



# bpda | 2016 Annual Report



### **The Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA)**

We strive to understand the current environment of the city to produce quality research and targeted information that will inform and benefit the residents and businesses of Boston. Our Division conducts research on Boston's economy, population, and commercial markets for all departments of the BPDA, the City of Boston, and related organizations.

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### **Information**

For more information about our work, please visit [bostonplans.org](http://bostonplans.org)

### **Questions**

Please contact us at [bpdamarketing@boston.gov](mailto:bpdamarketing@boston.gov) with additional questions



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## Director's Note

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This past year has been a transformative year for development and planning in Boston as we are continuing to experience one of the biggest development booms in the city's history. In 2016, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA)/Economic Development Industrial Corporations (EDIC) assumed a new identity and refocused mission that better reflects our goal to shape an inclusive future for all of Boston's residents and neighborhoods. A culmination of many years work, the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) will better engage with Boston's residents, focus on comprehensive planning and smart development, and work with community partners. This will allow us to inspire greater trust and confidence from the people we serve.

Working together with our community, we are building an inclusive Boston where everyone can live, work and connect. This year we welcomed General Electric (GE) to Boston, helped guide the Imagine Boston 2030 process, the first citywide master plan in over 50 years, approved thousands of new housing units, commercial space and approved over \$7 billion of development - helping fuel our city's economy. New data from Moody's shows that Boston will receive an estimated \$75M in additional revenue from new development this fiscal year. That's revenue that can be re-invested directly into our neighborhoods - our schools, affordable housing, parks, workforce development programs and more.

At the same time, Boston is experiencing an unprecedented period of growth. Our city's population is projected to exceed 700,000 people by the year 2030. Welcoming tens of thousands of new neighbors in the next decade and a half is an exciting prospect that brings with it the potential to grow our economy, enhance the vitality and diversity of our neighborhoods, and create desirable new places for future generations to raise their families in Boston.

While this growth holds tremendous promise, change can also be difficult if it is not well planned and coordinated. That's why we are committed to working together, alongside every other city department, so that our communities grow responsibly and inclusively.

We embarked on a new approach to neighborhood planning in July 2015 – one that relies on robust community engagement and intense collaboration between city departments, a reflection of shared ownership in our collective future. This year, the first guidelines to reach completion, "PLAN: South Boston Dorchester Avenue" were approved.

The plan will guide the BPDA and the community on future development and public realm improvements within the South Boston Dorchester Avenue Study Area. The plan establishes goals and strategies that will help drive short- and long-term public-private investments in the community, including a new network of streets, public parks and green space, a range of housing types, and more commercial, 21st century industrial and retail activity for South Boston.

We are continuing to work with communities on the Washington Street corridor in Jamaica Plain/Roxbury, Dudley Square and Dorchester's Glover's Corner to shape future development that respects our past and present.

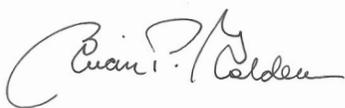
Long neglected projects like 115 Winthrop Square are moving forward after an open and transparent Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The City of Boston now has a real opportunity to realize the tremendous benefits from this underutilized city parcel, and make significant investments in our parks and affordable housing, while bringing a dynamic mixed-use development to our evolving downtown.

The development boom has brought more funding in community benefits and for the Neighborhood Jobs Trust, and we are turning that funding into meaningful investments in our people and our neighborhoods, including: Mayor Walsh's tuition free community college program for Boston Public School graduates, new workforce training programs and investments in affordable housing and open space.

In 2017, we will break ground on new projects in every neighborhood, including thousands of new residential units, helping us meet the Walsh Administration's housing goals and creating jobs for our residents.

But we know that the work is not done. We will continue to evolve into an agency that better serves our community and creates an inclusive Boston for all. I thank all of our community partners, and especially our staff who have spent long hours improving our agency to better serve our residents and our City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Golden". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "G".

