation in Roxbury and Dorchester and coordinating and promoting training and growth opportunities for local small businesses. The Institute will accomplish this goal by:

- Becoming a business innovation resource clearinghouse by collecting information on small business training opportunities, contracting and business opportunities and other resources;
- Communicating information effectively to Roxbury and Grove Hall entrepreneurs (for example, through a shared website calendar and targeted mailings/e-mails);
- Creating a calendar of training opportunities and connecting specific types of business to specialized trainings fitting their business category or needs;
- Arranging for mentoring relationships as a follow-up to training;
- Promoting Roxbury and Grove Hall’s assets in science, technology and industry; and
- Encouraging innovative business growth.
- Planning and obtaining site control for the creation of a Roxbury/Grove Hall business incubator.

Housing and Young Adults

Action Strategy IV Outcome: Create and support stable and affordable housing options for young adults

As a part of a larger goal to create 270 new homes and apartments in Roxbury, this action strategy seeks to create a young adult housing model through a collaborative planning effort among young adults and housing developers, and to advocate for resources to support the construction of the first young adult housing development in Roxbury. This goal calls for the creation of 30 units of housing that will target and provide supportive services to low-income young adults who require supports to remain stably housed, including those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.



The Housing action team and Young Adults action team merged their plans around a strategy to create affordable housing for young adults aged 18- 26. This housing will address an unmet need for this demographic, many of whom desire affordable one-bedrooms and studios. In this model, wrap-around services will be provided alongside housing, including: mentorship programs, career counseling, financial literacy, home buying training, and crisis management skills training. Young adults will live in this new housing with wrap-around services for a maximum of three years.

(iv) Activities to be undertaken: the community development activities to be undertaken under the Plan; and the expected impact the activities will have on the identified goals and the community/constituency(ies) to be served

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINE

ACTION STRATEGY I

ADVANCE ROXBURY AS A CULTURAL DESTINATION THROUGH SUPPORT OF ACTIVITIES THAT CELEBRATE THE AREA'S RICH CULTURAL DIVERSITY, HISTORY, AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY

Expected Impact: Bring visitors into the Warren Street Corridor and increase activity of current residents to enhance economic activity and vibrancy in the neighborhood.

<u>Action Item(s)</u>	<u>6-12 months</u>	<u>12-18 months</u>
1.1 Create Cultural Promotions Committee to host “Roxbury Before Dark” and “Roxbury Nightlife” activities	1.1.1 Identify participants and launch Cultural Promotions Committee	1.21. Develop partnerships with youth-focused organizations to develop youth as-organizers
1.2 Support arts programming for young adults		1.3.1 Create and administer survey for restaurant participation in Cultural Food Festival
1.3 Host Roxbury Cultural Food Festival		1.3.2 Identify and confirm dates and locations for Cultural Food Festival
1.4 Host Art Tours in conjunction with Discover Roxbury to showcase history through art		1.3.3 Secure partners and sponsors for Cultural Food Festival
1.5 Create permanent late night poetry and Jazz venue in Dudley Square		
1.6 Co-sponsor arts events in public spaces in Dudley Square and Grove Hall		
1.7 Support efforts to designate Roxbury as a Cultural District		

**Organizational
Champion(s)**

Gallery Mus!kavanhu; Elm Hill Family- Service Center/ABCD

ACTION STRATEGY II

ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY BY UNIFYING NEIGHBORHOODS ALONG THE WARREN STREET CORRIDOR

Expected Impact: Increase quality of life for residents of Roxbury’s Warren Street Corridor.

