

“Building Bridges”

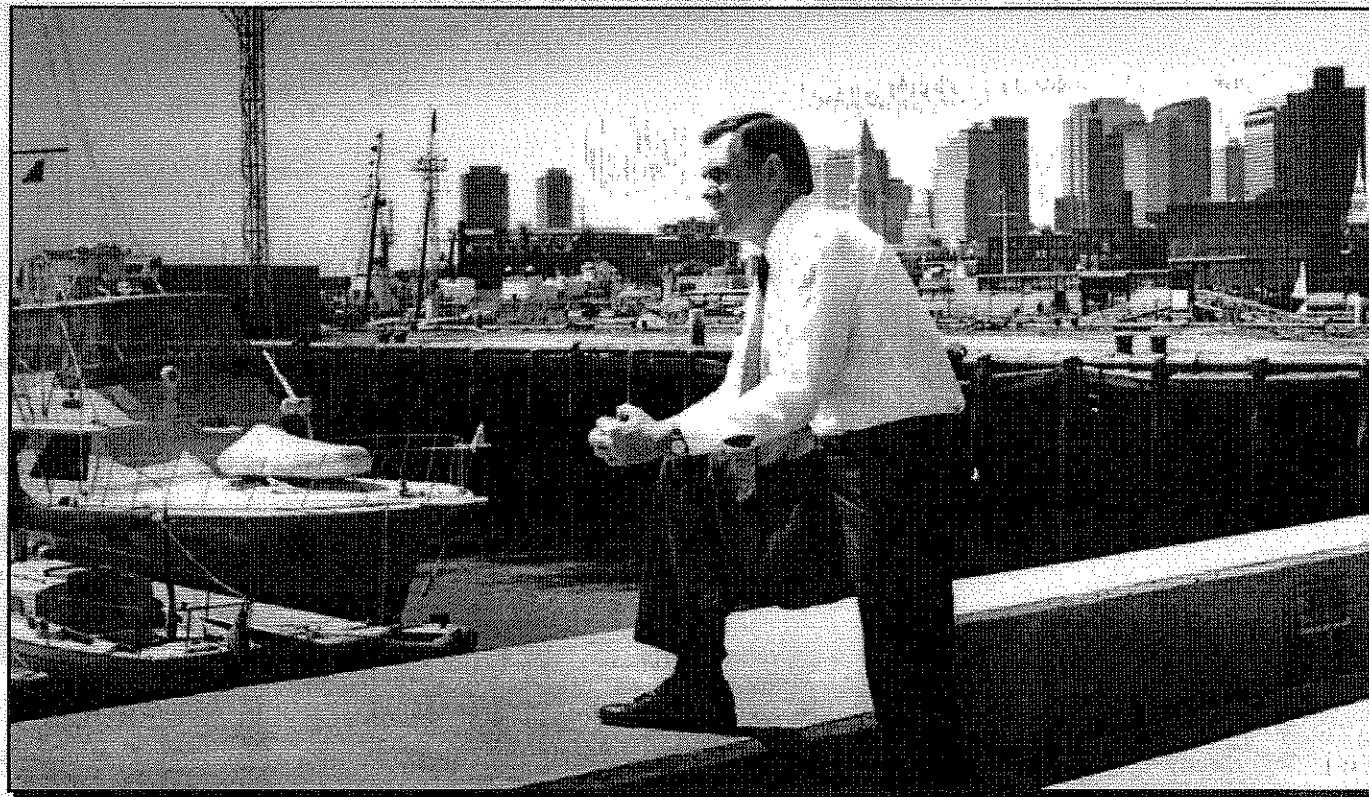
The Report of
The Raymond L. Flynn Commission

to

Mayor Martin J. Walsh

and

City Council President Bill Linehan



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—From the order establishing the Flynn Commission,
filed by Councillors Bill Linehan and Stephen J. Murphy

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City of Boston**

**Boston City Council
Councillor Bill Linehan, President**

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THE RAYMOND L. FLYNN COMMISSION

December 30, 2015

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

The Honorable Bill Linehan
President, Boston City Council

Dear Mayor Walsh and President Linehan:

Thank you for establishing, supporting and offering guidance to the Raymond L. Flynn Commission. We deeply appreciate your seeking recommendations for the best ways to recognize and honor Mayor Flynn, the 46th Mayor of Boston.

