



Council President
Michael P. Ross

Chair
Edward L. Glaeser

Members
Klare Allen
George "Chip" Greenidge
Pat Johnson
Bryan Koop
Ted Landsmark
Barbara Lynch
Jill Medvedow
Diane Paulus
Rocio Saenz
Dan Zarrella
Kairos Shen, *Ex Officio*
Greg Bialecki, *Ex Officio*

Citizen's Committee on Boston's Future Chairman's Final Report

Submitted by Edward L. Glaeser
December 14, 2010

Boston City Hall
One City Hall Plaza
Boston, MA 02201

Phone: 617-635-4225
Fax: 617-635-4203

ccc.future@cityofboston.gov

Follow us on Twitter:
CitizensComBos

Facebook:
Citizens' Committee on
Boston's Future

I. Introduction

Boston is an extraordinary city that has often led the country and the world in science and democracy, commerce and culture. Its diverse collection of extraordinary inhabitants shows the continuing vitality of urban America as a place to live, work and play.

But despite the city's enormous strengths, like many of its urban counterparts, it continues to face great challenges. Its economy has stuttered in the face of a worldwide recession. Housing remains expensive. Thousands of young people leave the region each year once their schooling is through, in search of a more affordable, enjoyable or remunerative life elsewhere. The Citizen's Committee on Boston's Future was charged by the Boston City Council with suggesting implementable ideas that could make an already strong city even stronger. This chairman's report summarizes what were in the chairman's view alone the most promising ideas that emerged from this process. While this report has benefitted greatly from the contributions of many committee members, it should be stressed that it is a chairman's report and the chairman alone takes responsibility for its contents.

The Committee imposed realistic restrictions on its ideas. While the school system and the city's police are critical elements in Boston's quality of life, the Committee did not have the appropriate members or knowledge to meaningfully consider reforms in these public sectors. The Committee also was all too well aware of the fiscal limits currently facing the city and the state, and this led it away from recommendations that would increase the budgetary problems already facing our governments. Instead, the Committee focused on those reforms that could improve the quality of life without costing a large amount of money.

The Committee's ideas fell into three broad categories:

- Infusing Boston's Places with the Energy of Bostonians
- Unfettering Private Innovation
- Helping Good Government Be Even Better

The first category starts with the recognition that at their heart cities are not structures and streets, but human beings. The buildings and parks that are the permanent part of Boston only come alive when they are utilized and inhabited by the increasingly diverse range of remarkable people who live and work here. One goal of good policy is to enable all people to make better use of the city's spaces.

One example of such policies is to make better use of private spaces, by nudging landlords to fill vacant buildings and by facilitating the development of flexible space for budding entrepreneurs. Another example is to create excitement in public spaces, by strengthening arts and cultural institutions, encouraging arts-related events and making more room for urban agriculture. A third example is facilitating the flow of people to places that are exciting at night through late-night transit service.

Boston is a regulated city, and many of its regulations come from the state-government. The downturn may preclude most new spending initiatives, but it doesn't stop the city from becoming more exciting by eliminating or refining burdensome rules. Moreover, replacing current regulations with a fee-based system can provide a means of paying for new public services, like late night transit service.

The Committee was particularly focused on those regulations that limit the development of Boston's quality of life. For example, the state government imposes a significant limit on the number of alcohol licenses in the city, while the city itself imposes a host of regulations barriers on food trucks. Both areas are ripe for reform. The costs of limiting private development may be even more severe in the real estate sector, where builders routinely complain about the difficulties of negotiating what is often a multi-year approval process. Reform there is more difficult because the most important barriers to building are not clear public rules, because the need for regulatory clarity and efficiency must be balanced with the need for effective community input.

The third set of ideas relate to the public sector itself. Mayor Thomas Menino has provided remarkable leadership and a singular focus on improving basic city services for 17 years. Many Committee members strongly supported these efforts, especially those that seek to improve the delivery of city services by both making better use of new technologies (such as Smartphone and social media). Moreover, they were pleased to learn that city has enabled these efforts by making it easier for both users and the region's strong network of software developers to access and use city data on a variety of key issues. Committee members suggested that the City Council strongly support these efforts and, as part of this support, the Council might work with the Mayor's office and private-sector experts to develop an "Apps for Boston" contest that would identify and honor the people and firms who use city data to develop the useful and financially sustainable new applications for Smartphone and other new technologies.

Many Committee members also focused on the need for more coordination among the region's many local governments. Massachusetts has 351 cities and towns that often act like separate and competing entities, but the health of the region often requires coordination. One plausible place to start is for the state government to modestly fund a multi-city entity aimed at attracting people and businesses to the region.

The next section of this report provides background on the Committee's mission and procedures. Section III, IV and V then detail the three groups of ideas that emerged from the Committee's work.

II. Background and Process

This Committee was formed by the Boston City Council and its members were appointed by City Council President Michael Ross, who proposed the creation of the committee as well. (See Appendix A for a list of the Committee's members). The Committee was given the following charge:

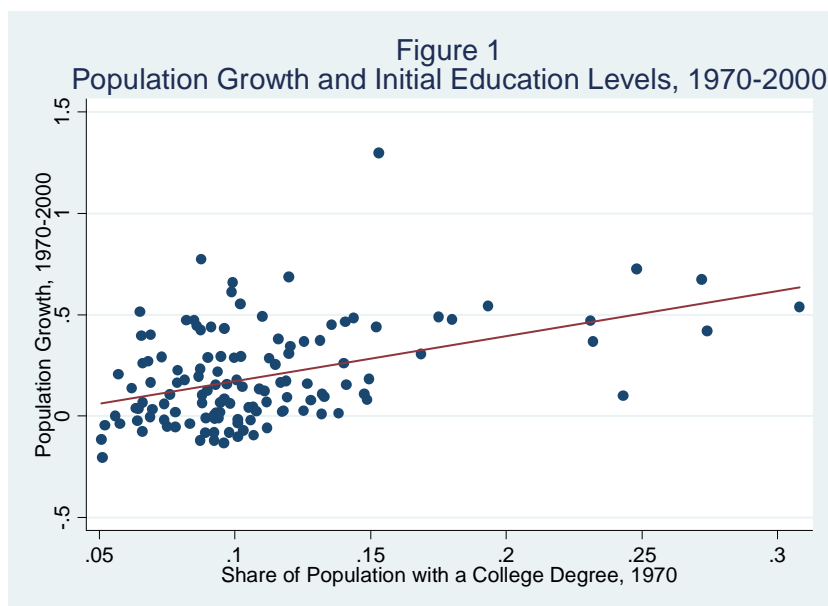
The Citizens' Committee on Boston's Future ... shall concern itself with what Boston must do to compete effectively to be the best city in America, including attracting and retaining smart and skilled people, reducing impediments to business and development in 21st century growth sectors, promoting and sustaining neighborhood businesses, and fostering an environment for arts and culture. The Citizens Committee shall be an

independent body which will include representatives from science, industry, arts and education as well as concerned citizens.¹

In his remarks at the Committee's first meeting, President Ross made it clear that he thinks that the ingenuity of Boston's residents could help come up with new ideas and make the case for their implementation. He also made it clear that while he is well aware of the enormous strengths that already exist in Boston's public sector, he also saw the continuing challenges that face the city and hoped that broader citizens initiative could help produce the ideas needed to face those challenges.