<u>Action Item(s)</u>	<u>6-12 months</u>	<u>12-18 months</u>
2.1 Create cadre of Neighborhood Engagement Team (‘NET) Connectors’ to facilitate communication between residents within specific areas	2.1.2 Identify NET Connectors in areas where block associations do not currently exist	2.1.9 Host basic trainings in community organizing and advocacy to ensure NET Connectors have access to shared tools, resources and information
	2.1.3 Identify NET Connectors in areas with independent block associations that are not supported by a broader coalition or network	2.2.1 Host quarterly meetings of NET Connectors
	2.1.4 Identify and recruit NET Connectors	2.2.1 Organize at least 5 areas to create/revitalize block associations
	2.1.5 Schedule and coordinate dinner meetings to bring NET Connectors together to identify and prioritize issues	2.2.2 Secure resident to serve as Lead NET Connector around prioritized issue areas
	2.1.6 NET Connectors work to problem solve and take action around prioritized community safety issues	2.2.3 Identify an additional 5 areas to create/revitalize block associations
	2.1.7 Convene dinner meeting of 5-8 neighborhood associations	2.2.4 Develop shared calendar of trainings focused on tools, resources and information needed to be effective in the role as NET Connector
	2.1.8 Identify additional NET Connector	
<u>Organizational Champion(s)</u> Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation		

ACTION STRATEGY III –
ENCOURAGE INNOVATIVE BUSINESS GROWTH AND INVESTMENT IN THE
ROXBURY ECONOMY

Expected Impact: Retain and grow existing businesses while encouraging entrepreneurship to develop the wealth of Roxbury residents.

<u>Action Item(s)</u>		<u>6-12 months</u>		<u>12-18 months</u>	
3.1	Create Roxbury Innovation Institute to promote innovation as the driving force for local small business development; serve as a resource for training and contracting opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs; and generate reputation for Roxbury as leading innovation district)	3.1.1	Schedule 1-on-1 meetings to identify and create Innovation Institute Advisory Board	3.1.4	Secure AmeriCorps intern for Innovation Institute
		3.1.2	Create a shared calendar of trainings and other resources for Innovation Institute	3.1.5	Design information session on Innovation Institute
		3.1.3	Host at least one workshop for Innovation Institute during Spring of 2013	3.1.6	Solicit in-kind funding for marketing and promotions materials and website of Innovation Institute
				3.1.7	Solicit funding through Innovation Institute to hire community surveyors to assist Grove Hall and Dudley Square Main Streets with survey of businesses along Warren Street Corridor
3.2	Create Roxbury Community Business Incubator	3.2.1	Create business plan and identify location for Business Incubator	3.2.2	Obtain site control for location of Business Incubator
				3.2.3	Hire staff, instructors and mentors for Business Incubator

Organizational Champion(s)
 Nuestra Comunidad
 Development Corporation

ACTION STRATEGY IV

CREATE AND SUPPORT STABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Expected Impact: Enable vulnerable youth to become and remain stably housed in their community.

<u>Action Item(s)</u>	<u>6-12 months</u>	<u>12-18 months</u>
4.1 Create structured and affordable housing options for young adults ages 18-26	4.1.1. Secure consultant 4.1.2 Solicit partners to provide technical assistance and resource 4.1.3 Develop and administer survey to identify specific housing needs, challenges and desired supports for young adults ages 18-26 4.1.4 Identify funding for stipends for focus groups participants	4.1.6 Prepare planning grant proposal for structured affordable housing for 18-26 year olds that includes housing-mentoring-support services connection
4.2 Create housing-mentoring-support services connection for young adults (18-26) that includes mentoring services, financial literacy training, career development support, home buying counseling and life skills coaching in crisis management	4.1.5 Conduct 2-3 focus groups with young adults	4.2.1 Advocate for policies and funding to support dedicated housing options for young adults ages 18-26

Organizational Champion(s)

Madison Park Development Corporation

(v) How success will be measured/evaluated: the tools and methodologies to be used to measure the impact of undertaking the programs, policies and activities in the Plan

The Community Contract sets four strategic outcomes that will significantly impact the Roxbury and Grove Hall community. The methodology to be used in measuring success in achieving these outcomes is to identify and measure one or more key indicators that will reflect progress in achieving the identified outcome. The following key indicators and tools will be used to measure program against each strategic outcome goal. Evaluation will be conducted by Nuestra Comunidad with the assistance of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation.