Brian Golden, *Director*  
*Boston Planning & Development Agency*



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## An Identity to Better Reflect Our Mission

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In May, the BRA hired Continuum, a Boston-based global innovation design consultancy to work with the BRA and the public to re-envision the agency's identity. This effort built upon the reform efforts at the BRA over the past several years under the leadership of Mayor Walsh and Director Brian Golden. Continuum spent months engaging, interviewing and holding group workshops with agency employees and board members, residents, business owners, community activists, architects, developers, city agency partners, and members of the media.

Following a 14-week effort to renew and refocus the agency's identity and vision to better reflect its work and ongoing mission, the City of Boston announced the launch of the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA).

The mission of the BPDA is to plan and guide inclusive growth in Boston while creating opportunities to live, work and connect. The BPDA will engage communities, implement new solutions, partner for greater impact and track progress through its future-focused city-wide lens.

To achieve its new mission and vision, the Boston Planning & Development Agency will focus on designing new systems, processes, tools, and communications to address four areas of focus: (1) Engage Communities, (2) Implement New Solutions, (3) Partner for Greater Impact, and (4) Track Progress.

- **Engage Communities:** To shape an inclusive

Boston, the BPDA will engage a broader and more representative community made up of the people, businesses and communities of Boston as well as its own employees. The BPDA will create a redesigned community meeting format to provide more context and more clarity, and an online platform for neighborhood-specific updates and feedback. This will ensure that conversations are open, ongoing, and available to all.

- **Implement New Solutions:** To be a leader in planning and solve many of the challenges that 21st century cities face, the BPDA will leverage its deep expertise, tap into Boston's innovative spirit, and capture inspiration from around the world. The BPDA will identify new approaches and collaborate with partners to implement new solutions that effectively problem solve to positively impact the people of Boston.

- **Partner for Greater Impact:** The BPDA will work together with each partner to amplify efforts, making the sum truly greater than its individual parts. In the end, the collective efforts of many entities will help shape the future of Boston. The agency will launch BPDA+, a program to forge collaborations with nonprofits, businesses, universities, and startups; and host innovation fellowships for leading-edge global experts.

- **Track Progress:** To build trust externally and confidence internally, the BPDA will track its progress, and impact. The agency will start with analytics, use appropriate tools to make tracking simple and translate the results into relatable benefits.

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## Who We Are

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The BPDA is the urban planning and economic development agency for the City of Boston. The BPDA plays a far reaching role in shaping the city. We are a self-sustaining agency and our love for Boston inspires us to make this City an even better place to live, work, and connect.

We are 250 professionals who serve the city in a variety of ways -- from architects who review the smallest details of a historic building in Roxbury to project managers who host a community meeting for a new affordable housing project in Dorchester. We work hand-in-hand with other city departments and community groups to make our city better.

Our agency is charged with growing Boston's tax base, cultivating the City's private jobs market, training the workforce, encouraging new business to locate in Boston and existing businesses to expand, planning the future of neighborhoods with the community, identifying height and density limits, charting the course for sustainable development and resilient building construction, advocating for multi modal transportation, responding to the city's changing population, producing insightful research on our City, and ensuring Boston retains its distinctive character.

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## Live

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In 2016, the Boston Planning and Development Agency approved nearly \$7.87 billion worth of development in Boston, representing over 14.7 million square feet but there's much more that we do. Our work makes Boston a better place for our residents to live, work and connect.

The Boston Planning & Development Agency is making significant progress towards reaching Mayor Walsh's ambitious housing goals of 53,000 new units of housing by 2030. In 2016, 7,686 residential units were approved by the BPDA, and 1,661 of those units are affordable.

### 2016 Projects to Highlight

*162 affordable units for seniors in Chinatown to be rehabilitated* - Located in Chinatown, Quincy Tower is a 16 story affordable housing complex that contains 162 age-restricted units. Ten percent of the units (17 units) will be rented to households with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income (AMI) and the remaining 144 units will be rented to households at or below 60 percent of AMI, all in perpetuity.

