

Economic Analysis and Planning Report

Massachusetts Convention Center Authority Facilities



March 2025

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Boston Aerial | Photo credit: Signature Boston

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01

Executive Statement

To:
Executive Office for Administration and Finance (EOAF; A&F)

The Pinnacle Team is pleased to submit the 2024 Economic Analysis and Planning Report.

Background and Objectives:

The Economic Analysis and Planning Report, commissioned by the Executive Office for Administration and Finance (EOAF), was initiated in July 2024. Research and analysis were completed by October 2024 and the report finalized in December 2024. The objective of this Study was to provide the EOAF with an independent, comprehensive assessment of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authorities (MCCA). This assessment involved in-depth reviews and analysis of key issues involving all MCCA facilities with attention to financial performance, bench marking, competitiveness, capital planning, sustainability and decarbonization, climate resilience, community engagement, emergency response and transportation. The findings and recommendations developed by the Project Team provide options that can be considered by EOAF but also, and equally importantly, by the MCCA Board and its executive leadership in developing an updated strategic vision for these vital assets.

There are of course tradeoffs and choices to be made among the findings outlined in this report, particularly in considering the relative merits of expansion options for the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC) and how the parcels under the control of the MCCA in the Seaport are linked to decisions about BCEC’s future. The updated data and information in this report are intended to aid state, municipal and convention center officials, as well as their business and community partners, in weighing these factors, and to help them strengthen relationships across government so that MCCAs priorities are aligned with broader strategies for economic development.

We thank the Executive Office for engaging our team in doing this important work and commend both EOAF and MCCA officials for their support throughout its development – the thoughtful approach taken by all involved bodes well for the future of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

A&F retained the Pinnacle Team to provide an economic analysis and planning report for the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC), MassMutual Center (MMC), John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center (HCC), Boston Common Garage (BCG), and other development parcels. Collectively, these assets (BCEC, MMC, HCC, and BCG) are referred to as the "MCCA Facilities." These facilities are owned and operated by the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA or "Authority"), a public entity established under Chapter 190 of the Acts of 1982, as amended.

As directed by A&F, the Economic Analysis and Planning Project encompassed multiple objectives related to the MCCA and its impact on the state's economy. Key objectives are noted to the right.

Key Objectives:

- **Industry Analysis:** Assessing current and projected industry conditions affecting MCCA facilities, offerings, revenue, and expenses.
- **Customer Priorities:** Analyzing the needs and priorities of current and future customers to enhance MCCA's competitiveness in the convention and meetings industry.
- **Economic Impact:** Evaluating the economic impact of MCCA facilities on host communities and the state, with consideration for environmental justice, cultural enrichment, and tourism-related businesses.
- **Role Maximization:** Exploring strategies to maximize MCCA's role as an economic driver, employer, and ambassador for Massachusetts.
- **Community Engagement:** Developing strategies to engage diverse communities and promote economic development, particularly in host communities.
- **Sustainability and Resilience:** Assessing decarbonization and climate resilience measures, along with emergency preparedness.
- **Transportation:** Analyzing transportation options and infrastructure to support MCCA facilities.
- **Leading by Example:** Establishing sustainability standards, including decarbonization goals, climate resilience measures, community engagement, and emergency response.
- **Telling the Massachusetts Story:** Reviewing communication strategies to promote Massachusetts through MCCA facilities.
- **Impact Analysis:** Assessing MCCA’s employment policies, neighborhood impacts, procurement of services, and contributions to culture and tourism.
- **Competitiveness:** Evaluating MCCA's competitiveness in the convention and meetings industry and its impact on Massachusetts’s economy relative to similar facilities in other states.
- **Opportunity Expansion:** Analyzing efforts to expand opportunities for small and diverse businesses with MCCA facilities.
- **Evaluation of Previous Analyses:** Reviewing 15 Authority reports on MCCA Facilities for continued relevance.

Executive Statement

Analysis and Report

Due to the project’s complexity, our Team included specialists with expertise in each objective area. This work involved site inspections, the review of thousands of pages of project related documents, hundreds of interviews with business leaders, general managers of key Boston Hotels, critical organizations and associations directly linked to the MCCA, focus groups with key stakeholders, and numerous meetings with operations, sales, and leadership members. Extensive coordination within our Team was essential to ensure a comprehensive and insightful Final Report.

The Final Report is organized into five chapters, with an appendix of supporting materials also provided:
Chapter 1: Holistic Findings on Affordability, Financial Stability, Community Engagement and Opportunity, Telling the Massachusetts Story, Leading by Example, Competitiveness, Impact, and Relevance of Previous Reports.

- Chapter 2: Boston Convention & Exhibition Center
- Chapter 3: John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center
- Chapter 4: MassMutual Center
- Chapter 5: Boston Common Garage

Key Findings:

For a detailed understanding of the Project Team's comprehensive recommendations, readers are encouraged to review the full Final Report. A summary of key findings is as follows:

MCCA Facilities Deliver Effective Performance

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) plays a pivotal role in managing Massachusetts’ top event venues, including the BCEC, HCC, MMC and the BCG, driving substantial tourism and economic benefits. Recognized for its strong organizational structure, effective management, and high customer satisfaction, the MCCA has developed a strong reputation and competitive standing in the national market. Economically, MCCA’s impact is considerable, generating over \$1.15 billion in direct and indirect economic effects in FY24, with projections of exceeding \$1.8 billion by FY2034. Additionally, MCCA supported the local hospitality market by driving over 700,000 hotel room nights last year across its two key markets. Convention Center business is essential to elevating Boston’s standing amongst the nation’s top-performing markets in occupancy and Average Daily Rate (ADR). While the sales arm, Signature Boston, has depth, experience and shows strength with a solid business pipeline, there is a need for increased support at the MMC in Springfield to realize its full potential.

Despite these successes, MCCA faces challenges with rapidly rising operating costs, which have increased by 127% since FY2019 compared to a modest 2.4% revenue growth over the same period, placing strain on its Convention Center Fund (CCF). Additionally, post-COVID capital investment demands necessitate a proactive, long-term project management approach, including bundling projects over a 4–5-year period to enhance efficiency. Collaboration with key stakeholders and improved internal reporting systems are also essential to track performance accurately and hold managers accountable. Further, a stronger focus on supporting some quantity of small, locally oriented events could enhance the MCCA’s community impact. Addressing these strategic areas will help the MCCA sustain growth, optimize resources, and continue to drive Massachusetts’ tourism and hospitality economy effectively.

Convention Center Fund (CCF) Requires Active Management.

As of July 2024, the CCF holds a balance of \$510.2 million, with capital investments for deferred maintenance and upgrades projected to increase from an average of \$23.5 million annually (FY16-FY24) to around \$111 million annually (FY25-FY35) across Baseline, Upside, and Downside scenarios. This increase addresses aging facilities and past underinvestment, assuming all proposed projects are funded but does not include the new projects identified in this report that addresses key energy, decarbonization and fuel switching efforts. We recommend you consider annual updates to the 10-year financial outlook to facilitate MCCA and Board oversight, a five-year full re-evaluation of capital project moving the next scheduled update forward one-year to FY25, focusing on the priorities to optimize maintenance and asset life, and a bundled project management approach using frameworks like Design-Bid-Build or CMAR. Funding that supports the Community and DEI Initiatives (combined at \$3.0 million per fiscal year) in addition to setting aside funds for Booking Incentives to target low demand and new events supporting Massachusetts Economic Development objectives are built into the annual MCCA funding assumptions from the CCF.

Economic Impact Will Continue as the MCCA facilities Generate Substantial Benefits, With our Without Expansion.

The BCEC, HCC, and MMC have significantly impacted Massachusetts' economy, with FYE 2024 seeing \$1.15 billion in direct, indirect, and induced spending, supporting nearly 11,500 jobs and generating \$61.1 million in tax revenue. As event volumes return to pre-pandemic levels, aided by the fully re-opening of the HCC, total spending is projected to exceed \$1.8 billion by FY2034. Expanding the BCEC would add significantly to the Economic Impact totals – a full expansion including a new expo hall and ballroom is projected to generate an additional impact exceeding \$300 million of incremental annual spending, while a ballroom only expansion which would generate incremental annual spending in the \$25 to \$30 million range.

Executive Statement (continued)

Community Engagement and Diversity, Equity (DEI) and Inclusion

Recent improvements have been made in communications to support community engagement and DEI initiatives. Our research, however, indicates that the MCCA lacks strong external relationships with the business community, state and city agencies, and local communities due to the lack of ongoing communications. Without this alignment, the economic impacts of the MCCA are not being shared with the businesses and residents of Massachusetts. To address these issues, we offer specific ideas to re-establish important relationships, including the creation of a dedicated team to collaborate with the different groups as a way to provide economic opportunities for MA residents and businesses. We also suggest the idea of creating designated convening spaces at each MCCA facility to showcase our assets. Lastly, a renewed emphasis on the “role of art,” leveraging local culture and partnering with art institutions to create installations both inside and outside the facilities will help to brand Massachusetts and tell our story.

Over the past year, a number of strategies to address the DEI issues at the MCCA have been initiated, including the hiring of a DEI professional to take over HR and a partnership with the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA) around procurement. However, MCCA still has far more work ahead to change the internal culture. The new Executive Director will need to address the fact that the enterprise must evolve to move DEI efforts from good intentions to achieving measurable results. It will be essential to attract leaders who champion DEI beyond the performative and also understand the business value of a diverse workforce. This collective effort will help establish DEI as a core component of the organization, driving lasting and meaningful impact.

MCCA can Lead by Example

The MCCA has the potential to be a frontrunner in sustainability and resilience, all while meeting its economic objectives. Central to its sustainability efforts are energy efficiency but there is more potential to develop comprehensive strategies that also emphasize decarbonizing operations, lowering embodied carbon, building climate resilience, creating healthy and equitable spaces, and engaging in community stewardship on a daily basis, as well as during emergencies.

With a commitment to build on the successful work of the MCCA staff, provide additional resources and staff needed to assist the MCCA's core team, and extend the necessary resources that is coupled with an effective plan, the MCCA is positioned for success. In addition to the recommended improvements for sustainability and resilience highlighted in this report, the MCCA has a significant opportunity to serve the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and lead by example.

Capital Planning

Each of the four facilities share different needs that are based on their inherent uses, schedule for deferred capital and modernization, and overall demands that respond to ROI and economic impact. In general, each focus on improving sustainability & landscape, modernizing wayfinding and digital signage with ROI opportunities, and key operational improvements that advances the efficiency of facility functions. As all are occupied buildings, capital improvements may impact operations, further coordination with staff and event planning will be required.

As some capital planning is already built into the CCF, there are other projects that will need to allocate resources that will need to be planned as an additional expense. Each facility highlights areas for improvements and the distinction between costs borne within the CCF and those as an additional budget requirement.



BCEC is Well Positioned to Sustain Its Success But Will Operate At a Loss and Will Need Capital For Deferred Maintenance and Sustainability.

Praised for its modern, expansive space and cutting-edge facilities, the BCEC has been recognized as a top venue for international conventions and trade shows, boosting Boston's economy through tourism and hospitality. Serving as a catalyst for the Seaport's transformation, the BCEC helped establish the area as a vibrant hub of commerce, culture, and innovation. The BCEC customers reported high levels of satisfaction with their overall experience, it is competitive with its benchmarks in terms of meeting and exhibit space, as well is in its total number of meeting rooms, and it is a vital contributor to Boston's and Massachusetts' economy, generating significant direct and indirect revenue for the City and State. While the impact of Covid caused the facility to shut down, following the pandemic, the facility experienced a strong recovery, with revenues currently exceeding 2019's results. The BCEC is expected to operate at a loss throughout the forecast period due primarily to increases and labor, and operating expenses. Additionally, the BCEC is aging, and it will need significant capital to remain competitive and to achieve sustainability and become carbon neutral.

Executive Statement (continued)

BCEC Expansion Has Options

The BCEC has undergone multiple expansion plans over the past decade to boost hosting capacity, revenue for the MCCA and the Convention Center Fund, and stimulate regional economic growth. Full expansion program was provided by Signature Boston and MCCA to include 180,000 square feet of exhibit space, a 75,000 square-foot ballroom, and 40,000 – 50,000 square feet of additional meeting space to attract more citywide events and optimize the event calendar. Although factors such as high exhibit hall occupancy indicate potential success, limited hotel availability in the Seaport poses a significant challenge. The Project Team suggests consideration for two expansion options. Full expansion is only advised if hotel capacity and room block commitments on MCCA-owned land are increased. The Project Team suggests expanding the exhibit and meeting spaces, contingent on hotel growth, while supporting the ballroom addition for community use without requiring more hotel inventory. The estimated costs for the ballroom only is estimated to be \$500M. This option includes 20,000 SF of convener space for the Community. The economic impact for this option is in the range of just over \$395 million over a 10-year period. The costs for the full expansion are estimated to be \$1.9B to \$2B. Modeling of the MCCA’s financial obligations against projected CCF available balances suggests that to afford the full expansion, careful decisions will be needed on spending to address the deferred maintenance, one-time, ongoing and proposed capital projects identified in this study, particularly those related to sustainability, climate resilience and other capital initiatives. Bond financing will be necessary to fund any expansion option.

MCCA-owned properties (lots C,D and E) adjacent to BCEC, while not currently providing public-facing functions, were acquired with the intention of supporting the future strategic vision for BCEC as it evolved and developed alongside neighboring communities and the regional economy. These parcels offer development opportunities, but decisions about their future should be made consistent with a long-term strategy for BCEC; whether and how it expands, and whether additional hotel capacity may be needed to support its growth.

The Hynes Convention Center – Impacted by Operational Uncertainty – Is Set to Regain Prominence Following a Significant Renovation Program.

The Hynes Convention Center is well-suited to hosting medium-sized conventions, trade shows, and corporate events, known for its high service standards and robust technology infrastructure. While customer satisfaction is generally high, there is room for improvements in facilities and operations. In FY 2019, revenues reached \$17.1 million, and after the pandemic, they rebounded to \$16.4 million in FY 2023. Unfortunately, revenue fell to \$12.7 million in FY 2024 due to the "stop sell" issued in the fall of 2019 thru the fall of 2022 amid the potential sale discussions. FY 2024 ended with a net loss of (\$1.8) million, driven by closures for deferred maintenance and increased labor and contract service expenses. The Hynes is projected to become profitable by FY 2033 through increased revenues and more stable expense management. Achieving this, however, requires a substantial capital investment, estimated at \$313 million over 11 years, to address deferred maintenance and ensure that the aging facility remains competitive. These significant investments are essential to sustain the Hynes' role as a premier convention venue.

The Mass Mutual Center Has Potential for Growth with the Implementation of the Master Plan

Located in downtown Springfield, MA, the Mass Mutual Center (MMC) is a unique facility with a dynamic program, featuring an arena for sports events, concerts, and performances, a large exhibition hall for trade shows, and ballrooms with meeting spaces for a wide array of events. The facility generated over \$2.5 million in FY24—the highest revenue in MMC history—yet several critical issues need to be addressed. First, executing the Master Plan and addressing deferred capital improvements are essential for the facility to remain competitive locally and regionally. Second, operational challenges (outlined in this report) must be resolved to enhance communications, marketing, and profitability. Finally, strategic collaboration with local authorities is necessary to boost Springfield's overall appeal. Addressing these factors is essential for the MMC to remain a viable venue and contribute to Springfield's economic vitality.

The Boston Common Garage Remains a Well-Managed Operation with Opportunities for Revenue Growth.

The Boston Common Garage plays a vital role for both the City and the State, generating approximately \$12 million in annual revenue (FY24), with projections reaching \$13.8 million by 2035. While the facility is expected to remain profitable, profit margins are projected to decline from 81% in 2019 to 72%, primarily due to anticipated increases in labor-related costs. The BCG is an important revenue-generating asset for the Commonwealth and a source of working capital for Boston Common, we recommend that the BCG remain under the MCCA portfolio.

Boston Convention Marketing Center (BCMC)

The Boston Convention Marketing Center (BCMC) is a joint effort of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority and Meet Boston to market and sell the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, and The Lawn On D. The BCMC is your single point of contact for event requirement submissions, hotel room blocks, facility contracts, and site visits.

Signature Boston

Signature Boston is the name for Boston’s convention and meetings experience and includes the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA), Boston Convention Marketing Center (BCMC), and our partners in Boston’s hospitality community.

The Report refers to Signature Boston as the sales and marketing entity.

Closing

Our team is grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Commonwealth’s economic advancement. We believe our analysis is thorough and that implementing the suggestions herein will lead to more effective policies and planning. Our research and Final Report include numerous findings, and options, and the Pinnacle Team remains available for further analysis and support with implementation as needed.

02

Affordable and Financially Sustainable

This section provides an overview of the Convention Center Fund (CCF) and detailed analysis relative to historical and future projections.

The CCF has an available balance of \$510.2 million as of July 2024. Capital investment for deferred maintenance and upgrades have been identified with projected capital spending increasing from an annual average of \$23.5 million (FY16-FY24) to the range \$111 million (FY25-FY35) under the three modeling scenarios (Baseline, Upside and Downside). This surge of spending stems primarily from aging facilities along with past underinvestment. Modeling of projections assume all proposed projects are funded.

Key Findings:

- Implement annual updates to the 10-year outlook for the MCC Fund, capital and other deductions so planning can be monitored by the MCCA and shared with the MCCA Board and Commonwealth Department of Administration and Finance
- Maintain a long-term planning approach for capital projects, conducting a comprehensive re-evaluation every five years to set priorities for the next five-year period. This approach recognizes the maintenance team's efforts in extending and optimizing equipment performance to reach full end-of-life, and establishes updated priorities for each facility. The financial model assumes that 100% of the projects identified as deferred by MCCA Consultants will be completed within the 11-year outlook, in line with the suggested project schedules.
- Modify the approach to project release and management by bundling multiple projects under a Project Management framework. Options to consider include Design-Bid-Build or Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) delivery methods. Additionally, MCCA may need to evaluate current staffing levels and potentially increase personnel to manage projects effectively.
- Establish a portion of the Fund to support incentives for groups to entice bookings in soft periods (Q1 and Q4), to be approved by a sub-group comprised of key MCCA leadership and select Board members. This fund could be established using savings between the actual needs of the MCCA and the \$28 million funding cap allowable in the Fund documents. Target \$5 million level within 2 years of the MCC Fund increase and with priority to funding first the Community Fund has been fully funded
- Establish Funding for Community and related initiatives at \$3.0 million per year.

MCCA Overview & Convention Center Fund

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) oversees the State’s major convention venues: The Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC), John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, MassMutual Center (MMC) in Springfield, and Boston Common Parking Garage. The MCCA plays a key role in Massachusetts’ tourism and event industries, focusing on the following:

- **Economic Impact:** The MCCA drives economic activity by hosting conventions, trade shows, and large events that attract visitors from across the country and internationally. This stimulates local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and other service industries.
- **Tourism Promotion:** By facilitating major events and conventions, the MCCA helps promote Massachusetts as a premier destination for both business and leisure tourism.
- **Venue Management:** The MCCA is responsible for ensuring the efficient operation and maintenance of its venues. This includes overseeing day-to-day operations, managing event logistics, and ensuring high standards of service.
- **Revenue Generation:** The MCCA generates significant operational revenue, contributing to the state’s economy through its venues. It also manages parking facilities and generates profits that help fund its operations and reinvestment in infrastructure.
- **Capital Projects and Long-term Planning:** The MCCA oversees capital improvements to its venues, ensuring that the facilities remain competitive in attracting major events. It collaborates with state agencies and private partners on these projects.

Convention Center Fund

The Convention Center Fund (CCF) was created through the Convention Center Act, a key piece of legislation passed by the Massachusetts General Court (state legislature). This act laid the foundation for a dedicated financial resource established to support the operations, maintenance, and capital improvements of the convention centers in Massachusetts. The fund is primarily supported by a mix of revenue sources including Hotel Occupancy Tax, Tourism-Related Taxes and State Appropriations.

The fund is primarily used to:

- **Support Convention Center Operations:** It finances the daily operations of convention centers, such as the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC) and the Hynes Convention Center, ensuring they are properly staffed, maintained, and equipped to attract large events.
- **Promote Tourism and Economic Development:** By helping convention centers host national and international conventions, trade shows, and other large-scale events, the fund stimulates tourism and brings revenue to local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and retail shops.
- **Finance Capital Improvements:** The fund also supports renovations, upgrades, and expansions to convention facilities to ensure they remain competitive and capable of attracting large, high-profile events.
- **Cover Debt Service:** The fund helps service the debt on bonds issued for the construction or improvement of these convention centers.

The MCCA is responsible for administering the funds and ensuring that the resources are used effectively to support the state's convention center infrastructure. The establishment of this fund has played a critical role in enabling Massachusetts to develop and maintain world-class convention facilities that attract events and visitors, thereby boosting the local economy. MCCA has significantly reduced operating losses since FY2017, achieving excellent results in FY2023. These efforts are contributing to the improvement in the MCC Fund balances available to invest back into the facilities and future initiatives.

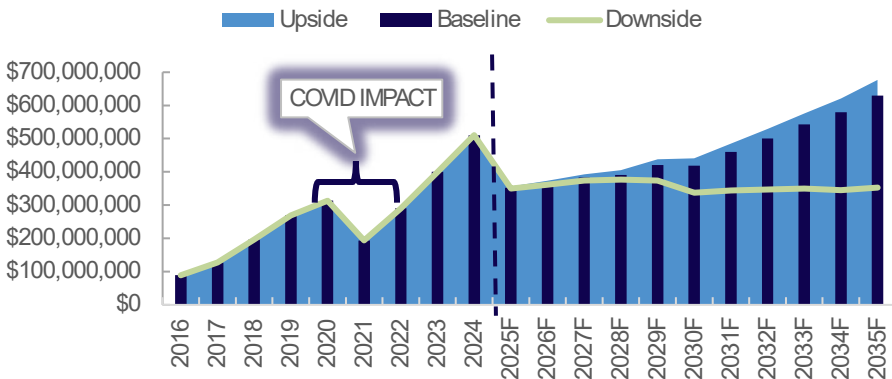
Convention Center Fund (continued)

The financial modeling conducted for this analysis considered three scenarios: Baseline, Upside, and Downside. The project team collaborated with MCCA and coordinated with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts A&F team to develop all projections. The Downside scenario reflects a significant revenue adjustment in FY 2029 and FY 2030, accounting for potential unforeseen market impacts. All scenarios reflect improvement in the MCC Fund when compared to pre – covid period.

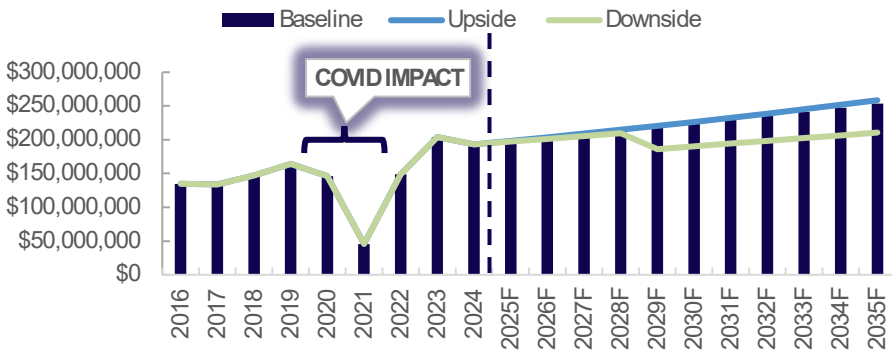
Forecasted available fund balance reflected in the accompanying chart represent the net MCC Funds projected after deducting the annual bond payment, full disbursement to MCCA for operational costs, including for DEI and Community initiatives proposed in this report, and \$150M for bond debt and program reserves.