The broad history of Boston shows a constant process of crisis and reinvention. In the 17th century, the decline of immigration from England that followed the Civil War led to the creation of the triangular trade pattern where Bostonians shipped food and wood to the cash colonies of the south, which then shipped tobacco, and sugar to Europe, which then shipped, manufactured goods to Boston. When that trade faltered, as more southern cities with richer hinterlands, such as New York and Philadelphia, copied and surpassed the Boston model, the city innovated once again, and helped create an even vaster global trading network that went from South Africa to the Canton. As the era of the clipper ship waned, Boston restructured itself as a manufacturing city built around a railroad hub.

Then, during the 20th century, all of America's older industrial cities, including Boston, faltered and the trends that lead to this decline are still with us today. A dramatic decline in transportation costs led to an exodus of manufacturing to lower cost regions of the U.S. and across the globe. The rise of the car led to a flight from older urban cores built around foot traffic and streetcars. Americans moved to warmer areas, which offered gentler climates and fewer restrictions on new construction. Between 1930 and 1980 Boston's population declined by 28 percent. Boston's economic decline was accompanied by social strife, including a rise in crime and the crisis associated with busing.



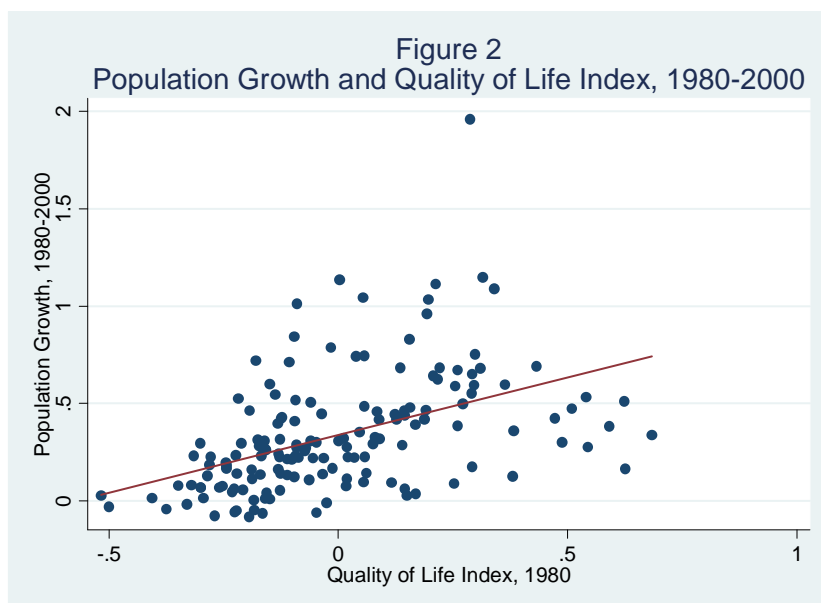
¹ See <http://www.cityofboston.gov/citycouncil/committees/future.asp>. See Appendix A for a full list of committee members.

But since 1980, Boston has experienced yet another remarkable renaissance. The city has come back as a center of innovation in technology and finance. The region's educational institutions have proven to be anchors, and the skilled people that they produce have helped to lead the private entrepreneurship that are the ultimately source of any area's economic vitality. A series of strong public leaders have helped make the city safer, more exciting and more pleasant. People have streamed back into the city and as it became more attractive, it became more expensive as well.

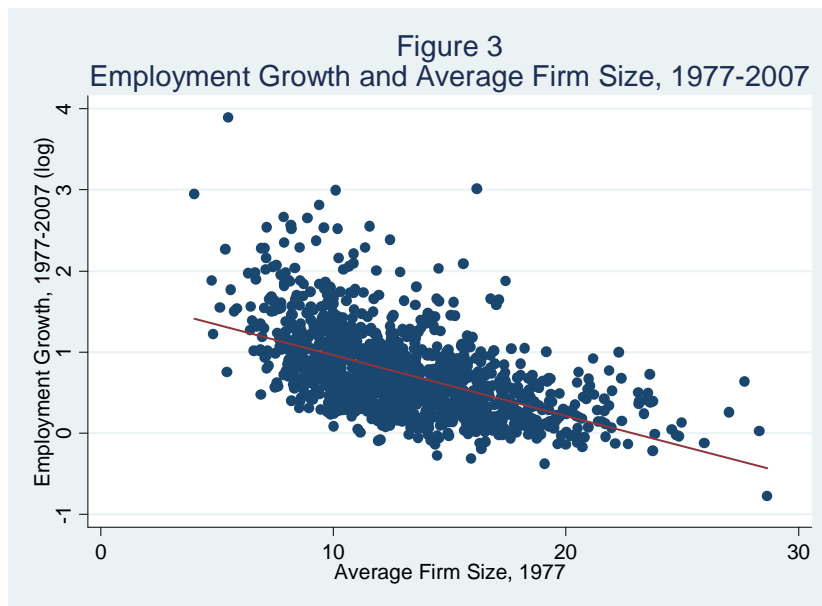
Boston's success during this period is not unusual for a skilled city. Figure 1 (on the previous page) shows the connection across cities in the Northeast and Midwest between the share of the population in a city with college degrees in 1970 and population growth since that year. The least educated cities experienced a growth rate of 13 percent; the most educated cities had an average growth rate of 30 percent.

The connection between skills and growth is one of the great facts of modern urban change in the U.S. Two other major facts are also important for thinking about Boston's future. A second fact is the importance of quality of life in driving urban growth. Along with colleagues, I have calculated a quality of life index for 1980 by looking at how expensive a region is relative to its income. People are typically willing to pay more for a region's housing, at least relative to earnings, when that region is more pleasant. Figure 2 shows the strong correlation between this measure and subsequent population growth across the U.S. In the 19th century, cities formed in places where firms had an advantage in production. In the 21st century, cities form in places where people want to live, in part because a higher quality of life attracts more productive, more entrepreneurial people.

This fact provides an opportunity for cities like Boston. The same concentration of talent that can make cities so productive can also make them more fun. The large numbers of customers in big cities can support a wide range of innovative restaurants and clubs and art galleries. Cities like Boston can thrive in the 21st century, in part, by being exciting places to play as well as work.



The excitement of a city is important because a high quality of life can attract more potential entrepreneurs, and more entrepreneurial cities have also grown more quickly than less entrepreneurial places. Figure 3 shows the relationship between average establishment size in 1977 and subsequent employment growth in a county. Those more entrepreneurial places, with smaller average firms, have grown more quickly than places dominated by a small number of large employers. This fact is particularly important for Boston, because Suffolk County has the largest average establishment size of any county in the U.S. with more than 50,000 people. The dominance of large employers over small entrepreneurs is a challenge facing Boston's future.