It is our privilege, on behalf of the Flynn Commission and the many hundreds of people who offered ideas and inspiration to the process, to present our recommendations for fitting ways to honor Ambassador and Mayor Raymond L. Flynn.

This report is the product of thousands of hours dedicated to seeking, vetting and deliberating over possible ways to honor Ray Flynn and his legacy. The Commission heard verbal and written testimony from residents of every Boston neighborhood. We heard from immigrants who had only just arrived when Mayor Flynn took office and from people who have known Ray Flynn since childhood. Every one of them held one experience in common: Their lives were better because of something Mayor Flynn did. Ray built bridges to connect individuals and families with hope and opportunity. It is this fact that, in the end, informs our recommendations to you.

Thank you, again, for your leadership.

Sincerely yours,

Francis J. Doyle, Esq.
Co-Chair

Rosemarie Sansone
Co-Chair

The Raymond L. Flynn Commission Mission Statement

“The mission of the Raymond L. Flynn Commission is to examine an appropriate location and tribute to recognize and memorialize the significant legacy and accomplishments of Raymond Leo Flynn, the former Mayor of Boston, for current and future generations. The goal is to honor Raymond L. Flynn’s term as Mayor of Boston from 1984-1993 and his contributions and accomplishments as a State Representative (1971-1979), Boston City Councillor (1978-1984), Ambassador to the Holy See (1993-1997) and lifelong community leader.

Through a broad-based and inclusive public process involving the stories and personal experiences of neighborhood, labor, religious, business and political leaders, and citizens of Boston and beyond, we will seek a way to celebrate Flynn’s legacy as part of the rich history of Boston and the United States of America. The Commission will make recommendations to the Mayor of Boston for a proper dedication acknowledging Ray Flynn and his commitment to the city in accordance with the Boston City Council order establishing this Commission.”

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**"Boston has for too long been a house divided
against itself...our resolve now is to bind old
wounds, put the memories behind us, and carry
worthwhile lessons into the future."—Mayor Raymond
L. Flynn, First Inaugural Address**

1. Executive Summary

The Raymond L. Flynn Commission, established by the Boston City Council in 2014, recommends to Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the City Council the following acts to recognize and honor Mayor Flynn's historic contributions to Boston and its people. We offer this as a single recommendation with three elements:

- **Rename the Boston Marine Industrial Park in South Boston as "The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park."**
- **Establish the "The Raymond L. Flynn Visitor Center" at The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park.**
- **Name the Summer Street Bridge over the Reserved Channel "The Mayor Raymond L. Flynn Bridge."**

A number of people supported two additional ideas, which deserve special note here.

- To rename the Boston Convention Center for Mayor Flynn. Members of the Designation Subcommittee discussed this idea at length with City of Boston and state leaders. City and State officials strongly maintained that global branding considerations make it infeasible to rename the Convention Center in any way. We were told that altering the name by which the facility is known worldwide in the convention industry would simply be bad for business.
- To erect a Flynn statue. The Designation Subcommittee did not advance this idea because the cost could be prohibitive in the short term and because it would be difficult to choose among many equally attractive locations. This in no way precludes the creation of such a statue in the future.

Raymond L. Flynn was known as “The Mayor of the Neighborhoods” during his service as Boston’s chief executive from 1984 to 1993. The legacy of Ray Flynn’s nearly three terms as mayor is the unification of Boston residents across lingering social and racial divides. Mayor Flynn’s overriding policy goal was to create **Unity, Dignity and Opportunity** for every person and every family in every neighborhood. We believe our recommendation captures these principles.

"Mr. Flynn has seemed to be everywhere trying to bring racial and economic justice to his constituents."—*New York Times*, March 14, 1984

A 1985 editorial in the *Bay State Banner* indicated that Mayor Flynn had delivered on the promise.

"But that [racial conflict] may be history now. True to his word, the new mayor, Ray Flynn, has made dramatic moves to bring the city together."

The mayor built bridges that linked a prosperous downtown to affordable housing, jobs and other opportunities for supporting better lives in Boston’s neighborhoods. The mayor earned wide national recognition and many awards for his leadership in reducing homelessness and ensuring quality housing and health care for homeless people and families. The City partnered with community development corporations, unions and other organizations to develop affordable housing across the city. Enduring examples are the Back of the Hill homes on the south slope of Roxbury’s Parker Hill and the Andrew Square homes in South Boston, built by the Bricklayers and Laborers Nonprofit Housing Corp.