As of January 2024, there was \$397.2 million in bond debt with \$56.7 million in annual payments from the BCEC’s construction. The MCC Fund had an available balance of \$510.2 million as of July 2024. Capital investment for deferred maintenance and upgrades have been identified with projected capital spending increasing from an annual average of \$23.5 million (FY16-FY24) to the range \$111 million (FY25-FY35) under the three modeling scenarios (Baseline, Upside and Downside). This surge of spending stems primarily from aging facilities along with past underinvestment. Modeling of projections assume all projects are funded.

FORECASTED AVAILABLE FUND BALANCE: BASELINE, UPSIDE, DOWNSIDE

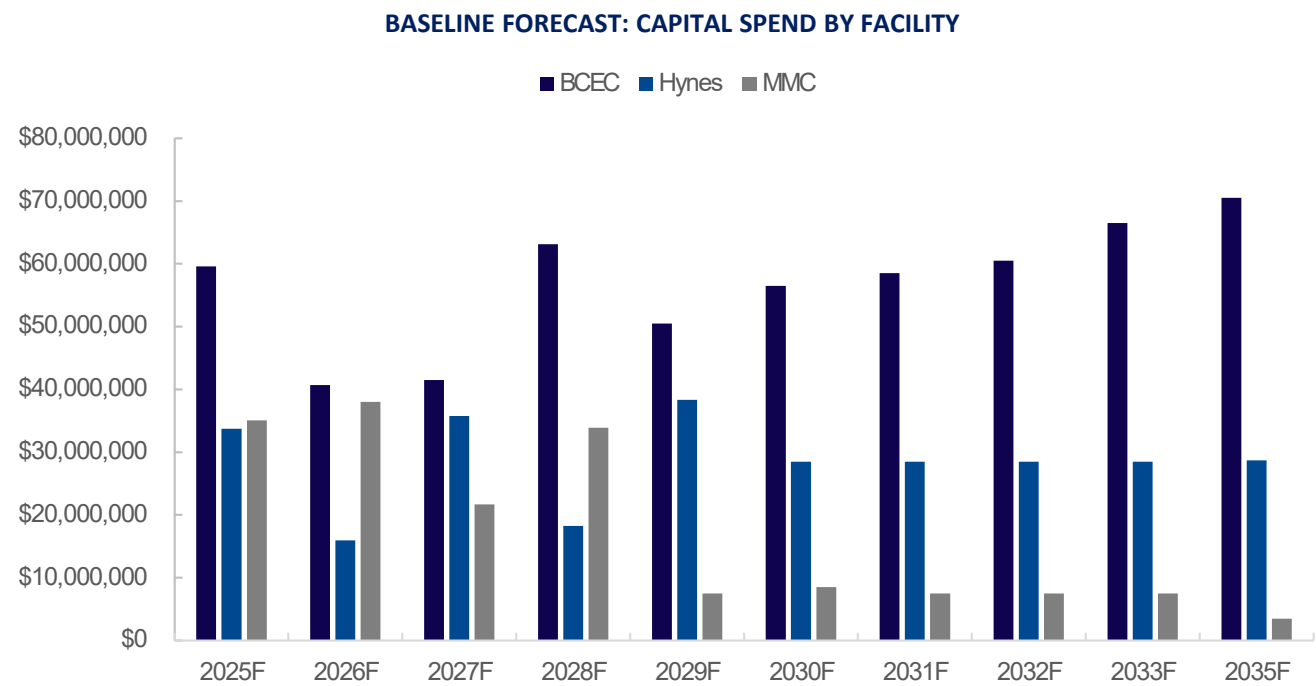


FORECASTED MCC FUND REVENUES: BASELINE, UPSIDE, DOWNSIDE



Over the 11-year period FY25-FY35, MCC Fund revenues are estimated to be just under \$2.5 billion in the Baseline model, an average of \$225 million annually. Capital spending during this period is estimated at \$1.22 billion due to previously noted capital needs of \$938 million of just deferred capital projects. Spending is spread with BCEC at 52.9%, Hynes at 25.7%, MMC at 14.7%, Boston Common Garage at 5.7% and Wage reimbursements at 1% under the Baseline scenario.

Capital Spend



Annual funding for MCCA expenses is currently capped at \$28 million. This cap will need to be increased. The last adjustment to this funding limit was made in 2018, as annual expense obligations have risen quickly post-covid and are projected to continue increasing into the future. In addition to the current annual funding requirements, there are new initiatives factored into the use of this available funding. Our proposed approach is that these initiatives be budgeted through the annual budget program, approved by the MCCA Board and funded as part of managing the budget. Annual growth is forecasted in all modeled scenarios at a conservative 2% year-over-year adjustment but to be based on CPI, following review with the Commonwealth A&F team.

This report outlines key new initiatives for consideration by the Project Team to help the MCCA become more competitive, increase revenue during the off-season, support environmental efforts, and establish new community connections—all essential to the long-term success of the MCCA’s mission and that of the Commonwealth.

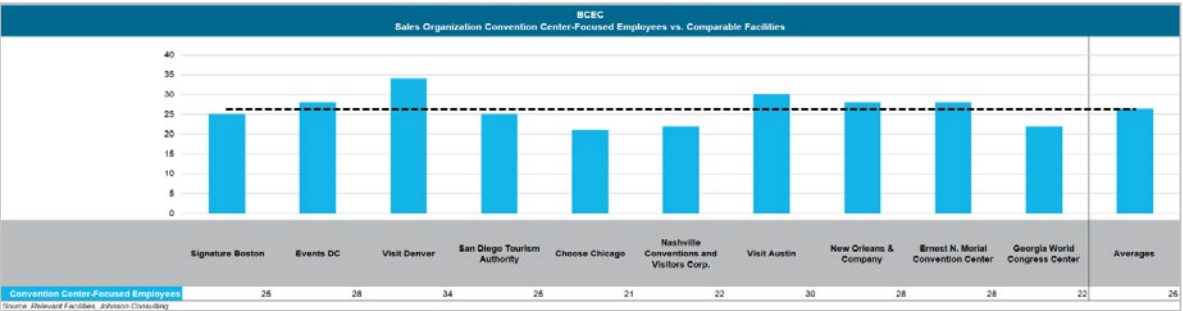
The MCC Fund projections for the next 10 years should be updated annually by MCCA Finance leadership in collaboration with the A&F Department to ensure funds are effectively tracked and available to meet the organization’s needs. This long-term outlook will serve as a valuable planning tool for the MCCA Board, facilitating coordination among key stakeholders and ensuring cash flow is allocated appropriately, allowing the MCCA to focus on business operations.

BCG Capital Spend: Baseline	
Year	Spend
2025F	\$1,300,000
2026F	\$1,000,000
2027F	\$2,500,000
2028F	\$1,000,000
2029F	\$2,200,000
2030F	\$41,900,000
2031F	\$1,200,000
2032F	\$7,200,000
2033F	\$3,000,000
2034F	\$2,700,000
2035F	\$4,900,000

Sales Team Structure

Sales Team Structure & Opportunities

Currently, the BCMC has three commissioned teams: Citywide Convention Sales Team, Event & Media Sales Team, and Hotel Relations. Total commission is based on roomnights, food and beverage, number of events and need period bookings. Overall, Signature Boston has 25 convention-center focused employees, in line with key comparable cities noted below.



Focusing on Emerging Industries: We highly suggest an industry-focused team/individual focused on the key industries as defined in the Economic Development Plan, including AI, Climatic, and Advanced Manufacturing and Robotics. Industry efforts should be focused across all three venues and can be structured as one new person, as well as distribute booking goals across key sellers with a focus on the Events Team. Specific metrics should be created to track the progress of events by industry and used in the incentive structure.

Merging Meet & Signature Boston: Meet Boston is a separate not-for-profit, membership-driven sales and marketing organization. While similarly focused on driving meetings and conventions, they focus on hotel-specific initiatives rather than the MCCA centers. In conversations with customers, hoteliers, and other key stakeholders in the market, there is confusion and lack of clarity of each organization’s roles and a history of separate sales efforts. This lack of coordination leads to duplicative efforts when it comes to prospecting, marketing, and attending trade shows. Merging the two organizations at least within the context of the same brand umbrella “Meet Boston” will streamline operations, improve client interactions and clear up market confusion. Improved communication could lead to better alignment and more effective booking strategies. It is our understanding that Signature Boston is currently in the process of a re-branding exercise. Consolidation under the “Meet Boston” brand should be considered prior to introducing yet another naming convention to the marketplace.

In 2023, the second-largest source of revenue was the MCCA at over \$6.7M. A small portion is retained to support Meet Boston’s convention services and destination marketing programs, and the remaining is passed back to the BCMC for their use. For the FY24 Budget, the BCMC was budgeted to retain \$6.4M, of which \$3.9M was Personnel costs.

	FY2023	FY2024
Boston Convention Marketing Center	\$6,028,000	\$6,435,000
Meet Boston Convention Services Program	\$897,000	\$1,017,200
Meet Boston Destination Advertising & Promotions	\$275,000	\$308,562
Total	\$7,200,000	\$7,760,762

Connecting Boston & Springfield: The selling organizations between the BCMC and the MassMutual Center (“MMC”) are disconnected. While customers looking to host events in Boston have a different size and spending profile than the Springfield customer, there are opportunities and efficiencies that could be created through increased collaboration. We suggest increased connection between the MMC’s sales efforts in the BCMC. Specifically, the MCCA should focus on implementing a formal tracking of leads and referrals with sales incentives and the sharing of CRM tools to better coordinate communication amongst customers, particularly amongst State associations and regional companies.

Sales Team Structure (continued)

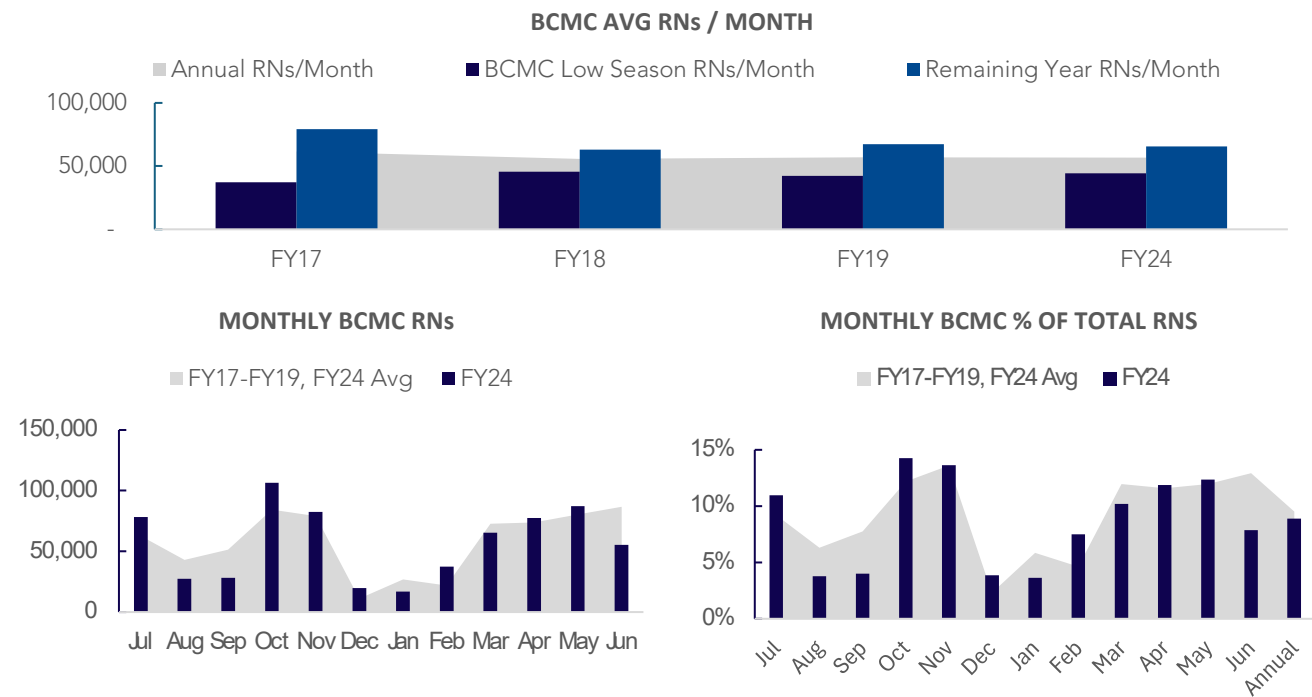
Proposed Sales Team Initiatives

Strategic Planning Sessions: There are numerous agencies within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts focused on meetings and conventions and the resulting economic impact. Holding annual strategic planning sessions will ultimately align resources, uncover emerging industries, and align economic resources to target opportunities. Organization to be involved include Mass Lodging Association, Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism, Meet Boston, Department of Economic Development, MMC Leadership, and MCCA Leadership.

Improved collaboration across these entities will have a direct benefit to the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the sharing of departmental research and insights, supplemental marketing support, and increased engagement and alignment among the Regional Tourism Centers.

Rebates / Incentives: Common feedback from the hotel community was the increased need of support and lack of pricing flexibility during the offseason. The two Boston centers, particularly the BCEC, have high off-season occupancy, but these events in general have a lower production of roomnights. When transient hotel demand is lower in these months, group demand plays an integral role in establishing a base of roomnights to reduce swings in hotel operations. To help off-season room night production, the BCMC should identify need periods and conduct a replacement strategy for events that need to be shifted to optimize economic impact.

To incentivize off-season bookings, a rebate/incentive structure for groups that reduce their overall cost of the event would be suggested. This program should not replace the TDMD Program in place at Meet Boston, but rather supplement. By setting aside funds for all three facilities to “buy” offseason business, where hotel availability is greatest, greater economic impact can be generated.



Low Season: November through March
Source: STR, BCMC | Compiled by CHMWarnick and Pinnacle Advisory Group

Sales Team Structure & Room Block Participation

The Hotel Relations Team: The Hotel Relations Team, unique to Boston, is regarded as a significant competitive advantage. No other city or convention center offers a one-stop process for securing room block commitments from hotels. This streamlined approach not only simplifies the process for meeting planners but also allows the Hotel Relations Team, being independent of the hotel community, to provide unbiased recommendations and negotiate on behalf of clients, leading to more favorable outcomes and increased client satisfaction.

The Hotel Relations team recognizes the importance of site inspections and how integral the hotel community is to this process. The Hotel Relations team’s thorough planning and personalized execution are key to converting prospects into confirmed clients. Site inspections include personalized touches and comprehensive itineraries to ensure that prospects experience a full representation of Boston's facilities and services, which aids in their decision making process to ultimately choose Boston for their events.

Communication is currently handled through Lead Link, a proprietary system designed to streamline communication and manage hotel bookings for citywide events. Lead Link enhances the efficiency of the hotel booking process, ensuring timely and effective management of event needs and hotel communications.

Increase Communication

While the Hotel Relations team is well-regarded within the industry, feedback from hotel stakeholders highlights a need for greater transparency. The BCMC and hotel community can develop better communication channels to ensure more effective collaboration through improving transparency in the BCMC’s negotiations and booking processes. With increased hotel development in Seaport, hotels in Back Bay and other areas of the city are experiencing less compression. This shift in supply dynamics has led hotels to focus more on in-house group demand and transient business. Enhanced communication between BCMC and the hotel community can help share real-time efforts to attract business, outline group schedules, and coordinate site visits. While these practices are already in place, there is room for improvement.

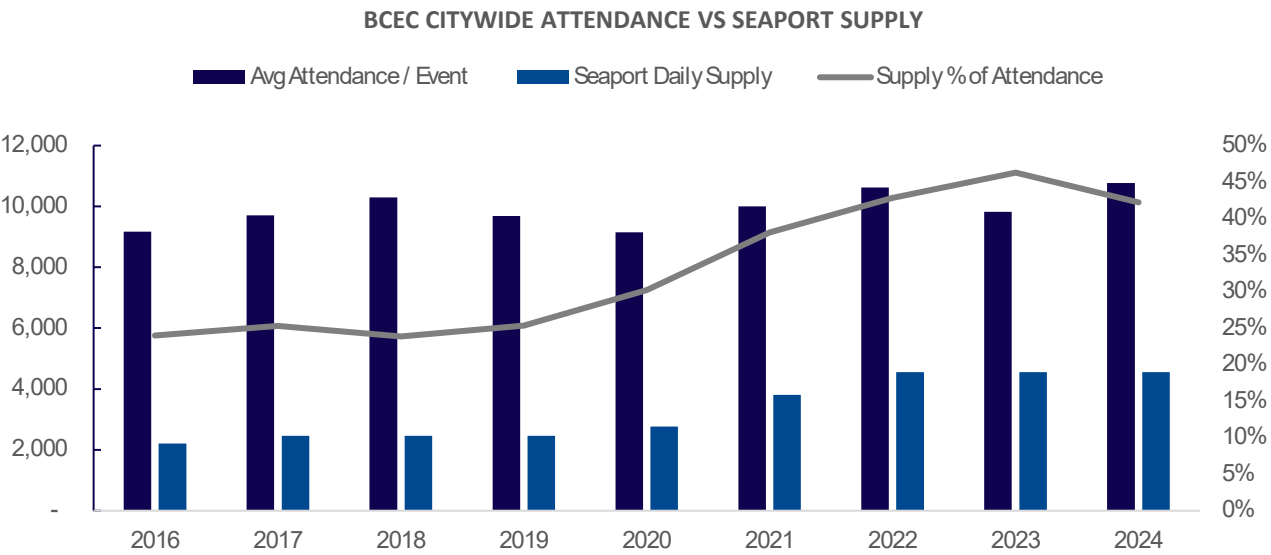
The Hotel Relations team faces unique challenges due to high rates and limited availability, especially on weekdays and during the summer, leading to lost business for Signature Boston. By increasing proactive communication, both the hotel community and BCMC can better identify need periods and collaborate to accommodate business, driving additional economic impact to the City. Coordinated, transparent communication would encourage hotels to commit more rooms.

Room Block Participation

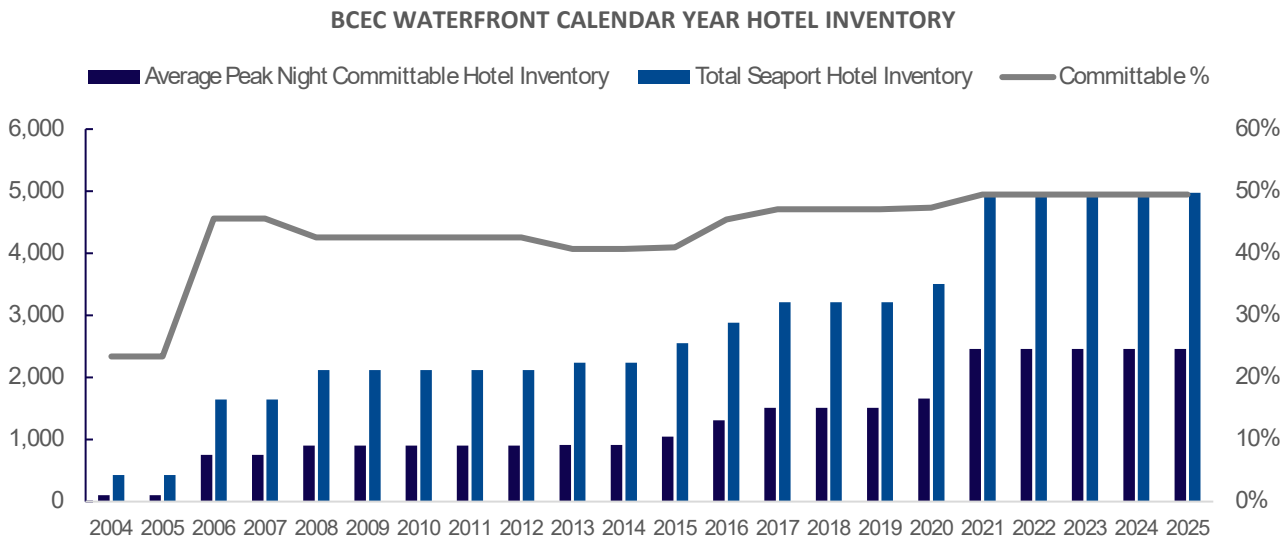
A common challenge for meeting planners at the BCEC is securing enough hotel rooms for their events. In FY24, the average attendance per citywide event exceeded 10,700, more than double the current hotel capacity in the Seaport neighborhood of approximately 4,500 RNs. Currently, the Seaport hotels offer an average of 2,400 committable rooms. It is important to note that the number of committable rooms fluctuates depending on periods of low or high demand.

Due to high demand, the Hotel Relations Team, while prioritizing City hotels, often turn to hotel in the Boston suburbs to satisfy room block requirements leading to increased transportation costs. Boston's appeal is a strong draw for BCEC clients, but the lack of local accommodations diminishes the true Boston experience for attendees. As other convention markets increase hotel supply surrounding their convention center, it is possible that event organizers will begin to look at other cities to provide guests with a self-contained experience. MCCA staff have noted increasing difficulties in securing hotel room blocks, largely due to misaligned booking windows and hotel compensation structures. Meet Boston has available incentives for groups looking to book in-house at hotels and frequently offer a First Quarter meetings promotion to discount a group’s master bill and room block. From our interviews, we understand that the BCMC has not approached this Committee for any of their prospective convention-hosted events. There is an opportunity for Signature Boston to utilize this fund to incentive room block participation from local hotels.

Room Block Participation



Source: STR, BCMC | Compiled by CHMWarnick



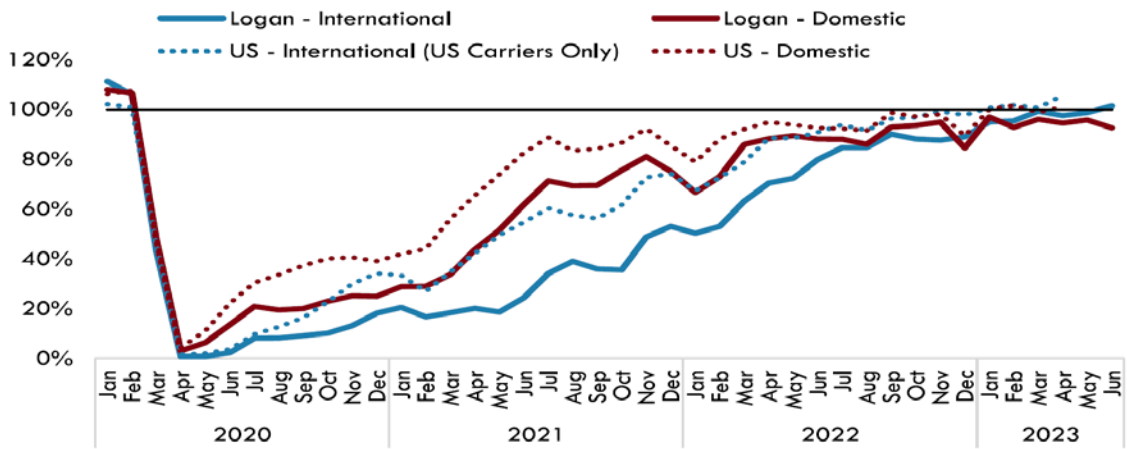
Source: BCMC

Massachusetts Economy & Visitation Trends

The key sectors of Health Care, Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services, Education, and Retail Trade in Massachusetts all perform at or above national averages in terms of overall employment. Since the peak of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021, hotels have shown strong growth through mid-2024, exceeding 2019 RevPAR performance, which serves as a benchmark year for this sector.

