

## **AN ORDER BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF SUNSETTING URBAN RENEWAL IN THE CITY OF BOSTON UNTIL MARCH 31, 2023**

- WHEREAS: Urban renewal was created as a set of tools for municipalities to address so-called blighted areas by acquiring private property, relocating residents, and clearing away the old buildings to make room for new development and uses; and
- WHEREAS: In practice, low-income communities were targeted for demolition, then replaced with development of new residential and commercial uses benefiting wealthier residents; and
- WHEREAS: Prior uses of urban renewal powers by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) have caused harmful and unnecessary destruction of homes and neighborhoods resulting in unjust social equity outcomes within the City of Boston, most notably in the West End where thousands of immigrant and low-income and working-class residents were unjustly evicted; and
- WHEREAS: The City of Boston is working tirelessly to promote the sound growth and development of its neighborhoods and to provide places for Boston's residents to live, work, and recreate; and
- WHEREAS: The results of this activity have been the creation and preservation of homes and businesses, as well as parks, schools, libraries and other public facilities, leading to Boston's reputation as one of the world's most vibrant and livable cities; and
- WHEREAS: The City’s application of the urban renewal tools in recent decades has created and preserved nearly ten thousand (10,000) units of affordable housing, creating and protecting open space, providing new opportunities for many of Boston's residents, enabling public-private partnerships, and bolstering planning efforts; and
- WHEREAS: The City of Boston maintains fourteen (14) active urban renewal plans originally approved by the BRA, the Boston City Council, the Mayor of Boston and the Department of Housing and Community Development, which plans were most recently extended for six (6) years in August 2016; and
- WHEREAS: Since the 2016 extension, the BRA has facilitated a community engagement process that has garnered input on the future of urban

renewal, and has made relevant urban renewal documents accessible to the public through the zoning viewer; and

**WHEREAS:** The BRA has identified ten (10) plan areas that could benefit from a temporary extension of the use of the urban renewal tools and protections, and opportunities exist to advance positive community-oriented outcomes, in partnership with the City and community stakeholders; and

**WHEREAS:** By their provisions and previous extensions granted, the plans, the protections established from responsible use of the urban renewal tools, and the powers conferred therein will terminate on April 22, 2022 unless so extended; and

**WHEREAS:** An expiration of ten (10) of the fourteen (14) active urban renewal plans on April 22, 2022 without further discussion could have unintended negative consequences for some community members in the larger plan areas with a high prevalence of Land Disposition Agreements; and

**WHEREAS:** The expiration of four (4) urban renewal plans on April 22, 2022 is appropriate, as the original intent and purpose of these plans has been fulfilled; and

**WHEREAS:** The BRA seeks an eleven (11) month extension for ten (10) of the active urban renewal plans that are set to expire on April 22, 2022; and

**WHEREAS:** Each plan includes within its provisions the ability to modify said termination date and extend said plan; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

**ORDERED:** That the City Council does hereby approve the extension of the term of the urban renewal plans listed below, to March 31, 2023:

1. Central Business District South Station Urban Renewal Plan,
2. Fenway Urban Renewal Plan,
3. Campus High School Urban Renewal Plan,
4. South Cove Urban Renewal Plan,
5. Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan,
6. Downtown Waterfront-Faneuil Hall Urban Renewal Plan,
7. Government Center Urban Renewal Plan,
8. South End Urban Renewal Plan,
9. Washington Park Urban Renewal Plan, and
10. Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan.