

## Response to questions from the BPDA

### Questions for all proponents:

#### Why did you decide on the housing program you are proposing (i.e. rental vs. homeownership, unit sizes, etc.)?

In reviewing the RFP, PLAN: Nubian Square, and the Roxbury Strategic Master Plan, we understood the City and community's strong desire to ensure that the Crescent Parcel provide housing for a broad range of incomes and household sizes. To that end, our team has proposed 177 units of housing with a true mixed-income program:

- 36% of all rental units, or 62 units, will be rental apartments for households with incomes from 0% to 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI), and 29 of these 62 units (more than 46%) will be affordable to households with incomes at 30% of the AMI. A total of 25% of each building's total units, or 44 units, will be supported by project-based subsidy, making them affordable to residents with incomes from 0 to 50% of the AMI.
- 44% of all rental units, or 76 units, will be for households with incomes from 51% to 80% of the AMI.
- 20% of all rental units, or 35 units, will be unrestricted market-rate units.
- In addition to the 174 rental units, there will be 4 homeownership units in the Melnea Cass Building, 2 of which will be for households up to 80% of the AMI and 2 of which will be for households up to 100% of the AMI. We introduced a homeownership component into the Melnea Cass Building in response to community preferences and also as part of a larger homeownership and wealth building initiative, our **Roxbury Real Estate Center**, that includes targeted homebuyer education, financial counseling, savings match and down payment assistance to existing residents of MPDC's rental properties and technical assistance and financing for local and Black businesses in the purchase of commercial real estate. The four homeownership units proposed provide direct entry townhouse style family sized homes integrated into the larger building and were clearly financially feasible with the public resources currently available.
- The program mix in our proposal reflects one that prioritizes affordability and is financially feasible. If designated, we would work collaboratively with the community and the City to ensure that the final program and design meet the collective goals of the stakeholders and can be successfully implemented.
- Lastly, our proposal includes units with sizes ranging from one to three-bedroom residences, ensuring that families of different sizes will be able to find a home at this new development. Indeed, 65% of the units will be apartments with two and three bedrooms.

The redevelopment of the Crescent Parcel creates an opportunity to address some of the housing challenges our City faces, and our proposal provides ***20% more affordable units than are called for in the RFP.***

- Trinity and MPDC are experienced developers of mixed-income developments in the City of Boston. We have built thousands of housing units for people of all incomes and economic backgrounds in communities across the City and region, including 75 units of mixed-income homeownership housing units in Lower Roxbury at Davenport Commons and Shawmut Estates. Our team has the capacity and the experience to deliver the proposed mixed-income program, including additional homeownership housing units, at Crescent Parcel

Describe why you chose the number of parking spaces in your proposal, considering that Crescent is so close to the Ruggles T stop.

Our plan includes 83 below-grade parking spaces. This allows for on-site parking that does not intrude in the public realm, and also recognizes the transit-oriented nature of this site given its proximity to Ruggles T, Nubian Square, and various public bus routes. Access to parking has been consolidated to minimize curb cuts interrupting pedestrian movement in and around the site and to maximize active street frontage. Given the site's proximity to public transportation, we envisioned a reduction of the base zoning parking requirements. For the 177 residential unit count, we are proposing 83 parking spaces. This creates a reduced parking ratio of 0.47 parking spaces for each residential unit, whereas the zoning calls for a 1:1 parking ratio for market rate units and .7 ratio for affordable units. We have successfully developed two transit-oriented developments (TOD) at another T stop (Ashmont Station) with 199 residential units and 99 parking spaces; this ratio of 0.5 spaces/unit has worked successfully. This gives us some confidence that a 0.47:1 parking ratio is appropriate. We believe that the transit-oriented nature of this site will work with our proposed parking count and ratio.

What opportunities exist to engage Madison Park High School as part of your development?

As one of the state's founding community development corporations, Madison Park Development Corporation has been deeply rooted in the Roxbury neighborhood for 55 years and has been a significant catalyst in the neighborhood's ongoing renaissance. As part of its mission, MPDC has implemented targeted workforce development initiatives since 2014, focused on addressing the widely unmet Boston Residents Jobs Policy (BRJP). MPDC's Construction Workforce Diversity Initiative provides accessible pathways into living wage jobs for Boston residents, focused on the Roxbury neighborhood, while concurrently fostering a vibrant ecosystem of local M/WBE contractors.