Logan Airport is expected to surpass 2019 passenger activity by the end of 2024. The Massachusetts economy has been showing signs of improvement in 2024, with labor market remaining relatively stable. Elevated costs for Labor, Insurance, Property Taxes, Supplies & Materials, are pressuring profit margins as hotels implement strategies to optimize revenues and profits.

Figure 17. Logan Airport and U.S. Monthly Passenger Volumes in 2023 as a Percent of 2019



Source: MassPort; Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic & International Market
Note: U.S. International passenger data are from U.S. carriers only.

Visitor statistics for Massachusetts from 2016 to 2024 show some key trends. Pre-pandemic, the Commonwealth was thriving in tourism, with domestic and international visitor numbers growing annually. In 2019, Massachusetts recorded approximately 31 million visitors, contributing over \$24 billion in spending. However, the pandemic led to a sharp drop in both domestic and international tourism in 2020.

Tourism began rebounding by 2022, with visitor spending reaching \$24.2 billion. Domestic tourism recovered faster, generating \$22 billion in 2022, exceeding 2019 levels. International travel, however, remained lower than pre-pandemic levels, with international visitor spending of \$2.2 billion compared to \$4 billion in 2019. In early 2023, the State's hotel industry saw a further recovery with a notable increase in revenue.

These trends underline the resilience of Massachusetts' tourism industry and its vital role in the state's economy, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and generating significant tax revenues.



Life Sciences and Biopharma Growth



Inclusive Economic Development



Innovation in Healthcare



Decentralization of Investments

Massachusetts Economy & Visitation Trends (continued)

The Boston office market is feeling the full impact of the national post-pandemic downshift in office demand. Office attendance remains low and estimated ridership on the MBTA has yet to reach 70% of pre-pandemic levels, about 10 percentage points below the national average. As of 4Q 2019, Boston’s vacancy rate was 7.9% and Cambridge was 4.7%, as compared to 2Q of 2024 with Boston at 23.8% and Cambridge at 22.9%.

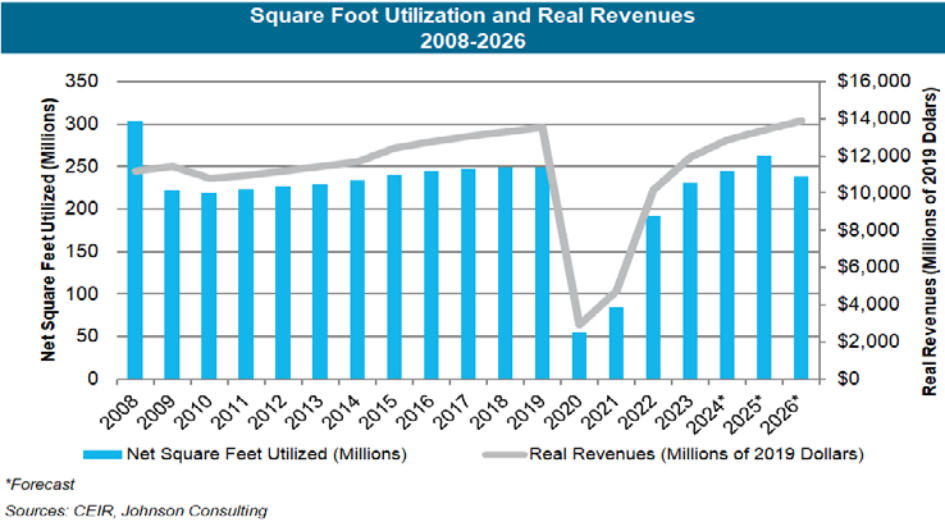
CoStar projects an uptick in vacancy rates of 2% to 3% through 2028. An eventual improvement in the office market will benefit the hotels in Boston by way of an increase in corporate demand, both on the transient side and the group side.

The BCEC is located in the Seaport submarket. This submarket contains approximately 10.3 million square feet of office inventory, about 15% of the City’s total office space. The Hynes is located in the Back Bay submarket, containing approximately 13.6 million square feet of office inventory, about 20% of the City’s total office space.

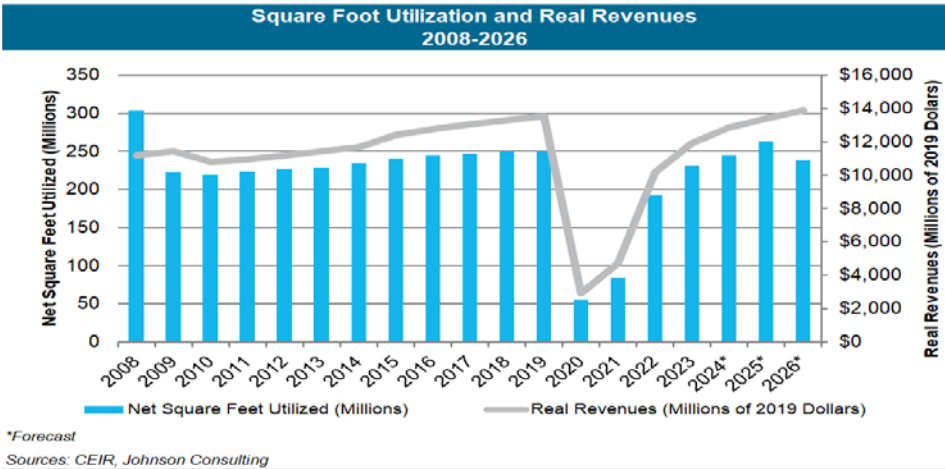
Boston / Cambridge - Office Inventory					
	2Q 2024			4Q 2019	
	Total Inventory	Vacancy Rate	Avg Rent	Total Inventory	Vacancy Rate
Boston					
Back Bay	13,619,196	17.7%	\$69.32	13,424,652	4.5%
Downtown	36,241,906	27.3%	\$67.85	34,192,584	8.7%
Allston/Brighton	758,521	18.6%	\$52.00	962,443	0.0%
Charlestown	2,103,505	20.5%	\$35.59	2,747,176	4.6%
Crosstown/Columbia Pt.	735,667	32.9%	\$69.08	1,251,320	2.8%
Fenway/Kenmore	1,593,007	10.9%	\$53.30	4,257,995	1.7%
North Station	2,728,050	31.9%	\$49.20	2,245,004	10.4%
Seaport	10,347,549	20.1%	\$58.68	11,715,924	13.2%
South Station	1,217,778	19.8%	\$42.74	1,214,493	5.8%
Total	69,345,179	23.8%	\$64.74	72,011,591	7.9%
Cambridge					
Alewife St./Route 2	1,123,956	14.0%	\$41.27	2,755,614	13.3%
East Cambridge	8,813,281	25.4%	\$82.55	19,810,192	3.4%
Havard Sq./Mass Ave	1,934,848	16.3%	\$58.30	1,899,495	6.6%
Total	11,872,085	22.9%	\$76.31	24,465,301	4.7%
* Avgrent was not reported on 4Q 2019 Colliers report.					
Source: Colliers					

Events Industry Trends

The COVID-19 pandemic dealt a severe blow to the events industry, with the number of net square feet used in U.S. events plummeting from 249 million in 2019 to just 55 million in 2020 according to the 2024 Index Report produced by the Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR). Similarly, real revenues in 2019 dollars dropped from \$13.5 billion to \$2.9 billion. Exhibitors and attendees also saw dramatic declines, falling from 1.4 million and 32.6 million in 2019 to 296,000 and 6.8 million in 2020. The pandemic disrupted a decade of growth that had followed the 2008 financial crash, setting the industry back significantly.



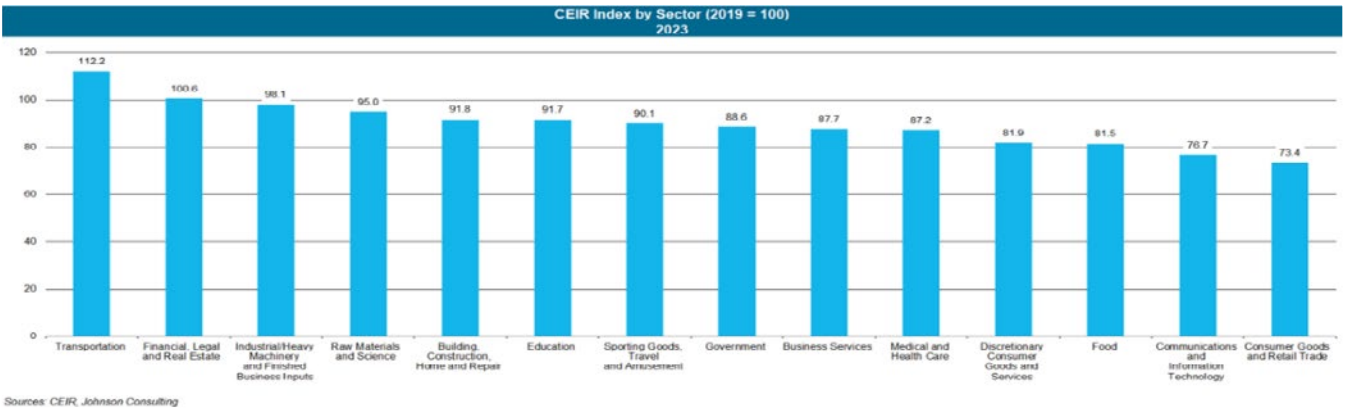
While recovery has been underway since then, the sector is still not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until 2026. However, this recovery is progressing more quickly than after the 2008 recession, with steady year-over-year gains in key metrics like square footage used, revenues, exhibitors, and attendees. Medical and Health Care events lead the way in terms of overall volume despite the sector being hit particularly hard by the pandemic, with those events attracting over 4.3 million attendees in 2023.



Events Industry Trends (continued)

The recovery has been uneven across different sectors. The Transportation sector has exceeded 2019 levels, with a 2023 CEIR Index of 112.2, while Financial, Legal, and Real Estate also saw modest growth. In contrast, sectors like Communications and Information Technology and Consumer Goods remain well below pre-pandemic performance. However, the Communications sector is showing strong growth, with a 31.3% year-over-year increase from 2022 to 2023, the second highest after the Sporting Goods and Travel sector.

Larger events have tended to fare better in the recovery, with those occupying over 100,000 square feet seeing faster growth between 2022 and 2023. This suggests a greater demand for large convention spaces like exhibit halls and ballrooms, compared to smaller venues. CEIR expects strong growth in sectors like Communications and Food over the next few years, despite some stagnation in 2023, and notes that larger events are likely to continue leading the recovery.



COVID-19 devastated events industry

Full recovery projected for 2026

Medical sector represents largest attendee share

Uneven recovery across sectors

Transportation sector has seen strongest recovery

Larger events seeing strongest demand

Reporting & Communications

The Operations Team is dedicated to delivering high-quality work, but there are opportunities for improvement in several areas. Not all team members have clear visibility into their department's financial performance, and departments often operate independently. By enhancing leadership involvement, focusing on strategic alignment, and fostering interdepartmental collaboration, resources can be better aligned across teams.

Additionally, there is a growing need to improve communication with external stakeholders to keep them informed, gain their support, and provide industry leadership. The MCCA is currently not fully leveraging the vast resources and expertise available to support its mission of expanding and strengthening the Commonwealth's meetings and conventions business. By taking a leadership role in engaging with external entities, the MCCA could fill this gap. Strengthening relationships with key stakeholders such as MOTT, Meet Boston, and Economic Development can help foster valuable industry partnerships. At times, accessing important information has been challenging, suggesting that improved sharing of insights could benefit everyone. Currently, performance results are difficult to interpret in a clear and digestible way. Reporting across all operations should be streamlined and restructured to allow for more effective performance management and measurement. Additionally, openly sharing these insights with key partners could enhance collaboration.

Lastly, there is an opportunity to streamline internal communication by getting back to basics, improving leadership coordination, and updating reporting systems to equip key members with the data they need for better business decisions. With these adjustments, the organization can thrive and continue its growth.

Economic Development

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) plays a significant role in driving economic development within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Its core mission is to generate substantial economic activity through the management of world-class public facilities and events, which in turn benefits the broader Massachusetts economy.

BCEC

Since its opening in 2004, Boston's Seaport District has experienced significant economic development, transforming from an industrial area into a vibrant hub for business, innovation, and culture. Key developments include:

Real Estate and Commercial Growth:

Office Space: Major companies, including tech firms, financial institutions, and startups, have established headquarters and offices in the Seaport. Notable companies include General Electric (which moved its headquarters to the Seaport in 2016), Amazon, and PwC.

Residential Growth: The area has seen the construction of high-rise luxury condos and apartment buildings, making it a desirable residential area for professionals and families. The rise in real estate values has significantly boosted property tax revenues.

Innovation & Technology Hub: The Seaport District has become a center for Boston's innovation economy, hosting major tech and biotech firms as well as innovation incubators like MassChallenge (a startup accelerator) and various co-working spaces. This has attracted talent and investment, further boosting the economy.

Hospitality & Tourism: The district has seen a surge in hotel development, such as the Omni Hotel and the Hampton/Homewood Hotel, catering to business travelers and tourists. The Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC), located in the district, has helped drive tourism, with thousands of events and conventions each year. Restaurants, bars, and retail spaces have also flourished, contributing to the hospitality sector's growth.

Economic Development (continued)

Cultural and Entertainment Expansion: The Seaport has invested heavily in arts and culture, with the addition of spaces like the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) and large public parks, including Seaport Common. Seasonal events, waterfront dining, and pop-up markets have further enhanced its appeal as a cultural destination.

Transportation Infrastructure: Development of infrastructure like the Silver Line and pedestrian bridges has improved connectivity to other parts of Boston, enhancing the district's accessibility. The proximity to Logan International Airport and South Station has made the Seaport a key location for businesses and travelers alike.

Overall, the Seaport District has transformed into one of Boston's most dynamic economic centers, contributing billions to the local economy and positioning itself as a major player in sectors like technology, finance, and hospitality.

The Hynes Convention Center

The Hynes Convention Center in Boston, located in the Back Bay neighborhood, has made significant contributions to the economic development of the area surrounding its facility. As one of Boston's premier convention centers, it has played a pivotal role in driving business, tourism, and infrastructure development. Here are the key contributions:

Hospitality Sector: The influx of visitors attending conventions, trade shows, and conferences at the Hynes has greatly benefited nearby hotels, restaurants, and bars. Hotels like the Sheraton Boston, Westin Copley Place, and Marriott Copley Place, located adjacent to the convention center, often experience high occupancy rates due to events at the Hynes. This has helped sustain and grow Boston's hospitality industry, especially in the Back Bay.

Retail Impact: The Hynes is connected to the Prudential Center and Copley Place malls, providing direct access to high-end shopping. Convention attendees frequent these retail spaces, contributing significantly to retail sales and foot traffic in the area.

Tourism and Visitor Spending: The Hynes brings in thousands of out-of-town visitors each year, from national and international conventions, academic meetings, and trade shows. This has a ripple effect on the local economy, with attendees spending on lodging, dining, transportation, entertainment, and shopping.

Cultural Attractions: Located near attractions like Fenway Park, Newbury Street, and the Boston Public Library, the Hynes has contributed to tourism in the broader Back Bay and Fenway neighborhoods, boosting visitation to these sites.

Spurring Infrastructure Development: Over the years, the presence of the Hynes has influenced infrastructure improvements in the Back Bay. For instance, there has been investment in transportation networks, including improvements to nearby MBTA services at Hynes Convention Center Station and enhanced pedestrian walkways to accommodate the high volume of visitors.

The convention center has also driven the development of new hotels and office spaces, making the Back Bay a business and tourism hub.

Attracting Large-Scale Events and Conferences: By hosting large-scale events and conferences, such as the Harvard Model United Nations and various medical, academic, and business conventions, the Hynes has raised Boston's profile as a global conference destination. These events bring diverse groups to the city, increasing exposure to Boston's economic and cultural opportunities.

Civic and Community Engagement: The Hynes has also been a venue for local events, charity fundraisers, and civic gatherings, integrating itself into the fabric of Boston's community life. Its role in hosting educational and non-profit conferences has strengthened connections between Boston's academic institutions, such as Harvard and MIT, and professionals worldwide.

Overall, the Hynes Convention Center has significantly boosted the economic vitality of Boston's Back Bay neighborhood through increased tourism, business development, and infrastructure improvements. Its central location has helped maintain the area's status as a key business and tourism destination.

MassMutual Center

The MassMutual Center (MMC) in Springfield, Massachusetts, has been a catalyst for economic development in downtown Springfield since its opening in 2005. It has played a key role in revitalizing the area by attracting tourism, supporting local businesses, and promoting job creation. Here are some of the specific impacts the MMC has had on the local economy:

Tourism and Visitor Spending: The MMC has drawn thousands of visitors to downtown Springfield by hosting a variety of events, including conferences, trade shows, concerts, sporting events, and conventions. This influx of visitors results in increased spending at nearby hotels, restaurants, bars, and retail stores, providing a steady stream of revenue to local businesses. Notably, events like professional hockey games for the Springfield Thunderbirds, college basketball tournaments, and concerts have brought large audiences to the area, supporting the local hospitality and entertainment sectors.

Employment and Job Creation: The MMC has created jobs both directly and indirectly. It employs staff in areas such as event management, security, operations, and food services. Indirectly, it has stimulated job growth in the hospitality, retail, and transportation sectors as businesses expand to meet the needs of visitors. Additionally, construction projects related to the MMC, including renovations and nearby developments, have provided temporary employment for construction workers and contractors.

Increased Investment in Infrastructure: The MMC has contributed to infrastructure improvements in downtown Springfield. For instance, better roads, improved signage, and enhanced public transportation options were developed to accommodate the growing number of visitors. The revitalization efforts have helped to enhance the downtown area's appeal for both businesses and residents.

The construction of the MMC itself was part of a broader plan to revitalize Springfield's urban core, complementing the development of nearby amenities like the MGM Springfield.

Economic Development (continued)

Revitalization of Downtown Springfield: By serving as an anchor for downtown activity, the MMC has been integral to Springfield’s broader urban revitalization efforts. The increase in visitors has led to more businesses opening or relocating to the area, which has created a more vibrant and dynamic downtown. Springfield, Massachusetts, has seen mixed trends in downtown crime rates and positive development initiatives in 2023 and 2024. While efforts by Springfield Police, like public education on gun security and increased presence on the streets, have led to some reductions in gun-related incidents, violent crime remains a concern.

The presence of the MMC has also encouraged other large-scale developments, such as the Union Station transportation hub and the growth of the cultural district, including museums and theaters.

Overall, the MassMutual Center has been a driving force in the economic revitalization of downtown Springfield, helping to increase tourism, stimulate local businesses, and promote broader infrastructure development. It has positioned Springfield as a destination for both large-scale events and community gatherings, making it a key asset to the city’s economy.

Capital Oversight & Planning

Long-Term Capital Planning & Project Management Strategy

We recommend that you consider maintaining the current approach for long-term capital planning, with a comprehensive re-evaluation every five years. This review process will help establish priorities for the next five years, recognizing the maintenance teams’ efforts to extend equipment performance and lifespan. The re-evaluation will enable the reprioritization of projects, addressing unforeseen issues, and adjusting plans for any improvements that can be deferred due to business considerations or the continued functionality of equipment, eliminating the need for immediate upgrades or replacements.

Project Management Strategy Shift

Adapt the strategy for managing capital projects by bundling multiple projects under a unified Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) structure. This will streamline the process and enhance efficiency, especially as properties age and capital needs increase due to delayed investments.

From FY16 to FY24, average annual capital spending was \$23.5 million. However, projections for FY25 to FY35 estimate a significant increase to \$111 million annually, representing an increase of 372% . MCCA must adjust its approach to handling large, multi-property projects by creating a structured process to avoid business interruptions, closures, and negative impacts on client relations and the organization’s reputation. This will help ensure MCCA’s ability to meet growth targets.

Resource Allocation & Strategy Development

To meet these increased demands, MCCA will need to expand its resources to support the rise in capital projects and ensure they are delivered on time and within budget. The strategy should shift to a 3 to 4-year outlook by facility, focusing on bundling projects and using a Project Management framework. Operational leadership must be engaged in this process to align project work with business activities, minimizing disruptions and preventing extended business interruptions at key convention centers.

Addressing Aging Facilities & Deferred Maintenance

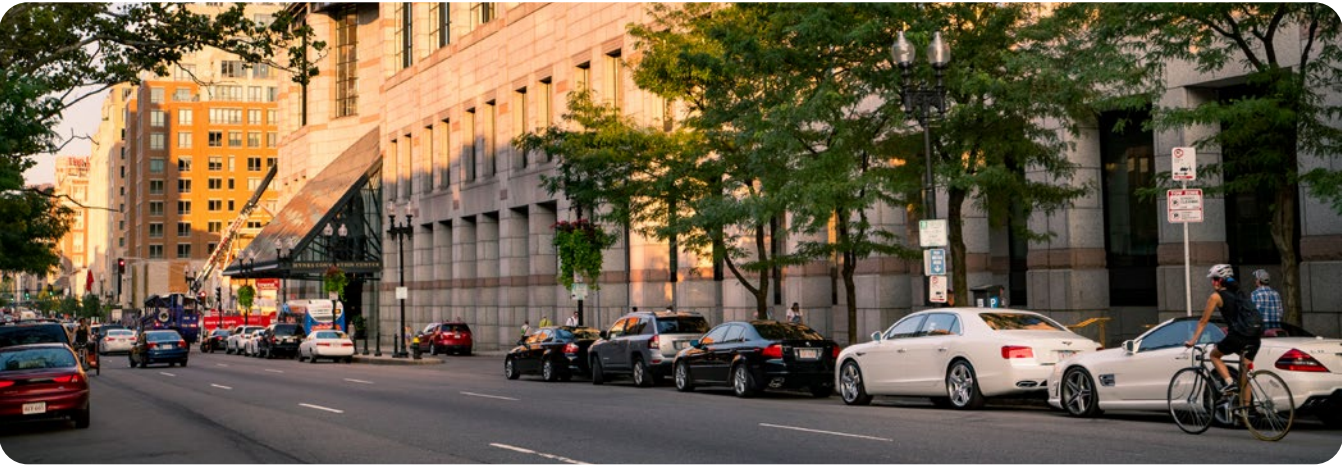
The capital obligations from FY25 to FY35, driven by deferred maintenance and the need to keep aging facilities competitive, pose a significant challenge for the MCCA. Balancing the completion of essential work with the need to avoid business disruptions should be a priority. Lessons from the closure of the Hynes Convention Center (beginning in 2024) underscore the importance of preventing similar scenarios in the future. The MCCA must prioritize smooth operations across all facilities in Boston and Springfield to safeguard its market position and ensure business continuity.