As *Boston Globe* columnist Adrian Walker wrote on May 29, 2015:

“He came into office as the...leader who would prioritize the city’s neighborhoods over downtown development...His role model was James Michael Curley, the so-called ‘mayor of the poor.’ He vowed to move beyond the naked racial animus sparked by busing, and he poured energy and political capital into cooling race relations. ...He deserves to be remembered as a mayor who improved the city.”

Mayor Flynn had served several terms as a state representative and as a member of the Boston City Council before winning election as mayor in 1983. Ten years later, President Bill Clinton appointed him United States Ambassador to the Holy See.

Under the leadership of Councillors Bill Linehan and Stephen J. Murphy, the City Council established the Raymond L. Flynn Commission in July, 2014. The charge to the Commission read:

“The commission shall examine former Mayor Flynn’s contributions and service to the city of Boston and its residents. The commission shall make recommendations to the Mayor of Boston for a proper dedication acknowledging Ray Flynn and his commitment to the city.”

Throughout the text you will also read statements by Mayor Flynn, made at many times and in many places across the city, that capture the values that guided him. These were the principles he emphasized repeatedly as the way for the city to move forward as a united, thriving community for all. These were the principles with which he led Boston to the important outcomes memorialized in the journalistic accounts cited above.

Commission members carefully evaluated hundreds of ideas offered by people from all walks of life and from every neighborhood in Boston. The yearlong process culminated in a public hearing on May 27, 2015, attended by more than 150 people. The Commission received oral and written testimony from more than 30 witnesses who came to testify, including many neighborhood residents whose lives had been changed because of Ray Flynn, and from leading figures who work in health care for the homeless, affordable housing, unions, elected office, and community-based organizations.

The Commission is composed of a diverse group of people, all of whom shared experiences with Mayor Flynn at different times and in different capacities. Frank Doyle and Rosemarie Sansone were appointed co-chairs of the Commission. Both worked for Ray Flynn during his tenure as mayor.

Commissioners include:

- Gregory Ashe
- Bill Chin
- Bob Consalvo
- Marcus DeFlorimonte
- Bill Doherty
- Judy Evers
- Edward Flynn
- Jovita Fontanez
- Patrick Walsh
- Don Gillis
- Jack Hart
- Ted Landsmark
- Juan Lopez
- Michael McCormack
- Thomas McIntyre
- John Nucci
- Kevin Phelan

2. The Recommendation

Rename the Boston Marine Industrial Park in South Boston as “The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park”

As mayor of Boston, Ray Flynn was dedicated to building bridges that could connect people to hope and opportunity. He took ownership of the problems of discrimination and disadvantage and worked with the people of the neighborhoods to find solutions to these problems. He served as a tireless champion for the core values of racial and ethnic healing; dignity and respect for all; and opportunity that connects people to safe, secure lives.

"No city can be truly great when unemployment denies workers their self-respect, when inadequate education robs our children of decent schooling, when street crime traps the elderly in fear, and when the lack of affordable housing forces people to move out of the city, and worse, move into the streets."

—Mayor Raymond L. Flynn

The designation of **The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park** on the historic South Boston waterfront would be especially appropriate for a number of reasons.

- The Marine Industrial Park is the only section of the city specifically set aside for marine industrial uses. The Flynn family has a long association with Boston’s commercial waterfront, especially its South Boston longshore activities. Ray Flynn is a son of the South Boston waterfront, and in many ways his understanding of the dignity of hardworking men and women and their struggles to create a better life for their children was formed there. His late father, Stephen, was a longshoreman and member

of the International Longshoremen's Association. Ray and his brother, Stephen, worked as members of the International Longshoreman's Association alongside their father at the docks across the Reserved Channel from the Park. While her husband and sons toiled on the waterfront, Ray's mother, the late Lillian (Kirby), helped support the family by cleaning offices in downtown Boston.

