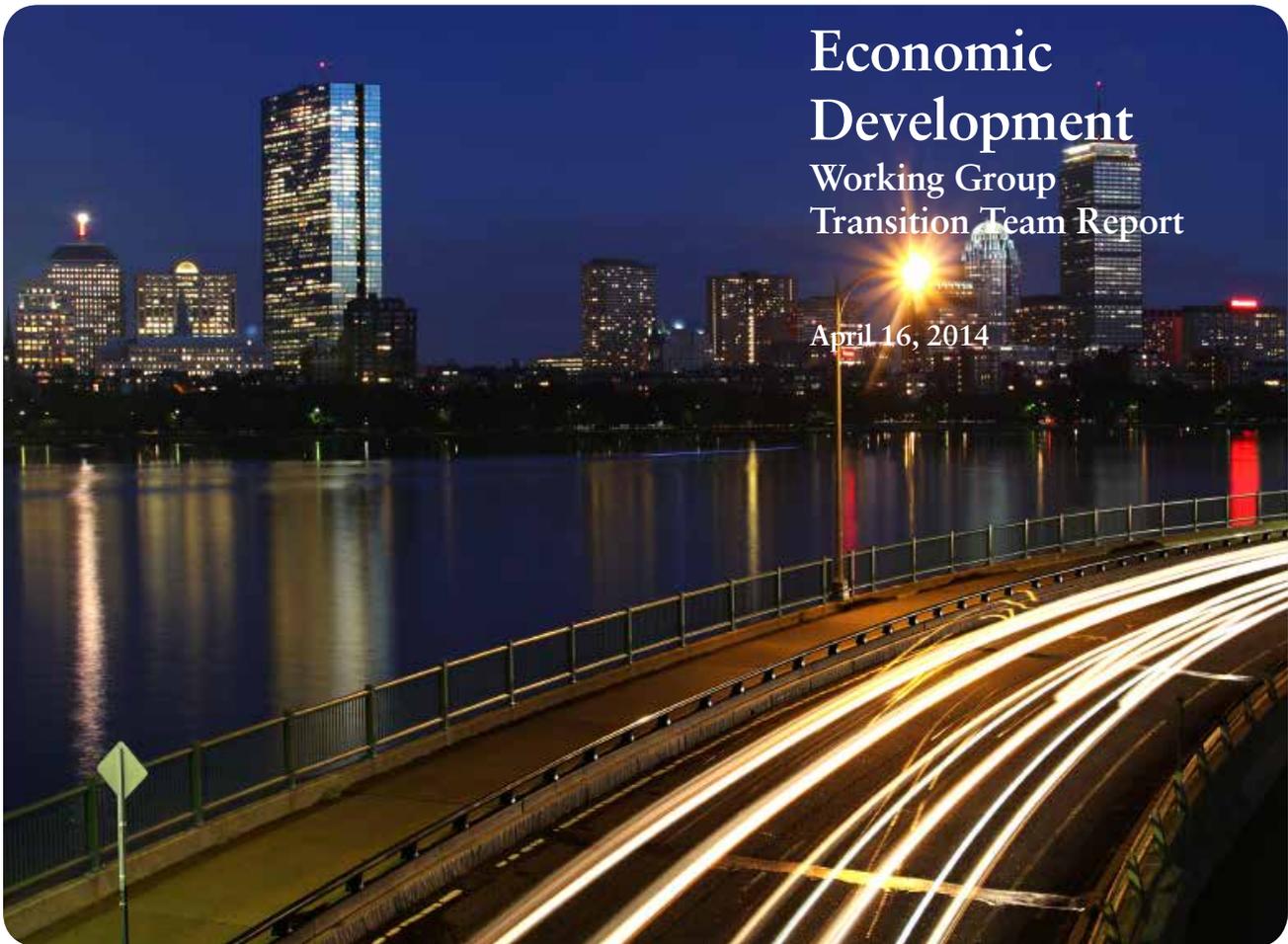


★ MAYOR ★
MARTIN J. WALSH

BOSTON2014
TRANSITION COMMITTEE



Economic
Development
Working Group
Transition Team Report

April 16, 2014

Photos: Kit Pyne





“What can Boston city government do—whether by itself or in partnership with business, labor, civic, or institutional entities—to promote the creation of jobs for residents of all Boston’s neighborhoods and the location of businesses outside the downtown business districts?”