Economic & Fiscal Impact

The MCCA as a whole has had, and continues to have, a significant impact on the economic and fiscal landscape of the State of Massachusetts. The table below provides an analysis of the combined effects of the BCEC, Hynes, and MMC, which account for the vast majority of the MCCA’s economic and fiscal impact. Please note that this analysis is based on the MCCA’s economic impact methodology, which is recognized as one of the most robust methodologies of its kind in the United States.

As can be seen in the chart on the adjacent page, though these facilities have not, in the aggregate, recovered to pre-pandemic levels in terms of total events, they collectively exceeded pre-pandemic levels of attendance and total visitor days in FY2024, exceeding pre-pandemic performance. In terms of impact, this translates to over \$1.15 billion of estimated direct, indirect, and induced spending at the three facilities generated in FY 2024. This total spending supported nearly 11,500 full-time equivalent jobs and generated \$554 million of increased earnings. The direct spending associated with the three facilities also generated \$61.1 million of tax revenues to the State and local entities.

Looking forward, this impact, as well as the volume of business generated by those three facilities, is projected by the consulting team to grow considerably over the next decade. Even in a baseline scenario in which annual citywide events stay essentially stagnant and short-term events return to pre-pandemic levels, total spending is projected to grow to over \$1.8 billion by 2034. Over the next 10 years, the fiscal impact of the three buildings is estimated to total \$812 million in tax revenues.



HCC from Boylston Street | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, and MassMutual Center Combined Historical and Projected Economic Impact															
Events and Visitation	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2023	FYE 2024	FYE 2025	FYE 2026	FYE 2027	FYE 2028	FYE 2029	FYE 2030	FYE 2031	FYE 2032	FYE 2033	FYE 2034	
# of Events	429	438	353	336	355	373	388	404	419	432	431	433	434	435	
Event Attendance	1,031,611	1,051,989	1,055,542	1,192,791	1,217,246	1,286,628	1,320,772	1,355,870	1,397,846	1,454,596	1,443,735	1,458,314	1,454,889	1,465,750	
Total Visitor-Days*	2,197,444	2,340,386	2,402,223	2,523,035	2,612,045	2,758,121	2,767,567	2,772,789	2,831,892	3,018,747	2,974,669	3,033,077	3,017,659	3,061,737	
Total Room Nights*	687,215	700,056	647,093	709,112	745,219	764,380	748,701	731,772	738,220	822,450	802,424	829,735	824,279	844,305	
Direct Spending (\$Million)	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2023	FYE 2024	FYE 2025	FYE 2026	FYE 2027	FYE 2028	FYE 2029	FYE 2030	FYE 2031	FYE 2032	FYE 2033	FYE 2034	
Hotel	\$187	\$196	\$204	\$230	\$248	\$263	\$265	\$266	\$277	\$319	\$320	\$342	\$350	\$369	
Food and Beverage	101	111	128	138	147	160	165	170	179	197	200	211	216	226	
Transportation	46	50	58	63	67	73	75	77	81	89	91	95	98	102	
Attraction	40	44	52	56	60	65	67	70	73	80	82	86	88	92	
Shopping	57	63	73	79	84	92	95	98	104	113	115	121	124	130	
Other Industries	69	74	83	88	94	103	104	104	108	123	124	132	135	142	
Subtotal	\$500	\$540	\$597	\$653	\$700	\$756	\$771	\$785	\$822	\$923	\$932	\$987	\$1,010	\$1,062	
Operational Spending	\$64	\$61	\$67	\$70	\$72	\$74	\$76	\$79	\$81	\$84	\$86	\$89	\$91	\$94	
Total Direct Spending	\$565	\$600	\$664	\$723	\$772	\$830	\$848	\$864	\$903	\$1,006	\$1,018	\$1,075	\$1,102	\$1,156	
Indirect and Induced Spending	\$337	\$358	\$396	\$431	\$460	\$495	\$506	\$516	\$539	\$600	\$607	\$642	\$657	\$690	
TOTAL SPENDING	\$902	\$959	\$1,060	\$1,154	\$1,232	\$1,325	\$1,353	\$1,380	\$1,442	\$1,606	\$1,626	\$1,717	\$1,759	\$1,846	
Direct Earnings and Employment	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2023	FYE 2024	FYE 2025	FYE 2026	FYE 2027	FYE 2028	FYE 2029	FYE 2030	FYE 2031	FYE 2032	FYE 2033	FYE 2034	
Earnings (\$Million)	\$271	\$288	\$319	\$347	\$371	\$398	\$407	\$415	\$433	\$483	\$489	\$516	\$529	\$555	
Employment (FTE Jobs)	5,599	5,951	6,582	7,166	7,423	7,745	7,673	7,591	7,696	8,320	8,170	8,371	8,322	8,473	
Earnings and Employment based on TOTAL Spending	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2023	FYE 2024	FYE 2025	FYE 2026	FYE 2027	FYE 2028	FYE 2029	FYE 2030	FYE 2031	FYE 2032	FYE 2033	FYE 2034	
Earnings (\$Million)	\$433	\$460	\$509	\$554	\$592	\$636	\$650	\$662	\$692	\$771	\$780	\$824	\$845	\$886	
Employment (FTE Jobs)	8,939	9,502	10,508	11,441	11,851	12,365	12,251	12,120	12,287	13,285	13,044	13,366	13,288	13,529	
Fiscal Impact (\$Million)	Tax Rate	FYE 2018	FYE 2019	FYE 2023	FYE 2024	FYE 2025	FYE 2026	FYE 2027	FYE 2028	FYE 2029	FYE 2030	FYE 2031	FYE 2032	FYE 2033	FYE 2034
By Types of Taxes															
Hotel Tax	13.45%-16.45%**	\$30.6	\$32.2	\$33.4	\$37.5	\$40.6	\$42.9	\$43.2	\$43.5	\$45.1	\$52.0	\$52.3	\$55.8	\$57.1	\$60.3
Meals Tax	7.00%	7.1	7.8	9.0	9.7	10.3	11.2	11.6	11.9	12.5	13.8	14.0	14.7	15.1	15.8
Sales and Use Tax	6.25%	10.4	11.4	13.0	13.9	14.9	16.2	16.6	17.0	17.8	19.8	20.1	21.2	21.7	22.7
Total		\$48.1	\$51.3	\$55.3	\$61.1	\$65.7	\$70.4	\$71.4	\$72.4	\$75.5	\$85.7	\$86.4	\$91.7	\$93.9	\$98.9
By Jurisdiction															
State Taxes		\$27.5	\$29.6	\$32.8	\$35.9	\$38.5	\$41.5	\$42.3	\$43.1	\$45.1	\$50.7	\$51.2	\$54.2	\$55.5	\$58.3
Local Taxes		12.8	13.5	14.1	15.8	17.1	18.1	18.3	18.4	19.1	22.0	22.1	23.6	24.1	25.5
Special Authority Taxes		7.7	8.1	8.4	9.4	10.2	10.8	10.8	10.8	11.2	13.0	13.0	13.9	14.3	15.1
Total		\$48.1	\$51.3	\$55.3	\$61.1	\$65.7	\$70.4	\$71.4	\$72.4	\$75.5	\$85.7	\$86.4	\$91.7	\$93.9	\$98.9
*Including visitor-days and room nights from attendees, exhibitors, event organizers, etc.															
**Reflecting 16.45% in Boston, 13.45% in Springfield.															
Source: Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, Johnson Consulting															

03

Community Engagement and Opportunity

There has never been a greater time to bring people together.

Greater focus on fostering inclusivity and diversity within convention center communities can help the MCCA reflect the unique demographic make-up of Massachusetts. By breaking down barriers, embracing diverse perspectives, championing inclusivity, and creating welcoming environments for all, the MCCA can enrich the fabric of its industry and drive positive social change. This is an opportunity for all stakeholders to strive to ensure that convention centers are truly reflective of the diverse tapestry of humanity they serve.

Key Findings:

- The team at the MCCA including the new Director of People and Culture, the new Director of DEI, and other members of the leadership team should be empowered to implement new policies addressing hiring, retention, advancement, purchasing, procedures and developing new opportunities for economic growth, further explored in this report.
- To align economic development priorities, the MCCA needs to engage and collaborate with external stakeholders including the Massachusetts Office of Economic Development, the cities of Springfield and Boston and residents of the state. This will require additional staff to develop and manage external stakeholder relations - a Community Engagement and Collaboration Team (CEC).
- The CEC can work with convention organizers to curate targeted programming for attendees. This will require a working relationship with the business community, cultural and arts community, non-profit and trade organizations, working with the existing staff and MEETBoston.
- The creation of a MA Resource Directory, a joint effort with State and City agencies, industry and community stakeholders, would be beneficial to curate programming for incoming conventions. This centralized database does not currently exist.
- The MCCA should consider providing community spaces in the form of 'convener spaces' inside each facility, to be used for showcases and performances at conventions, and for collaborative and community efforts at other times.
- The innovative economy of MA provides many opportunities to produce local events that showcase the assets of our State. These events can be developed in partnership with the MCCA.
- There is more opportunity to host local events, involving diverse groups and residents across the State. An effort to research and host local cultural, entertainment, sports and industry events can be undertaken by the CEC team, working with the states sale team.
- Activating the direct neighborhood area around the existing centers will provide destinations for incoming visitors, as well as provide economic opportunities for local businesses and amenities for local residents.
- The role of art in each facility should be expanded, as a way to share MA assets and brand as well as provide opportunities for local cultural and arts groups across the state.

Introduction

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) is responsible for operating some of the most significant venues in the Northeast. These public spaces anchor New England’s tourism, attracting more than 700,000 visitors to Boston from countries around the world. In these transformative times, as states chart the course of recovery and growth, convention centers can serve as vital hubs for innovation, collaboration, and economic prosperity, and it is important that all stakeholders work together to ensure their continued success.

First and foremost is recognition of the pivotal role convention centers play in fostering connections and driving progress across industries. They are not merely physical spaces; they are dynamic ecosystems where ideas converge, partnerships form, and breakthroughs emerge, reflecting the innovative culture of our Commonwealth.

By leveraging local assets and resources, and by enlivening centers with relevant local activities and interactions, MCCA can help create a genuine and compelling brand for Massachusetts.

Looking to the future, the Commonwealth is committed to enhancing the value proposition of Massachusetts’ facilities by embracing innovation and adaptability. This is especially true as technology has changed the way we meet; now, it is a perfect time for MCCA to step up as a leader in reshaping its centers into dynamic, technologically advanced versatile spaces, a true reflection of its leadership in this industry.



Aerial view of Fort Point/Seaport | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Key topics explored include:

- Maximizing the Authority’s role as a convener, catalyst, growth engine, host, and ambassador of Massachusetts to visitors, neighbors, and guests.
- Further defining each asset as a gateway to Boston and Springfield and/or their neighborhoods and to welcome and engage the local community.
- Exploring how MCCA can provide economic development opportunities and benefits for diverse and inclusive communities, including its host communities and the state.
- Developing ideas for better leveraging the Authority’s impact as an employer, neighbor, purchaser of goods and services, and participant in the tourism and cultural sector of the state’s economy, and as a strategic public sector partner to other economic drivers in Massachusetts to help make the state more competitive, affordable, and equitable.
- Exploring avenues and initiatives to welcome and engage youth, Boston public schools students, and people from diverse, inclusive, and vibrant backgrounds, including non-English speakers, veterans, LGBTQIA+ community, people of color, people with disabilities, and others, especially with activities at the HCC.

People, Planet, Profit

The framework, provided by the A&F/MCCA, acknowledges that profitability, while important, does not come at the expense of people and the planet. Rather it is a result. In the 21st century, consumers are looking for institutions that will allow them to live their values. In the same way, residents are looking to understand how large institutions benefit their everyday lives. This understanding is key to MCCA designing and deploying community engagement and DEI strategies to realize its interconnected goals of people, planet, and profit.

This triple bottom line aligns with current best business practices to protect and grow an enterprise competing in a global economy.

“It has always been a challenge to balance government assets with the public’s interest, maintaining profits while simultaneously providing benefits to the local community” - ED, Quasi-state agency



Introduction (continued)

For MCCA, understanding the interconnection among people, planet, and profits will help transform the organization and its convention centers by elevating both its internal and external cultures – to be more inclusive and inviting.

Here is some current thinking on how to define each of these terms from a business perspective to create impact.

- **People:** Humans are the foundation of any successful business whether as employees and team members, leaders, consumers, vendors, partners, and other stakeholders. Creating a people-centric internal culture means to focus on practices that: (1) empower employees, such as through greater transparency and establishing strong feedback loops; (2) communicate clearly and often; and (3) build and strengthen cross-functional teams. Creating a people-centric external culture starts with understanding the external stakeholders. For MCCA, recognizing stakeholders – such as consumers, the state, and its voters – supports decision making that takes into account the vision held by people in the state.
- **Planet:** Environmental practices and greater sustainability can actually improve profitability. According to research, to meet environmental standards organizations must become more innovative and upgrade their processes, which leads to opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce waste/costs, and enhance offerings. Becoming known for sustainability also helps organizations to attract and retain better talent who can lead the charge toward greater innovation.
- **Profit:** Although profit appears to be self-evident – a function of profit-and-loss statements – there are many levers that can enhance profitability beyond keeping costs low and prices high. Employee engagement leads to improved customer experiences, higher quality, more innovation and a willingness to implement new practices.

In summary, MCCA is a successful convention center organization in a well-known, innovative State. At the same time, MCCA’s ability to deepen its impact on people and the planet has yet to be fully discovered. By engaging with the local community and establishing meaningful partnerships, MCCA can offer a fuller experience to its audiences. In turn, this will help MCCA continue its role and enhance its relevance in shaping the future of convention centers centered around people, planet and profit.



BCEC ballroom prefunction space | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Objectives

As part of the MCCA’s framework, a series of objectives have been developed to guide the future growth and integration of the convention center facilities. These objectives outline opportunities for the MCCA and its assets to become integrated, inclusive, dynamic hubs that reflect the diversity, energy, and potential of their local and regional context and include:

- Community engagement and integration with local communities
- Global reach
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Promoting innovation and providing opportunities for MA residents and businesses
- Strengthening transportation and connections



BCEC Summer Street entrance | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Peer City Review

To inform our analysis the team undertook a review of convention centers and authorities in peer cities. Below is a brief summary:

Los Angeles Convention Center (LACC):

- Committed to “positively impacting the community in which we operate.”
- Partnerships developed with several nonprofit organizations, including a network to donate leftover items (totes, gift bags, non-perishable food, furniture, etc.).
- Regularly organizes a minimum of two service days each year to give back to the downtown community. Center employees are encouraged to dedicate their time to volunteer at local organizations.
- Has multiple green initiatives, including saving energy and water, promoting recycling, purchasing environmentally preferable products and helping raise awareness of environmental issues.
- LACC has hosted cultural festivals, job fairs, educational conferences, and public exhibitions for residents.
- Additionally, the LACC’s sustainability initiatives, such as its solar energy program and water-saving measures, reflect the venue’s efforts to benefit the local community by promoting environmental responsibility. The planned expansion, which is essential for the upcoming LA28 Olympics, is also expected to create more public spaces and upgraded amenities that will enhance the quality of life in the surrounding areas.
- LACC has been a hub for community-driven art projects - for example the “Shaping LA” mural by the nonprofit Portraits of Hope, which was hand-painted by over 7,000 local residents from all backgrounds. This large-scale installation spans the length of four football fields and transforms the venue’s exterior, fostering community pride and providing a vibrant visual symbol of collective creativity.

Detroit – Huntington Place

- Statement of belief includes “Our diversity is our strength.”
- New Director of HR hired (2023) to address priorities such as “DEI and flexible work schedules [that] have become a top priority for employees, along with opportunities to create better work/life balance.”
- Huntington Place has been recognized for its commitment to sustainability. The facility features eco-friendly practices such as energy-efficient lighting, low-flow fixtures, and recycling initiatives, which reflect its goal to achieve LEED Platinum certification. It also collaborates with local nonprofits, such as Forgotten Harvest, to significantly reduce food waste.

Seattle Convention Center (SCC)

- Prominent statement on “Inclusion and Equality” including the following excerpt: “SCC is steadfast in holding itself accountable to create a diverse and inclusive workforce but realize there is room for improvement. Our Board of Directors represents our broader community and sets policy to create a diverse workforce. We set measurable goals for minority- and women-owned business participation in our procurement and contracts, and we equitably distribute economic benefits. As we grow our staff to service two convention center buildings, our practices can improve for recruitment, training, promotion, and outreach at all levels of the organization.”
- Offers specialized services for smaller events with up to 300 attendees. (As our research indicates, catering to smaller events with flexible space and cost-effective offerings would also help MCCA promote community relations).
- The SCC’s “Summit” building expansion has allowed the SCC to commit more than \$93 million to community projects. This includes \$40 million to support affordable housing, \$16 million for pedestrian and cyclist improvements, and funds for creating open spaces around the center.

International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney)

- Highlights “internal culture that champions diversity, equity, inclusion, sustainability and innovation.”
- As part of its commitment to local culture, ICC Sydney has created a public art gallery within the convention center, which hosts both a permanent collection, as well as rotating galleries featuring local artists. Commissioned pieces are part of this collection.
- Sydney entrepreneurs are featured at all conventions to showcase the city’s innovation economy.
- Students from local schools and universities attend and present at conventions as a way to continue their education and offer insights into future careers.
- After holding Sydney WorldPride Human Rights Conference, ICC pledged to become “most inclusive venue possible,” with an Accessibility and Inclusion Guide for visitors. In addition, it is committed to “objectives of our second Reconciliation Action Plan and our Legacy Program, which aims to build opportunities for local First Nations, creative industries, entrepreneurial businesses as well as students with clients through their events at ICC Sydney.”
- Promotes volunteering opportunities with community partners as well as environmental sustainability initiatives.

DEI - An Internal Assessment

We believe that, with commitment and appropriate application of resources, the best of both worlds can be achieved: a truly inclusive and world-class convention and event organization that equitably serves all its constituencies.

Internal DEI - Cultural Snapshot

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”

The primacy of culture over strategy is a fact of life for any organization. Understanding the culture – what exists currently and what needs to be changed – will help any organization design strategies that are more relevant, realistic, and sustainable. To put it simply, if the culture chooses not to change it will not.

Culture is widely recognized as the values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions that define an organization. It impacts how people treat each other (both colleagues and customers) and adds tangibility to what it means to belong. With this understanding, MCCA’s culture needs to be examined.

To better understand the MCCA internal culture, we reviewed the following documents:

- 1. Prince Lobel report and current tracking
- 2. Employee survey: “Becoming an Employer of Choice”
- 3. Strategic Plan deck
- 4. Various cultural presentations

As the Prince Lobel report found: “From a variety of measurements, the prior administration’s approach to addressing these [DEI] issues was ingrained in the culture and day-to-day operations. We find that the current administration [as of October 2023, prior to hiring of Interim Director] is also concerned and committed to these issues, but its approach has been more ad hoc and less intentional.”

The report also found:

- Black and Hispanic employees are “disproportionately” represented in “the lower rungs of the organization.”
- From 2019, until the hiring of a Black Chief Diversity Officer in 2023, there were no Black or Hispanic employees in senior leadership at the Authority.

“Everyone has a bias. If we’re not talking about our biases, if we’re not being open about them, then we are going to have a workforce in which predominantly people of color are in entry level jobs, and predominantly white males are at the top. That is every company right now.”

MCCA mirrors many cultures of large organizations: efficient and effective on many levels and across many processes, procedures and policies. However, after reviewing the employee survey and interviews, we found common pitfalls in MCCA’s culture, including the existence of silos, a tendency toward caution over curiosity, and pushback becoming the norm.

Another data point that indicates a calcified structure is the overwhelming top-three priorities for MCCA to become an employer of choice. Communications (19), individual professional development (18), and work/life balance (17) rank far higher than the next three, which scored a total of 13 points. This highlights a culture in which people do not talk to or invest in one another enough, which can lead to disempowerment, lack of trust, and lack of investment in employees.

A few employees surveyed provided comments that reflect a common sentiment on the importance of communications.

- For example:
- “With the additions of Gloria [Gloria Cordes Larson, as Interim Executive Director] and Herschel [Herschel Herndon, Chief Diversity Officer], communications with all levels of staff seem to improve in the past year. More openness/ transparency.”

Observations about professional development and work/ life balance reflect a lack of understanding on how to move up and progress:

- “I wanted to get a certification to get a pay increase but my manager held me off [saying], ‘I will take a look in 2025.’”
- “There has been more of an effort from leadership to enforce this [work/life balance]. The Authority expects employees to put MCCA first, but the MCCA isn’t flexible to all employees equally.”



Veteran’s Memorial Auditorium | Photo credit: Signature Boston

DEI Internal (continued)

There has also been a lot of turnover at MCCA including Herschel Herndon, as head of DEI, who departed as we were conducting our research. Herndon created a three-year strategy based on many hours of internal conversations. Much institutional knowledge was captured by Herndon and is enshrined in this strategy. Although we do not suggest forcing the new Chief Diversity Officer hire to institute this strategy, it could be an important starting point.

It is also important to note that MCCA’s culture has been in the news and public discourse, such as through the Prince Lobel report, lawsuits, and turnover. Over the past year, the MCCA senior team held discussions with Prince Lobel attorneys to review where the blind spots were or who was tone deaf and did not value the problem as important to be corrected. This will help ensure MCCA reinforces those weaknesses in the future.

When taking into account all of the DEI internal work shared with us as consultants, it is apparent to us that MCCA was pushed into DEI through external forces and may not have been able to reckon with the rationale – the why. As we conducted our research, one word appeared numerous times in our notes: Resistance.

As a result, the existing internal culture will struggle to deliver on the priorities of people, planet, and profit. The reason is simple: without diversity of lived and learned experiences, without diversity of context and understanding, organizations cannot actualize an empathetic and curious culture.

As *experts and researchers* have found, diverse teams are more likely to ideate and innovate, leading to the new and different. Diversity in experiences, perspectives, and opinions sometimes leads to conflicting ideas, but this friction can spark creativity that helps teams and organizations discover, design, and deploy more innovative solutions and strategies.

“What I’m really doing is connecting the dots ... and I’m making sure that everyone is involved. ... The idea is that we are thinking about Massachusetts, and then we want to think about the economic engine ... and what all of that has to do with DEI.”

An opportunity exists for MCCA in the recruitment and hiring of a new CEO and a new head of diversity. It will be essential to attract leaders who champion DEI beyond the performative and also understand the business value of a diverse workforce. This will enable MCCA to invest in talent recruitment and development so that its staff at all levels reflects the global community it hopes to attract.

With such leadership in place, MCCA will be better equipped to navigate what The Lazu Group calls **“The Seven Stages from Intention Impact”**:

Stage 1: Excited relief—there is a way to solve “the problem.” Pledges are made, committees are formed. CEO action supporting DEI is a great step one. But far too many organizations stop here with only lip service, sometimes followed by backpedaling from initial commitments. The result is often eyerolls over launching a tone-deaf DEI campaign.

Stage 2: Learning about “the problem.” Organizations set up training and education portals. Creating strategy and enabling employee resource groups (ERGs) are great ways to apply learnings.

