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### **MCCA REQUESTS PROPOSALS FOR MASTER PLAN OF BCEC SITE**

*Larger Facility Would Sustain Boston as Convention Leader and Enhance Customer Experience*

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) today issued a request for proposals from consulting firms interested in developing a master plan for the 62-acre South Boston Waterfront property that houses the award-winning Boston Convention & Exhibition Center (BCEC). The MCCA is encouraging firms to focus on when and how the BCEC could be expanded to keep Boston a leader in the meetings and conventions industry.

“The BCEC has emerged as one of the top convention properties in the country, and Boston has been named to *Tradeshow Week’s* List of Top Ten Cities for the past two years after more than 22 years off the list,” said James E. Rooney, Executive Director of the MCCA. “Through this process, we will be able to explore prudent expansion options and the appropriate next steps to continue to increase the BCEC’s prominence in the competitive meetings and convention marketplace.”

“We always anticipated that there would be a phase two of the BCEC project when the building proved to be as successful as we hoped,” said Gloria Cordes Larson, Chairman of the MCCA Board. “The building has exceeded our expectations, and it is the right time to explore what we should do with the undeveloped portion of the property. A master plan is the best way to start the dialogue.”

The MCCA is calling on firms to develop a master plan for the undeveloped 22-acres located where currently there is a surface parking lot. The MCCA is asking firms to provide an analysis of existing land and buildings, demonstrate if and when additional facilities are necessary, define measures used to demonstrate the need for and financial impact of facility expansion, and analyze traffic and environmental considerations.

“Since the BCEC opened three years ago, Boston has bolted to the top of the convention industry. In order to ensure our competitive position, however, we need to be looking toward the future,” said Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “Now is a good time to think about what the best next steps should be and how any new development at the BCEC would fit into the overall pattern of waterfront development.”

“The convention and tourism industry is vital to the Massachusetts economy and the BCEC’s success has benefited the Commonwealth’s reputation across the country,” said Daniel O’Connell, Massachusetts Secretary of Housing and Economic Development and a member of Governor Deval Patrick’s cabinet. “It is important that we think about how to stay a leader and prepare to expand the BCEC or develop the land in another way that benefits the convention industry. A master plan is a good investment in the future.”

Leading convention industry executives have voiced concerns about Boston’s ability to hold their events in coming years. As major shows, like BIO International, continue to grow, they could no longer be able

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to keep Boston in their rotation as they move around the world to key cities. Conventions typically book events several years in the future, oftentimes more than a decade in advance. Organizers need to take into account what their events will look like in the future and what space a city will be able to provide them both at the facility and with hotel rooms. Boston is a desirable destination because of its rich history and demographics, but the city is competing with top tier cities across the country where the convention centers are larger or expansion plans are already underway, as in the cases of New York and Philadelphia. In fact, when compared to facilities in the other *Tradeshaw Week* Top Ten Convention Cities, the BCEC is the smallest convention center.

“The Biotechnology Industry Organization was thrilled with the success of the 2007 convention and hopes to return to Boston. However, with success comes growth and at the current rate, the event could soon outgrow the BCEC,” said Robbi Lycett, Vice President of Conventions and Conferences for Biotechnology Industry Organization, which held its annual event at the BCEC in May and generated an estimated \$32 million in economic impact. “We are extremely encouraged by the news that the MCCA is exploring an expansion that would allow us to continue to grow and keep Boston – a key city for our industry - in our rotation.”

“As the global leader in promoting excellence in periOperative nursing practices, the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses is constantly growing in membership and now requires a facility that can withstand our event and attendee space demands,” said Gretchen Bliss, Director of Meetings & Conventions of the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses. “After closely examining the City of Boston, AORN events would fit hand-in-hand because of its world renowned medical facilities and schools. However, our organization cannot hold events in Boston until the BCEC has the proper and adequate space to fulfill our needs.”

Welcoming hundreds of thousands of attendees each year, the BCEC is the largest convention center in New England, sitting on 62-acres of land and providing unparalleled meeting and exhibition opportunities. The building offers more than 516,000 square feet of contiguous exhibition space, 160,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, more than 300,000 square feet of function and registration space, 86 meeting rooms and a dramatic 41,000 square foot ballroom overlooking the Boston skyline. The BCEC offers valet parking and on-site parking for over 1,200 vehicles. The BCEC hosted 145 events over the past year with nearly 370,000 attendees, generating more than \$147 million in direct spending.

“The BCEC has been a great addition to our neighborhood, and the MCCA has consistently worked with the community on big events and initiatives,” said Massachusetts State Senator Jack Hart. “I’m happy that the MCCA is taking a thoughtful approach to the master plan and the possible development of the property in South Boston. The BCEC’s success is important for the city and the neighborhood, and I look forward to working with the BCEC to develop a viable plan.”

Requests for Proposals will be available July 25, 2007 at noon on [www.massconvention.com](http://www.massconvention.com). All proposals are due September 5, 2007 at noon.

The Massachusetts Convention Center Authority owns and oversees the operations of the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA and the Boston Common Parking Garage. In 2006, the BCEC and the Hynes successfully hosted 275 events, bringing 696,522 attendees from across the country and around the world to Boston.

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