INTRODUCTION

As part of Mayor Martin J. Walsh’s Transition Team Committee, the Economic Development Working Group, co-chaired by Beth Williams of Roxbury Technology and led by Donna Cupelo of Verizon and Pat Moscaritolo of the Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau, discussed and solicited input from the Boston community, residents, and businesses.

THE PROCESS

The economic development team worked within a framework that considered which existing programs and services are successful and would be best to KEEP, which new initiatives or expansions is important to IMPLEMENT, and which DREAMS for which to strive.

Mayor Martin J. Walsh asked the Economic Development Working Group “What can Boston city government do—whether by itself or in partnership with business, labor, civic, or institutional entities—to promote the creation of jobs for residents of all Boston’s neighborhoods and the location of businesses outside the downtown business districts? What can Boston city government do in partnership with others to retain, strengthen, and grow jobs in existing institutions and corporations throughout the City of Boston?”

Representing a cross-section of Boston’s business community – including small business, labor, educational, neighborhood, and not-for-profit institutions—the economic development transition team identified some key themes emerging from input gathered through public hearings and the Boston14.org website. These themes, though not exhaustive, serve as a framework to guide the new administration as it puts forth its policy initiatives related to economic development.

Thriving businesses bring employment and vitality to Boston’s neighborhoods and commercial districts. In order to attract and foster new businesses in our city, the Walsh administration must send a clear message that Boston is a vibrant locale that welcomes businesses of all sizes. Streamlining the permitting process, ensuring interdepartmental coordination, and clearing a direct path for business assistance will convey that Boston, ideally located in today’s global economy, is “open for business.”

We believe each resident of the city of Boston has innate capabilities to achieve success and that there is a responsibility shared among individuals, families, civic institutions,

businesses—large and small—and government to facilitate the development and actualization of these capabilities. We further believe that among government’s many responsibilities is the responsibility to formulate and promote economic development policies founded on principles of equity, access, and opportunity. Economic development policies that encourage sustainable economic growth are important to creating those opportunities.

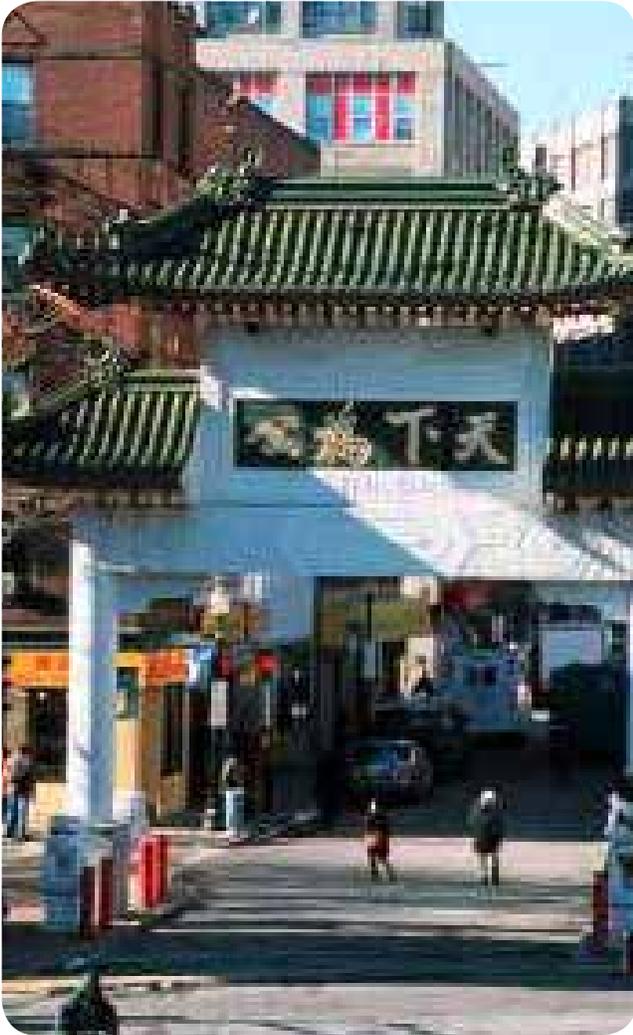
Toward this vision, we have defined our charge to the mayor: develop an agenda to support these beliefs and achieve the ends to which they aspire.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS 1: DEVELOP PATHWAYS TO OVERCOME INCOME & WEALTH DISPARITY AND DISPROPORTIONATE OPPORTUNITY