Stage 3: Taking action on low-hanging fruit. After training and learning, organizations commit to taking some action. Most organizations start with the obvious and easy; for example, they include questions on equity in an employee survey and begin reviewing job descriptions for bias. We often see increased communications, diversity hiring commitments, and efforts to establish baselines and measure progress. Qualitative metrics are really important here.
**** Note based on our analysis of internal and external culture and current commitment to DEI, MCCA is at Stage 3.**

Stage 4: Denial about getting pushback. Often, initial small actions are met with pushback. For example, the communications team may start to push back about messaging; managers and team members ask if new policies mean hiring “less qualified” people or put the company at legal risk by centering BIPOC. Those leading DEI efforts may often try to compromise at this point, which will dilute their efforts.

Stage 5: Realizing the pushback is real. Much of the pushback encountered can be explained by employees being scared to take risks, get in trouble or, worse yet, be rejected by their work “tribe.” Many managers instinctively acquiesce to “concerns” about DEI efforts, until they realize that it’s actually the machine pushing back. Executives who normally don’t have trouble making decisions suddenly have subordinates questioning their directives and pushing back. By recognizing these reactions for what they are, companies begin to comprehend the pervasiveness of bias.

Stage 6: Realizing the pushback is bias. It becomes clearer that the pushback being encountered is bias within the organization. This realization can cause pain and undermine work relationships—which, in turn, often keeps people in denial.

Stage 7: Deciding to move around and through the bias. The decision to move through the bias is the only way for organizations to put it behind them. Taking this step requires people and organizations to ask themselves: Are we committed to the struggle or will we back down to the structural bias that wants to protect itself at all costs and slow down progress? Do you prefer being comfortable now if it affects future profitability, sustainability and reputation?

DEI Internal (continued)

As noted, our analysis places MCCA and its convention centers at Stage 3. On the positive side:

- MCCA has adopted elements from the Massport plan (from the Boston Planning and Development Agency), which requires bidders to address DEI in project development.
- MCCA had hired a Chief Diversity Officer and is recruiting another, following his departure.
- MCCA's HR department helped sponsor the D.I.V.E. (Diversity in Venues and Events) Team, an affinity group.
- A new HR Director (People & Culture) with a strong DEI background, will help to understand hiring and retention of a diverse workforce.
- A partnership with the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts (BECMA) will initiate a review of purchasing policies and procedures.

However, MCCA still has far more work ahead to move its DEI efforts from intention to measurable impact. For example:

- The Prince Lobel report noted hearing “concerns that the D.I.V.E. Team is not an effective initiative” and suggested that “the Authority consider rolling out a new affinity group initiative for employees of color and other groups who are interested in the benefits of this community-building model. At a minimum, this entails clear and consistent communication about the purposes and goals of these groups and appropriate ground rules and resourcing.”
- MCCA has experienced turnover, including at the top of the organization. As noted above, an interim executive director (*Gloria Cordes Larson*) was named in December 2023, and a new director, a person of color, has since been hired.

Times of great change also bring about the potential for transformation. MCCA has the opportunity to strengthen its leadership by prioritizing those who have high EQ, such as being purpose-driven, empathetic, and taking a holistic approach (e.g., people, planet, and profitability).

Our research and review of documentation yield insights that can help MCCA prepare and actualize its DEI strategy:

- As highlighted above, the Prince Lobel report observed that, while there has been concern and commitment for DEI issues, the approach “has been more ad hoc and less intentional.” This may reveal an attitude within MCCA’s culture that makes it difficult to connect the dots between DEI practices and benefits. There seems to be a false narrative that sees DEI as *“charity” and not additive to profit. If these attitudes remain embedded in the culture and ingrained in practices, it will be difficult, if not impossible, for DEI to leverage into business success as measured by “people, planet, and profit.”*
- The Tracking Sheet of what has been done reveals a very tactical focus. This can be effective within a culture that embraces change. However, tracking (and getting credit for) the number of meetings convened can undermine actual impact, as discussion is mistaken for progress.
 - There is an opportunity to create KPIs that identify and measure the work that needs to be done to reach the Authority’s goals around effective DEI to support people, planet, and profit.
 - An example is more equity in hiring, which begins with making an organization more attractive to diverse talent. Then, by working with employee resource groups or affinity groups, an organization can ensure its job descriptions are welcoming and do not contain language that would discourage diverse people from applying. Eliminating bias (conscious and unconscious) in the process prevents qualified candidates from being overlooked because of perceptions of “culture fit” or failure to see how existing skills can be applied to new challenges and opportunities.

- Professional development at MCCA reveals that people want more opportunities to progress and move up the ladder. **This is a strength in developing a culture that is curious and empathetic.**
- Communication is an area ripe for improvement. Many comments reflect a feeling that current communications are not effective to inform or motivate. Finding ways to let employees carry communications throughout the organization could improve its effectiveness. Employee comments include:
 - “Top down communications does not work...Additionally, rules seem to either mean nothing or constantly change without warning... You end up being told you did something wrong (even when you follow the process the way it was written).”
 - “Without communication it doesn’t matter how good we are at everything else...”
- Work/Life balance: This is important for developing a culture that encourages equity by allowing people to perform their work in a way that is healthy for them. Based on the comments received, it appears that employees are not clear about how to build work/life balance. **Campaigns to educate people on work/life balance can help, as well as management modeling and encouraging the behavior.**



HCC ballroom | Photo credit: Signature Boston

In the summer of 2021, the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) created a DEI task force with the goal of creating best practices and opportunities to educate, engage, elevate, and empower professionals. These practices center around education, inclusive marketing, and supplier diversity. Education best practices include visible DEI statements, DEI training, and opportunities for experiences for staff. Inclusive marketing best practices include thoughtful visuals, language, and strategies, celebrating holidays in meaningful ways, and staying consistent. Supplier diversity best practices include creating policies, developing relations with community partners, and developing relationships with diverse vendors.

As MCCA examines its policies and practices, the ESPA's resources affirm the importance of centering strategy in DEI to transform both internal and external culture, in pursuit of benefits to people, planet, and profits.

Community Engagement

The team was assigned to gather insights from multiple stakeholder groups across the Commonwealth, to include individuals and organizations in government, business, non-profit, trade organizations, neighborhood associations, and those active in their community. Interviews involved diverse audiences across communities including LGBTQIA, veterans, people of color, people with disabilities, in addition to individuals of all ages from youth to the elderly. The team engaged with residents from local neighborhoods and leaders from the Commonwealth’s diverse and robust economy, including technology and innovation, life sciences, clean energy, robotics and healthcare. The Community Engagement phase was executed through a number of methodologies:

A. Stakeholder meetings

A robust list of key stakeholders was compiled, followed by individual interviews to understand the current perceptions of the MCCA, as well as to elicit ideas for future collaboration and alignment.

B. Discovery Groups

A series of four Discovery Groups were convened with thought-leaders from Boston (3 groups) and Springfield (1 group), representing business, incubators, nonprofits, government, and community development. The Discovery Groups explored key themes related to MCCA in smaller breakout sessions to encourage sharing of personal experiences and ideas, followed by large group discussions.



BCEC ballroom prefunction space | Photo credit: Signature Boston

The team set out to understand the challenges, opportunities, and needs within these groups and gain insights on potential collaborations that promote economic growth, while also encouraging public programs that involve and integrate the residents of the Commonwealth. The information collected can help shape future initiatives, foster collaboration and drive positive change.

“True success lies in balancing the drive for financial growth with the cultivation of strong community relationships, ensuring that revenue generation goes hand-in-hand with public trust and connection.”

- Boston business leader

Emerging Themes

Across stakeholder and discovery group outreach, several themes emerged:

1. Massachusetts is a hub of innovation, boasting key industries that set the state apart on both national and international stages. By increasing access to what Massachusetts has to offer, the MCCA can help showcase the state’s unique strengths to an international audience of convention goers.
2. As a major presence in the community, the convention center has a responsibility to give back, recognizing the significant amount of real estate it occupies and its role as a steward of public spaces. The MCCA does an enormous amount in the community. These recommendations represent what can be done with additional staff. Beyond hosting events, centers have a duty to contribute meaningfully to the local community, ensuring that their footprints positively impacts the surrounding areas.
3. MCCA and its convention centers need for a full-scale arts initiative, such as using local art, both on the exterior and in the interior, as a means to celebrate culture and tell the Massachusetts story using state-of-the-art installations.
4. Relationships, communication, and collaboration with and between MCCA and the city, state, and local industries can be further enhanced as MCCA helps market and showcase what makes Massachusetts unique.
5. Untapped opportunities should be explored and addressed to give convention attendees a broader, more authentic, and culturally diverse experience within local communities to complement and enhance their attendance at events.
6. Expand the use of public spaces, such as the successful Lawn on D. By creating new public spaces, they can be transformed into vibrant hubs of activity.
7. The importance of including minority-owned business enterprises (MBEs), small businesses, diverse vendors, artists and the creative economy, ethnic/neighborhood restaurants, local nonprofits, and others in sharing the economic benefits generated by the convention centers should be a priority. Such revenue generation and sharing is paramount not only to the livelihood of many, but also benefits MCCA facilities and the Commonwealth.
8. The MassMutual Center in Springfield should be viewed as its own unique ecosystem, intricately connected to the community it serves, while also functioning as part of the broader convention center network across Massachusetts.
9. Increased communications with key industries and the community will foster further collaboration and provide increasing opportunities for residents and businesses to participate in the economic growth of the state.

Community Engagement (continued)

The MCCA has done a great job with the resources they have - a small communications staff that is spread thin. We believe that the MCCA needs an expanded external relations team, as well as an educational communications effort to re-engage with the state's many stakeholders. In addition, many of the neighborhoods around these centers and other cultural and non-profit groups do not have a relationship with the MCCA, and additional communications and community outreach would help in the future. It is about revisiting, enhancing and building on what is already there.

While the MCCA has provided many community benefits, there is more that needs to be done because many of our key audiences had no knowledge of MCCA's good work. We are recommending additional communications efforts to key audiences, both online and in-person. The residents of MA want more involvement.

Barriers to Entry

In addition, the Stakeholder and Discovery Group participants identified a number of barriers and challenges and offered observations, including but not limited to:

- **Accessibility and Transportation:** "The Seaport is difficult to get to with public transportation from many of the neighborhoods around Boston."
- **'Ticketed' events/Non-public events:** "Convention Centers are concrete walls with private events."
- **Cost of attending and hosting events at the Center:** "We did not consider hosting our event at the Hynes or BCEC because of the cost."
- **Contracts/paperwork/policies that work against involvement of small businesses:** "We don't have enough insurance coverage to cover an event there."
- **Feeling that there are too many ""down days" when conventions aren't happening:** "What is happening most of the time at the convention center? It looks dark."
- **Buildings do not look hospitable:** "Unless there is a convention underway, the buildings are 'closed for business.'"
- **Need more information on what is happening at the convention centers:** "I'm sure they put out information on the conferences, but it would be good to know months in advance and where I can find this information."
- **Opportunities left on the table; need for more dedicated staff:** "There are opportunities to showcase what we are known for."

Participants aired robust ideas of how to increase the convention centers' relevance to the local economy, while also enhancing the experience of those attending a convention, conference, or other event at an MCCA venue. The ideas discussed led to some of the recommendations outlined in this document.

Ideas For The Future

"Make the MCCA assets a place for all of us in the state to use..... to help grow our economy and offer places for the community to access."

CEO, Massachusetts industry trade organization

"Is MCCA part of the policy conversations about the future economy of our region or existing to serve only the convention and hospitality industry? That is the question we should be asking ourselves at this point in time?"

MCCA Board member

"MCCA takes up a lot of real estate - we have a responsibility to give back in our role as the owners of public space"

MCCA Board member

The Community Engagement and Collaboration Initiative

Throughout the community engagement process, powerful messages arose from nearly every interview we conducted.

- There is a significant opportunity for the MCCA to become a beacon to showcase the diverse range of local Massachusetts assets - from local businesses in emerging industries to the arts and diverse history of the Commonwealth – and to share these assets with national and international audiences utilizing the convention centers.
- These convention centers can integrate into the fabric of local communities by also convening events and activities that encourage innovation, creativity, and civic involvement and include diverse populations to provide economic development opportunities for the businesses and residents of Massachusetts.
- The streetscapes surrounding these public buildings must become welcoming to and participatory for the local community, while also showcasing the culture of our cities in telling the Massachusetts story.

Community Engagement (continued)

Development of a Community Engagement and Collaboration Team

The MCCA enterprise needs to decide whether shifting the paradigm from a strict profit-driven business model to an ecosystem that recognizes the imperatives of promoting and protecting the well-being of society and the environment, while continuing to maintain financial gain is viable. The question then becomes: How can MCCA achieve this mission in a way that enables it to compete even more effectively in the 21st century, while centering its triple bottom line of people, planet and profit?

As outlined in the DEI analysis, MCCA’s culture needs to evolve to reflect a proactive public-facing organization, truly embedded in the communities across the state. Achieving this goal will require the development of a team, led by top professionals in their fields, to coordinate and align MCCA with all external stakeholders.

By honoring the rich history of Massachusetts, while also adapting to the needs of the future, this team will help position the state as a leader in sustainability, technology, and education, thus helping ensure long-term growth. Fostering public-private partnerships, promoting equity, and leveraging the state’s existing assets will make Massachusetts not just a place to live, but also the ideal destination for the world’s most innovative minds and companies.

Each convention hosted at MCCA’s centers will have a unique attachment to different aspects of our economy. Providing opportunities for residents and industries in the state to showcase and present their unique assets at MCCA conventions will generate economic opportunities and help brand MASS as a diverse and innovative place. To support these efforts, the Collaboration and Community Engagement team (CEC) can help curate and coordinate these presentations and showcases, which will include a range of participants, such as start-ups, innovation hubs, cultural performances and minority businesses.

“Massachusetts has always punched above our weight. We have individuals and companies from other parts of the country and world who have flourished here because of our ecosystem. We need to find a way to share these stories with convention attendees.”

- CEO, Massachusetts quasi-public agency

These efforts will require ongoing relationships with government, business and non-profit organizations and institutions and greater alignment to grow the economy. The CEC team will maintain ongoing communications, as well as attend meetings with industry organizations so that MCCA and the business community can work in partnership to identify and pitch future events for Massachusetts.

The team will not only focus on new and trending fields, but will also highlight the unique strengths that make Massachusetts an attractive place for businesses and professionals. From the state’s distinct diversity of industry and rich history, to today’s breakthroughs in technology and medicine, Massachusetts has played a pivotal role in shaping both national and global progress.

Operational Recommendations for the CEC Team:

Executive (seasoned professional) to lead the CEC team:

- Reports to the Executive Director of the MCCA and the MCCA Board.
- Works with government agencies and quasi-public agencies to create a “Strategic Economic Development Committee” to meet regularly.
- Meets with business trade organizations to ensure collaborations and alignment of economic development priorities.
- Oversees an appointed Community Advisory Committee - DEI recommendation.
- Interfaces with DEI Director.
- Alignment with the existing communications team.

Staff: Provides concierge services to convention organizers by developing curated programming for each convention, working with MEET BOSTON and other regional tourism councils:

- Organize showcases and presentations of local businesses and organizations to coincide with the convention agenda.
- Assist with the identification of local resources and businesses to host off-site tours and events, in sync with the content of the convention. For example a clean technology or renewable energy convention might include a visit to Greentown Labs or another precedent-setting start-up, which could foster future collaborations.
- Develop opportunities for local ticket sales and discounts to relevant stakeholder groups, students and non-profits.
- Organize “swag bags” to promote exploration of diverse neighborhoods and other areas beyond the convention centers by offering samples, coupons, and gift certificates from local diverse businesses;
- Provide access to discounts available for local museums and tourist attractions.
- Develop a roadmap of all local activities.

Oversees development of a **“Massachusetts Economic & Cultural Network Resource Directory”** for convention organizers, working in coordination with state and city agencies, Signature Boston, MEET Boston and statewide trade organizations. This directory will include information on all local assets which may be of interest to attendees, and can be used as a guide when working with the convention organizers.

Community Engagement (continued)

Advisory Committee on Community Engagement

To further enhance community engagement and imagining possibilities for MCCA and its three venues, interview and Discovery Group participants frequently emphasized the importance of forging closer relationships with community organizations. For example, such engagement is imperative to designing meaningful experiences for event-goers that are also aligned with the culture, needs, and goals of the residents. Establishing relationships with authentic community connectors – those who already have trusted relationships within the community – can help ensure success as MCCA reaches beyond its current relationships and partnerships.

An “Advisory Committee on Community Engagement,” composed of local business owners, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and others, could be tasked with helping ideate innovative solutions and explore opportunities for the local community to participate more broadly in the economic benefits of the convention centers. In addition, the committee’s members would be a resource to identify groups and individuals who can assist with the development of curated programming for convention attendees.

The CEC team can work with convention organizers to coordinate with these local groups to curate a package that supports the incoming convention, while also showcasing Massachusetts’ strong assets in that sector.

Creation of a Massachusetts Economic & Cultural Network Resource Directory

The Massachusetts Economic & Cultural Network Resource Directory will be a comprehensive, state-wide resource that will serve as a central hub for accessing businesses, nonprofits, arts organizations, and industry leaders, providing a curated list of Massachusetts-based entities across a range of fields that can participate in conventions. The resource directory can be utilized by MCCA event staff and incoming convention organizers, providing information on potential collaborations, activations, and activities for convention attendees.

The CEC team can work with convention organizers to coordinate with these local groups to develop a package that supports the incoming convention, while also showcasing Massachusetts’ strong assets in that sector.



Boston Public Garden | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Creation of a Massachusetts Economic & Cultural Network Resource Directory (continued)

Designed to foster partnerships, promote Massachusetts strengths on-site at the conventions, and enhance the state’s economic ecosystem, the directory offers access to:

- **Businesses:** From startups to established companies across the state’s top industries, including emerging industries such as biotechnology, clean energy, artificial intelligence, AI, and advanced manufacturing. These businesses should have an opportunity to either participate in their respective sector events and/or be a resource as part of a sponsorship package for convention organizers for off-site visits and information gathering. This would require ongoing conversations between industry associations and the CEC Team Director.
- **Industry Associations:** These associations are a strong force for connecting stakeholders in various industries to present and/or collaborate with convention organizers. Participation could include seminars hosted by industry groups during conventions or the opportunity to invite industry leadership to address key issues facing Massachusetts as part of a relevant sector event.
- **Massachusetts Tourism Assets:** Working with MEET Boston, a listing of all potential activities and tours should be included as part of the Directory
- **Nonprofits:** The Commonwealth’s leading organizations driving social impact and innovation will be featured as examples of precedent-setting social and innovation sectors in Massachusetts.
- **Arts & Cultural Organizations:** Showcasing the creativity and diversity of Massachusetts’ cultural landscape will further enhance community relations and the appeal of MCCA centers. Examples of activities include cultural tours in Greater Boston and the Berkshires in Springfield, and performances held at conventions coordinated by the CEC team. This could come in the form of discounted tickets to multiple museums.
- **Sports facilities and college campus:** Activities could include tours, presentations, and exhibits related to a particular event or industry sector.

By offering these valuable resources, conventions can be activated with authentic Massachusetts experiences on and around event days, and key businesses will be highlighted within relevant industry conventions to promote Massachusetts.

Community Engagement (continued)

Creation of Convener Spaces at MCCA Assets

The **Convener space concept** is a dynamic, multi-use community space within each of the convention center campuses, serving as a hub for collaboration, community connection, and cultural exchange. By leveraging the **Massachusetts Economic & Cultural Network Resource Directory**, these spaces could connect local businesses, nonprofits, arts organizations, and industry leaders to the broader community, while offering a unique platform for knowledge sharing, networking, and creative expression.

The convener spaces can offer opportunities to individuals and organizations from every corner of Massachusetts to host and participate in showcases and sales opportunities for attendees while a convention is operational in the convention center.

Managed by the CEC team, the spaces can be designed to be an inclusive and accessible space inviting all residents, from entrepreneurs to artists to community leaders, to come together and shape the future of Massachusetts. Given the need to leave spaces open for conventions, these spaces can move within the building dependent on the date and use.

This space embodies the spirit of innovation and partnership that defines the Commonwealth. Partnerships and activations can include:

Convener Spaces | During Convention Dates

- **Industry Showcase:** The primary role of the Convener spaces will be to highlight sector-leading businesses and local cultural and non-profit communities to provide an opportunity to interface with convention audiences and share what makes Massachusetts the innovation center of the U.S.

“Massachusetts officially began its ‘Massachusetts 250’ initiative, an effort that state officials say will be a boon for tourism as well as an opportunity for the state to look back on its successes in its first 250 years.

Gov. Maura Healey said the campaign will celebrate Massachusetts as a place of firsts — from healthcare to education to innovation — and will serve as a catalyst for what’s to come from the state.”

- Boston Business Journal

- **Institutional Showcase:** Massachusetts is known for its world-class healthcare and higher education institutions, including hospitals, research institutions, and schools. The Convener spaces can be dedicated locations at conventions to feature announcements and innovations to national and international audiences.
- **Cultural and Arts Exhibitions:** Helping tell the Massachusetts story and connection to these industries, the Convener spaces can showcase the work of local artists, performers, and cultural institutions, reflecting the rich diversity of Massachusetts’ creative community.

“For every one sports ticket sold (in Massachusetts), there are five sold for the arts.”

- ED, A MA Arts & Culture Organization

- **Non-Profit Examples:** Massachusetts is fortunate to have hundreds of non-profits that are setting precedents in their fields of social and economic justice. Developing solutions to society’s challenges in new ways and using breakthrough models of interaction should be showcased. Some Massachusetts examples include:

Rosie’s Place - Founded in 1974, this was the first women’s shelter in the United States. It provides meals, shelter, and educational services to homeless women in the Boston area

Cradles to Crayons is the largest national nonprofit focused on ending Children’s Clothing Insecurity by providing millions of packages of essentials.

Convener Spaces | Outside Convention Dates

- **Community Destination:** Based on the schedule, convention centers can become spaces for community performances, after school programs, etc. The space can also offer accessible and affordable space for community-hosted meetings or forums and public discussions on key issues that encourage dialogue and community involvement.

“A campaign is needed to change the face of MCCA with a new brand-- the convention center is a great asset and we need to be able to use it for civic and charitable events.”

- Labor leader

- **Networking Events and Seminars:** There are opportunities to foster collaboration among professionals, thought leaders, and creatives from various sectors and industries outside of conventions. Educational events include topics such as entrepreneurship, sustainability, workforce development, and civic engagement.