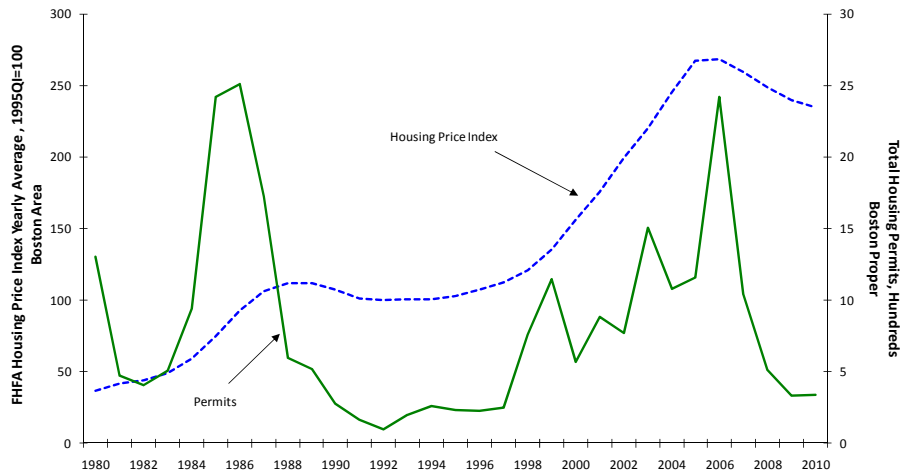
Despite Boston's successes over the past 30 years, the past decade has taught us that the city is far from invulnerable. During the recession, the Boston area's unemployment rate rose as high as 9.3 percent in January 2010. That high rate was lower than much of the nation, and the rate has fallen significantly since then, but that experience should remind us that Boston's economic success is far from automatic.

High housing prices represent a second challenge that continues to face Boston despite the national housing bust. Figure 4 (on the next page) shows the path of prices and housing permits over the past 30 years. The price series is area-wide and taken from the Federal Housing Finance Industry. Unfortunately, there is no city-specific series that corrects for changing housing quality using repeat-sales, as the FHFA index does. The permit series is specific to the city of Boston (but may understate actual housing production because it doesn't fully capture the impact of renovations.² Despite these limitations, the figure shows

² According to the city's "Leading the Way III" report, 18,000 units of new housing were built in Boston between 2000 and 2007. (See "Leading the Way III, online at http://www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/pdfs/LTW_III_Plan_summary_draft.pdf

that over the long term, there is a consistent pattern of rising prices and declining permits. The relative lack of construction in the city does not reflect any lack of housing demand—the area’s high prices reject that view. Only supply constraints can explain the combination of high costs and low levels of construction.

Figure 4
Housing Permitting and Prices for Boston, 1980-2010



Rising prices may not seem like a problem to homeowners, but as prices rise, the city becomes less accessible to ordinary and young people. There is no long run solution that will ensure that Boston is affordable except for providing more homes, and that inevitably means more construction. For Boston to be more inclusive and energetic, it must work on ways that make the permitting process less difficult.

These facts inform this report. If Boston is to continue being successful, it must continue to attract skilled people. It must continue to provide a high quality of life, and figure out ways to allow the social innovations that make cities fun. It must do a better job of providing more opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurship. This report’s proposals all aim at this overall objective of helping the city become more innovative, inclusive and pleasant.

Process

The Citizen’s Committee on Boston’s Future developed this report through a series of meetings. The Committee first met in March 2010 at the Top of the Hub in the Prudential Tower, where the Committee was hosted by Bryan Koop, a Committee member who also senior vice-president of Boston Properties, which owns the building. At that meeting, members Committee members aired their initial ideas and heard from other meeting attendees. After that meeting, the Committee solicited more public feedback through the Internet, social media, and discussions with the wider public. The Committee’s second meeting was held at the Institute of Contemporary Art, which is headed by Committee Member Jill Medvedow. There the Committee heard a wide range of ideas to strengthen the city. The third meeting took place in the Boston City Council’s James Michael Curley Room, where Committee members voiced their priorities for this report. The Committee also

had a less formal community dialogue, hosted by committee member George Greenidge at Roxbury Community College. After this point, an initial draft of this chairman's report was written and then sent to the members of Committee for their comments. The report, however, is not a formal report of the entire Committee. Rather it is the chairman's best effort to summarize those areas where there generally was broad consensus among Committee members. (See Appendix B for materials from those meetings).

III. Infusing Boston's Places with the Energy of Bostonians

The true heart of a city is people, not structures, and spaces only come alive when they are well used by people. One set of proposals focuses on supporting exciting uses of Boston spaces. This subsection has been broken into three major areas: A More Creative and Healthy City, Space for Entrepreneurs and Late Night Transit.

A More Creative and Healthy City

Boston is a city of great beauty and remarkable art, of artists, teachers, students, residents and tourists who treasure the museums, theaters, concert halls, neighborhood art centers and many festivals for their inspiration, education, entertainment and employment. During our meetings, several Committee members articulated the need for significant municipal funding for the arts to better support the city's cultural institutions and enable innovative programs, initiatives and services from them. Citizens and committee members also spoke of their desire to do more with Boston's existing physical infrastructure, and infusing public spaces with more vitality and purpose. Many members also noted that in order for Boston to become a world-class transformative city its public spaces, venues, restaurants, and other important places, it must be welcoming to an increasingly diverse populace and workforce.

In most discussions about urban culture, the subject of public space and public art attracts much attention and our meetings were no exception. Citizens suggested specific ideas that ranged from performances in the unused Tremont Street subway station to urban mini-golf, to murals on city walls. In fact, many of these ideas are already happening. For example, the Boston Youth Fund's Mural Crew already helps Bostonians bring beauty to their city.³ Another suggestion was to facilitate urban farming in areas close to city schools and teach students about biology and the sources of the food they eat, and steps towards allowing micro-farms in city schools are already happening. The Committee was excited about these trends.

It was not the Committee's job to recommend individual projects. The Committee did, however, have three concrete proposals that are worth serious consideration. They are:

First, while the Committee recognized the city and the states' current serious fiscal issues, many members believe that the city should find a way to create a dedicated and significant funding source in the city to provide support for Boston arts organizations that will support operations and special projects. Operating support will provide predictable support for anchor arts organizations and enable them to invest in both core and innovative programs, marketing and education. It will enable the city to partner with the state to strengthen the

³ More information about the murals program is available at <http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/teenzone/employment/muralcrew/>

cultural sector, and increase investment in the creative economy. This investment makes sense because, as discussed above, quality of life is an increasingly important element in the economic success of cities. The revitalization of neighborhoods like the South End, Roslindale, and Jamaica Plain occurred, in part, both because they are beautiful places and because of the restaurants, shops, galleries, and theaters that make them dynamic places to live and work. A similar revitalization is occurring now at the waterfront, pioneered by the new ICA, and now with restaurants and bars like Sportello, Flour, Drink, Legal Seafoods and Menton. Boston needs to ensure that it continues to foster cultural life on the waterfront and make sure that more of the city is also a place of beauty and creative energy, rewarding those who already live here and helping to draw more creative, entrepreneurial people to the region.

Currently, the city funds the arts through The Boston Cultural Council (BCC), under the umbrella of the Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism and Special Events. The BCC annually distributes funds (allocated by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency) to support innovative arts, humanities and interpretive sciences programming that enhances the quality of life in our city. This year the BCC distributed \$133,320. At the state level, the Massachusetts Cultural Council separately funds the arts, the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) includes a new office for the Creative Economy, and a 2008 law created a Creative Economy Council to advise the legislature and the EOHED.⁴

All of these entities also have limited budgets but in combination with more robust funding and new arts leadership in the city, there exists the potential to provide much needed financial support and informed advocacy for public culture in greater Boston. As it currently stands however, the impact of the extremely limited city funding for the arts is negligible and the benefit to artists, institutions and city life is commensurately small.