- Summer Street, literally and metaphorically part of Ray Flynn's "Road to City Hall," also touches the main entrance to the Park as it bridges downtown, the working waterfront and South Boston.
- The Park's Black Falcon passenger terminal is named in honor of seven longshoremen killed and 13 injured on November 2, 1953, as they off-loaded volatile chemicals bound for the Army base on the site. The men were killed and injured in a hellish fire in the hold of the Norwegian-flagged *Black Falcon*. The dead and injured were union brothers and friends of Ray's father and the Flynn family.
- Ray Flynn championed the struggle that finally saved Boston Harbor after decades of neglect and abuse. When he took office, the City's water and sewer functions, like its schools and public housing authority, were in court receivership. Ray rolled up his sleeves and worked with the late Massachusetts Superior Court Judge Paul Garrity, who was overseeing the receivership, to restore the Harbor. The renewed marine life and the energy that throngs of new visitors have brought to the revitalized Harbor Islands are living testament to an historic achievement, as noted by Vivien Li, former president of the Boston Harbor Association, in her testimony to the Commission.
- The Park has served as a prime location for consolidating, preserving and growing Boston's ocean trade, maritime industries

and industrial uses. The area will continue to create and protect good jobs at good wages for a variety of skill levels. It is a vital part of marine commerce in the Western Hemisphere's oldest continuously operating port.

- The waterfront itself is a physical bridge that links downtown and the neighborhoods. It's where the "blue collar" economy of the neighborhoods joins "white collar" uses, as the downtown financial sector expands along the seaport.
- As it was for Ray Flynn's ancestors who endured the dangerous crossing from Ireland, Boston's Atlantic shore continues to be the first landfall for many immigrants who come to Boston from Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa and around the world. Whether they land at Logan Airport in East Boston or at the South Boston seaport, their first steps on American soil retrace those of Ray's family.

The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park will serve as an incubator for new firms that embrace the Flynn principle of good jobs at good wages, thereby improving the quality of life for workers and their families. Our vision for Flynn Park is consistent with the goals and aspirations of the Boston Redevelopment Authority's South Boston Waterfront Public Realm Plan:

- Promoting Boston Harbor as a shared natural resource
- Preserving and enhancing the industrial port
- Planning the seaport as a vital, mixed-use neighborhood
- Developing the seaport as an integral part of Boston's economy
- Enhancing the South Boston community

The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park would be the new name for what is now known as the Marine Industrial Park owned by the City's Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC). The 191-acre site was an Army/Navy base that stood nearly empty and abandoned until the property was granted to the EDIC between 1977 and 1983.

The Park represents a Flynn Administration priority: economic development that creates jobs. It is now home to over 200 businesses with more than 3,000 employees supporting major seafood-processing and wholesale companies, the Boston Design Center, ad agencies, research organizations, and life sciences and clean-energy companies. Given all that Ray Flynn stands for, the Commission can think of no more appropriate place to honor the Flynn name.

The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park: a new name; a renewed mission; new opportunities.

Establish "The Raymond L. Flynn Visitor Center" at The Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park

The Raymond L. Flynn Visitor Center would be a multi-purpose facility designed to welcome visitors and provide them with a snapshot of the role municipal leadership has played in shaping our world-class city. Millions of visitors come to our shores each year, and increasingly they are visiting the revitalized waterfront and seaport. "More than 300,000 passengers use Cruiseport Boston each year, whether departing on a cruise to Bermuda, making a transatlantic voyage or visiting Boston as a port-of-call," according to MassPort. An estimated 115 ships will make port-of-call and tie up at the Park's Black Falcon Terminal in 2015. The **Raymond L. Flynn Visitor Center** will provide a hearty welcome to one and all, echoing its namesake.

The Center would present the permanent exhibition "Governing Boston, 1822-Present," a look at the political, social and economic history of Boston through the experiences of its mayors. As is fitting for an area named for him, the collection will feature Ray Flynn's pivotal role in expanding opportunity and in healing racial divisions. It will

offer a unique view of an administration that created the road map for the neighborhood renaissance we see today.

From its beginnings on the tiny Shawmut Peninsula, Boston has engineered its physical transformation by building ferry landings, bridges and tunnels to connect Shawmut with the other towns that would become its great neighborhoods. The city's history has been built by the muscle and sweat of its people. They filled in the Back Bay, South Bay and the waterfront so the city could grow, and they dug the nation's first subway. The Flynn Center will preserve and illuminate the history of working-class Boston and the city's transformation to the diverse, world-renowned city it is today.

During Ray's tenure, City Hall welcomed people from across the city and around the world to positions of power and influence. The Flynn Center will feature exhibits on the historic contributions of women, people of color, LGBTQ people, new immigrants and organized labor. The diverse people and organizations that rose to power alongside Ray Flynn dramatically changed how Boston is governed.