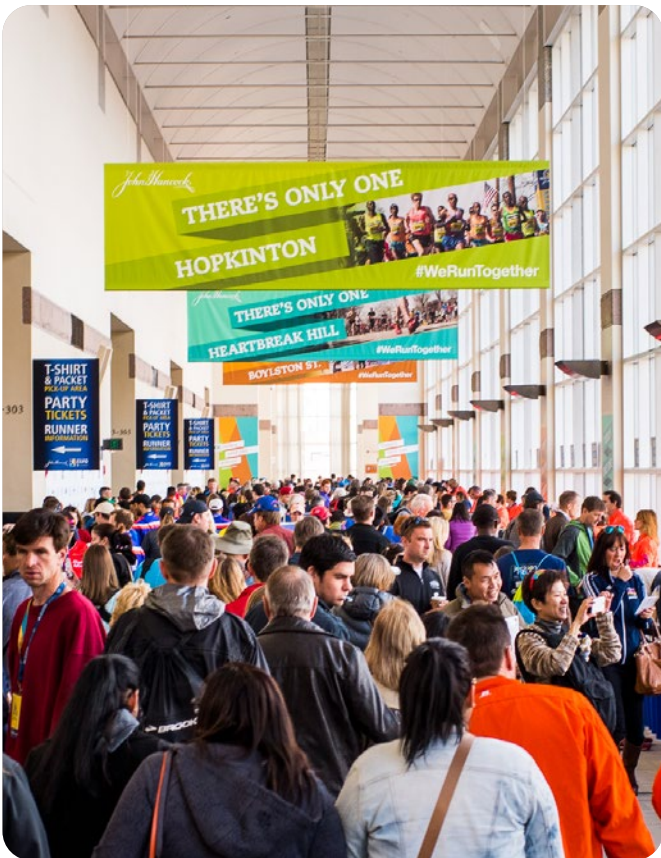
Community Engagement (continued)

Locally Produced Events for National Audiences

The MCCA can foster opportunities to produce and host conventions that attract a national audience, positioning the Authority as a key convener in sectors that are important to Massachusetts and its story. Local institutions, businesses and civic leaders have successfully produced past events, and these should be encouraged in the future by offering small grants to generate new ideas, as part of the Community Partnership Grants program. The scope of potential areas of interest is vast, and can incorporate the noteworthy attributes of Massachusetts, such as sports and medical innovations.

Examples of locally produced successful events:

- Building off the success of hosting the “Boston While Black’s annual Family Reunion,” MCCA can elevate its brand by staging similar events that are important to diverse communities of color. Commenting on the 2024 Family Reunion, Boston While Black Founder and CEO Sheena Collier said, “We utilize events like the Reunion to break down barriers that enable Black Bostonians to be tourists in their own city. The Seaport – a rebranded part of South Boston – carries a lot of history of not being somewhere Black people could congregate. Now ... Black people from across the Commonwealth, as well as visitors, are enjoying this space.”
- The “World Medical Innovation Forum,” where healthcare innovation and investment intersect, is an annual event that brings together top CEOs, investors, Harvard clinical leaders, and government officials. Staged against the backdrop of the latest biotech breakthroughs in medicine, it is produced by MGH and the Bank of Boston and held at ENCORE.



HCC during the Boston Marathon | Photo credit: Signature Boston

One potential annual event could be a “Diversity in Life Science” conference, which would bring together diverse people of color from around the world who are involved in some aspect of the life sciences industry. This would include venture capitalists, academicians, researchers, new drug innovators, etc. These events could include participants at all levels, from high school and community college students attending educational sessions to startups and venture capitalists engaging in pitch contests.

Promoting & Hosting Local Events to Draw Massachusetts Residents

There is an opportunity for MCCA to host local events to build and leverage its connections with diverse organizations and to create a vibrant, inclusive community interaction at each of its facilities. These events would promote local organizations, showcasing emerging technologies, products, and services from local startups and established businesses in sectors like biotech, AI, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing, as well as state job training programs, government programs and subsidies, etc. Such events could help fill the event calendars for MCCA centers; this year, the BCEC had 60 unbooked days and the Hynes had 187.

As noted earlier, in imagining possibilities for MCCA and its three venues, Discovery Group participants frequently emphasized the importance of forging closer relationships with community organizations. Such engagement is imperative to designing meaningful experiences for event-goers that are also aligned with the culture, needs, and goals of the community. To enhance community connections and ensure meaningful event experiences, the MCCA could focus on partnerships with trusted community organizations and connectors.

Examples highlighted during the community outreach study included:

- **Industry Expos and Roundtables:** These events would highlight emerging technologies, business innovations, and talent from across the state. There are opportunities to create a focus on small businesses and startups. For example, a Clean Energy Education Summit could bring together the industry, middle and high school students and teachers, vocational education programs, community colleges and more; this would provide information on the industry, job training programs, curriculum components, and job placement opportunities. Gathering leaders from key sectors like biotech, healthcare, and clean energy would foster discussions of trends, challenges, and opportunities for collaboration.

“This is an industry that is accelerating fast. There is an opportunity to pull together clean energy companies, small and large, start-ups and industry leaders, to provide an education on the industry. There are ample opportunities to support the ecosystem of small businesses and create conversations to include job training providers, vocational and community college leaders, high school educators and investors”

- Clean energy industry spokesperson

Community Engagement (continued)

- **Large Community Events:** Possibilities include concerts, local performances, seasonal events such as movie nights, plays, concerts, and art shows. These events could help make the convention center a destination for locals. Another example could be an event hosted for veterans to share information about job opportunities, job training, how to apply for benefits, while providing support by inviting commanders and former and current veterans and their families.
- **Heritage Events:** Celebrations of the cultural diversity of Massachusetts through food, music, dance, and art will help engage and promote different ethnic communities For example, explore hosting significant events such as the annual U.S. Dragon & Lion Dance Competition. This has been hosted in Quincy in the past, and is now hosted in convention centers in other cities. MCCA could work with the Asian Business Empowerment Council to bring it back to Boston. Such opportunities should be coordinated through the CEC office to ensure events are created locally, authentically, and are representative of our beautifully diverse state.
- **Smaller meetings:** Making smaller spaces available at the convention centers would accommodate more local events. The size and cost of venues such as the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center at the Seaport is prohibitive for many local organizations and locally organized events. As a solution, interviewees suggested that partial or subdivided spaces – particularly at the smaller Hynes center – could be made available at a discounted rate for local events. Such flexibility could also help MCCA generate additional, incremental revenue between major events.

“Look at the calendar. When are there openings? Break down the space into smaller [parcels] that are manageable for local organizations. For example, how about offering a space for 200 people for a fundraiser?”

- Discovery Group participant

Building Neighborhood Destinations

The BCEC, Hynes, and Mass Mutual Center occupy a significant amount of space, and it is critical to utilize the surrounding outdoor areas more effectively to create mixed-use districts. By transforming empty spaces into vibrant community installations and creating a mix of interactive and passive areas, MCCA can foster greater community engagement and provide spaces that visitors, residents, and everyone else can enjoy.

The Lawn on D was frequently highlighted in discussions with both individuals and groups. We applaud its innovative concept, which has earned much-deserved recognition as a pioneering example of how to activate outdoor convention center spaces.



HCC from Gloucester Street | Photo credit: Signature Boston

The Boston Convention and Marketing Center team has several initiatives involving the community, at the Lawn-On-D currently including partnerships with the Boston Center for Youth and Families, several South Boston non-profits and others. It is recommended that the MCCA build further on what is being done with citywide outreach to ensure the space remains vibrant and inclusive, with minimal dark days when space is unused. This role could be spearheaded by the Advisory Committee on Community Engagement. Similar public spaces should be considered at the Hynes and MMC, as outlined in this report.

Recommendations for the future:

- **Develop mixed-use opportunities with local retail/restaurants:** Share an inclusive story through local food and other offerings from small and diverse businesses. For example, an investment could be made to improve the retail program along Hynes frontage, and to populate the front of the BCEC with a café or year-round retail offerings from local businesses.

“Why can’t we bring in food trucks from the surrounding neighborhoods to fire up people’s taste buds – instead of excluding parts of the city you are trying to include.”

-Discovery Group participant

- **Improve Wayfinding** - Name the sidewalks, entrances, and new pop-up areas after Massachusetts cultural references. Utilize local artists and creatives via an RFP process to design these directional improvements around the site (signage, sidewalk art, etc).
- **Utilize every piece of real estate around the site** - For example, activate the light poles around the BCEC, Hynes, and the MassMutual Center to showcase the district and/or other aspects of the area. A permanent or rotating activation could include highlighting each of Boston’s neighborhoods on the poles lining D Street and surrounding the BCEC.
- **Naming Rights** - Explore the opportunity to name entrances, wayfinding markers, pockets of space, public spaces, cafes, etc. with historic or Massachusetts cultural assets that reflect the Commonwealth’s rich past and present.
- **Kiosks, marketplaces, and pop-ups:** MCCA could offer space (outdoor and indoor) for kiosks, marketplaces and pop-ups to local retailers, boutiques, designers and other members of the creative economy. One possibility is securing space in vacant storefronts near convention centers for 1-2 months to house pop-ups that provide diverse shopping experiences to visitors, while also exposing local people to retailers from less familiar neighborhoods. (It is important to note that there is not enough foot traffic on a daily basis to warrant a permanent retail space.)

Community Engagement (continued)

Atlanta: “Now that the development has matured around us, we’ve gone from just having conventions to creating experiences, and creating a convention and entertainment district in and around the center and in that neighborhood that create that ‘sense of place’ and encourage visitors to explore a broader city, then we’ve done our job.”

“In Houston, the area surrounding the George R. Brown Convention Center has been revitalized by integrating Discovery Green, a 12-acre park, with the convention space. This project not only encourages outdoor activities but also supports community interaction and city-wide events, breaking down barriers between the center and public space”

Meetings Today

Additionally, some convention centers prioritize what are called "liminal spaces"—areas between the primary rooms like ballrooms and meeting spaces. This trend, seen in projects like the BMO Centre in Calgary, has been vital in creating social hubs where attendees naturally gather. These design features promote networking and community interaction while maximizing the usability of both interior and exterior spaces

Meetings Today

The Role of Art

The role of art is important to community engagement and telling the Massachusetts story. There is diversity in art - it makes people feel seen, whether as a reflection of their culture or of their own background. New Data from the MA Cultural Council shows that there are more than 14,000 arts organizations across the state of Massachusetts - a \$20.6 billion industry that can contribute to the branding at our centers.

“The Massachusetts 250 initiative will also aim to center around traditionally underrepresented voices, including from the Indigenous and Black communities across Massachusetts.”

Boston Business Journal

There are innumerable opportunities to employ the local cultural community, as well as tell the Massachusetts story throughout the convention centers. These opportunities should be explored across all disciplines and mediums, including digital, performing, structural, photography, and more. The MCCA is currently pursuing the hiring of a curator or broker to make connections to the visitation/conventioner sector. This role should work directly with a community arts committee and organizations such as the MA Cultural Council. A call to artists could be used to activate parts of the convention center.

Examples:

- Utilize interior walkways and corridors and underutilized surfaces to showcase the Commonwealth’s diversity today and throughout history. One example would be “Faces of MA,” highlighting a rotating list of diverse residents.
- Share untold stories of Massachusetts, i.e. LGBTQ history during the Revolutionary War.
- A showcase of “Massachusetts Firsts,” e.g., the first public library was in Boston; Logan Airport has a variety of educational walls throughout each terminal.
- Exterior Murals - Build off the Rose Kennedy Greenway’s rotating art mural. There is ample exterior wall space around the BCEC as well as opportunities in and around the Hynes, Mass Mutual, and Boston Common Garage.



Community Engagement (continued)

- Coordinate interactive art installations to align with conventions in town. For example, green art/sustainable installations could integrate sustainable art projects, such as vertical gardens or eco-friendly sculptures made from recycled materials, to promote environmental awareness during a climate conference. During a medical conference, highlight the local innovative campaign to make art therapy covered by insurance.
- Local art can also be intertwined within practical usages:
 - Traffic calming methods - Pursue an RFP for art on district sidewalks and crosswalks between the convention centers and the surrounding hotels/neighborhoods.
 - Bus Stops - highlight the available transportation options available with art installations, while also helping to brand the district.
- Engage local artists from each community; for instance, the BCEC is surrounded by the vibrant work of the Fort Point Artists, a collective of over 500 members. Their involvement highlights the rich artistic talent of the area. We understand an art lending program is underway with the local Fort Point artists and suggest MCCA build upon this. South Boston and Chinatown also have active arts organizations, and the Hynes is located within walking distance of Boston's only public high school dedicated to the visual and performing arts, the Boston Arts Academy.

Essence Fest—An Immersive Experience

Hosted by Essence Magazine in New Orleans each year, Essence Festival is the largest Black culture and music event in the U.S. with approximately a half-million people in attendance. It is a compelling example of an immersive experience, which is created the moment attendees arrive in the city. This experience is further enhanced with the blend of a convention (featuring panel discussions, presentations, and more) plus concerts – along with an opportunity for companies to feature their products and give away “swag” to attendees.

The takeaway for MCCA is that events such as Essence Fest bring together multiple facets of experience: trendsetters, thought leaders, business, art, music, and self-expression. It showcases Black culture and local culture, by bringing together the best of both in a welcoming, inclusive environment.



04

Telling the Massachusetts Story

“Massachusetts 250 is going to be an ongoing celebration of who we are, of where we’ve been, and what is to come ... We’re going to leverage this moment to draw in visitors from all around not just the state, the country, but literally the world, who are going to come here to Massachusetts to see and to celebrate where it all began”

- Governor Maura Healey

Key Findings:

- Convention centers offer a valuable platform to highlight the diverse range of local Massachusetts assets—from local businesses in emerging industries, to the arts and diverse history of the Commonwealth—and to share these assets with national and international audiences utilizing and visiting the Hynes, the BCEC and MassMutual.
- Art can play a tremendous role in convention centers by telling a story that can be engaging -through murals, sculptures, interactive installations-art can create a sense of place, inspire and leave a lasting impression with attendees.
- The MCCA should work with convention organizers to develop local tour opportunities that are tailored to the convention center content (for example, life sciences or clean energy), working in partnership with all other relevant state and city economic development departments.
- Local technology companies focusing on AI powered solutions (chatbots, analytics, facial recognition) and robotics can be used to educate and entice attendees to experience what Massachusetts has to offer.
- The MCCA should strengthen external relations and community engagement by forming a Community Engagement and Collaborations (CEC) team, enhancing partnerships with the state and city economic development arms and other agencies, launching and increase communications within the communities.



Boston skyline | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Telling the Massachusetts Story

The Massachusetts Story

The Massachusetts story cannot be clearly defined or branded in a neat box. The Massachusetts brand incorporates history, culture, and innovation. The state is ripe with entrepreneurs and start-ups, surrounded by the best health care and educational institutions in the world. Today, a modern arts and culture ecosystem drives the creative economy. There are numerous opportunities to amplify the stories being told from all diverse regions of the State rather than creating a broad narrative that is too diluted to be received.

“We are not defined singularly. We show diversity everywhere: Our industries range from our famed meds & eds, to sneakers, cyber companies, startups, and climate gamechangers.”

- Co-Founder & General Partner, venture capital firm

While the MCCA and its partners do an excellent job selling Massachusetts, there are large spaces, both inside and outside the centers, that could be used to expand the Massachusetts brand. As we look into the future, we suggest using these large spaces to share our assets and tell the story of our precedent-setting innovations and cultural economy to the more than 500,000 convention attendees and their families who attend events with them every year.

Share the Massachusetts Story at All MCCA Assets

Imagine ... Attendees who arrive through Logan Airport are met with a variety of stories: “The Firsts of MA,” i.e. the Boston Public Library, media coverage of local Nobel Peace Prize laureates, hallway stories promoting tourism assets such as Walden Pond -- as well as promoting the importance of mental health as told by Massachusetts residents, thanks to the sponsorship of McLean Hospital.

There is an opportunity to continue these stories in each convention center by populating the spaces, the expansive hallways, and interior/exterior spaces with new narratives, using local artists from various disciplines, including performance, digital expressions, sculpture, painting, music and more.

“A commitment to local culture has created a public art gallery within the convention center, which hosts both a permanent collection, as well as rotating galleries featuring local artists. Commissioned pieces are part of this collection.”

- Sydney ICC



Downtown Boston | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Telling the Massachusetts Story (continued)

Showcase Local

Convention centers offer a valuable platform to highlight the diverse range of local Massachusetts assets -- from local businesses in emerging industries, to the arts and diverse history of the Commonwealth – and to share these assets with national and international audiences utilizing and visiting the Hynes, the BCEC and MassMutual. Each convention hosted will have a unique attachment to different aspects of the economy. By providing the opportunity for Massachusetts residents and industries to showcase and present their unique assets at conventions, MCCA will generate both economic opportunities for local businesses and organizations, as well as brand MASS as a diverse and innovative place.

“Massachusetts leads the country in getting women into labor. The best union event every year is the 'Tradeswomen Build Nations' - the largest gathering of unionized tradeswomen in the world. It is so inspiring – we really want to get Boston on the list to hold it here.”
- Labor Leader

Massachusetts has a strong community of cutting-edge thinkers. This presents the opportunity to connect event organizers with individuals and companies who are leaders in their fields. From MA Challenge to MA Robotics, from the UMass Amherst Innovation Institute to the Equity INNOVATION Hub at Harvard University, each provides insights into social programs in cities, while eight Massachusetts colleges and universities provide state-of-the-art programs in research and new ideas.

“Innovation drives change and helps us adapt to an ever-evolving world of emerging challenges. Engaging with Sydney’s innovative and entrepreneurial community fosters greater creative inspiration, transformational opportunities, problem solving, and insights into events at ICC Sydney”
-ICC Sydney Legacy Program

Massachusetts is home to schools for all ages, dedicated to culture and the arts, in addition to world-renowned symphonies and museums. The MCCA can develop a creative connection showcasing artists and performers, as well as develop curated tours of institutions and non-profits for convention attendees and families.

The CEC team, listed in this report’s set of recommendations, can be used to coordinate interactive art installations at the convention site to align with the content. For example, green art installations such as eco-friendly sculptures made from recycled materials would promote environmental awareness during a climate conference and share the state’s commitment to the planet, while also showcasing our creative economy.

Local Tours

The MCCA should work with convention organizers to develop local tour opportunities that are tailored to the convention content, working in partnership with all other relevant state and city economic development departments. In 2018, the BIO International Convention was held at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, drawing 18,289 biotechnology industry leaders – the most attendees in the last 10 years – from 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and 67 countries. Multiple off-site tours and events were presented to the convention attendees to showcase life sciences centers in Kendall Square and the Seaport, and share stories of innovations developed in our research centers and companies.



Aerial view of Fort Point Channel | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Similarly, the MCCA team can promote tours to neighborhoods that are within driving distance of each site. This should be in collaboration with MEETBoston, which has made this a priority in its strategic plan. For example, tours of the South End would tell the history of one of Boston’s poorest and most ethnically and racially diverse neighborhoods, which today boasts locally owned shops and restaurants catering to the diverse demographics of the neighborhood. From college campuses to sports facilities and world-renown tourist attractions, Massachusetts has a strong narrative to share with visitors.

Technology

We must use cutting edge technology and tech innovations coming out of the Commonwealth to tell the story. The MCCA team has used a number of different technologies in conferences. Let’s expand this narrative by working with the many trending technology companies in Massachusetts. The role that local technology companies focusing on AI powered solutions (chatbots, analytics, facial recognition) and virtual reality can play must be considered in order to educate and entice attendees to experience what Massachusetts has to offer.

“In September, we will host our 7th annual robot block party in the Seaport. Maybe the MCCA can make room for us at conventions to help brand Massachusetts. Companies like Autodesk can showcase their latest technology and there are dozens more that could tell a great narrative.”
- Executive, MA Robotics

Telling the Massachusetts Story (continued)

Involving Our Local Cultural and Arts Communities

There are innumerable opportunities to employ our local cultural community, as well as tell the Massachusetts story throughout the convention centers. These opportunities should be explored across all disciplines and mediums- including digital, performing, structural, photography, and more.

Examples:

- Utilize interior walkways and corridors and underutilized surfaces to showcase our diversity now and throughout history.
- Share untold stories of Massachusetts - i.e. the LGBTQ role in wartime histories.
- Exterior Murals - Build off of the Rose Kennedy Greenway’s rotating art mural. There is ample exterior wall space around the BCEC as well as opportunities in and around the Hynes, Mass Mutual, and Boston Common Garage.
- Dedicate a portion of the time on digital assets and signs to promote the Massachusetts story using all MCCA digital assets. The MassMutual Center will have a new digital sign which will provide innumerable opportunities to share information about Western Massachusetts and the region’s innovators. These are opportunities to tell the Massachusetts story as the conventions come to the Commonwealth.



“LACC has been a hub for community-driven art projects - for example the "Shaping LA" mural by the nonprofit Portraits of Hope, which was hand-painted by over 7,000 local residents from all backgrounds. This large-scale installation spans the length of four football fields and transforms the venue’s exterior, fostering community pride and providing a vibrant visual symbol of collective creativity.”

- Art Enthusiast

Communications

Today, the MCCA is viewed as a convention-centric organization, hosting out-of-state conventions and local events, all while creating economic impacts for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

External Relations:

Based on extensive interviews with thought-leaders across the State, it is clear that the Authority needs a strong external relations initiative. None of the stakeholders we interviewed has an ongoing relationship with the MCCA. MCCA is not benefiting from the vast resources and expertise in the Massachusetts market that is both willing and capable of supporting the mission of expanding and strengthening the meeting and convention business for the Commonwealth.

The existing communications staff is implementing several initiatives but is too small to take on additional external communications efforts, which leads us to the recommendation to add additional support by developing a Community Engagement and Collaborations (CEC) team to align with the existing Communications team. (Reference: Section 4: Opportunity).

Ongoing alignment with the state and city economic development offices must be part of this strategy. MCCA could fill this void by taking a leadership role by engaging more effectively with the State Office of Economic Development (which includes MOTT) and the City of Boston. In Springfield, ongoing relationships with ExploreMA and the western MA Regional Director, as well as the City of Springfield are important.

MCCA Educational Initiative:

In order to align with the State’s economic development and growth strategies, and partner with key MA industries and small businesses, it is important that MCCA undertake an educational campaign to re-engage these important stakeholders. There is a lack of awareness about the state of the convention industry post-Covid. A new “campaign” about how/why convention centers are important to the local economy (especially post-Covid), and an acknowledgment of the importance of working together is important at this time, according to the leaders of various trade organizations.

Community Communications:

Communicating directly with residents, non-profits, cultural and arts organizations, and the small and minority business communities is an important initiative that should be implemented. A community-centric website should be developed to provide information about upcoming events and conventions, as well as opportunities to use the buildings for other community uses.



The Rose Kennedy Greenway | Photo credit: Signature Boston

05

Leading by Example

The MCCA has the potential to be a frontrunner in sustainability and resilience, all while meeting its economic objectives.

Central to its sustainability efforts are energy efficiency but there is more potential to develop comprehensive strategies that also emphasize decarbonizing operations, lowering embodied carbon, building climate resilience, creating healthy and equitable spaces, and engaging in community stewardship on a daily basis, as well as during emergencies.

Sustainable and resilient design and operation of all facilities is a core goal of MCCA’s mission to lead by example. To effectively achieve these goals, a comprehensive sustainability framework is important for guiding various elements of the MCCA’s buildings and operations from policy and procurement to facility design standards. Developing a strategy for operational decarbonization, which includes benchmarking current energy consumption and emissions, is essential for any future renovations and new construction projects, and for complying with current and upcoming energy regulations. Strategies to reduce embodied carbon should be introduced, focusing on key factors for major renovations, interior fit-outs, vendor choices, and event management. In addressing the urgent need for climate resilience, the study examines both current and anticipated climate-related threats, providing recommendations to enhance the facility’s long-term resilience. Furthermore, while MCCA facilities have historically played a vital role in the Commonwealth’s emergency response efforts, there are numerous opportunities to strengthen this capacity through innovative design solutions.

With the recommended improvements to sustainability and resilience highlighted in this report, the MCCA has a significant opportunity to serve the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and lead by example.