Compare this to cities like San Francisco, Houston, or Seattle. San Francisco, for example, awarded over \$12 million last year through its Grants for the Arts (GFTA) program. The goal of Grants for the Arts (GFTA) is to provide a stable, dependable base of support for the city's arts and cultural organizations. In fulfilling its mission of "promoting the City through support of the arts," GFTA annually funds non-profit arts and cultural organizations that help promote San Francisco as a destination for regional, national and international visitors. GFTA is committed to supporting the broadest spectrum of the San Francisco arts community. GFTA's relationship with the city's non-profit groups is quite unique in terms of national municipal support of the arts. This is because funding is not linked to specific projects or productions. Instead, the annual grant program is designed to provide a consistent source of funds for general operating expenses. GFTA funding levels are determined on a progressive basis with smaller budget organizations receiving a larger percentage of their budgets and larger groups a smaller percentage from the Fund. San Francisco's largest cultural institutions are given important sustaining funds in recognition of their world-renowned artistic contributions and economic importance to the City. The majority of the

⁴ More information on the Boston Cultural Council is available at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/arts/bcc/>; more information about the Massachusetts Cultural Council is available at <http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/>; and more information about the state's Creative Economy office and the Creative Economy Council is available at http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=ehedterminal&L=3&L0=Home&L1=Economic+Analysis&L2=Key+Industries&sid=Ehed&b=terminalcontent&f=mobd_key_industries_creative_econ&csid=Ehed.

funds -- nearly 70 percent -- go to the small and midsize organizations of all disciplines and cultures.⁵

In 2008, Seattle invested \$2.2 million to support 275 artists and cultural organizations. Civic Partners is the city of Seattle's funding program for organizations, and awards two-year funding commitments to Seattle arts, heritage and cultural organizations and arts service organizations with a minimum three-year history of serving Seattle residents and visitors. Funding supports organizations' core programs and operations, aids in planning and attracting other supporters, and helps underwrite public access to a variety of quality arts and cultural opportunities. The Civic Partners program aims to help sustain established organizations over time with predictable funding, while also recognizing and fostering emerging organizations. In the first year of the 2009-2010 funding cycle, the program awarded \$1.6 million to 133 organizations.⁶

In Houston, the Museum District receives funding of approximately \$1.5 million in Hotel Occupancy Tax funds from the City of Houston and the Houston Arts Alliance, as well as the city setting aside 1.75 percent of the city's construction budget for art. Each of these cities has a robust cultural community, strong organizations and vital programs serving its citizens and attracting tourists.⁷

Special project support might include a performing arts festival in Boston. While Boston draws a major crop of tourists during the key summer months, the fall and spring seasons are often less full. During these time periods, hotels are often at less than full capacity and a big tourist draw would be a major economic boost. An arts festival could also serve to galvanize the city's artistic community and help build alliances between different groups and neighborhoods within the city. It would be an opportunity to remind people that Boston has art as well as history, which might help bring in more permanent residents as well as tourists.

Such an endeavor might build on several existing festivals and initiatives. For example, last year the American Repertory Theater, Huntington Theatre Company, and the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston worked together to organize "Emerging America," a theater festival devoted to supporting and launching new voices in American theatre. The event's organizers not only plan to make Emerging America an annual event, they also seek to raise its profile and size as well. Similarly, since 2003, the city has co-sponsored the Boston Arts Festival, a three-day festival of visual and performing arts in early September that brings about 50,000 people to Christopher Columbus Park on the waterfront while the Berklee Beantown Jazz Festival, which is held in late September, draws about 80,000 people to a six-block stretch of the South End.⁸

⁵ More information about GFTA is available at http://www.sfgfta.org/etc/annual%20report%2009_10.pdf.

⁶ More information about Civic Partners is available at <http://www.seattle.gov/arts/funding/organizations.asp>.

⁷ More information about the Houston Museum District is available at <http://www.houstonmuseumdistrict.org/default.asp?id=1>.

⁸ More on the Emerging America Festival is available at <http://www.emergingamericafestival.org/>. More on the Boston Arts Festivals is available at [http://www.bostonahtsfestival.com/ahts/\(ahts\):_The_Boston_Arts_Festival_Home.html](http://www.bostonahtsfestival.com/ahts/(ahts):_The_Boston_Arts_Festival_Home.html). More on the Berklee Beantown Jazz Festival is available at <http://www.beantownjazz.org/>.

Such festivals can become major economic engines, drawing both tourists from outside the region and residents of the cities and towns surrounding Boston as well. For example, every August, the population of Edinburgh more than doubles when more than 500,000 people come to the city to attend the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and several other noteworthy festivals and events, particularly the Edinburgh International Festival, the Edinburgh International Book Festival, and the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. While economic impact studies generally should be taken with a grain of salt, a study done for city and national officials in Edinburgh and Scotland (which provide some support for the festivals) estimated that in 2004, the more than 1.4 million people who attended performances associated with the Fringe Festival generated \$124.31 million in economic activity while the more than 300,000 who attended events associated with the International Festival generated \$34.27 million in economic activity and the more than 200,000 people attending the Military Tattoo produced \$41.38 million in new economic activity.

Similarly, organizers of Luminato, an annual 10-day “celebration of the arts where Toronto's stages, streets, and public spaces are infused with theatre, dance, classical and contemporary music, film, literature, visual arts, and design,” estimate that more than one million people attend festival-related events and activities. They further estimate that in 2009, \$193 million in visitor expenditure was generated as a result of Luminato, which like the Edinburgh festivals also receives some support from the public sector.

Second, many Committee members strongly supported the movement towards urban farms near school systems. Committee Member Barbara Lynch, head chef and owner of Barbara Lynch Gruppo, a collection of leading restaurants and a catering company, has been particularly articulate in her belief in this cause, which reflects a larger national interest in local food. Obesity is a significant health problem, and local farming has been seen by many, such as First Lady Michelle Obama and locavore chef Alice Waters, as a tool for better eating habits. As an advocate of better food for Boston, Lynch has argued that this has a significant education purpose, as well as providing an opportunity for an attractive use of urban space. Committee members hope that this initiative can be broadened and continued.

Third (and consistent with discussions in other sections of this report), easing and simplifying the permitting process for special events in the cultural sector would allow for a more art to take place and flourish in the downtown and waterfront areas as well as in the neighborhoods. Often, temporary special events and arts projects, performances and installations are subject to the same requirements as a commercial event with fees, liquor and the like. A well-informed arts manager in City Hall could act as an intermediary between bureaucracy and artists and institutions on permitting and licenses. The benefit to the city of facilitating the regulatory system is a more robust urban life, infused and enriched by arts events.

The arts have the capacity to enrich every life and strengthen every city. They do not require a vast flow of public dollars, but a modest targeted contribution could raise the profile of art in Massachusetts and Greater Boston.

Space for Entrepreneurs

A regular theme in the Committee's meetings was that there is not enough space available for budding entrepreneurs. The high cost of real estate, coupled with the unwillingness of many landlords to let space at low rates during a down market, made things difficult for the start-

ups that can help fire the Boston economy. The general requirement for appropriate space is that it is flexible, so it can accommodate the smallest companies, affordable and well connected with good technological infrastructure. In many cases, there is also a benefit from clustering activities to allow for the cross-company connections that can be so helpful to early start-up firms.