Larry Kessler, then-Executive Director of the Boston AIDS Action Committee, summarized the importance of this new paradigm of municipal government.

"Without a doubt, Boston is in the national forefront when it comes to services and education around the issue of AIDS. The progressive approach that we've seen initiated by the mayor and his staff has set an example for other cities around the country."

Visitors to the Center will learn the "why" and "how" of this local model, which used compassion, inclusiveness and innovative City leadership to make a big city work for every resident.

"The Raymond L. Flynn Bridge" over the Reserved Channel

Summer Street provides a bridge both literally and metaphorically between a thriving, growing downtown and the neighborhoods of Boston. It symbolizes many of the themes of Ray Flynn's public life. The Summer Street bridge that spans Reserved Channel connects South Boston's L Street with Drydock Avenue and the Marine Industrial Park along with Black Falcon Terminal and Conley Cargo Terminal. Summer Street then continues on, crossing Fort Point Channel and into downtown Boston.

Summer Street traverses the industrial waterfront and a swath of industrial flatlands where South Boston joins the South End and the South End flows into Roxbury. *The Boston Globe's* architecture writer, Robert Campbell, wrote about the role of the Channels and their extension, the former Roxbury Canal:

"The canal was an extension of Fort Point Channel, where the South End meets Roxbury. The canal then functioned as a kind of servant's entrance to the city. We can see coal and lumber being unloaded, and there were also brickyards, soap works, power plants for the transit system, and city gas, water, and sewer facilities. The canal was a place for the back-door, below-stairs activities that made the more elegant 'front rooms' of the city run smoothly."

—Robert Campbell and Peter Vanderwarker, "CITYSCAPES - Roxbury Canal," *The Boston Globe*, June 13, 1999

Formally naming this bridge for Ray Flynn will serve to remind current and future generations about the importance of maintaining bridges of unity, dignity, respect and opportunity for all the people of Boston. As long as the Raymond L. Flynn Bridge joins downtown to the neighborhoods, the link will remain vital and strong.

Naming a significant segment of a City street also recognizes how hard – and effectively – Mayor Flynn worked to reorient City priorities so that the basic service needs of the neighborhoods would be met. He was the first mayor to use the word “pothole” in an inaugural address. By 1983, the City’s finances and concomitant policy decisions were in such disarray that residents were feeling helpless as their pleas for assistance with basic problems such as potholed streets, shabby parks and playgrounds, and closed police and fire stations went unanswered. That feeling began to turn around in January, 1984. The balance of City priorities between downtown interests and the neighborhoods’ concerns would shift dramatically.

This bridge is quite literally part of Ray Flynn’s “road to City Hall.” It is part of Boston residents’ path to the jobs and opportunities of downtown and leads to an alignment of downtown and waterfront prosperity with the priorities of the South Boston neighborhood.

For decades the city lagged in developing the jobs, affordable housing and social parity that would turn a growing town into a city that would work for all its people. Through his diverse, neighborhood-centric mayoral administration, Ray Flynn built the bridges of unity, dignity and opportunity. In or out of public office, he continued his efforts to this day.

Renaming the bridge in Ray Flynn’s honor is an element of the recommendation of particular importance to many members of the Commission. While the Commission initially endorsed renaming the entire waterfront section of Summer Street, it came to consensus that naming the bridge is a perfect metaphor for the life of Ray Flynn.

Finally, the Flynn Commission respectfully requests approval to continue its work to support and guide the implementation efforts for the three elements of our recommendation, should it be adopted.

3. The Commission's Process

The Commission created two Subcommittees—Designation and Legacy—to accomplish its work.

Designation Subcommittee

The Designation Subcommittee was charged with reviewing all the suggestions made to the Commission. It was asked to:

- Organize and discuss those suggestions;
- Determine a process and criteria for analyzing them; and
- Rate the recommendations according to agreed-upon criteria in order to make recommendations to the full Commission.

This Subcommittee adopted the following evaluative criteria. Each suggestion was discussed in terms of whether, in this Subcommittee's considered judgment, it was:

- Appropriate (AP),
- Substantial (S),
- Meaningful (M),
- Enduring (E)
- Achievable (AC).

This Subcommittee reviewed suggested designations according to the criteria and then made recommendations to the full Commission based on that review.