Key Findings:

- A tailored and formally adopted MCCA Sustainability Framework, built on the recommended source material, can help MCCA quantify and track the extensive sustainability initiatives already accomplished across the organization while also mapping out a strategic path forward for a more sustainable and carbon neutral future.
- Significant progress has been made toward energy efficiency and carbon neutral operations at the BCEC and MMC, but further study will be required to devise cost-optimized pathways toward decarbonization of the remaining uses for natural gas at these facilities.
- At the HCC and BCG, most of the work to achieve carbon neutral operations are in the realm of off-site clean energy procurement, complimented by a shorter list of on-site improvement opportunities.
- A tailored and formally adopted embodied carbon reduction strategy, built on the recommended source material, would significantly improve the MCCA’s capacity to minimize embodied carbon emissions from future projects and ongoing operations.
- The two most prominent climate hazards across the four facilities are flooding and extreme heat. A suite of design and operations strategies are available to improve resilience to these hazards.
- The MCCA facilities have served myriad roles in Commonwealth emergency response actions, but there are numerous opportunities to serve even greater roles if certain facility upgrades are considered.

Sustainability & Decarbonization

Holistic Sustainability

This report aims to bring clarity to the sustainability goals and objectives that the MCCA is working toward and outline recommended steps necessary to achieve these goals. These recommendations are set in the context of potential renovation, renewal, and new construction efforts, broken down by each facility.

The MCCA can serve as a leader in the realm of sustainability while also fulfilling its economic mission. At the heart of MCCA’s holistic sustainability initiatives are:

- 1. Energy efficiency
- 2. Operational decarbonization
- 3. Embodied carbon reduction
- 4. The creation of healthy, equitable spaces
- 5. Support of and enhancement of biodiversity
- 6. Community stewardship

Collectively, a holistic and comprehensive sustainability framework, path for operational decarbonization, and embodied carbon reduction strategy will help MCCA quantify and track the extensive sustainability initiatives already accomplished at the BCEC while also mapping out a strategic path toward a more sustainable and carbon neutral future.

Sustainable design and operations of all facilities is a core goal of MCCA’s mission. It touches on every aspect of building, operations, and events at MCCA facilities. However, currently, the MCCA does not have a comprehensive document to guide, track, and report sustainability progress across all four facilities. To achieve this effectively, a well-developed sustainability framework is valuable for informing many aspects of the MCCA’s buildings and operations – from policy and procurement decisions to facility design requirements. A holistic framework can provide sustainable guidance for built projects and vertical development, horizontal site and infrastructure projects, vendor services and operations, and event management.

Numerous state and local regulations, policy drivers, codes, and priorities are in place to guide energy efficiency, electrification, and decarbonization; but a consistent, comprehensive, and holistic framework to guide all four facilities does not exist. Further, there are many sustainability best practices that reach beyond minimum regulations and policies -- energy efficiency, operational and embodied carbon, water conservation, waste management, health and wellbeing of building occupants, storm-water management, and biodiversity -- that enhance MCCA's investments and provide co-benefits in MCCA's role as a community steward.

Leveraging a robust sustainability framework that is specifically suited to MCCA's unique space types, requirements and needs, complemented with appropriate certification requirements, is recommended as a top priority for MCCA moving forward. This will enable MCCA to get consistent targets, collect specific metrics, and consistently monitor sustainability progress.

Operational Decarbonization

Operational carbon and a path for decarbonization is a critical consideration for any future renovation of MCCA facilities as well as in meeting current and future energy code requirements.

Set within a broader sustainability framework, a top priority for the MCCA is to achieve carbon neutral operations. Carbon neutral operations means all energy used on-site comes from carbon-free sources. This differs from Net Zero Energy operations (on-site energy demand equals on-site energy supply) in that it requires all purchased energy to come from carbon-free sources and does not require all energy to be generated on-site. Carbon neutral operations can be achieved by the following steps:

- 1. Energy conservation to save money and reduce electricity and natural usage.
- 2. Fuel switching to eliminate all remaining on-site natural gas usage (i.e., Scope 1 emissions).
- 3. On-site renewables to save money, reduce demand for purchased electricity, and support energy resilience.
- 4. Off-site renewable procurement to eliminate all remaining energy-related GHG emissions (i.e., Scope 2).
- 5. Monitoring and reporting progress toward carbon neutral operations to maintain accountability and serve as a leader for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the events industry overall.

In each report, a benchmarking of present-day energy usage and emissions has been provided to establish a valuable metric by which to assess the strategies and opportunities available to minimize operational carbon. Each report includes a summary of recent and ongoing efforts. These include lighting retrofits and controls updates, virtual power purchase agreements (VPPAs), demand response program participation, and a summary of the ongoing development of a Climate Action Plan (CAP) for the BCEC and HCC facilities. Lastly, each report details specific recommendations for achieving carbon neutrality via energy efficiency improvements and the elimination of on-site fossil fuel use. Strategies outlined in each report include key Energy Conservation Measures specific to each facility; and fuel switching from natural gas to electric alternatives for cooking and catering, space heating, dehumidification, and domestic hot water, where appropriate to each facility. Each report also includes recommendations for the evaluation and incorporation of previously studied on-site renewables in the form of PV, and a recommendation to commit to carbon-free energy procurement to meet remaining energy demands.



Aerial view of the BCEC | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Sustainability & Decarbonization (continued)

Embodied Carbon Decarbonization

When considering full carbon neutrality, embodied carbon – the GHG emissions associated with the production, transportation and installation of materials – is an essential yet historically under-emphasized element; however, an increasing number of institutions and jurisdictions are starting to take embodied carbon measurement into account. There are many opportunities to effectively assess and reduce the embodied carbon of materials at all scales of facility design and operation.

A goal for MCCA is to prioritize tangible strategies for reducing embodied carbon in:

- 1. Interior fit-outs
- 2. Renovations
- 3. New construction
- 4. Vendor activities

While the specific strategies will be unique to each condition and project, establishing high-level strategies, metrics and targets for vertical development, horizontal development, and event management are recommended. All new projects, whether renovation, addition, new construction or site and infrastructure related, should consider opportunities for embodied carbon reduction. Leveraging embodied carbon-focused credits within holistic sustainability certification programs for measuring and quantifying embodied carbon reduction can provide consistency for tracking these metrics across projects and facilities while also providing a vessel by which to promote MCCA's successes in this area.

While strategies for embodied carbon reduction should be catered to each project, focusing on structural embodied carbon reductions and the embodied carbon in new facade materials and products can help projects achieve significant reductions. That said, the opportunities will vary from project to project. The durability, longevity, and replacement schedule of interior finishes should also be taken into account when considering the impact of embodied carbon with regard to interior finishes. Requiring EPDs and setting a 10% embodied carbon reduction (from baseline) are among the recommendations detailed in each report.



Boston skyline | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Climate Resilience

A climate risk and resilience assessment was conducted of all four MCCA facilities as well as potential expansion considerations. These assessments evaluate current and future climate-related hazards and provide recommendations to enhance long-term resilience. Given the increasing impacts of climate change, it is prudent that the existing facilities are reinforced and protected, that vulnerabilities are identified and understood, and that renovations and expansions are designed and constructed to the highest standards of resilience. The assessment examines the facility's potential contributions to climate change, focusing on greenhouse gas emissions, waste generation, urban heat island effects, and impacts on local biodiversity. By integrating sustainable practices into both design and operation, the MCCA can minimize its environmental footprint and enhance its resilience to climate-related challenges which vary across the four facilities.

An in-depth hazards review was also performed, considering the following hazards:

1. Extreme temperatures
2. Winter weather
3. Wind (including tornadoes and hurricanes)
4. Seismic activity
5. Various types of flooding (riverine, coastal, storm-water, and groundwater).
6. Heat

The findings of this assessment underscore the necessity for immediate and long-term actions to mitigate these vulnerabilities. Prioritizing actions by focusing on high-risk areas, especially upgrading the storm-water management systems and enhancing cooling systems, will help MCCA to better handle extreme temperatures effectively. Integrating resilience strategies into planning by incorporating them into capital improvement plans and maintenance schedules, will ensure that upgrades are systematically planned and budgeted. Monitoring and risk assessment updates are critical to ensure that strategies employed are based on the latest climate projections and technological advancements to remain adaptive to changing conditions. Lastly, stakeholder engagement with local authorities, stakeholders, and the community will support broader climate resilience efforts and share best practices. Resilience-focused efforts should be integrated with decarbonization efforts in order to achieve the greatest opportunity for co-benefits.

By incorporating advanced resilience measures and sustainable design principles, the BCEC expansion can not only safeguard its future operations but also set a new benchmark for sustainable facility development in the region.

Emergency Response

MCCA's facilities are key in both Boston and Springfield's economic ecosystems and the Commonwealth's overall emergency management infrastructure. Each report identifies significant opportunities to enhance the role of MCCA's facilities in emergency preparedness and highlights gaps that need to be addressed to ensure the MCCA can effectively leverage these facilities and support the community during critical times.

Although the BCEC, HCC, BCG and MMC have some key limitations that prevent them from serving all roles in all events, requiring discussion of what role each facility can serve on a case-by-case basis, each facility has demonstrated flexibility in supporting emergency response during recent events including COVID-19 response and extreme weather events.

As one of the largest convention centers in the Northeast, the BCEC and HCC's vast infrastructure, strategic urban locations, and existing and potential logistics capabilities position these facilities as a valuable resources in the Commonwealth's emergency management system. As the largest gathering space in western Massachusetts, the MMC is a versatile convention center with extensive infrastructure and a central location, which also makes it well-suited for several emergency response roles. These emergency response roles include:

1. Emergency Distribution Hub
2. Temporary Medical Facility
3. Community Warming and Cooling Hub

Despite its primary function as a parking facility with limited amenities, the BCG's underground structure, strategic location beneath Boston Common, and proximity to key city areas position it to play valuable roles in future emergency responses such as:

1. Shelter from Above Grade Hazards
2. Staging and Storage for Emergency Resources and Vehicles
3. Evacuation Assembly Point

To fully realize the potential of MCCA's facilities as a critical asset in the Commonwealth's emergency response efforts, the MCCA must address key infrastructure limitations—particularly in energy resilience and HVAC capacity—and enhance operational readiness through improved staff training and strengthened partnerships with emergency management agencies. By implementing these recommendations, the MCCA can ensure that these facilities will remain resilient and adaptable resources serving the community.

06

Competitiveness

This section of the report evaluates the current regional convention center and meeting industry needs and trends.

- The industry mix in Massachusetts, particularly in key sectors such as Health Care, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Education, and Retail Trade, performs at or above the national averages in overall employment.
- The hotel sector has experienced strong growth through mid-2024, surpassing RevPAR performance levels from 2019, which is considered a benchmark year for the industry, following the peak of COVID-19 in 2020/2021. However, after factoring in inflation, the 2024 RevPAR was much lower than what it would have been if it had increased at the same rate as inflation since 2019.
- Elevated costs for labor, insurance, property taxes, and supplies and materials are pressuring profit margins, prompting the hospitality industry to implement strategies aimed at optimizing revenues and profits.
- Logan Airport is expected to exceed its 2019 passenger activity by the end of 2024.YTD August 2024, passenger counts exceeded 28.9m as compared to 28.5m for YTD August 2019.
- Overall, the Massachusetts economy has shown signs of improvement in 2024, while the labor market remains relatively stable.

Key Findings:

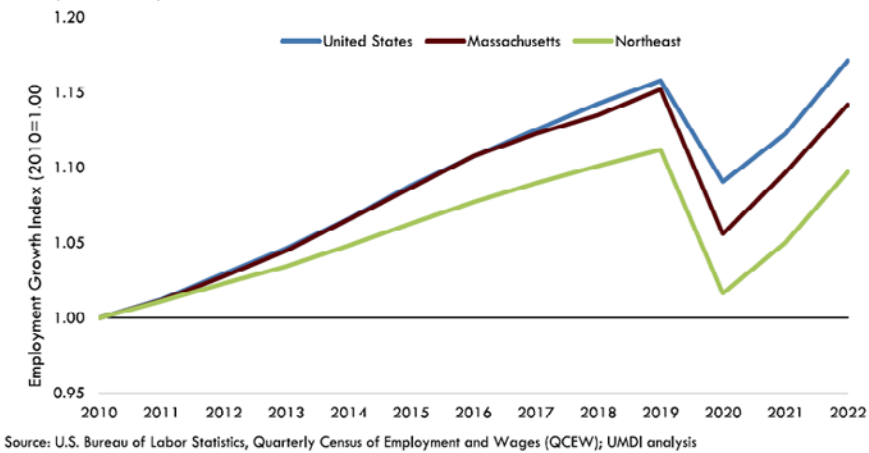
- Leveraging resources and collaborating with key industry stakeholders to create new opportunities.
- Committing to customer and staff satisfaction.
- Proactively evaluating ongoing operating costs to achieve optimal efficiency.
- Maintaining and supporting Signature Boston’s unique approach to in selling and marketing MCCA properties.
- Investing in the facilities that allows for developing and growing market share.
- Capitalizing on the strengths of MGM as an organization within the events and entertainment industry.

Massachusetts' Economic Landscape

The Massachusetts economy showed signs of continued improvement in 2024, particularly in the second quarter, with real Gross State Product (GSP) growing at an annual rate of 3.3%, outpacing the national GDP growth rate of 2.8%. This growth was fueled by increased income and spending, alongside high tax receipts, which indicate strong wage and salary growth. The labor market remains stable, with the unemployment rate at 3.5% as of July 2024, slightly higher than June's 3.2% but still below the national average of 4.3%. Job growth has been steady, with 19,000 new jobs added in June 2024, contributing to an over-the-year increase of 40,200 jobs.

In recent years, Massachusetts has experienced employment rate growth that is stronger than other Northeastern states, though it trails slightly behind the national trend. This shift comes after years of Massachusetts' employment rates tracking closely with national averages. The State's key industries, including Health Care, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Education, and Retail Trade, all perform at or above national employment averages. Notably, the white-collar nature of many of these industries means that Massachusetts performs well above the national average in terms of median household income.


Figure 1. Employment Growth Index in Massachusetts, the Northeast, and the United States, 2010-2022 (2010=1.00)




The hotel industry in Massachusetts has demonstrated a strong recovery through mid-2024, surpassing the RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room) performance levels of 2019, which is considered a benchmark year for the sector. This growth is primarily driven by increases in the Average Daily Rate (ADR), although there has been a slight decline in occupancy when comparing these two years.

It's important to note that both ADR and RevPAR are increasing at rates below inflation. For instance, from year-to-date August 2019 to year-to-date August 2024, Boston's RevPAR grew at an annual rate of 1.2%. To keep pace with inflation, the RevPAR would have needed to increase by 4.2%. After factoring in inflation, the 2024 RevPAR was 16.4% lower than what it would have been if it had increased at the same rate as inflation since 2019.


The combination of lower top-line revenues and elevated costs for labor, insurance, property taxes, and supplies is pressuring profit margins. As a result, hotels are implementing strategies to optimize revenues and profits.




Economic growth
outpacing
national average



Unemployment
lower than
national average



Slight population
loss in Springfield
and Boston



Strong hotel revenue
growth, though
with rising costs

Despite the positive economic indicators, particularly relative to the Northeast as a whole, Massachusetts continues to face challenges such as rising living costs and mixed signals in labor market conditions. Additionally, while the State's overall population has grown to just over 7 million, both Boston and Springfield have seen population declines. Between 2022 and 2023, Boston lost approximately 26,000 residents, and Springfield reported a decrease of just under 500 residents. The overall economic outlook is strong, but Massachusetts must still navigate these pressures as it moves forward.

The MCCA, with its portfolio of assets including the BCEC, Hynes, and MMC, has a significant role to play in stimulating the Massachusetts economy and continuing to drive economic development for the State. The BCEC and Hynes contribute to Boston ranking 17th on Cvent's 2024 Top 50 Meeting Destinations in North America, and second within the Northeast region. Meanwhile, the MMC brings thousands of visitors to Springfield every year while also hosting the Thunderbirds, an invaluable and celebrated civic asset.

As a destination, Massachusetts is faced with a variety of challenges that the MCCA must contend with. The clearest one is seasonality: the State is more affected by seasonal fluctuations than year-round convention destinations like Las Vegas or Orlando, which benefit from warmer climates and a broader tourism base. Winter months in Massachusetts can deter convention organizers who prefer locations with consistent weather and leisure options. Hotel capacity and costs are also significant factors. This is particularly true in Boston which, while competitive in terms of hotel options, ranks 5th among its benchmark set in terms of total hotel inventory within a 30-minute drive, behind key competitors Washington, Chicago, Nashville, and Atlanta. Additionally, the segment faces higher operational costs, including elevated costs for labor, property taxes, and materials, which places pressure on profit margins. These factors will increasingly make Massachusetts as a whole, and Boston in particular, less attractive than lower-cost states like Texas or Nevada, which offer more competitive rates for convention organizers.

While Massachusetts may not host the same volume of general conventions as markets such as Las Vegas or Orlando, it excels in industry-specific conventions. Boston regularly hosts top-tier events for sectors like life sciences, healthcare, and higher education, which draw thousands of professionals from around the world. This specialization makes Massachusetts highly competitive in these fields but less so for broader convention markets like those in entertainment or consumer goods. Furthermore, in the Northeast, Massachusetts is a top performer in the conventions industry, consistently competing with New York City, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia. The State's combination of convention center infrastructure, business-oriented travel, and academic prestige gives it an edge over many neighboring states.

However, the North American conventions market remains highly competitive, with many markets investing significant capital, marketing and incentive dollars to secure an edge. In the last five years, major expansion and renovation projects have been completed at the Las Vegas Convention Center, the Seattle Convention Center, the Javits Convention Center in New York City, and the Moscone Center in San Francisco, with a total of over \$5 billion invested between those four projects alone. Meanwhile, an expansion of the Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale is underway, and major expansion projects are planned for the Austin Convention Center, Los Angeles Convention Center, and Toronto Congress Centre. Thus, it is incumbent upon the MCCA to continue making strategic investments to keep Massachusetts competitive within this landscape.

Fortunately, the MCCA and the State are starting from a strong position. The MCCA's robust portfolio of assets, in tandem with Massachusetts' broad array of historical, cultural, and natural assets, makes the State a strong tourism market even with its challenges. With leadership from the MCCA, Massachusetts can continue growing its economy and providing better resources, amenities, and opportunities for its residents.

07

Impact

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority provides the Commonwealth with revenues, supports the hospitality industry and provides jobs to local residents. But there is more than can be done.

MCCA has ample opportunities to positively impact the communities in and around Boston and Springfield, and across the Commonwealth, by providing culturally diverse experiences, expanding the scope of tourism, and partnering with diverse vendors, businesses, artists and others to create more immersive experiences. The result will be greater revenue generation that benefits more people, partners and communities.

Key Findings:

- Collaboration with city and state workforce development agencies will help identify additional pools of talent and support a reinvigorated DEI strategy.
- Affiliations with job training programs, like the hospitality -focused programs with Madison Park Technical High School and BEST Hospitality Training, should continue to be supported, creating a career path for underserved and diverse communities.
- Purchasing policies and procedures need to be re-examined to make it easier for small and minority, women and veterans businesses to compete.
- New partnerships, like the BECMA program, should be encouraged with other minority groups and organizations.
- Impacts and relationships with local neighborhoods can be improved in many ways, including communications, providing community and convener spaces in each facility, providing opportunities to showcase local assets, as well hosting more local events at the convention centers.
- Opening new markets and marketplaces for local businesses to showcase and sell their goods and services will increase foot traffic around the centers while sharing the variety of goods, services, dining and cultural experiences available across the State.
- Providing new ways to interact with the conferences and conventions at MCCA spaces can foster interactions that provide educational opportunities, as well as possibilities for professional development.

Defining Impact

Employment Policies and Strategies

- **Direct and Indirect Jobs:** The MCCA directly supports thousands of jobs in hospitality, event management, and security. Indirectly, it boosts employment in sectors like restaurants, transportation, and retail. Many of these jobs are concentrated in Boston and Springfield (MCC), but the ripple effects are felt statewide.
- **Job Training Initiatives:** The MCCA partners with local workforce development organizations to provide training programs, especially for underserved communities. This promotes inclusivity in the job market, opening up opportunities for minority and immigrant workers.

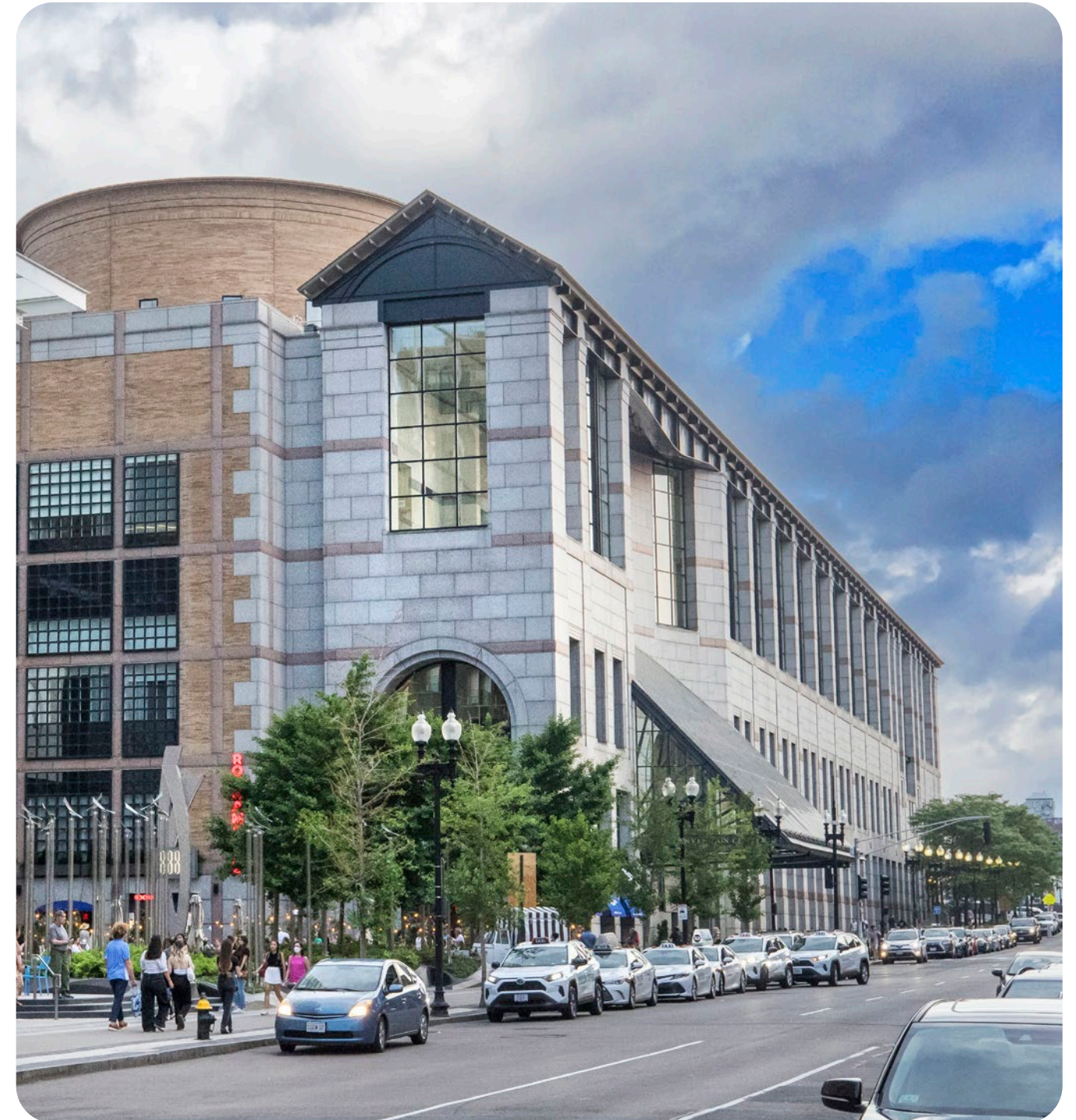
In conversations with the City of Boston's Office of Workforce Development (OWD), there are more opportunities for collaboration with the BCEC and Hynes. We recommend an initial meeting to discuss and create a plan of action with the Workforce Group in the OWD.