There are several examples of such space that already exist in Boston. For example, the guiding vision of the Boston Innovation District, 1,000 acres of iconic waterfront property, is an area that will be friendly to smaller innovative firms. One part of the reward for the entrepreneurial winners of the MassChallenge contest is that they would receive space within the Innovation District. Moreover, two recently approved major mixed-use developments in the Innovation District – Seaport Square and Waterside Place – will both include “innovations centers” that will provide office space for small firms and conference and public spaces where individuals where people from those firms can connect with each other and with people in the districts’ larger firms who might have the access to capital and other resources that smaller firms need to grow.⁹

Another example of shared space is the Non-Profit Center, which provides shared space for non-profits downtown in Lincoln Plaza. The Non-Profit Center combines flexible space, with some shared infrastructure and supportive counseling services. The non-profit structure of this innovation has many plusses, but it is probably less attractive for housing for-profit entrepreneurs.¹⁰

A third example is the Cambridge Innovation Center, a for-profit firm located in MIT-owned space in Kendall Square. CIC offers a wide range of space options ranging from fairly conventional office space to shared offices and it has expanded steadily, housing a remarkable roster of start-up firms. One key lesson is the CIC’s success is the importance of proximity to a major institution—MIT—that is an outsized attraction for start-up firms.¹¹

Outside of Boston, there are many examples of shared spaces that have been encouraged by local governments. The New York City Economic Development Corporation (a public entity) has used public funds to finance shared spaces for entrepreneurs, such as the Varick Street Incubator, which was done in collaboration with NYU.¹² Newly elected British Prime Minister David Cameron seems eager to support such spaces in London, while Silicon Valley has a particularly large shared space, the Plug and Play Tech Center.¹³

What can the city do to promote this type of space? There are essentially three natural means of encouraging shared start-up spaces. The first is the direct cash grants, such as those used by the NYC Economic Development Corporation. A second approach is to offer tax breaks to companies housing smaller start-ups. A third approach is to offer fast-track building

⁹ More information about the Innovation District, MassChallenge, and the new developments is available at <http://www.innovationdistrict.org/>.

¹⁰ More information about the Non-Profit Center is available at www.nonprofitcenterboston.org.

¹¹ More information about CIC is available at <http://www.cictr.com/>.

¹² More information about the Varick Street Incubator is available at <http://www.poly.edu/business/incubators/160-varick>.

¹³ More information about the Plug and Play Tech Center is available at <http://www.plugandplaytechcenter.com/>.

approvals to projects that will offered shared space to start ups. All approaches are worth considering.

A challenge that was raised with the Committee was vacant space being held off the market by landlords. There are obvious public safety issues surrounding vacant buildings, but also damaging is the economic impact of an empty building, of which the committee focused. Vacant space hurts the surrounding area by reducing the number of cross-firm connections that are available. Those costs may not be considered by landlords when making individual renting decisions. One option to push against long-term vacancies is to levy a modest tax surcharge on higher end commercial space that is kept vacant for an excessive period of time. The revenues from that tax surcharge could then be used to subsidize other shared start-up space. If landlords were willing to provide short-term leases for start-ups, they could obviously avoid the vacant space tax surcharge. (The committee, of course, recognized that this idea likely presents complex legal issues that would have to be fully researched and addressed before the council moved forward with such a surcharge.)

Late Night Transit

While the previous two subsections focused on providing better uses for existing spaces, the last option in this section focuses on mobility—allowing Bostonians to access space more easily. Boston has an excellent public transit system, but the system stops operating before 1 a.m., which means that late night activities beyond walking distance must rely on cars or taxis. The Committee repeatedly heard about the importance of late night transit to the city. Employers discussed the difficulty of commuting for hospitality-industry workers. Ordinary Bostonians discussed the difficulty of getting home from exciting entertainment venues at night. Others emphasized the dangers of drunk driving.

Later night transit services could infuse Boston's spaces with more activities later at night. It would also allow the concentration of nighttime activities in more focused areas, which would have two advantages. Concentration of entertainment is useful, but people who are out at night typically want to be near other people who are out at night. After all, the point of such activities is often to be around other fun people. Concentration of activities would also mean fewer disturbances in more residential districts.

Boston is virtually alone among major metropolises in shutting down its transit system so early; New York City and Chicago have trains running all night, while Philadelphia extends its subway service to 24 hours a day with its NiteOwl bus service. Boston's lack of late night service is seen as being a competitive disadvantage, because young people see other cities as having more fun late night options. Advocates of late night service emphasize that such service could have benefits beyond just making one person's ride home easier. It could help catalyze nightlife in a way that could potentially be transformative.

But the fundamental difficulty of late night service is that it can be quite expensive. Representatives of the MBTA emphasized the existing financial difficulties facing that vital agency, and argue that late night service is not the top priority for a system currently facing significant financial challenges, including a backlog of deferred maintenance needs. The MBTA, moreover, has consistently contended that it cannot provide late-night train service because the rails need to be empty at night to allow for regular maintenance and, unlike systems in New York and Chicago, the MBTA only has one track in each direction.

Using buses to provide late-night service not only allows the MBTA to perform routine maintenance, it also is cheaper than running trains. Even so, from 2001 to 2005, when the MBTA offered “Night Owl” buses serving train routes from 1:00 to 2:30 a.m., the cost of service was about \$8 a ride. That price is not appreciably lower than cab service for two or more people in the same cab. The high cost of providing Night Owl service led the MBTA to end the program five years ago and makes the MBTA wary of restarting such service today. Illustratively, according to information given to the Committee by the MBTA, the annual costs of providing late night Friday-Saturday bus service along key train lines would be more than \$2.1 million. Manpower, not materials, represents the lion’s share — 84 percent — of these costs. The biggest single category is the \$606,000 in wages paid to provide 100 person-hours of bus operators over 104 nights. Three inspectors add another \$197,000 to costs.

Late night service is so costly because under existing contracts with the unions representing the MBTA’s worker, the bus drivers have to be paid double-time for working late at night, which makes their average wage \$58 an hour. The MBTA didn’t separately provide the cost of fringe benefits for the operators, but it estimated that benefits, FICA, and pensions added an extra 69 percent to overall labor costs. If that rate applied for the bus operators, they would be earning \$98.02 an hour. Few (if any) taxicab drivers earn that much, which helps explain why taxicabs can be less costly than late-night bus service.

Since many of the costs of late night service are essentially fixed costs, covering those costs requires a large number of riders, which suggests that it makes sense to focus on lines that historically garnered the most ridership. When the Night Owl service was initiated in 2001, the MBTA ran buses on 17 routes. However, more than one-half of the 1,600 riders per night came on just four routes. Three of these followed Green Line routes and one travelled on the path of the Red Line.

Late night service becomes more financially feasible with higher fares. It may be reasonable to ask travelers to pay a few extra dollars to ride late at night. However, since higher fares deter ridership, there is a painful tradeoff. Instead, the Committee believes that there are two feasible options both of which should be explored. Option # 1 is a purely public option, where the MBTA would go back to running bus lines over the most travelled routes.

But for the public option to make sense, it needs to be funded in creative new ways. One possibility is to fund the service with more sensible liquor licensing rules, where new licenses are issued in exchange for annual fees that help fund late-night transit service. In this way, businesses will be paying for the travel costs of their customers. Another funding option is that interested parties — such as the large colleges and universities whose students and employees are likely to use Night Owl buses — could buy night-time ridership passes in bulk and then distribute them to their students and workers, who would then ride for free or for relatively low fares. Ideally, the per ride cost would be low or zero, once the bulk passes are purchased, in order to encourage more people to ride the late night service.