Group A

- Rename a City building or park (AP, S, E, AC)
- Rename a City street or major boulevard (AP, E, AC)
- Name a homeless shelter or library (AP, M, E, AC)
- Rename the Harborwalk (AP, M, E, AC)
- Rename Post Office Square (AP, M, E, AC)

- Rename Blue Hill Avenue (AP, M, E, AC)
- Establish a challenged youth support fund or scholarship program (AP, M, AC)
- Create a youth sports related tribute (name gym, basketball court, or perhaps rename the BNBL) (AP, M, AC)

Group B

- Redesign and rename City Hall Congress Street entrance (S, E, AC)
- Design and dedicate a statue in Faneuil Hall area (“Mayor’s Walk”)(E, AC)
- Build a new pedestrian bridge from City Hall Plaza to Faneuil Hall spanning Congress Street and name it after Mayor Flynn (S, E, AC)
- Create a Boston City Museum named after Mayor Flynn that features an exhibit on his legacy among other displays (AP, M, E)
- Close Union Park St. on the block between the Cathedral and Cathedral High School and turn it into Flynn Park (AP, E)
- Rename and erect a statue on the Summer St. bridge (AP, M, E)
- Place a statue or memorial in the Chinatown/Theatre District area (AP, M, E)

Group C

- Rename the Convention Center (AP, S, M, E)
- Rename Marine Industrial Park (AP, S, M, E, AC)
- Rename Boston Medical Center (AP, S, M)
- Create a district around Boston Medical Center named after Mayor Flynn (similar to the Longwood Medical Area) (AP, S, M, E, AC)
- Rename the Boston Housing Authority after Mayor Flynn (AP, M, E, AC)

This Subcommittee also reviewed lists of hundreds of unnamed public buildings and parks. It diligently studied every idea presented to it and found that scores of them were worthy of support. But this Subcommittee was required to distill these ideas into the recommendation

presented here. The Commission encourages others to advance additional ideas that reflect on Raymond L. Flynn’s legacy of significant lifelong contributions to the people of Boston and beyond.

After months of investigation and respectful consideration of each and every suggestion made to it, this Subcommittee presented its findings to the full Commission, which adopted them unanimously.

Legacy Subcommittee

As an integral part of this recommendation, the Legacy Subcommittee established a robust record of Mayor Flynn’s innumerable contributions to Boston. The following report highlights this Subcommittee’s findings.

Ray Flynn: Meaning and Legacy for Boston Unity, Dignity, Opportunity

As stated above, Ray Flynn sought every day as mayor of Boston to build bridges to opportunity for the people of Boston. He took ownership of problems related to discrimination and disadvantage and worked with neighborhood people to solve them. He was a tireless champion—working 18-hour days with rare time off—for the core values of racial and ethnic healing; dignity and respect for all; and opportunity that connects people to safe, secure lives.

There were two principles that guided him—first as a candidate and then as mayor.

“The hopes that unite us are much stronger than the fears that divide us.” — Raymond L. Flynn

“Every person should be treated with dignity and respect.”
— Raymond L. Flynn

From the beginning, Mayor Flynn said that there would be "one set of rules" to which everyone in the city would be accountable. And from the beginning, he involved himself personally to try to foster hope, diminish fear, and guarantee dignity and respect for everyone.

He built a City Administration on the three pillars of Unity, Dignity and Opportunity.

Unity

"Boston has for too long been a house divided against itself ... our resolve now is to bind old wounds, put the memories behind us, and carry worthwhile lessons into the future."

—Mayor Raymond L. Flynn, First Inaugural Address

Perhaps nothing was more important for Mayor Flynn or the people of Boston than to soothe racial tensions and bring the city together—to build a positive atmosphere of tolerance and understanding that was missing in the city at the beginning of 1984.

After the primary election, the two finalists, Ray Flynn and Mel King, met and agreed to keep race out of their campaigns. They understood how important it was for the city to come together. After the final election, Mayor Flynn worked to make that happen.

Many found it difficult to see Ray Flynn in the role of racial healer, primarily because he had opposed court-ordered busing in the 1970's.

"I didn't believe busing was going to help a black kid or a white kid or any kid get a better education," he would later say.

Mayor Flynn's opposition to busing was rooted in his belief in bringing people together to improve public education, not dividing them.

Once the judge's order went into effect, Flynn worked tirelessly in the neighborhoods and in school corridors to reduce fear and build peaceful communities.