Boston is one of the most expensive cities and has one of the highest rates of income inequality in the nation. One in five Boston residents lives in poverty. The goal of a sustainable economy providing equity, access, and opportunity for all requires policies and programs that actively and aggressively counter income inequality and promote high-wage growth. Our economy

Photo: Kit Pyne



must not only be competitive, it must be fair. Beyond job creation, we must address job quality. And we must enforce and enhance policies designed to improve the wages and working conditions of the 40% of Boston's workforce currently in low wage jobs.

KEEP

- 1) The City of Boston is already aware of income disparity issues but it must utilize this knowledge in a productive manner. The city must leverage existing knowledge about economic disparities to inform its policy agenda.

IMPLEMENT

- 1) Too many residents struggle to earn enough money to provide for their families. An examination of the current impact and enforcement of the Living Wage ordinance and the feasibility of its expansion will allow Boston to ensure that all residents have access to good jobs that allow them to provide for their loved ones.
- 2) Residents of the city who have minor offenses on their records routinely are passed over for jobs they are fully capable of performing. Developing a strong position on CORI reform and hiring will help economic development in every neighborhood.

DREAM

- 1) Economic development must include not only access to fair and equitable job creation, equitable schools, and business development, but also wealth building strategies for individuals and communities. Create an Office of Financial Empowerment to prioritize resolving poverty issues as a critical issue at the top of every agenda.
- 2) No worker should have to lose wages because of a lack of child care. Ensure that universal child care is available so that Boston's

workforce is always at full strength and its children are cared for. Consideration for competitive grant programs for day care centers that stay open to accommodate multi-work shift workers should be made.

- 3) People from every neighborhood, from every demographic, and from every income level must have access to educational opportunities that prepare them for job opportunities in any industry in which they aspire to work.
- 4) A solid economic foundation must be laid citywide so that this generation thrives. Residents who require financial help need to have the resources available to improve their lives.

FOCUS 2: ESTABLISH A STRONGER CONNECTION BETWEEN EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

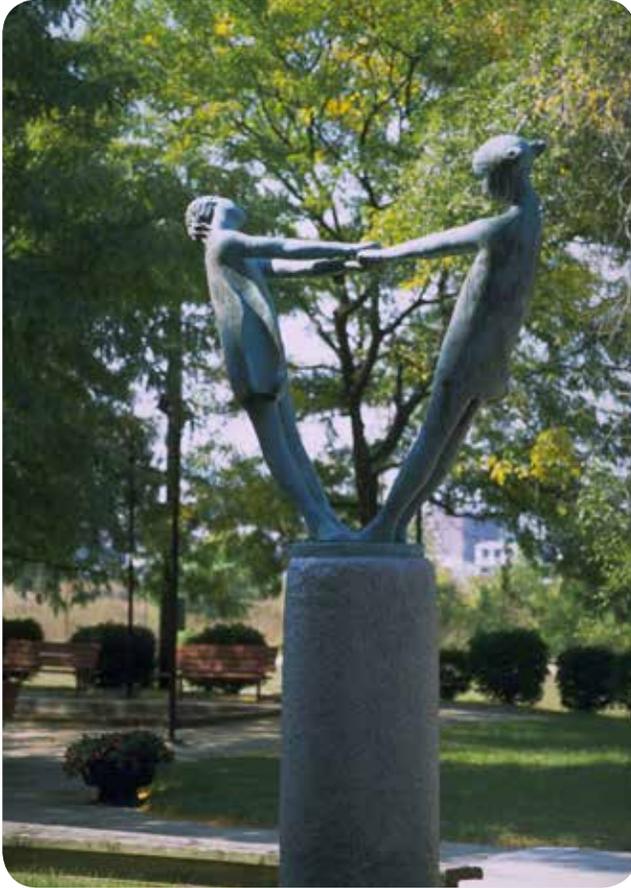
A productive and profitable workforce is Boston's greatest resource as new industries emerge and old ones continue to grow. The city must ensure that educational opportunities and fruitful partnerships are available to provide residents the resources they need to achieve long-term employment and economic security.

KEEP

- 1) Continue the city's support for one-stop career centers and link them to all available assets, including schools, employers, neighborhood centers, etc.
- 2) Career readiness for all youth must become a reality. Continue support for summer job opportunities that will expose students across the city to various sectors.
- 3) Boston's immigrant population has been growing at a faster rate than the rest of the state. The Mayor's Office of New Bostonians is a great tool to assist Boston's immigrant community in becoming active in the social and economic life of the city.
- 4) Continue to support the state STEM plan and its @Scale programs in the City of Boston.

IMPLEMENT

- 1) Transform Madison Park Vocational High School into a national model for vocational and technical education.
- 2) Leverage relationships with Bunker Hill Community College and Roxbury Community College to help train Boston's future workforce.
- 3) Examine, update, and ensure the goals of the Boston Residents Job Policy to reflect the city's changing demographics.
- 4) Connect high schools, vocational schools, and community college programs with employers to link students with industries that stand to benefit from the skills acquired at these



educational facilities.

- 5) Commit to workforce training, re-training, and career pathways for youth and adults in high quality training programs.
- 6) Continue and increase funding for ESL resources connected with training and GED programs that support immigrants' immersion into Boston's economy and diverse workforce.
- 7) The city's economy is a part of the greater Massachusetts economy. Ensure that the city's plans are consistent with the state's economic development plans in order to effectively coordinate and work toward the same goals.

DREAM

- 1) Incorporate the arts as a main component curriculum in public schools grades K-12. Focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) curricula will have long-term benefits for the city and the culture it embodies. Fluency in creativity and visual learning, in addition to math and science, is what a 21st century workforce needs.
- 2) Employers from leading industries in the region know which skills will be needed for workers to succeed in tomorrow's workforce. In order to efficiently train workers, the city should partner with businesses and create employer-driven education and training programs.
- 3) Work with various businesses and corporations around the city to create opportunities for youth and adult internships in different industry fields.
- 4) A well-formed workforce relies on education that extends beyond a high school education. The creation of a bridge program to vocational schools, junior colleges, and four-year bachelor programs will allow residents to continue building career skills.
- 5) Parental involvement in a child's education is a crucial part of success. Public education should be embraced not only in the classroom but also at home. Support more alignment between the Boston Public Schools and parental engagement to benefit all students.

FOCUS 3: SUPPORT BUSINESSES IN BOSTON THROUGH PROGRAMS THAT FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENT FOR GROWTH AND JOB CREATION

As the economy begins to rebound from the recession, Boston still faces challenges in ensuring continued economic growth. By listening to business concerns and partnering with local employers to address administrative and procedural issues, the City of Boston can promote job growth and expansion across the region for businesses of all sizes.

KEEP

- 1) Boston Main Streets should continue as a resource for small businesses to assist in revitalizing neighborhoods and promoting small, locally owned business.
- 2) Permitting costs must remain low so new businesses are attracted to the city and existing businesses can continue expanding.

IMPLEMENT

- 1) Establish an Ombudsperson to assist new and

existing businesses by performing a review of all permitting processes and identifying ways to streamline the permitting process.

- 2) Form an Economic Advisory or Business Council, comprised of large and small business owners and other external stakeholders, who will collaboratively identify and address issues that inhibit future job growth and development opportunities in Boston.
- 3) All too often it takes businesses longer than it should to open. While waiting for all permits, they are spending valuable capital to keep afloat. The establishment of a predictable and streamlined permitting process across all departments will help businesses open their doors faster.
- 4) As a city, promote and support Boston's green economy.
- 5) Boston is not an isolated city; we are surrounded by cities and towns with great universities, hospitals, businesses, and creative economies. In order to further our economic development, we must promote regionalism and link the Boston business community with our neighbors.
- 6) Create a culture of excellent customer service throughout the city to improve the delivery of services for residents and businesses.
- 7) Restructure and strengthen the Minority and Women Business Enterprise Program by streamlining the MWBE certification process and by establishing measurement and reporting mechanisms to ensure compliance.

8) Make Procurement Bids issued by the City of Boston accessible publicly, leverage available technologies that can automate and/or streamline bid notification and review processes, and offer information to small businesses on how to prepare a city bid.

DREAM

1) City funds are limited in nature, but working together with private funds, we can achieve so much more. Joint public/private ventures will allow the city to take its economic development to a new level.

FOCUS 4: ESTABLISH FAIR AND TRANSPARENT POLICIES ON LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

True economic development occurs where land use planning and development and workforce development strategy converge. Land use planning is the key to guiding physical growth that supports expansion of local business, entrepreneurship, and employment. It is also critical to the production of the volume, variety, and range of housing Boston neighborhoods need to grow at every income level. Additionally, it is essential to

creating the kind of mixed-use districts into which modern employers are expanding.

KEEP

1) Maintain the urban planning and design aspects of the current Boston Redevelopment Agency that support responsible growth in the City of Boston.

IMPLEMENT

1) To be successful and support our sustainability goals, Boston's land use planning leaders must thoughtfully coordinate land use planning and development with Boston's network of public improvements and infrastructure including open spaces, public transportation, waterfronts, streets, water, and utilities.

2) Land use planning must continue to engage the design fields involved in development to maintain and improve the high quality of architecture and public realm improvements Bostonians enjoy.

3) Improve transparency of public land use.

DREAM

1) An updated comprehensive plan will help to bind neighborhoods together in terms of vision and actual physical development, make for a more holistic Boston in terms of planning and development, and provide equal opportunity to all neighborhoods in the city.

2) Affordable housing is the cornerstone of a

diverse, thriving community. The city's existing families, workforce, and young residents must have access to more affordable housing in the city in order for our economy to be strong.

FOCUS 5: ESTABLISH AN ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES, SUPPORTS, AND PROMOTES ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurship is emerging as one of the strongest drivers of economic development in Boston and nationally. It will be essential for the strength of Boston's future economy to create a culture that is encouraging, supportive, and incentivizing for existing entrepreneurs and those striving to become entrepreneurs. In light of the tenuousness of today's economy, entrepreneurship offers flexible career choices for new and recent graduates, as well as those in mid-career who are looking for new opportunities.

KEEP

- 1) The innovation ecosystem goes beyond companies themselves. Boston must invest to make sure that the quality of life is such that

we can continue to attract and retain college and university graduates. Citywide investments in transportation and housing, as well as streamlining regulation, will make Boston a more welcoming city for new business.

IMPLEMENT

- 1) Develop and communicate a clear vision for the Seaport Innovation District in South Boston and devise critical enablers to support its progression and success, so that a model may be emulated in other parts of the city. This would include housing, talent acquisition and retention, access to capital, and infrastructure improvements.
- 2) Entrepreneurs flourish within a vibrant ecosystem of peers, mentors, advisors, capital, and help in navigating government requirements. Support start-ups by providing partnerships and linkages, including mentor and networking assistance, as well as encouraging events. Aspiring and seasoned entrepreneurs, investors, mentors, and service providers can meet and collaborate to create more vibrant innovation communities.
- 3) Sales and understanding customer needs are key success factors for start-up companies. Help young companies navigate Boston's RFPs or purchasing requirements where applicable.
- 4) Building a new business requires long hours and hard work. Use the mayor's bully pulpit to encourage Boston's entrepreneurs and make it clear their efforts and contributions to the city are welcomed and appreciated.

DREAM

- 1) By replicating the success of the Seaport Innovation District in other parts of Boston, (such as Roxbury or Allston) and in a manner consistent with neighborhood needs, other communities will have the opportunity to thrive. This innovation district should be scaled locally and connect Boston residents with emerging companies seeking to hire new employees. The city should ensure the vision is clear for those clusters so that the private sector, state and federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations can build that vision into their own strategic plans and support the city's vision.
- 2) Establish public/private partnerships to provide faster transportation links between these new innovation districts within Boston as well as with Cambridge.
- 3) Advocate for improved access to public transportation and funding by the state to support economic growth. As an example, the Fairmont Line has been a great addition to the MBTA and has allowed greater access to public transportation.
- 4) Overhead costs are one of the main reasons many businesses have trouble opening their doors. If the city can help emerging businesses gain access to resources and equipment to help with initial overhead costs, new businesses will be able to employ more residents and contribute to the economic development of the city as a whole.