These efforts culminated in the launch of the Madison Train 2 Trades (MT2T) program at the end of 2019. This initiative was developed in partnership with **Madison Park Technical Vocational High School (MPTVHS)** and engages a team of local and MWBE contractors who serve a training

partners, providing direct instruction within their building trade to participants, while in turn gaining access to a burgeoning pipeline of qualified new workers. Participants also complete a range of introductory trainings and certifications, such as OSHA-10 and Basic Construction Plan Reading, based on the Core Curriculum model designed by the National Center for Construction Education and Research. Finally, participants have access to job readiness services, including resume development, mock interviews, professional communication workshops and job application assistance. MPDC's goal for this program is to recruit and train 100+ Greater Boston residents annually and prepare them for employment and/or apprenticeship opportunities.

In response to COVID-19 restrictions, the program has been adapted to an online platform for adult learners who are seeking opportunities to gain the basic skills needed for entry level positions within Boston's growing construction industry. As COVID restrictions are lifted we will revisit offering classes in partnership with MPTVHS and utilizing their extensive training facilities to prepare local residents for the construction job opportunities at Crescent Parcel and across the City of Boston.

For more information visit [www.mt2t.org](http://www.mt2t.org)

Further, our proposed Roxbury Real Estate Center will provide education forums, technical and managerial assistance, and internship opportunities that will be coordinated with Madison Park High School to expose students to careers and wealth building opportunities in the real estate industry.

### How many of the existing trees will be preserved? How many will need to be removed?

The Trinity/ MPDC team worked closely with our certified arborist, Brendan McCarthy of Skyline Landscapes, Inc. and Deb Myers of Deb Myers Landscape Architecture (WBE) on the critical tree preservation goals of the RFP. The Arborist visited the Crescent Parcel site and prepared an initial Tree Inventory and Assessment Report to inform our site organization strategy. The assessment identified characteristics and conditions of each tree located on or near the parcel. Information in the report includes tree species, relative age, diameter at breast height (DBH), and the species tolerance for construction. This data was then used to determine a recommended tree protection zone for each existing tree.

**Based on the findings of the report, our plan for Crescent Parcel calls for the preservation of 34 trees, including 26 mature, large caliper trees (a total of 586 caliper inches). In conjunction with the tree preservation measures, the new design calls for the planting of 52 new trees on the 2 RFP parcels.** Building placement and setbacks have been carefully studied to maintain sustainable distance from the trees and their root zones, particularly those that are prominent such as Tree 11, which enjoys its own designated open space protecting its substantial DBH of 50 inches. To the south of Tree 11 there is a generous building set back along Tremont Street of approximately 40 ft. from curb to building edge. The building design strategy is oriented around the open green space, making it a site plan that is architecturally intentional from the public

realm at ground level up to the roofline. Our team is committed to maintaining the trees in accordance with City of Boston, RFP and Climate Ready goals.

Does this project include homeless focused programing?

Our proposed housing program includes 29 units (17% of the rental program) for households between 0% and 30% of the Area Median Income, inclusive of a 10% homeless set aside (18 units). MPDC, Trinity, and our property management team (Trinity Management) have extensive experience as owners and managers of properties that house homeless and formerly homeless individuals and households. Our team has strong partnerships with local organizations that provide a range of services, including case management and other supportive services, and we work to connect our residents with these organizations to help ensure that their needs are met.

There are a number of mixed-use developments in this area with vacant retail and commercial space. What steps will be taken to activate the ground floor?

The ground floor of both the Tremont Street Building and the Melnea Cass Building will contain commercial space which will be utilized for community-oriented programs. The Tremont Street Building will contain approximately 7,123 SF of ground floor commercial space, of which **3,000 SF will be used for the Roxbury Real Estate Center** – a resource center to help Roxbury residents and business increase their net worth. It will provide homeownership assistance, small business assistance, and educational and mentoring support for members of the community interested in careers in real estate development. The remaining space at the Tremont St. location, **approximately 4,000 sf will be filled with community-oriented uses**. Our budget includes resources to make this space affordable to locally-owned, neighborhood-oriented retail and service establishments. The Melnea Cass Building will include approximately **4,985 SF of ground floor commercial space for Tenacity, a youth-development organization focused on creating equitable access to educational and fitness opportunities in underserved communities**.