Soon after taking office, he learned that the Dixons, a black family in Dorchester, were being harassed because of their race. He immediately visited them to reassure the family that their right to make a safe and decent home for themselves would be protected. When she answered the door, Mrs. Dixon could not believe the mayor of Boston was standing there. "I was just sitting down to write you a letter, and here you are," she said.

Mayor Flynn's visit comforted the family, and Boston Police, under his leadership, arrested the youths involved. They were subsequently tried and convicted of violating the family's civil rights.

Racial conflict had been thrust onto center stage with the 1974 federal court desegregation decree. City Hall's response to the April, 1976 violent and unprovoked attack on Ted Landsmark, a black attorney, on City Hall Plaza by a young, white man brandishing a pole with the American flag attached, was widely criticized locally and nationally. A photographer caught the moment of the attack to the shame of our city and nation. The City's banal reaction to other racial attacks and incidents of improper police behavior were also broadly criticized—most notably the James Bowden case. Bowden, 25, a black employee at Boston City Hospital had been fatally shot by two white Boston police officers in 1975. Bowden's family filed a civil suit against the City, and the City refused to pay the resulting judgment.

Mayor Flynn sent a clear signal to the city and to the police department with his first actions concerning race relations in Boston, as shown in this editorial following his disposition of the Bowden case:

"One of the more mean-spirited and unexplainable episodes in this city's recent history has come to an end—

and a very classy end—with Mayor Flynn's quiet delivery of a check for \$843,498 to the widow of a black man shot by two white police officers nine years ago." (*Boston Globe* editorial March 16, 1984)

As the *New York Times* offered in assessing Flynn's performance in 1991:

"In his first two terms, Mr. Flynn was widely given credit for easing racial tension that had grown out of a conflict over court-ordered school busing in the mid-1970s. Although he had opposed the busing himself at the time, Mr. Flynn as Mayor made a concerted effort to reach out to Boston's black population, opening predominantly white housing projects to blacks. He restored many of the city's neglected neighborhood parks. And he increased the number of blacks, Hispanics and Asians on the City payroll to 22 percent from 6 percent. Minorities make up 35 percent of Boston's population." (Butterfield 1991)

The late City Councillor Bruce Bolling had this to say about Mayor Flynn's appointment of Francis "Mickey" Roache, head of the Community Disorders Unit, as Boston Police Commissioner:

"He [Flynn] has restored to the city some of the credibility lost under the previous administration, especially in terms of race. He's setting a high tone on race relations. Roache is particularly strong on race. These are very important signals, and Boston needs that right now. I think he's doing well." (Kenny, *The Boston Globe*, May 5, 1985)

The Reverend Charles Stith, then of the Union Methodist Church, also commented on the Roache appointment:

"His appointment is indicative of the high priority the administration has toward molding a department that takes

seriously the need to protect all citizens despite color or class. Mickey's credentials are outstanding in terms of his reflecting real sensitivity to the major public safety issue in Boston—racial violence.” (Marantz, *The Boston Globe*, 1985)

During Mayor Flynn's first summer in office, white and black youths playing different sports clashed over the use of the single asphalt court at Wainwright Park in Dorchester. A weekend cookout was quickly organized to bring people in the neighborhood together—adults as well as young people, and construction was started immediately on an adjacent court. In a few weeks hockey and basketball were being played at the same time—and by kids of all races.

A long-standing discrimination suit by public housing residents was settled, and Boston became the first City to enter into a voluntary agreement with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to desegregate public housing.

During his first term, Mayor Flynn, Roache and the Boston Housing Authority receiver quietly worked with neighborhood leaders, clergy and residents to integrate previously all-white public housing in Charlestown. And in 1987, just weeks before election day, Flynn announced that public housing integration would proceed citywide, including in his native South Boston. When the mayoral election votes were tallied, he had won substantially in every neighborhood in the city but his own.

Yet South Boston, once again, voted overwhelmingly for Ray Flynn four years later, after the West Broadway development changed from a place where 98 percent of the residents were white to one where 35 percent of its families were minorities. For the first time in years, minority families also moved into public housing developments in Dorchester, Brighton, Hyde Park and Roslindale.

The City developed a Fair Housing Plan to increase minority access to both publicly assisted and private housing. The plan became a model for cities and towns locally and nationally.