Strategy 1 outcome goal: Advance Roxbury as a cultural destination through support of activities that celebrate the area's rich cultural history and economic viability.

Key indicator #1: The creation or retention of 14 local businesses through commercial real estate development of small business assistance over a two-year period; and the creation or retention of 104 businesses by 2021. The tool for tracking this indicator is the monitoring and implementation by Nuestra of a workplan created and monitored by the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods coalition, a group of six community-based organizations led by Nuestra Comunidad.

Rationale for key indicator: the purpose of the arts activism strategy is to bring Roxbury's business centers (Dudley Square and Grove Hall) as cultural destinations for shoppers through the use of creative public placemaking. The retention of existing businesses (many of whom are struggling) and the creation of new businesses will indicate success in this strategy.

Strategy 2 outcome goal: Enhance public safety by unifying neighborhoods along the Warren Street Corridor.

Key indicator #2: Residents will feel that their neighborhood is safer and that neighbors are more connected. The tool for tracking this indicator is a bi-annual (every two years) in-depth, statistically valid random survey of a target area within Roxbury where crime rates have historically been high. The tool was created through NeighborWorks America's Community Impact Program using the "Success Measures" evaluation system created by NeighborWorks.

Rationale for key indicator: The survey tools measures how safe residents feel and how connected they feel to their neighbors (eg, "how likely is it that one of your neighbors would give you a ride if you needed one?") If the Mission 180 Community Connectors succeed in bringing more neighborhoods together and reducing crime, the survey tool over time will measure positive improvements.

Strategy 3 outcome goal: Encourage innovative business growth and investment in the Roxbury economy.

Key indicator #3: Local entrepreneurs will create at least three business concepts annually. The tool to measure this is an annual business concept competition offering cash prizes for best business plan or concept. A Mission 180 partner conducted the first round of this competition in 2012.

Rationale for key indicator: The critical obstacle for innovative business ideas is capital. The relatively small cash prizes for the business plan/concept competition (\$45,000 total prize pool annually) provide early business planning capital. Competition winners will be connected to the Mission 180 business innovation center and related training programs offered there. Over time, the competition winners will develop fuller business plans and shop them for venture capital. Through mentorships and other linkages with the established innovation centers in downtown Boston, Cambridge and East Boston, and the angel investors associated with these centers, the local entrepreneurs will have better business plans than if developed on their own and a much better opportunity to pitch their business plan to investors.

Strategy 4 outcome goal: Create and support stable and affordable housing options for young adults.

Key indicator #4: The City of Boston will award funding over a three year period for the development of 280 mixed-income housing units in Roxbury; of these, funding will be awarded for at least 30 micro-apartments with supportive services for 18-26 year olds tied to the apartments. The tool for tracking this indicator is the monitoring and implementation by Nuestra of a workplan created and monitored by the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods coalition, a group of six community-based organizations led by Nuestra Comunidad advocating for sustainable, transit-oriented, mixed-use and mixed-income development in Roxbury along the Warren Street transit corridor.

Rationale for key indicator: The key to realizing the vision for young adult housing is to persuade the City to adopt a policy incorporating that vision tied to funding for construction and services.

- **The evaluation process and the role of participants in the process**

Key indicator #1 and #4 will be monitored and evaluated by the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods coalition partners, which includes three organizational members of Mission 180 and one community resident. Consultant Diane Gordon has been retained by the RGN coalition through the Smart Growth Network to evaluate the success of the business development strategy.

Key indicators #2 and #3 will be monitored and evaluated by the Mission 180 steering committee, whose members are listed in this plan. Nuestra will prepare an annual written report for the steering committee documenting success and challenges in changing these key indicators. The report will also report success in achieving the activities, annual outputs and timeline of the Community Contract.