MPDC strives to maximize occupancy while sometimes holding space open for the tenants and services that contribute to the needs of the surrounding community.

**MPDC currently owns and manages five properties that include ground floor commercial uses in the immediate area at 184 Dudley Street, 207 Dudley Street, 2101, 2136 and 2201**

**Washington Street. As of this writing 100% of the ground floor spaces are occupied with a range of retail and commercial uses that serve the immediate and broader community, including a grocery store, barbershop, youth drop in center and a range non-profit and public office tenants that provide services ranging from youth mentoring to childcare to job training, all of which contribute to the services and uses in the adjacent neighborhood.**

MPDC was also recently selected by the City to provide technical assistance to local and black owned business on the purchase of commercial spaces to support their businesses, a model that is being piloted with the owners of Black Market in Nubian Square.

Trinity Financial has developed over 600,000 square feet of retail/commercial space in our residential developments in the Northeast. Some successful examples of local community oriented retail/commercial uses include: Mass Pike Towers, Carruth and Treadmark in Dorchester and River St. in Mattapan.

Based on our collective experience, MPDC and Trinity Financial are uniquely qualified to work together to ensure that we attract and retain the best mix of commercial and retail uses possible at the Crescent parcel development.

Can you talk about people of color in leadership positions on your team?

### **Trinity Financial - Key Personnel of Color**

- **Patrick Lee, a black man is 50% owner, founding partner at Trinity Financial, Inc. and Principal-In Charge for the Crescent development.** Mr. Lee is involved in several civic activities, including serving on the Board of Overseers for the Boys and Girls Club of Boston and the Board of Trustees for Wellesley College. Mr. Lee holds a Bachelor's degree from Harvard University and is an MIT-trained City Planner.
- **Kenan Bigby, a black man, is Trinity's Managing Director of Development.** Kenan joined Trinity Financial in 2001 and has personally managed several complicated developments for the company over the course of his 17 years with the company. These include the 266-unit mixed income Franklin Hill redevelopment here in Boston, Massachusetts, the 299-unit mixed-income development in Newport, Rhode Island, 297 units of development in New Haven, CT, and 320-units of development in New York City. As Managing Director of the company's Development staff, he is now responsible for and is leading a staff of 8 development management professionals in our Boston and Manhattan offices. Mr. Bigby holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania.
- **Omalawa Abdullah-Musa, a black man, is Trinity's Design and Construction Manager.** Omalawa joined Trinity in 2017 and provides design and construction oversight for the company. Omalawa brings over 20 years of experience in the architectural field, which includes a focus on the development of mixed-use affordable housing

projects. He is currently working on the Brookfield Commons redevelopment Masterplan and its Phase 2 and Phase 3 projects in White Plains NY, which is targeted to have approx. 850 units and 5 new residential buildings upon completion. As a LEED accredited professional, he strives to achieve sustainability measures and energy efficiency on all projects. Prior to joining Trinity, Mr. Musa worked at several New York based architectural firms where he was responsible for the management and coordination of all phases of complex new construction and renovation projects. Omalawa graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture degree from CCNY School of Architecture.

- **Sienna DeSantis, a black woman, is Assistant Project Manager**, joined the Trinity team in 2015 and over her nearly 6 years with the company has worked with other development staff on the financial closing for the 83-unit Treadmark development in Boston, MA and 60-unit 60 King development in Providence, RI. Additionally, her portfolio consists of the 331-unit Orient Heights public housing redevelopment, in the East Boston, assisting project development from permitting and resource allocation through to closing and construction. Additionally, she's worked on the 273-unit Washington Village mixed-income development in Norwalk, CT assisting in bringing all three phases through design development, closing, construction and lease-up. Ms. DeSantis further assists with internal projects, including early site due diligence and prospecting. She holds a Bachelors of Economics from Syracuse University.
- **Michael Hunter, a black man, leads Business Development activities for the company.** Michael previously served as Undersecretary for Business Development in the administration of Governor Deval Patrick overseeing the Massachusetts Office of Business Development. Michael has held various positions in real estate over his career including Assistant Vice President at AECOM, one of the world's premier infrastructure firms, Real Estate Manager for SUPERVALU, and Deputy Director at the Boston Redevelopment Authority, currently known as the Boston Planning and Development Agency. Michael earned a Masters Management from the Heller School at Brandeis University and BA in Political Science from the College of the Holy Cross.
- **Maribel Concepcion, a Latina, is Chief Operating Officer for Trinity Management.** As COO Maribel is responsible designing and implementing business operations for all property management functions in the company. Establishes policies and procedures that promote the Company culture and vision. Maribel Oversees operations of the company and work of Executive Level staff. Evaluation performance by analyzing and interpreting data and metrics. Manage relationships with partners/investors/vendors. Work closely with the development team to ensure new construction projects and/or take overs are in line with overall Company mission and goals. Foster an environment of teamwork and open communication.