- 'Boston has a diverse talent pipeline for all of its positions up and down the supply chain...'
- 'Every economic development strategy that has proven successful has a diverse strategy approach in their vision and that strategy has a main pillar, workforce development.'

In review of the Authority's DEI policies (Reference: Section 4: Opportunity), the recent hiring of a DEI-professional to manage People and Culture, and initiatives that have been introduced in the last year to current DEI practices and policies to see where they can be deepened and expanded are significant milestones towards changing the internal culture. The continued support of internships like those provided through Madison Park Technical High School and hospitality-focused workforce development events and programs hosted by and at the MCCA facilities should be continued and expanded when necessary.



View of Boston from Boston Harbor | Photo credit: Signature Boston



The Hynes Convention Center | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Defining Impact (continued)

Neighborhood Impacts

The MCCA enterprise creates revenues for the Commonwealth, and also local jobs surrounding the Convention Centers. In 2023 according to the MCCA FY2023 report, convention center events generated \$922 million in economic impact and supported 7,900 jobs.

- Spillover Effects to Broader Communities: Though the BCEC, Hynes, and MassMutual Centers are the primary hubs, their economic impact is not confined to their districts. The influx of convention visitors positively affects neighboring communities by increasing demand for regional services like tours, transportation, and cultural excursions.
- Regional Economic Impact: MCCA events often encourage attendees to visit other parts of Massachusetts, such as Cape Cod, the Berkshires, and North Shore, creating a broader economic uplift beyond Boston and Springfield.
- Community Partnerships and Outreach: The MCCA has worked to expand its reach into underserved and diverse communities through outreach programs, grants, and partnerships with local small businesses, particularly minority- and women-owned enterprises, to ensure that benefits of the convention economy are more widely shared.

In Boston, the BCEC and the Hynes have ongoing partnerships with South Boston and neighborhoods across the city:

- \$5 million from percentage of parked cars, and tickets, at gated shows at the BCEC, provided to South Boston non-profits.
- BCEC provides in-kind support by loaning the digital marquee and equipment for local events.
- Access to the public park at ‘Lawn on D.’
- Community Partnership Grants and the Hospitality Fund support activities across the neighborhoods in Boston.
- 40 Tons of donated goods are provided through C.A.R.E to local non-profits including recovery centers in Boston.
- The MCCA Arts program in conjunction with the Office of Arts and Culture provides opportunities throughout the BCEC.
- Holiday programs including ‘Toys for Tots’ and other holiday programs are offered annually.
- The ‘Madison Park Partnership’ supports culinary and hospitality programs.

Through the partnership with MGM Springfield, partnerships with local community-based organizations and institutions offer networks to grow the workforce and provide educational opportunities. The Springfield community would benefit from increasing the number of partnerships with MMC by offering.

- Increased access to the facilities for various types of community events.
- Sharing in the economic opportunities that the MCCA provides (i.e vendors for events, local partners on industry conventions, etc).
- Recognition and implementation of events that are more representative of the local culture.
- A focus on the unique aspects that already exist in Springfield (local history and attractions, culture of basketball & universities).

Purchasers of Services Policies and Procedures

As researchers have found, greater diversity in any company’s supplier base helps promote socio-economic agendas. If businesses want to do more to show their commitment to DEI agendas, supplier diversity is one way to make an impact on a number of levels, socially and economically.

While the MCCA actively works to include diverse vendors in its supply chain, creating opportunities for minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses to participate in the economic activity driven by conventions can be expanded. More can be done to drive additional opportunities to underserved businesses and communities.

It is important that procurement policies and procedures should be coordinated with HR – to provide consistency within the MCCA to employ and hire individuals affiliated with minority communities, and to use contacts within these communities to help spread the word about new hiring and RFP opportunities.

Recommendations to reach vendor diversity goals:

- Currently state laws require that a bid for any services must go to the lowest bidder, making it next to impossible for small businesses to compete on large contracts.
- “MCCA, working with other public agencies, should try to secure an exception to the state law forbidding splitting up contracts.” - MCCA Board member
- Under recent leadership, the MCCA has agreed to a precedent-setting partnership with the Black Economic Council of Massachusetts”, which is a major step towards driving deeper relationships with black -owned small businesses. Other minority groups (women, veterans, LGBTQIA, disabled, etc.) would benefit from equal attention when determining future policies.
- Building a relationship with the ‘Pacesetters’, a program of the Boston Chamber of Commerce, can help the MCCA build relationships with other diverse businesses.
- Black Economic Council of Massachusetts has services to support WMBEs through the vendor process. Additional support should be provided to other underserved stakeholder groups.
- The Black Economic Council of Massachusetts precedent is setting up a process to review contracts to see what opportunities are coming out for bid in the next year or two, and to review the process to understand how make opportunities more accessible to small and local businesses, as well as make these potential bidders aware of the opportunities and timelines.



Bluebikes station | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Defining Impact (continued)

Cultural and Tourism Impacts

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) plays a significant role in the cultural and tourism landscape of Massachusetts, particularly through its management of the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center (BCEC), the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center (HCC), and the MassMutual Center (MCC).

In 2019, Massachusetts’ tourism sector generated \$24.2 billion in spending. A significant portion of this came from conventions, meetings, and business travel facilitated by the MCCA. The BCEC and Hynes Convention Center alone contribute hundreds of millions annually in direct spending by attendees.

The MCCA generates economic activity by attracting events to its facilities and, providing revenues for the Commonwealth, but it also triggers enormous impacts for our hospitality and tourism industries. Key drivers of economic impact are 554,000 annual room nights and 660,000 attendees generated by events held at the MCCA's Boston venues, equaling direct and total (including indirect) economic output of \$350-450 million and \$850-\$950 million, respectively.

Here’s an overview of the MCCA’s impact on culture, tourism, employment, and economic development, with particular attention to diverse communities and regions outside the immediate convention districts:

- **Attraction of Major Events:** The MCCA is responsible for bringing large-scale national and international conventions, trade shows, and exhibitions to Massachusetts. Events like PAX East (gaming), Anime Boston (pop culture), and other industry gatherings not only foster niche cultural events but also enhance Massachusetts’s standing as a global destination.
- **Visitor Spending:** By attracting over a million visitors annually, the MCCA generates significant visitor spending in lodging, dining, retail, and local attractions, bolstering the state’s tourism sector.



Harborwalk and the Boston Children's Museum | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Strategies to Leverage Impact

There are many ways to increase the impacts and leverage the work that is already being done.

The MCCA has ample opportunities to positively impact the communities in and around Boston and Springfield, and across the Commonwealth, by promoting culturally diverse experiences, expanding the scope of tourism, and partnering and aligning with diverse vendors, businesses, artists, and more locally based organizations to create more immersive experiences. The result will be greater revenue generation that benefits more people, partners, and communities.

Each of the three convention centers can be optimized to create greater employment opportunities, additional revenue generation, and other economic development opportunities (e.g., inviting more local business partnerships in and around the centers) to support the local economy.

Defining impact beyond event revenue and jobs could sharpen MCCA’s ability to connect the dots to how relationships work and lead to authentic impact.

For example:

- Tie events to the local economy and key issues, with greater participation by local businesses, vendors, and other partners, to amplify MCCA’s commitment to people, planet, and profit.
- Optimize community benefits by including a working group composed of sales, marketing, and DEI.
- Explore how the smaller Hynes Center can more easily be subdivided into flexible spaces and more affordable venues for locally organized events.
- Envision how the Boston Convention Center can provide space within and around its large footprint to display works by local artists.
- Rotate cultural exhibits, kiosks and marketplace concepts for local businesses, artists, and vendors.

As more partnerships, community involvement, and experiences are launched, the Massachusetts Convention Center economy can benefit the Commonwealth in three new ways:

- Opening new markets and marketplaces for local businesses to sell their goods and services. This will increase foot traffic around the centers, while also showcasing the variety of goods, services, dining, and cultural experiences available across Boston, Springfield, and the Commonwealth.
- Providing space for the local ecosystem – including the creative economy – to convene and showcase their work.
- Expanding the horizons of all residents by offering new ways to interact with the industries that sponsor their conferences and conventions in MCCA spaces; such interactions can foster education about those industries and further opportunities for professional development.

08

ROI Analysis and FY2025 – FY2035 Capital Plan

The MCCA centrally manages all capital projects by leveraging experienced in-house professionals and external third-party expertise. This structure provides efficiency and consistency but will need to adapt as capital project volume increases with the aging of facilities. Prioritizing capital spending is essential for the MCCA board to maintain competitive facilities.

Each property summary provides details on newly identified and additional capital projects developed by the Project Team during this engagement. These projects are included in the overall assessment of capital expenditures and their impact on the available funds in the Convention Center Fund (CCF). A primary focus is on selecting projects that support climate resilience and position the MCCA to "Lead by Example."

Key Findings:

- Expand the horizon of project focus to a period spanning 48 – 60 months to allow the project team to establish project priorities, managing cost, and scheduling.
- Increase in-house and external third-party professional resources to support the higher level of capital spend projected between FY 2025 – FY 2035.
- Structure organization where work can be managed across multiple properties simultaneously given the increasing demands to maintain the facilities in "first-class" standard.
- MCCA should collaborate more proactively with third-party professionals to evaluate and develop future capital expenditures at each of the MCCA assets.
- Prioritize projects that position the MCCA to meet and exceed energy and sustainability targets.
- Incorporate projects amongst overall priorities to support the Community along with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Capital Planning Summary

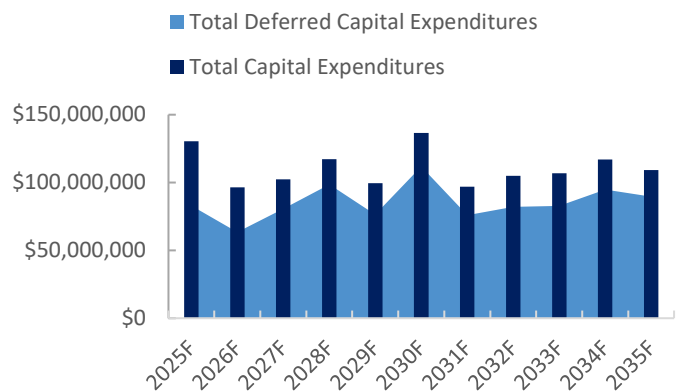
Current Plan Summary

The Capital Projects Team at the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) is actively involved in managing improvements across all facilities. Arcadis, acting as the Owner's Project Manager (OPM), oversees the MCCA's capital construction initiatives aimed at enhancing visitor experiences and driving economic growth for the state. Arcadis handles a range of project management responsibilities, including overseeing design phases, managing financial controls, and ensuring construction quality.

Over the next ten years, average annual capital spend is projected to increase from \$24M to \$111M per year. The majority of this increased spend is attributable to deferred capital projects, 77% of all spend across all facilities.

Deferred capital projects account for over 80% of total capital spending at the BCEC, HCC, and BCG, while they represent 41% at the MMC. MCCA will need to develop new strategies to manage this significant increase to avoid negative impact on business activity and CCF balances.

CAPITAL SPEND BY YEAR (BASELINE)

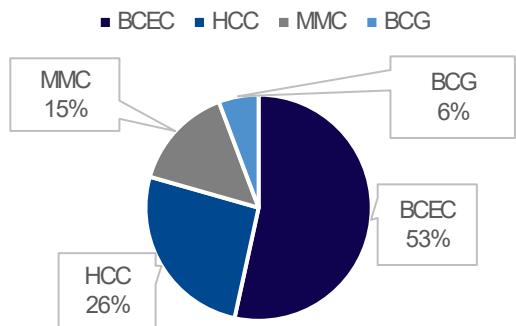


Capital Planning – MCCA Deferred Capital

Capital spend across the MCCA portfolio is focused on addressing deferred capital. Boston properties range between 82% and 88%.

Springfield is at 41% of the total spend. This is before adding in the additional \$12M newly identified in this Study.

TOTAL CAPITAL SPEND BY FACILITY: 2025F - 2035F



New Projects Summary

New Capital Projects

The Project Team has identified over the four MCCA properties a total of \$449M of additional capital for review and evaluation. \$213M or 46% of the overall projected costs are targeting Sustainable and Decarbonization initiatives, an MCCA priority. Adding these projects to the estimated \$1.2 Billion already identified brings the new estimate to just under \$1.7 Billion, and that is before considering any expansion options for the BCEC, a priority focus of the MCCA.

Project Summary -- TT Project Team	
Sustainable / Decarbonization	\$206,175,196
Deferred Capital	\$11,772,835
Proposed Capital Projects	\$231,382,746
Total	\$449,330,777

This following are recommended next steps:

- Integrate the list of new projects to include timing with the current projected capital plan
- Prioritize the focus on sustainable and energy Initiatives to meet Carbon Free Boston by 2030
- Work with the MCCA Operations team to evaluate proposed new capital projects for their viability/priority
- Move the full evaluation of all future projects (Deferred, One-Time and Ongoing) forward to FY25 from FY26 so the overall planning of capital and resource deployment can be developed

This study confirms that the facilities in Boston are highly competitive and do not require significant capital for repositioning or upgrading. However, Springfield does lag its competitors regionally and nationally, requiring the improvements provided in this report and these must remain a priority.

In addition to the new projects that have been identified and costed, there are also new initiatives focusing on Community, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that support fostering the relationships critical to the MCCA and its mission. While there are some costs associated with these plans, do not expect additional capital above what is already developed.

- Incorporate a Community Center into the potential future Ballroom Expansion
- Implement Art Programs working with local artists; this would not require a capital investment
- Add a Hydroponics program for Food and Beverage to be funded through operations
- Improve Landscaping by creating a welcoming ambiance for the public – captured in our planning
- Provide rooms and spaces for use which should initially be accomplished thru change in operational strategies
- Add Electric Car Charging Stations – working with providers to integrate. Minimal captured in our planning.
- Increase bike sharing – working with firms to coordinate initiative at low cost

Capital Planning Renewable and Fuel Switching

Renewable and Fuel Switching

Renewable energy and fuel switching are important strategies toward achieving carbon-neutral objectives, as they directly reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Additional strategies, such as energy efficiency improvements, carbon capture, sustainable transportation, and behavioral changes, also play vital roles in creating a holistic approach to carbon neutrality.

There are just over \$206 million in projects identified to address this critical issue recognizing its priority.BCEC and HCC must be the priority given the focus on Boston 2030 with estimated projects costs at \$162M. Among all the projects highlighted in this section of the report, these are the highest priority for completion by 2030.

Renewable/Fuel Switching Projects					
Facility	Project Type	Title	Description	Hard Cost	Total Cost
BCEC	Renewable	Solar Panels	Install 2MW-PV solar panels on meeting space rooftops.	\$19,250,000	\$25,000,000
BCEC	Fuel Switching	Fuel Switching	Replace Kitchen Gas DHW water heaters with electric heat pump water heaters.Replace space heating gas boilers at the central heating plant with hydronic air cooled heat pumps. Provide additional supplemental electric service to meet new loads.	\$81,000,000	\$105,300,000
BCEC	Fuel Switching	Kitchen Electrification	Conversion of all gas appliances to electric alternatives.	\$1,430,000	\$1,859,000
Hynes	Fuel Switching	Kitchen Electrification	Convert any gas kitchen appliance to electric appliance.	\$1,250,000	\$1,625,000
Hynes	Renewable	Rooftop solar	Add 200kW PV solar panels.	\$3,500,000	\$4,550,000
MMC	Renewable	Rooftop Solar	Add 500KW PV rooftop solar to west and arena roofs.	\$3,727,945	\$4,846,329
MMC	Fuel Switching	Fuel Switching	Replace kitchen gas DHW water heaters with electric heat pump water heaters. Replace space heating gas boilers at the central plant heating plant with hydronic air cooled heat pumps. Provide additional supplemental electric service to meet new loads.	\$47,257,590	\$61,434,867
MMC	Fuel Switching	Kitchen Electrification	Conversion of all gas appliances to electric alternatives.	\$1,200,000	\$1,560,000
Total				\$158,615,535	\$206,175,196



Aerial view of the BCEC | Photo credit: Signature Boston

Capital Planning Energy Efficient and 11-Year Outlook Summary

Energy Efficient Projects

Over \$10M was identified through various surveys and analyses, and the chart below highlights only projects with a payback period of less than four years for consideration. Although several projects could contribute to energy reduction, their high cost and low return do not justify prioritization at this time. These projects would not disrupt operations if implemented but should be incorporated into the overall plan, balancing the available funds in the Convention Center Fund (CCF) with the benefits these projects bring to operations.

Capital Planning – As Is vs. Expansion Options

The MCCA should determine its long-term strategic priorities. Below, we outline three approaches that will significantly impact decision-making processes. These approaches are:

1. Operate As-Is:

Maintain current facilities, addressing ROI and required capital improvements while meeting environmental goals and objectives related to community, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This approach will preserve the strong CCF fund balances for future opportunities.

2. Add a New Ballroom Facility:

Construct a new ballroom at the BCEC that will also meets community needs; deliver on meeting environmental goals while advancing DEI objectives across the portfolio. This approach preserves the CCF fund balances and may support future expansion.

3. Expand the BCEC Facility:

Expand the BCEC to meet rising demand, generating new economic impact for the region. This approach will address community needs for the BCEC; deliver on meeting the environmental objectives while upholding DEI goals across the portfolio. However, it will require a very focused and disciplined approach to managing capital, including significantly reducing costs and re-engineering proposed work to meet aging facility needs. This option will reduce funds but will re-position Boston as a Convention destination.

Energy Efficient Projects				
Facility	Description	Hard Cost	Total Cost	Payback (years)
BCEC	AHU-3A and 3B Scheduling	\$2,053	\$2,669	0.03
Hynes	Condenser Water Reset	\$2,503	\$3,254	0.2
MMC	AHUs 1&2 Variable Flow Control	\$4,005	\$5,207	0.3
BCEC	Condenser Water Reset	\$2,503	\$3,254	0.4
Hynes	AHUs DAT Reset	\$20,858	\$27,115	0.5
MMC	Condenser Water Loop Temperature Optimization	\$4,005	\$5,207	0.8
MMC	RTUs 1 & 2 DCV	\$4,004	\$5,205	0.8
MMC	CHW DP Reset	\$3,003	\$3,904	0.8
Hynes	CHW Supply Temperature Reset	\$6,257	\$8,134	0.9
MMC	Glycol Pumps Controls	\$20,858	\$27,115	1.1
MMC	Ice Sensor Recalibration	\$2,002	\$2,603	1.3
MMC	Unoccupied Building Demand	\$54,488	\$70,834	1.4
MMC	Occupancy Based Space Temperature Setback	\$15,017	\$19,522	1.8
MMC	Variable Flow Condenser Water Loop	\$28,922	\$37,599	2.3
MMC	AHU-3 Static Pressure Reset	\$3,003	\$3,904	2.4
Hynes	Economizer Control Retrocommissioning	\$105,122	\$136,659	2.9
MMC	Automatic Condensing Pressure Reset	\$20,858	\$27,115	3.5
MMC	Walk in Cooler/Freezer EC Motors & Fan Cycling	\$28,199	\$36,659	3.5
MMC	AHU-4 RCx	\$8,009	\$10,412	3.9
Total		\$335,669	\$436,370	



Aerial view of Fort Point/Seaport | Photo credit: Signature Boston

09

Evaluating Previous Analyses

Our team was tasked with evaluating 15 previous analyses of the Authority and MCCA Facilities.

This team determined continued relevance of the recommendations contained in the reports as well as components that may now be disregarded due to changes in the Commonwealth’s economic, regulatory, and social environment, the Authority’s financial and governance conditions, or any other changes since the time each analysis was conducted and reported.

Key Findings:

- 7 Reports are not relevant and do not require further study.
- 5 Reports are partially relevant and should remain in circulation for evaluation against current conditions.
- 3 Reports are relevant and should remain in circulation.

Relevancy of Previous Reports

Report Name / Date	Is report relevant today?	Comments
BCEC Site Survey, Prepared by Nitsch Engineering Survey, dated May 5, 2016	Yes	Site plans are current and relevant.
Massachusetts Convention Center Partnership. Final Report issued July 2011 and prepared by ADD Inc., and HVS Convention, Sports & Entertainment	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.
BCEC Strategic Development Plan issued November 2009 and prepared by a consulting team led by Sasaki Associates	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.
Boston Creates, prepared by the City of Boston, June 2016	Partially Relevant	The elements of the Boston Creates Plan that are relevant today have been incorporated into the recommendations for the 2024 Plan.
Hotel Market Demand and Feasibility Study (draft) dated March 2010 and prepared by HVS Chicago for a potential additional headquarters hotel for the BCEC	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.
Go Boston and Imagine Boston 2030 reports; prepared by the City of Boston, May 2017	Partially Relevant	Information is relevant for many RFR tasks and these elements of the Boston 2030 have been incorporated into our recommendations.
South Boston Waterfront Sustainability Transportation Plan (2015)	Partially Relevant	The report is dated as much of the Waterfront has changed since 2015. Some data still is relevant, but projections should be further evaluated against present day conditions.
The Seaport Public Realm Plan published by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) in February, 1999	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.
The Fort Point District 100 Acres Master Plan issued by the BRA in September 2006	Partially Relevant	The report is dated as there have been changes since 2006. Some master planning is still relevant in areas that have not implemented any advancements.
The Massport Commonwealth Flats Strategic Plan, Aug 2019	Yes	Report was focused on the World Trade Center and Fidelity’s master plan for the facility submitted by Massport to the Mass DEP. Report is relatively recent. It contains information related to the Seaport that reference regulations around climate resilience, flood proofing, MassPort’s approach to public accommodation and circulation, and public realm improvements. Contents, such as understanding the improvements to circulation, added retail to Seaport Boulevard, and making the area more pedestrian accessible and friendly identify important guidelines.
The Massport Commonwealth Flats Design Guidelines and Standards	Partially Relevant	Although written for the Department of Housing and Community Development, there is some crossover with technical requirements, guidelines and standards, particularly solar PV.
South Boston Transportation Study issued by the Boston Transportation Department in July 2000	Yes	The report is relevant, particularly related to truck access points and overall South Boston circulation. Truck type projections, demands, and volumes should be further evaluated against present day conditions.
Pinnacle Advisory Group Report (2009) for the Boston Convention Marketing Center on Boston Lodging Market	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.
Boston Redevelopment Authority’s Report on Boston’s Hotel Industry issued in 1997 and updated in 2002	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.
Final Report on the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, prepared by ZHA Incorporated, Johnson Consulting and Fort Point Associates, dated March 1997	No	Report is dated, and the Study would need to be updated as conditions in the market have changed.