A second option is a hybrid public/private option that makes use of private jitney or bus operators. Essentially, a public entity — such as the MBTA or the City — would take bids from private firms willing to operate service on key routes. Multiple providers would be allowed to compete on both service and price. One advantage of a private option is that it likely could provide drivers at less than \$100 an hour. Somewhat similarly, the city and MBTA could arrange for private late-night jitney services on key routes. Private jitanies could

be flexible and cheaper, since providers also could pay lower wages. And with enough regulations, the jitneys would be safe and comfortable. Private late-night bus or jitney service offers several attractive possibilities. One could easily imagine innovative, higher quality service being a selling point. Providers might innovate in ways that made the experience more pleasant. A more aggressive policy of encouraging private late night provision would encourage this type of service provision that could carry a wider range of Bostonians.

The big problem with any private solution is the state's "Pacheco Law," (M.G.L. ch. 7 sections 52-55), which limits private provision of public services. But the law arguably does not impact taxicabs, which raises the hope that a late-night jitney system could be created within the Pacheco law's limits. Late-night transit service would be a boon for Boston. It would be terrific if the MBTA could manage a way to do this with limited subsidies, but officials should also be open to private options, especially on routes that cannot be affordably covered by the MBTA.

IV. Unfettering Private Innovation

Urban innovation requires two major ingredients: intelligent people with an interest in coming up with new ideas and rules that enable them to make their vision a reality. Boston already has a wealth of human creativity, but rules often make it difficult for them to implement their ideas. The Committee heard much about two major areas where regulations appeared to stymie innovation: entertainment and real estate.

Regulations and Restaurants

Boston has a web of regulations that make culinary innovations somewhat difficult. Some of these rules, such as the public health rules that require inspections of kitchens, make a great deal of sense. Other rules, such as the binding restriction on the number of liquor licenses set by the state legislature, are far less defensible. Moreover, there are new culinary innovations—such as food trucks—that our cumbersome regulatory apparatus has difficulty supporting.

The committee starts with the view that the hospitality industry should be a major part of the Boston economy. Restaurants are important not just as potential employers for Bostonians of all levels of human capital, but also as a major draw for the city. Throughout the world, food has become a major form of entertainment. A night out at a restaurant is among the most common forms of pleasure, and it is a particularly urban pastime.

Cities, innately, have an edge in producing high quality eateries. Restaurants have fixed costs—kitchens, space, the time and training of chefs—that must be spread over a significant clientele. Cities have enough customers, both in their residents and in their tourists, to pay for these fixed costs. Adam Smith once wrote that "the division of labor is limited by the extent of the market" and this is as true in the culinary arts as anywhere else. In low-density areas, restaurants must cater to the full range of possible customers requiring them to deliver generally acceptable cuisine. In a dense urban atmosphere, with a lot of eaters who have diverse tastes, restaurants can offer a much fuller level of variety. This is an urban advantage to be exploited.

Moreover, cities also create opportunities for competition and the creative borrowing of ideas. One chef learns from another, and there are abundant stories of talented restaurateurs who got their start in someone else's kitchen. As each chef innovates to attract customers, those innovations become public knowledge and a starting point for someone else's good idea. The net result of all this creativity is that cities become cauldrons of culinary creativity that provides an ever-changing array of new food items.

Sometimes the innovations are in the form of food delivery, not just the food items themselves. A food truck, for example, is a new idea that builds on two old ideas. Portable eateries are an old idea, and hot dog vendors have been around for many decades. A food truck takes the idea of a movable eatery and transforms it into a movable feast by delivering higher quality, more innovative cooking. Sometimes their products are simple Chinese cooking, and sometimes they are healthy organic fare and sometimes they are creative cupcakes. All are examples of innovation expanding consumer choice.

Urban innovation is a major selling point of the city. Cities can deliver an ever-changing array of delights that can attract people who are bored by suburban chain restaurants. But this innovation needs to have sensible regulations to thrive.

The City has a helpful online roadmap -- <http://www.cityofboston.gov/business/restaurants/> - that is a guide through the difficult process of getting approval to open a restaurant. Among the many hurdles include building permits, food service health permits, the fire department's construction site safety and place of occupancy permit, the common victualer license, dumpster placement permits, site cleanliness license and alcoholic beverage license. A road map is badly needed because so many different agencies need to weigh in before any one is allowed to sell a hot meal. The Committee supports a reasonable attempt to consolidate the permitting process for restaurants that would require fewer permits and a less dispersed set of licensing entities.

In particular, Boston labors under an ancient system of state-legislated liquor licenses that artificially limits the number of licensed eateries based on the area's population. It is hard to see why this state-level rule makes much sense in a city that is a draw for tourists worldwide and for residents throughout greater Boston. Moreover, current laws allowing the limited number of licenses to be transferred anywhere in city, create tremendous pressures to shift licenses from historic commercial areas in neighborhoods to downtown locations – a process that makes it harder for restaurants to help spur revitalization of various neighborhoods. The State Legislature recently recognized this problem by expanding the number of licenses, but the demand for such licenses still outstrips supply.

It is clear that the City of Boston's population provides a poor guide to the amount of demand for eateries serving liquor in the city. Moreover, it is hard to see why the state legislature should have the power to determine the number of licenses in greater Boston. The state has many legitimate concerns, but local knowledge over the state of supply and demand is important, and the Mayor of Boston and the City Council are far more likely to have that knowledge than 240 legislators on Beacon Hill who come from throughout the state.

The correct place to start any analysis of liquor licenses is to reconsider why the City has such licenses at all. Presumably, the main reason to have liquor licenses is to make sure that alcohol-serving establishments are limited in residential districts where they might disturb residents and to make sure that these establishments follow certain basic rules of safety and

good behavior. Perhaps, liquor licenses can also be a valuable source of public revenues that can cover the costs of public services that support entertainment venues. (Here again, the committee recognizes that a more detailed legal analysis would be needed in light of state court rulings requiring that any fees imposed by the city be clearly linked to services funded by those fees.)¹⁴

The Committee considered three reforms in the area of liquor licensing that are worth further deliberation. First, that such licensing be controlled—for the state’s larger cities—at the city rather than the state level. In areas where the state cap on liquor licenses does not bind, this is already the case. There is no reason why a large city like Boston would not be capable of governing its own entertainment outlets. Such a reform, of course, also would require a long-overdue change to the Boston Licensing Board, which oversees liquor and food licenses, and whose members are appointed by the governor not the mayor.¹⁵ Moreover, with this change, the city also could develop a simplified and more consolidated restaurant permitting process.

Second, the number of liquor licenses in Boston should be expanded, especially in core entertainment districts. There was widespread consensus on the Committee and on its guests that the benefits of new, exciting restaurants serving at least wine and beer with meals would exceed any costs, especially if those venues are located in high demand non-residential areas. In fact, some committee members believe that there is merit in eliminating the cap entirely for restaurants that only serve liquor (or at least beer and wine) with food as long as those restaurants do not create significant problems for their neighbors.

Third, the allocation of these new licenses should be on a transparent fee-based system, not with an opaque licensing regime. If there is a good reason to limit the availability of licenses, then there is every reason to allocate them to people who are willing to pay for them. One benefit of allocating licenses on fee basis is that this ensures that they will go to the venues that value them most, which presumably means the venues that will be able to attract the most patrons. A second benefit of using fees is that this can provide revenues to pay for entertainment-related services, such as the late night transit service discussed below.

There are two natural means of allocating licenses using fees. One method is to set fees in advance and allow as many people as want to purchase the licenses at the price of the license. The fee could be set at different levels based on the neighborhood involved. Fees in residential areas could, for example, be set at higher rates than fees in areas where there is less of a cost of having another entertainment venue. Fees could also be higher for larger establishments. The fee could be proportional to the square footage of the area or the number of employees allowed.