More than 72% of Trinity's current personnel are either people of color (43%) and/or women (29%).

### **Madison Park - Key Personnel of Color**

**MPDC** is a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Supplier Diversity Office Certified M/WBE, minority and woman owned nonprofit organization. MPDC's commitment to diversity is evident in their Board of Directors, which is made up 100% by people of color, and 58% by women.

**The CEO of MPDC, Leslie Reid, is a Black woman.** She leads the organization day-to-day and holds responsibility for management of the affairs of MPDC and its affiliated organizations.

Additionally, more than 68% of MPDC's current staff are either Black, Hispanic, or Asian and 60% are women.

### **Consultants/Contractors**

The team of **consultants** that Trinity and MPDC have assembled for this project includes participation of M/WBE firms. Our architect, DHK Architects, is an MBE and our permitting attorney, McKenzie & Associates, is an MBE.

For the Tremont Street Building, the General Contractor is a mentor/protégé arrangement between Dimeo Construction Company and Tara Construction, a Hispanic-Owned Business, certified SBA 8A Small Disadvantaged Business and Massachusetts Certified Minority Business. For the Melena Cass Building, the General Contractor is a Joint Venture between Dellbrook|JKS and Maven Construction, a M/WBE contractor. Dellbrook|JKS has significant general contractor experience in multifamily construction within Roxbury and the city of Boston. Recent examples include construction of Melnea Cass Apartments, Smith House, Madison Park II and IV – all of which were developed by MPDC.

Maven Construction is a Boston-based Black- and woman-owned general contracting firm bringing decades of experience in multifamily construction.

The Trinity team has experience developing over 9,500 units of housing and more than 600,000 square feet of retail and commercial space throughout the Northeast and has consistently achieved or exceeded the hiring and employment goals set forth by the host municipality, including the City of Boston. **Over the past two decades, Trinity has exceeded our M/WBE subcontracting goals by an average of 120%, and our goals for employing residents, minorities, women, and Section 3 workers by an average of 126%.**

MPDC has developed over 1,400 units of housing and more than 115,000 square feet of retail and commercial space in Roxbury and has extensive experience complying with the Boston Residents Jobs Policy (BRJP). As part of its mission, MPDC has implemented targeted workforce development initiatives since 2014, focused on addressing the widely unmet BRJP. **MPDC's construction Workforce Diversity initiative provides accessible pathways into living wage jobs for Boston Residents, with an emphasis for those residents living in Roxbury as further described in this section**

### How does your design relate to the St. Katharine Drexel church building?

The St Katherine Drexel church building is clearly of a more intimate scale than that proposed Crescent design, particularly the new building on the corner of Tremont and Ruggles streets. However, our buildings and site planning strategy make several important gestures to relate to the existing church building and property. The St Katherine Drexel church parking lot entry and circulation occurs within the designated Crescent RFP parcel. First, from a site planning point of view, the proposed project is designed to accommodate all the access and movement points that currently exist for the church and the adjacent building, along Raynor Circle. A new roadway was designed into our site plan to ensure permanent access for the church to their parking area. The Church, as well as the overall community would have access to the newly created open space within Crescent. Second, to support the church and community, our project has incorporated an additional public outdoor sitting area along Ruggles adjacent to the entrance to the church building (and next to one of the existing trees being saved). Lastly, the proposed 11-story Tremont building on the corner has many architectural gestures along the facades facing Ruggles and facing the church building that recall the more intimate scale of this building. The proposed building will bring an element of surprise to the street experience, as scale and details of the church building would come into full view once you are at the corner of Tremont and Ruggles.