*280-290 Warren Street approval to bring 95 affordable units to Roxbury* - Located at 280-290 Warren Street, 100 percent of the units in this two-phased project will be income-restricted and geared towards family and elderly (95). The project will also include 11,334 square feet of commercial office space, a coffee shop, a restaurant, and 102 parking spaces in a two-level garage

*Affordable senior housing moves forward with*

*16 Ronald Street project approval* - Located in Dorchester, the proposed 16 Ronald Street project will include the development of a four-story residential rental building with 54 total housing units. Of the 54 units, 52 will be affordable one-bedroom senior housing units, the other two will be affordable studio units. The project will also have two units designated as both affordable and accessible.

*Housing for chronically or formerly homeless individuals over age 55 greenlighted* - Trinity Green Investments, LLC will construct a three-story, residential building at 123 Hamilton Street. Trinity plans to enter into a 100% master lease with the Pine Street Inn to create housing for chronically or formerly homeless individuals over the age of 55 years. As proposed, this project strongly aligns with Mayor Walsh's charge to end veteran and chronic homelessness in Boston. Construction is expected to begin in early 2017.

*16 Boardman Street approved for Orient Heights neighborhood* - This East Boston project proposes the construction a three-story, approximately 23,400 square foot residential building with 19 homeownership units, including two income restricted units, and approximately 27 off-street vehicle parking spaces. As currently proposed, the 19 residential units will be made up of two one-bedroom units, 16 two-bedroom units, and one three-bedroom unit.

*Energy efficient residential development given okay for West Roxbury's 400 Belgrade Avenue* - The pro-



posed development at West Roxbury's 400 Belgrade Avenue will create an energy efficient four story residential building, consisting of 18 residential rental units, two of which are affordable units, and 33 parking spaces. Each unit will have two bedrooms and access to the below-grade parking will be created by way of Beech Street.

*Mixed income housing for veterans gets green light in Brighton - Brighton Marine Health Center, Inc. and*

Winn Companies are prepared to move forward with the redevelopment of an approximately 1.5 acre site to bring mixed income housing for veterans to the Brighton Marine Health Center. The project create 102 new units and 87 parking spaces. In addition to the creation of housing, the project will create an off-site historical exhibit highlighting the social history of the project site by constructing a memorial to honor fallen heroes from the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.





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## Work

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In every neighborhood in Boston, the Boston Planning & Development Agency is putting residents to work and strengthening our local economy. At the end of 2016, the unemployment rate in the City of Boston stood at 2.4 percent.

12,568 construction jobs and 7,239 direct jobs have been created as a result of projects approved by the BPDA in 2016.

The Neighborhood Jobs Trust (NJT), which is fueled by large scale commercial developers in Boston, is re-investing in our people the city's residents.

This fall, the NJT funded a 10-week Retail Job Training program, "ESL for Customer Service," that teaches low-income immigrants about customer service norms, service-specific vocabulary, the application process and labor laws. Employer partners including Roche Bros., Bon Me and Uniqlo provided open job descriptions, company policies, application guidance and tours. Over half of the participants had received jobs placements by graduation.

Right here in our own agency, we are fostering an innovating workforce that is working to create a better Boston. In December, Mayor Walsh presented the second annual Innovation Excellence award to John Swenson, LeeAnn Coleman and Anthony Verani for their role in launching the BPDA's new web-based Property Management Solution, YARDI, which allows the agency to better manage its leases. All of the agency's 126 leases were reviewed, abstracted for salient facts, and entered

into YARDI. In addition, over 1100 lease documents were scanned and added to YARDI. Staff are now able to easily access lease information, produce reports as needed, and proactively manage the agency's lease portfolio.

We are welcoming new companies from all over the world to Boston that are bringing jobs with them.