(vi) Collaborative efforts to support implementation: existing and proposed collaborative relationships with other stakeholders, such as nonprofits, businesses, state and municipal government; the role of existing and proposed collaborations to support implementation of the Plan

New collaborations have been formed to guide implementation of the Community Contract going forward in 2013 and beyond. Each of the four action plans within the community contract

contains a partnership between resident “champions” and at least one organizational partner to ensure that passion and capacity will carry forward the action plans to success. These champions and organizational partners sit on the steering committee charged with monitoring and evaluating the Community Contract implementation. New collaborations will be sought, as the community contract calls for “new voices” to lead the implementation process, defined broadly as the grass-roots leaders, such as immigrant community representatives, who have not been heard frequently, or consistently, in the rooms where decisions affecting the community are made.

(vii) Integration of activities/consistency with community strategy and vision

- **Description of the interaction and interrelationship of Plan activities to be undertaken**

The interrelationships of the Community Contract’s activities will be identified and leveraged during implementation through structural mechanisms within the Mission 180 coalition. One is that each of the four action plans within the community contract contains a partnership between resident “champions” and at least one organizational partner to ensure that passion and capacity will carry forward the action plans to success. Each champion and organizational partner sits on the steering committee. Decisions for each action plan are made by the full steering committee, ensuring an opportunity for key participants representing all aspects of the action plan to have input and identify opportunities for coordination among the plans.

The Mission 180 coalition crafted the community contract around four action strategies: using arts activism to revitalize Dudley Square and Gove Hall’s public places; and organizing for public safety through a network of “community connectors” tying together blocks of neighbors; promotion of small business innovation and training, with resources concentrated in a business incubator; building housing with supportive services for young adults; Each strategy has its own set of activities. Uniting and integrating these action plans and activities is a vision created by the planning participants:

- The community contract calls for “new voices” to lead the implementation process, defined broadly as the grass-roots leaders who have not been heard frequently, or consistently, in the rooms where decisions affecting the community are made.
- In the past, Roxbury and Grove Hall had to react to redevelopment plans coming from outside the community. Today, the new voices engaged in the Mission 180 coalition have an historic opportunity to proactively transform Roxbury around a shared community vision.
- The remarkable investment occurring today in Dudley Square at the Ferdinand Building and elsewhere is just the tip of the iceberg of what is possible over the coming decade. The Mission 180 community contract can be a critical tool to shape this coming wave of investment to conform to the community’s vision.

- **Description of how the Plan fits into a larger vision or strategy for the entire community**

The Community Contract’s vision of new voices leading a transformation of Roxbury, leveraging outside investment and achieving four strategic outcome goals aligns with Nuestra’s

own, broader vision for community development. As stated below and in Nuestra's theory of change (attached), the Nuestra vision resonates with the Mission 180 Community Contract:

Roxbury/ Dorchester is a destination, a place where residents of all incomes have access to affordable, high quality housing and other resources and services, and share in a sense of pride as they work together with other stakeholders to strengthen community life and vitality.

- **Description of how the Plan is consistent with other neighborhood, community or regional plans**

The Community Contract is consistent with the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan (RSMP), created in 2004 following a two-year community process led by the Boston Redevelopment Authority. As part of the Mission 180 planning process, Nuestra prepared a detailed analysis tracking elements of the RSMP to be incorporated in the Mission 180 SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges) analysis. The coalition checked the final actions plans for consistency with the RSMP. [Link to the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan](#)

The Community contract is consistent with the community workplan adopted by the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods coalition in 2012, also led by Nuestra Comunidad. The RGN coalition brings together sustainable development advocates based in Roxbury around a detailed action agenda and workplan calling for affordable housing development; mass transit improvements; and small business retention and creation. RGN is affiliated with the Mass Smart Growth Alliance, and through this affiliation, the RGN coalition ensures that its sustainable development agenda is consistent with the 2020 Metro Futures strategic plan created by the Metro Area Planning Council, a funder and sponsor of the Smart Growth Alliance and its Great Neighborhoods program. [Link to information about the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods Coalition](#)

(viii) Financing strategy: how the CDC will finance implementation of the Plan's activities; projected availability of the financing sources; the organization's past experience using the proposed financing sources; and identification of the level of commitment of other funding sources to implement the Plan. Financing is committed for some components of the Mission 180 Community Contract. Specifically:

- LISC has awarded to Nuestra \$55,000 to support the implementation of the four action strategies, plus \$100,000 to support the work of a lead organizer for the Mission 180 coalition.
- LISC has committed \$45,000 to support early implementation of the other three action strategies. The Smart Growth Alliance has committed \$100,000 to support the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods coalition in 2013, which will support one economic development implementation activity (a Warren Street retail business survey) and staff time to plan a feasible young adult housing financial model and to lobby for the City to adopt a policy to fund and build this housing. Full implementation of the economic development, young adult housing and arts activism strategies will require additional funding. Following are the approaches and strategies being used in this effort

For the “Community Connectors” public safety implementation, the committed LISC funds will support this strategy over the next three years. Nuestra is committed to support the costs of the labor-intensive community survey that will track key indicators for this action strategy, using NeighborWorks grant funds awarded as general operating support to Nuestra.

For the Young Adult Housing implementation, the committed LISC funds will pay for a consultant to explore the policy changes needed to make this model possible, including fair housing issues associated with restricting housing by age, and with financial feasibility. Key to a viable model will be creating a proforma reliant on available sources such as 4% low-income housing tax credits, and not the scarce 9% LIHTC. Micro-apartments will be explored to reduce costs and thereby to reduce subsidy needs per unit, making the model more attractive to funders. The Home For Little Wanderers will be approached to provide supportive services funded by their recurring funding sources.

For the economic development implementation, grant funding will be necessary to start and sustain this strategy. Nuestra will offer CITC tax credits to donors to support this economic development program and/or the buildout of the incubator space; funding from DHCD will be requested to support the development of a donor strategy for CITC tax credits. A proposal has been drafted for multi-year funding at \$100,000 per year of a business plan competition and training, modeled after the 2012 program run by a Mission 180 partner which engaged 24 applicants, 18 entrepreneurs in an 8-session training provided by the Center For Women In Enterprise and 5 prize winners. The future cycle(s) of this program will continue to engage past competition winners. Nuestra is exploring possible locations for a 6,000 SF open office space in the community to be rented and used as a local innovation center to house this economic development initiative. Trainings to the broader small business community will also be provided at this incubator.

For the arts, activism and community growth implementation, 2013 arts events are funded by the committed LISC implementation funds. Mission 180 has a low-cost approach to sustaining arts-based public placemaking in Dudley Square and Grove Hall. The model for this approach is the “quicker, lighter, cheaper” strategy pioneered by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS). The principal costs are the “infrastructure” for regular events at specific public places, such as tables, chairs, signage, tables, kiosks and a sound system. Events capture volunteers from the community to staff events. Partnerships with established artists’ associations and organizations results in events funded by those artists associations and organizations. Nuestra has begun to implement this financial model successfully at Bartlett Yard in Dudley Square where three arts events are scheduled for 2013. Go to BartlettEvents.org for more information. A proposal will be submitted to the Mass Cultural Council for designation of Dudley Square as a cultural district, which will not directly provide funding but will support future funding requests by Nuestra and arts organizations for recurring events in specific public places in Dudley Square and Grove Hall.

(ix) Other

- **Description of Plan consistency with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles**

Mission 180 is in alignment with 80% of the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles.

Concentrate Development and Mix Uses. The Mission 180 Community Contract calls for development and programming focused along the Warren Street transit corridor, through which over 33,000 individuals travel each week day. It includes the Dudley Square bus station, the second largest in the state. It aims to revitalize two historic neighborhood business districts, Grove Hall and Dudley Square.

Advance Equity. The Mission 180 Community Contract represents a vision for future development to benefit the low- and moderate-income residents of Roxbury and Grove Hall. An extensive community planning process created this vision and the Community Contract. The redevelopment of this community will redress the historic disinvestment here through urban renewal, redlining, arson, business flight and predatory subprime lending.