### How are you financing your proposal?

MPDC and Trinity have a long and successful track record of raising significant amounts of public resources, debt, and equity to support complex development projects. For Crescent Parcel, our team believes that through a combination of Federal, State, and Local housing resources, as well as private debt and equity sources, sufficient capital can be raised to implement the 177-unit proposed development and provide robust community benefits, including more than \$1 million for programs to help residents in the community increase their net worth and build wealth.

Our team has strong working relationships with the Commonwealth's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), MassHousing, and the City's Department of Neighborhood Development (DND). Some of the funding sources that Trinity will seek for Crescent Parcel include tax-exempt bond financing from MassHousing, Low Income Housing Tax Credits from DHCD, and affordable and workforce housing resources from MassHousing, DHCD, and DND based on per affordable unit amounts that are consistent with prior amounts provided by those public lenders. Our team's financial



strength and substantial experience routinely allow us to secure top dollar with the syndication of our tax credit properties and negotiate favorable terms for private debt. We appreciate the precious resources that our public partners bring to the table, and we see it as our duty to use those scarce resources efficiently and to leverage private resources to the maximum extent possible.

### **Questions for Trinity-Madison Park:**

Why the difference in height between the two buildings in your proposal

We think it is imperative from an urban design point of view, that the different scales of Tremont Street and Melnea Cass BLVD be respected, in particular as the latter abuts Madison Park Village. Our approach to the building massing is to establish a transition from the tall elements to the lower ones, gradually moving from the larger scale of Tremont Street to the smaller, more residential scale surrounding the new park and Madison Park Village. The Tremont Street Building gradually steps down from 11 floors to 10, and cascades down to a 6-story scale at its “nose.” This aligns with the height of the Melnea Cass Building (6 stories) and the scale surrounding that portion of the site. Our proposed architecture for each of the two buildings is designed to respond to the surrounding context.

The buildings’ placement, as demonstrated by the site plan, align with both Melnea Cass and Tremont Street, opening the corner for the park. The Melnea Cass Building is located on the northeast corner of the site, along Raynor Circle running parallel to the recently completed MPDC residential property at 40 Raynor Circle. This L-shaped building creates a dynamic edge with Melnea Cass to the east. The other side of the L faces 40 Raynor Circle defines a more intimate residential environment. The southern façade of the Melnea Cass building utilizes individual entrances and front stoops marching along the length of the buildings to complement the context across the street at 40 Raynor. We envision that this strip of Raynor will result in a “pedestrian mews” of sorts, with a driving lane, running towards Melnea Cass, establishing a dialogue between the two buildings that face each other. We have developed a series of “maisonettes” along this face of the Melnea Cass Building, two-story units with internal vertical circulation. At 6 stories high, the Melnea Cass Building is of a scale that mediates between the more intimate scale of Madison Park Village and the larger scale of Tremont Street. The Tremont Street Building, located on the southwest edge of the site, at the corner of Ruggles and Tremont, sits across from International Village dorms of Northeastern University. That is a cluster of buildings that range from 6 to 20 stories tall, and set-up a different scale along Tremont. Similarly, the proposed re-development of the Whittier Street housing site – Whittier Choice 3 – to the south side of the Crescent Parcel along Tremont, an 11-story building, establishes a grander urban scale. Our proposed building is 120 feet tall, consisting of 11 floors at this end of the site.

## What makes this opportunity any different than what we have seen before from Madison Park

Over its 55 year history Madison Park Development Corporation has pioneered approaches to community driven neighborhood development. From the work of its founders on Madison Park Village, which was among the first resident owned housing developments in the country, to leveraging for-profit and non-profit partnerships alike to execute the redevelopments of the Orchard Park and Whittier public housing developments to securing institutional and private funding for homeownership opportunities at Davenport Commons and 2451 Washington Street, we have continued to honor the legacy of our founders by effectively and creatively maximizing investments into the development of the Lower Roxbury and Nubian Square neighborhoods. The opportunity at Crescent Parcel will allow us to utilize our unique and successful experience in innovation in the delivery of the new program elements articulated by the community in the RFP, which include but are not limited to, residential development with a broader and responsive mix of both incomes and tenure, integrated into the buildings proposed, the first new significant open space to be introduced in the immediate area in decades that will maximize the preservation precious mature tree cover and a \$1M investment in the establishment and staffing of a Real Estate Opportunity center that will expand on the ownership and wealth building initiatives that we have undertaken in recent years.