

## Mayor Menino Speaks Out on Wynn Casino Plan, Charlestown Impacts

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*The following opinion piece was submitted by the Office of Mayor Thomas Menino on Monday, Aug. 12:*

#### A Question of Impacts

***By Mayor Thomas M. Menino***

Some people have accused me of “playing politics” and being a “bully” in regard to the proposed Wynn casino development. Today, I’m setting the record straight—if being a bully means standing up for Boston and Charlestown then, yes, I am. If being a bully means that I demand information from developers who plan to impact our city then, yes, I am. If being a bully means that I stand up and call foul on a rushed and ill-conceived project that will rely on Boston land to survive then, yes, I am.

Let me be clear: the Wynn Casino proposal has significant impact on the city of Boston. Our roads, waterways, businesses, visitors, environment and the quality of life of our residents will all be affected. Nowhere will these impacts be felt more than in the neighborhood of Charlestown.

Charlestown is a tight-knit community, full of young families alongside longtime residents, with growing and thriving businesses and accelerating home values. As many of you are aware, the roadways of Charlestown, including Rutherford Avenue, are in the midst of a massive transformation that is more reflective of the community today—a true community, not a cut-through for adjacent towns.

From the information we have, the majority of vehicles going to the proposed Wynn development will cut-through Charlestown. This fact alone illustrates the importance of shared information and acknowledgement by the developer of the substantial impacts on the Charlestown community and way of life.

The state will grant a casino license in the greater Boston area. But first, the casino-applicant must mitigate the impacts they will have through either a host community agreement or a surrounding community agreement.

The City of Boston has continually sought clarification from the Wynn development regarding Boston’s status as either a “host community” or a “surrounding community.” The Wynn development has stated that Boston is not a host. But they have not provided any of the documentation that would confirm that opinion. Instead their own filings have shown that without access through our city and Charlestown their casino would fail. We have yet to receive information from the developer. The City of Boston has also written to the Mayor of Everett, again seeking clarifying information about Boston’s status. This development must be understood. The boundaries of this development must be detailed and extremely clear.

While the issue of the City of Boston’s status is significant, and the Wynn development team’s delay in providing information is irresponsible, the most important issue to me is that the City of Boston is able to ensure that the interests of the community, in particular the community of Charlestown, along with all

residents, families, businesses and visitors, are the utmost priority in the potential development of a resort casino.

I will continue to be vocal and do everything in my power to make sure our city doesn't continue to be left out of the process and forced to watch as a development is forced down our throat and into our resident's backyard without even a thought for their concerns or plan for how this proposed development is built.

The people of Charlestown deserve a voice and a vote on this monumental matter. This is not playing politics, this is protecting my constituents.

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