A second approach is to auction of new licenses and let the market decide the cost. In this case, the public sector would keep control over the number of licenses to be granted. In principle, it would be possible to have neighborhood specific licenses or licenses that allow a certain square footage of space or a certain number of employees. (As noted above, both

¹⁴ For a good discussion of this issue see the discussion of fees in Chapter Four of Gerald R. Frug and David J. Barron, “Boston Bound: A Comparison of Boston’s Legal Powers with Those of Six Other Major American Cities,” a 2005 report produced for the Boston Foundation, online at <http://www.tbf.org/tbfgem1.asp?id=3475>

¹⁵ See Barron and Frug, Chapter 3, online at <http://www.tbf.org/tbfgem1.asp?id=3470#second>.

approaches would have to be carefully designed to ensure that they are consistent with state court rulings on fees.)

In either case, the recipient of the license would still face the prospect of losing the license for various forms of misbehavior, such as creating a public nuisance, serving intoxicated and/or underage revelers, or turning away clients because of their race. A more rational licensing system could be just as effective at protecting public safety if not more so. Boston has great restaurants, but it could have even more if it was easier to open and operate new eateries. Moreover, making it easier to open a viable restaurant in historic commercial districts could help spur revitalization of many ailing neighborhoods.

The Committee also supports the growth of the food truck industry in Boston. Both Mayor Menino and City Council President Ross have given great support to food trucks, which make much sense in a crowded city. President Ross and City Councillor Salvatore LaMattina have also proposed an ordinance that would license up to 25 food trucks in Boston. Committee members supported efforts to make the licensing of food trucks easier and to rationalize the process of approving the siting of different food trucks throughout the city.¹⁶

A Better Building Process

Real estate is a second area where regulation seems to have held the city back. Horror stories of multi-year approval processes are legion. Boston needs more structures in order to ease the demand for space and help the city to become more affordable and inclusive. Building is the only way to provide such structures, and Committee members supported attempts to reform and speed up the regulation of new construction without losing critical input from the community

The Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) argues that the problems of getting approvals are not its fault, but regardless of the cause, Boston could use a more efficient building permit process. Just as in the case of restaurants, the Committee believes that the regulatory process can be streamlined and that a fee-based system might ensure the most effective outcome. The City could achieve these goals in two ways. One approach would be to set a time limit – such as 75 days – for decisions on applications for zoning variances and other key approvals that projects need to proceed. This has the advantage of creating predictability for a project- support it or oppose it. It also will reduce, if not eliminate, costly delays and uncertainties that can bedevil even the best project if it has a few determined opponents.

Alternatively, builders could face clearer fee-to-build rules. If they paid the price, then they could build. Higher buildings would pay higher fees, which could then offset the costs of public services associated with the new construction and pay for public services that could

¹⁶ The proposed ordinance is available at http://www.cityofboston.gov/cityclerk/hearing/upload_pdfs/docket_pdfs/166312052010.pdf . For more information about the issue see City Councilor Michael Ross and City Councilor Salvatore LaMattina, “Report on Food Trucks: A Multiple City Analysis and Report of a Site Visit to Los Angeles,” Report on file with the Boston City Council, available online at http://www.cityofboston.gov/cityclerk/hearing/upload_pdfs/docket_pdfs/160411282010.pdf. Information about the 2011 Boston Food Truck Challenge is available at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/business/FoodTruckChallenge/>.

compensate numbers for any costs associated with the new construction. A simple fee-based system, however, is so far from the current building process that the transition path is difficult. In particular, it is hard to imagine how to integrate a bureaucratically designed fee-based system with the process of community meetings and discussion.

One way to meld the advantages of a fee-based system with community-engagement is to have a ticking-clock based system. The BRA would publish a clear and fixed schedule of required fees, but the amount of the fee would fall as the builder's time to approval increases. If the community needs more time, then the share of the fee that would go to the community would decline. One virtue of this approach is that it would make the costs of delay clear to the community that was debating the new project. (As with several ideas discussed above, this policy would have to be carefully drafted to ensure that it is consistent with state court rulings about the appropriate level and use of fees).

It is never going to be easy to allow new building in Boston. The long hand of history is strong and there is much in the area that needs to be preserved. Yet, the city also needs new construction and that requires a more permissive process. Moreover, this more permissive process should not be a giveaway to builders. They should pay for a speedier process. A clear fee-based system where the fees dropped with each month of delay would provide some incentive for communities to act more quickly and resolve their issues with new construction.

V. Helping Good Government Be Even Better

The final large area for reform lies within government itself. Committee members were very impressed with the city's efforts to use data and new technologies – such as Smartphone –to improve the quality of city services and, in doing so, to better connect citizens with their government and encouraged the City Council to support those efforts. Members of the Committee were also concerned that the large number of local governments in greater Boston often was a hindrance to area-level advances, and that there were areas where regional cooperation could be very valuable.

Using Technology and Data to Improve City Services

One of the most exciting stories that the Citizen's Committee heard concerned the provision of up-to-date information on bus service provided by the MBTA. Traditional attempts to provide private citizens with good information about bus arrival times would have involved a laborious contracting process leading to significant costs and long time delays. The MBTA instead made its internal data available and then encouraged private development of various applications for smart and regular phones, the Web, and other technologies (such as LED displays in local storefronts) that allow people to know where their bus is and when it is likely to get to their stop. The result was the speedy development by entirely private software engineers of applications that give citizens the information they need.¹⁷ This is a wonderful model for innovation in public services.

In a similar vein, the city recently released the Citizen's Connect 2.0 application for both iPhones and Android-based Smart Phones. As with the original award-winning version,

¹⁷ The MBTA's website has a page that lists all of these applications (online at http://www.mbta.com/rider_tools/apps/). Some committee members wondered if the city could use a similar approach to help both parents and school administrators know the locations of school buses.

Citizens Connect 2.0 allows residents to report potholes, graffiti and other issues by taking a photo of the problem and sending it directly to the City to get resolved. In addition, the revised application not only allows constituents to let other users know about service requests they have made to the city and provides a real-time map of the last 100 requests made or closed, it also provides developers with Application Programming Interfaces, so that they can build their own versions of Citizens Connect.

The city is also making a variety of its data available through its GIS DataHub (<http://hubmaps1.cityofboston.gov/datahub/>), which currently provides the location and status of every service request the City has received since July 1, 2009 in the 16 major service request categories as well as information on federal stimulus spending in Boston and easy access to GIS data layers that developers and researchers need to make use of the city's data. In addition, the city also ports quarterly "Boston About Results" reports on key performance measurements for the city 15 largest departments while data while data about reported crimes in Boston is available at www.crimereports.com. Moreover, the city currently is developing a beta site with sets of service request and licensing information available for download. Because of these and other efforts, in 2010 Boston won the "Best of the Web," award, an award from the Center for Digital Government, honoring outstanding government portals and websites based on their innovations, functionality and efficiencies. In addition, the city also ranked first in the nation in its 10th annual Digital Cities Survey, an award given by the Center for Digital Government in partnership with the National League of Cities that tries to assess which cities are "successfully incorporate information technology into operations to better serve constituents and businesses."¹⁸

Committee members appreciated the Menino Administration's efforts in this area and encourage the City Council to actively support the city's ongoing efforts to make more data available and encourage the development of useful applications that make use of that data. As part of this process, the Council might consider working with the mayor's office, and private entities to develop a high-profile Apps (Applications) for Boston contest that would be judged by representatives of the city council, the Mayor's office, and representatives of the region's technology and venture capital industries on their applications' ability to improve citizen's lives, make government more efficient or effective, and to do so in ways likely to be sustainable and profitable over time. The winners would receive public recognition and attention from the local technology and venture capital community. If private donations were forthcoming a cash prize could also be included.