FOCUS 6: ENHANCE AND EXPAND THE GROWING AND ESSENTIAL ENVIRONMENT OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Boston is a city rich in history and tradition. It is also a city constantly innovating for tomorrow. This is reflected in the changing demographics of its residents and workforce, at world-renowned educational institutions, and within new and evolving industry sectors that fuel the economy. Boston must keep an eye toward the future by not only supporting developments in research and innovation, but also by adopting technologies to deliver first-class city services to the people who live and work here.

KEEP

- 1) Keeping and building on the institutional knowledge that exists in city departments and programs is a great way to ensure basic city services continue to run well.
- 2) Ensure that existing and planned technological advancements that improve interactions among citizens, businesses, and city government are

implemented and maintained.

- 3) More than a third of Boston's population is between ages 20-34, which is the highest proportion of young people in the country. Boston's Onein3 program must be kept and revitalized to make sure that Boston is able to keep the bright young people who make our city so vibrant here.

IMPLEMENT

- 1) Infusing new technology into city services to improve processes will improve access. Base technology and system-design decisions on sound research about what people need and can use effectively, compared against the needs, goals, and constraints of the city of Boston. Working with existing technology companies in the region could facilitate the discovery, implementation, and adoption of technology.
- 2) Little City Halls across the city would make City Hall accessible to an even greater number of people. City services will be more readily available and Office of Neighborhood Services staff could use them to meet with constituents. These centers can be stationed at already existing city buildings such as libraries.

FOCUS 7: RECREATE A ROBUST AND PROGRESSIVE ENVIRONMENT THAT ENHANCES THE ARTS, CULTURE, AND TOURISM INDUSTRIES

Boston is a city that benefits from a number of industries that

drive its economy and, in turn, the region's economy. Among these sectors is the broadly-defined tourism industry. The foundation of Boston's brand or Boston's brand essence as a visitor destination rests on the worldwide reputation of its iconic cultural and historical attractions and venues, and on its proven reputation as a destination that can successfully host major special events and festivals.

While over the past decade the tourism industry has been a robust contributor to Boston's economy and success, competition for visitor spending from destinations across the globe requires a comprehensive response. Boston must create and build strong partnerships among city government, nonprofit cultural organizations, educational institutions, the private sector, and the other cities that surround Boston in order to grow the region's visitor economy.

KEEP

- 1) Boston has a vast treasure of historical sites and cultural institutions. We must continue and increase promotion of historical attractions and market cultural institutions to ensure that Boston remains a top-tier tourist city and premier destination.
- 2) Learning art from a young age will develop

visual and creative learning skills that can be used for a lifetime. We must maintain arts education in the public schools.

IMPLEMENT

- 1) A new, stronger focus on arts and cultural development as a component of economic development will allow the arts to be understood as anchor institutions in Boston.
- 2) Revamp the City of Boston's Film Office website to include online permitting, city services, and information on dining and hotels that benefit from the films shot in Boston. Film production can be a great economic boost for Boston.
- 3) Encourage more music and arts festivals throughout the city and its neighborhoods to bring foot traffic into neighborhoods and spur economic development. Music and arts festivals are a great way to encourage residents of Boston and elsewhere to visit often-overlooked neighborhoods.

DREAM

- 1) Arts organizations have ambitious agendas but often do not have adequate funds. With increased funding for the arts, they will be able to hire, serve, and attract more people in and to Boston.
- 2) Boston is one of the great cities in the United States and should promote itself vigorously throughout the region, country, and world. By launching partnerships with the private sector, state government, and other cities to drive the tourism business to Boston, its neighborhoods, and the region new dollars will be brought to the local economy.

Economic Development Working Group

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- Donna Cupelo, Regional President, Verizon
- Pat Moscaritolo, President & CEO, Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau

Members

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- Gaye Bok, Venture Partner, Excel Venture Management
- Jim Brett, President and CEO, The New England Council
- Ken Casey, Musician and Business Owner
- Gerald Chertavian, Founder & CEO, Year Up
- Jonathan DePina, District Officer of Community Outreach and Workforce Participation/Project Manager, Gilbane Construction
- Brian Doherty, Secretary Treasurer-General Agent, Building and Construction Trades Council of the Metropolitan District
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- Mark Erlich, Executive Secretary Treasurer, New England Regional Council of Carpenters
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Organizational titles and affiliations are provided for identification purposes only.