### **GE**

In 2016, the BPDA played a critical role in General Electric's (GE) decision to relocate their world headquarters to Boston to take advantage of Boston and the Commonwealth's innovative and competitive economy and access to human capital and world-class educational institutions. General Electric will bring approximately 800 high-paying jobs to Boston with this move.

The GE's headquarters project was approved by the BPDA board in November 2016. The project consists of two existing brick buildings and one new building totaling 388,070 SF. Construction on the new 13-story building will begin by the Spring of 2017.

### **Reebok**

In 2016, Reebok picked the Innovation and Design Building in South Boston as its new home with plans to relocate its 700-employee corporate workforce from Canton next fall. The BPDA is currently working with the global athletic footwear and apparel company on design features prior to the relocation.

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## Connect

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Within the Boston Planning & Development Agency is the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (OWD). OWD is an innovative public agency that seeks to ensure the full participation of all Boston residents in the city's economic vitality and future. OWD pursues its mission by promoting workforce development through education, job training, apprenticeships, financial coaching, career pathways, literacy initiatives, and the like.

### **Mayor's Tuition-Free Community College Plan, funded by development**

This year, Mayor Walsh announced the Tuition-Free Community College Plan with the goal of helping more Boston students afford and complete college. Managed by the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development and funded through fees generated by large-scale commercial building projects in the city, the program pays for up to three years of community college for eligible Boston Public School graduates at Roxbury Community College, Bunker Hill Community College or Massachusetts Bay Community College. In its first semester, the Tuition-Free Community College Plan enrolled 41 students, a number that is expected to rise as the plan's benefits become more widely known.

The first semester participants included 17 students from Madison Park High School; were 77 percent female; and had an average household income of \$19,860.

Cecilia Pires, 19, a graduate of Madison Park

High School, is taking advantage of the Mayor's Tuition-Free Community College Program and pursuing engineering at Bunker Hill Community College. "Neither of my parents went to college," Cecilia says. "Their education ended at elementary school. That's always been my motivation to continue my education." Cecilia's scholarship didn't cover her full tuition, but the Tuition-Free Community College Plan helped her make ends meet. Plus, the saved costs will help her plan for the future. "I'm saving up for my four-year college I plan to go to," she says.