The entries would be judged on their creativity and ability to improve the lives of ordinary Bostonians. The MBTA's bus applications are a perfect example of the kind of creativity that the contest would try to foment. The contest could be a way of galvanizing private innovators to work with the city, and obviously the losing applications might also provide considerable benefits as well.

Regional Cooperation

Massachusetts has 351 cities and towns, and in many ways, the 351 cities and towns are very separate entities pursuing their own objectives. Yet there are substantial benefits from coordination in many areas. Boston itself is an anchor of its region, and its success helps

¹⁸ More information about the survey is available at <http://www.digitalcommunities.com/survey/cities/>.

strengthen all of eastern Massachusetts. Similarly, the economic successes of start-ups in Cambridge help create demand for Boston-based services from nightlife to finance. The fact that economic success spills over across jurisdictions creates a case for area-wide coordination, at least in some areas.

For example, the Committee thought that some land-use decisions could be creatively coordinated between Boston and Cambridge. Transportation options, such as taxis, could also benefit from more coordination. But the easiest area for regional cooperation lies in the promotion of economic activity.

The Committee, therefore, supported the formation of a Boston-Cambridge economic development alliance that would aim at attracting businesses to the two-city area. There is much to be gained from promoting the two cities simultaneously. In principle, the alliance could be broadened to include other geographically proximate areas as well.

There are, of course, already private entities that span the two cities. For example, the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce aims at promoting economic activity within the region while a separate Cambridge Chamber of Commerce focuses both on regional issues and Cambridge-specific concerns. But both Chambers are quite different from having a government entity aimed at representing a multi-city group. The state's Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development promotes multiple cities and towns in greater Boston, but its jurisdiction is, in a sense, too broad. It must spend considerable energy on areas away from downtown Boston, and it has a large portfolio that includes housing, which is an important ingredient in economic success, but one that operationally is often distant from the core task of attracting outside businesses.

A Boston-Cambridge Economic Development Alliance would be a first step towards greater coordination between the two most important economic jurisdictions at the center of Greater Boston. It could reach out to businesses in the U.S. and the world and make the case for location in either Boston or Cambridge. This would permit the sharing of common expenses, such as travel, and would push businesses to think of Boston and Cambridge as connected entities rather than isolated cities.

Given the financial pressures facing both cities, Committee members felt that funding for this entity should be modest and come from a combination of city, state and private funding. The entity would therefore be a hybrid entity, encouraged by local government to begin the negotiation process with firms that might come to Boston or Cambridge. It would also represent a first step towards more cooperation between cities and towns in Greater Boston and could be funded on a trial basis.

Conclusion

In the process of developing these ideas, Committee members have again been reminded that Boston continues to be a city of innovators. The Committee ended its work with both unbounded admiration for the people of Boston and appreciation for the city's leadership. The city is very blessed.

Committee members also agreed that there are many ways that Boston could be even better and that, as in the past, Boston becomes better when public officials work with citizens to build a better city. The Committee has tried to do so in its work and in suggestions that both emphasize the broad contours of urban reform and make specific recommendations.

Looking forward, the measures suggested by the Committee would require different actions by the City Council. In virtually all cases, the Council can play a major role by using hearings and other measures to highlight the value and importance of particular ideas. In some cases, the council would also have to take formal action, such as passing new ordinances and, in some cases, submitting home rule petitions to the State Legislature, which would have to act on them as well. Moreover, as noted in this report, many measures that require legislative action require careful legal analyses and legislative drafting to ensure that they are consistent with the ways that the state's courts have interpreted laws governing fees, taxes, and regulations.

These are not easy tasks. Rather, as Max Weber noted almost 100 years ago, "politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards." While the Committee recognizing that much of what it recommends is likely to be difficult, this report ends by with this summary of recommendations.

The first key area was Infusing Boston's Places with the Energy of Bostonians.

Here the Committee suggested:

Creating a dedicated and significant funding source in the city to provide support for Boston arts and cultural organizations that will support operations and special projects

More support for urban farms that would serve as teaching tools and sources of green pleasures for residents of the city.

Regulatory and limited tax relief for buildings that provide shared-space for entrepreneurs.

Tax-based penalties for landlords of prime real estate that keep large amounts of space vacant.

Innovative attempts to provide late night transit service, either directly through buses operated by the MBTA or through private entrepreneurs, licensed and regulated by the MBTA to operate on popular route after 1 am on weekends.

In the area of Unfettering Private Innovation, the Committee focused on:

A reformed liquor licensing system that moves control of liquor licenses from the state legislature (and a state-appointed licensing commission) to city government. Liquor licenses should then be allocated with a transparent system of fees that generate revenues to provide public services, including late night transit service.

A reformed building process that replaces costly delays with a transparent system of linkage fees, based on the size and location of the building. The fees would be shared between the city and the local community, but the amount given to the community would decline with the amount of time spent in the permitting process.

In the area of Making Good Government Even Better, the Committee highlighted:

Continued efforts to use technology and city-owned data to improve the quality of city services and, in doing so, to better connect citizens with their government. Such efforts might include the development of a high-profile Apps (Applications) for Boston contest that would be judged by representatives of the city council, the Mayor's office, and

representatives of the region's technology and venture capital industries on an applications' ability to improve citizen's lives, make government more efficient or effective, and to do so in ways likely to be sustainable and profitable over time.

Greater focus on regional undertakings that would recognize the common interests of the cities and towns throughout Massachusetts. One natural place to start would be a joint economic development program that would represent Boston and Cambridge together, and possibly other areas as well, when convincing outside entrepreneurs to locate in Greater Boston.

As noted above, few (if any) of these proposals will be easy. But, as Weber also noted, "man" (and women) "would not have attained the possible unless time and again he [and she] had reached out for the impossible."

On behalf of all the Committee's members, I thank the Boston City Council and its President, Michael Ross, for the opportunity not only to develop these ideas but to experience first-hand the passion, creativity, and ingenuity of the city's diverse residents and businesses.

Appendix A

Members of the Citizens' Committee on Boston's Future

Edward Glaeser, Fred and Eleanor Glimp Professor of Economics, Harvard University, and Director of Harvard's Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston and its Taubman Center for State and Local Government

Klare Allen, Environmental Activist and Boston Housing Authority Resident

George "Chip" Greenidge, Executive Director of National Black College Alliance & The GREATEST MINDS

Pat Johnson, Former President, College Democrats of Massachusetts and Chairman of Governor Patrick's Statewide Youth Council

Bryan Koop, Senior Vice President, Boston Properties

Theodore Landsmark, President and CEO, Boston Architectural College

Barbara Lynch, Chef and Owner, Barbara Lynch Gruppo

Jill Medvedow, Director, Institute of Contemporary Art

Diane Paulus, Artistic Director, American Repertory Theater

Rocio Saenz, President, SEIU Local 615

Dan Zarrella, Social, Search, and Viral Marketing Scientist; author, *The Social Media Marketing Book*.

Ex Officio Members

Kairos Shen, Director of Planning, Boston Redevelopment Authority

Greg Bialecki, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, Commonwealth of Massachusetts