Make Efficient Decisions. The Community Contract intentionally aligns with smart growth plans developed by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan) and the community (the Roxbury Great Neighborhoods sustainable development plan). Implementation strategies will engage the City as a partner. These steps will ensure that the permitting processes for sustainable development are clear, predictable, and timely.

Protect Land and Ecosystems. The Community Contract seeks to improve the quality and accessibility of open spaces along the Warren Street Corridor (sidewalks, parks, crosswalks, plazas) by making them safer and by promoting arts programming to attract more residents and visitors to our public open spaces.

Use Natural Resources Wisely. The housing development called for by the Community Contract will be transit-oriented and eligible for LEED-certification. One major project (Bartlett Yard) will remediate a contaminated Brownfields site.

Expand Housing Opportunities. The Community Contract will expand housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income residents through development of approximately 270 units, including 30 designed for young adults who would otherwise likely be homeless, with accompanying supporting services to help them become independent, contributing members of society.

Increase Job and Business Opportunities. The Community Contract's goal to foster economic development through the creation of a business incubator and facilitating a business innovation challenge will support the development and growth of small businesses, increasing job opportunities in the Roxbury community.

Plan Regionally. The Community Contract's arts goals enhance regional interaction and engagement in Roxbury by bringing new audiences into the community, supporting local businesses, and enriching regional arts and culture.

- **Description of CDC's history of past practices and approaches to the proposed activities in the Plan**

Nuestra Comunidad has a thirty-one year history of community development in Roxbury. Nuestra was born out of the community's response to a wave of disinvestment and arson that blighted sections of Roxbury and North Dorchester along Dudley Street and Blue Hill Avenue in the 1970s, leaving scores of vacant lots totaling thousands of acres through those neighborhoods. A group of Latino residents connected to the La Alianza Hispana multi-service agency created Nuestra as a nonprofit community-controlled organization dedicated to rebuilding the community and restoring its vibrancy and vitality, rather than waiting for or relying on outside developers or government agencies to decide and control the redevelopment process.

Over the years Nuestra contributed significantly to the redevelopment and rebirth of Roxbury and North Dorchester, through development over 700 affordable rental housing units such as Atkins Apartments on Blue Hill Avenue; creating and selling over 150 homes for first-time homebuyers to help build wealth and stable neighborhoods; revitalization of Dudley Square landmarks such as the Dartmouth Hotel resulting in over 55,000 of thriving commercial space; and small business assistance to hundreds of local business such as Merengue Restaurant, a major success story on Blue Hill Avenue.

In 2013, Nuestra Comunidad was recognized by the MetLife Foundation and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation with a first place national award for its community safety and neighborhood revitalization efforts along Roxbury's Blue Hill Avenue Corridor. In partnership with the Boston Police Department, the City of Boston Inspectional Services Department, and local partners, Nuestra purchased and sold as affordable home ownership opportunities eight vacant foreclosed homes in the neighborhood, cleaned up targeted crime hot spots, closed an active brothel, built trust among neighborhood residents and local police officers, formed a community-based Prostitution Task Force that successfully reduced high rates of prostitution.

Nuestra Comunidad partnered with local arts groups Alliger Arts and Figment Boston to produce [Bartlett Events](#), a community engagement public arts/ events series, repurposing a former bus yard Brownfields site as a mixed use development using placemaking strategies. Over the course of five months in the spring, summer, and fall of 2013, Bartlett Events held a series of successful events to create a temporary large art plaza in Roxbury, the largest-ever exhibition of public art in Boston. Bartlett Events attracted the participation of more than 150 local and global artists and more than 3,000 community members. Bartlett Events built an infrastructure that encouraged local Roxbury residents to use the public plaza at no cost to host community block parties, book fairs, concerts, art workshops, and events. The success of Bartlett Events led the organizing team to speak at local CDCs, national conferences, and workshops about the placemaking strategies employed. The existing buildings will be demolished and environmental remediation undertaken in spring 2014, leaving 8.5 acres of developable land.