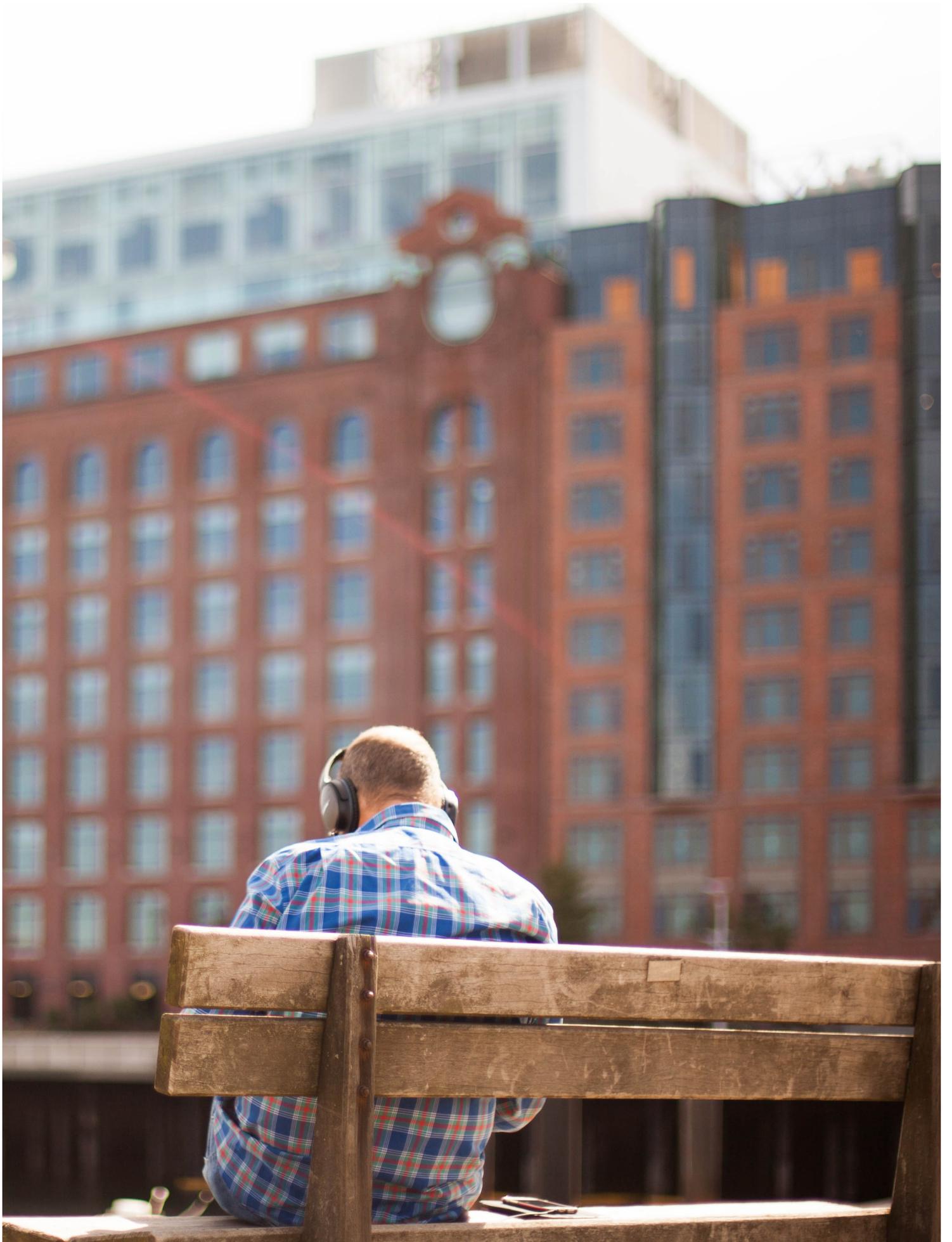
The Boston Planning & Development Agency believes that development has the ability to transform communities and make neighborhoods thriving places for people to live, work and connect. With that mission in mind, the BPDA is updating its guidelines for releasing community benefits from a developer to a community organization. Community organizations must prove that the award will be used to support a program or provide a service that directly serves the local neighborhood in order to be eligible for funding. When community benefits are not outlined in a developer's cooperation agreement, the BPDA will launch an open process for organizations to apply for grants. This process was first piloted in 2015 when \$400,000 was awarded to South Boston organizations from the D Street Hotel's community benefits package. Prior to receiving funds, organizations will be required to submit a budget and plan for how the money will be used in a way that produces a measurable impact. All awards will be subject to BPDA Board authoriza-



tion and chosen recipients will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the BPDA.

Using the new open application process for Community Benefits, the BPDA awarded \$39,250 to Artists for Humanity (AFH) in 2016 to create two large-scale murals on the Ipswich Street corridor in Fenway. A community process had revealed that neighbors supported an aesthetic boost to the well-traversed corridor, especially during

Red Sox season. Ten AFH youth employees, all under-resourced Boston teenagers, led the mural project. The teenagers all either lived in or attended school in the Fenway neighborhood. While painting the murals, the teenagers frequently received encouragement from passing cars and pedestrians and encouragement from neighbors excited about livening the area. The murals were installed on August 19.



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## Our Work This Year

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### Notable 2016 Approvals:

- *Garden Garage*: Approved in February 2016, this 470 residential unit project will also create 2.52 acres of new open space on the project site.
- *Parcel A (Marine Wharf Hotel)*: Approved in November 2016, this Harbinger Development project, managed by Hampton Inn and Homewood Suites by Hilton, will include 411 hotel rooms.
- *Parcel Q1*: The Tentative Designation for this project, a 215,000 SF office building proposed by Skanska, was extended today and is expected to be approved for Final Designation in the 1st Quarter of 2017.

### The Launch of Pipeline 2.0, Salesforce:

In November, our Management Information Systems (MIS) department launched a new software platform, Salesforce, which will replace several legacy systems that have historically been kept and maintained separately. Staff from all departments have been working on this for over a year to ensure that not only is it helpful, relevant and customized to our needs, but that it will allow for better communication and collaboration across our various departments. This new system will have a cleaner user interface, smart search, reporting and tracking capabilities and allow for 24/7 mobile access to our data. The first phase of Salesforce implementation is focused on our core data and business processes, including Development Review, Compliance, Housing, and Research. Future phases in the upcoming months will focus on expanding the functionality and providing cus-

tomized access to the Legal, Urban Design and Planning divisions.

### Real Estate:

- In August, the BPDA gave its final approval to a proposal by a joint venture consisting of Related Beal and TS partners for a first phase research and development building of approximately 120,000 square feet. The "Innovation Square" project, to be located at 6 Tide Street in the Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park (RLFMP) is expected to begin construction in mid-2017, to be followed by a second phase of approximately 240,000 square feet.
- *Ropewalk Building*: Final designation for the historic Ropewalk Building in the Charlestown Navy Yard occurred in December. Once the site of all rope used by the United States Navy, this historic building has sat vacant since the closing of the Yard. The building's design, stretching along a narrow footprint a quarter mile long, has been a barrier to its re-use. Now, through the use of historical tax credits and more than \$36,000,000 in financing from Mass Housing, the former Ropewalk will be transformed into a mixed use structure. In addition to 8,000 square feet of publicly accessible museum space, tracing the history of the Navy Yard and the Ropewalk, the building will be transformed into ninety seven apartments, 20% of which will be affordable.
- In 2016, the BPDA addressed two vital areas that will support and further the growth of the RLFMP. Authorization was given to advertise

and release a Request for Proposals for the expansion of the existing structured parking facility in the Park. That initiative is expected to yield approximately five hundred additional parking spaces, a reflection of the Park's continuing expansion. Parcel M, a three and a half acre development site immediately adjacent to the JC Cannistraro project, received authorization in November to advertise a request for Proposals for maritime related and industrial uses.

- *China Trade Building:* The restoration of the China Trade Building advanced significantly in 2016, with the completion of core and shell work, along with upgrades and improvements to the elevators, restrooms and mechanical systems, all with the goal of returning the building to the market place as an occupied Class B building. To that end, the International Institute of New England became our first tenant, taking up occupancy in the early fall of 2016. The Urban College of Boston became our second tenant, entering into a full floor lease in late 2016. Tenant fit out work is nearing completion with occupancy expected in the first quarter of 2017. Most recently, a Letter of Intent for another full floor occupancy has been received.
- *Capital Construction:* A number of significant infrastructure improvements projects were underway in 2016, including marine-related work at the V-1 Bulkhead and Pier 5 in the RLFMP. Both projects will be completed in time to offer much improved public access during the events of Sail Boston in 2017. Similarly, improvements to Pier 4, Pier 6 and Pier 11 in the CNY were all completed. Consistent with long standing requests from Navy Yard residents, the water shuttle service to Long Wharf was relocated from Pier 3 to Pier 4.
- The beginning of a yearlong program to improve elevator service in both 12 Channel Street and the RLFMP parking facility also commenced in 2016. Important environmental projects also moved ahead, including contract awards for the installation of energy efficient street lighting fixtures in the RLFMP and remediation assessments and pre-permitting activities with the United States Environmental Protection Agency for the former power plant in the CNY. Finally, construction oversight of a number of initiatives funded through the Massworks grant program.



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