Soon after taking office, Mayor Flynn signed an Executive Order guaranteeing equal rights for gays and lesbians. He later signed a Boston Human Rights Ordinance protecting all who reside in, work in or visit the city from discrimination or harassment of any kind.

Flynn called his desire to unite the city “the single most important goal of my life.”

Dignity

"No city can be truly great when unemployment denies workers their self-respect, when inadequate education robs our children of decent schooling, when street crime traps the elderly in fear, and when the lack of affordable housing forces people to move out of the city, and worse, move into the streets." —Mayor Raymond L. Flynn, First Inaugural Address

The Flynn Administration included 16 minorities and 17 women in leadership positions. Some of these new leaders had government service or private sector experience, but many had a much different background.

Community organizers were named to run departments whose mission was to provide access and services to community groups. Neighborhood leaders who had learned about development by fighting unwise and unwanted proposals were appointed to head planning and development agencies.

As Mayor Flynn proclaimed in his 1984 Inaugural Address: "Let the word go forth, that starting today there will be only one interest group

with special influence in City government—you, the people in the neighborhoods of Boston."

Instead of feeling they had to fight City Hall, neighborhood people found City Hall fighting alongside them—for better services and more opportunities and against unfair or unresponsive bureaucracies of any kind, whether big business or big government.

The mayor held a series of town meetings to listen to residents' concerns. He created a Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services and appointed liaisons to each community. Neighborhood Councils were formed to enable residents to monitor the delivery of basic services. Zoning Advisory Committees solicited neighborhood response to development proposals and created new zoning guidelines across the city for the first time in decades.

Flynn knew how important City services were to the quality of life in the neighborhoods. He activated a Pothole Hotline each spring, and sometimes, callers were surprised when the voice answering their calls was that of the mayor himself. He doubled Parks and Recreation Department spending in his first five years as mayor and drew up an ambitious plan to rebuild City parks, playgrounds and recreation centers.

"The people I care about depend on Boston's parks and pools for their recreation. They can't afford to go to Cape Cod or Kennebunkport," he said.

Flynn could not have taken these bold steps to improve City services without first addressing the City's financial condition. Boston was in very tough financial shape when he took office in January, 1984. The credit rating agencies had suspended Boston's rating, thus preventing the City from issuing new debt for needed capital programs.

Mayor Flynn successfully promoted legislation that gave the state’s 351 cities and towns the first-ever local-option excise taxes. He had cultivated widespread support among Massachusetts mayors and town officials, the Boston business community and the media. The excise measures raised significant revenue, and Flynn created the first-ever Office of Capital Planning to develop and monitor a five-year capital budget and plan.

The capital plan allowed Flynn to build a new Boston City Hospital, which had personal significance to him having been born there. He said at the time, “[i]t was a place that provided quality health care for poor and working and needy families in the city. It was kind of let go for a while. The decision before I became mayor was to close the BCH because it didn't work. I went over there and saw that more than 40 percent of the people there are poor, are from Roxbury, the South End, and South Boston. We’ll have the best quality health care facility in America, and it won't make any difference whether you're John Rockefeller walking in the door or some cleaning woman from South Boston.” (Kenny, *The Boston Globe*, February 26, 1989)

Ultimately, the City’s credit rating was restored and subsequently increased by the bond credit-rating agencies, allowing it to implement an aggressive capital plan. And Mayor Flynn established a policy of ensuring that budgets were fiscally conservative and credible. That perceptive fundamental policy and tradition continues to this day.

Opportunity

“Flynn famously judged people by how they treated the poor.” (*The Boston Globe* editorial, August 15, 2014)

“Millionaires don’t need mayors, poor people do.” (Mayor Flynn quoted in *New York Times*, June 9, 1993)

Mayor Flynn understood that the final—and possibly most important—stage of social justice is economic justice and that shared hopes outweigh the divisions of race, background and neighborhood.

He signed an executive order to increase City contracts with minority-owned and women-owned businesses and created a Minority Women's Business Enterprise Development Program to carry out the order. The City directed the greatest share of its own resources to neighborhoods that had been neglected the longest. Almost half of the \$35 million in Flynn-era linkage payments were awarded to development projects in Boston's minority neighborhoods.

Mayor Flynn called for an increased commitment to the Boston Jobs Policy goals for hiring residents, minorities and women on large, publicly and privately funded development projects.

Boston became the nation's first City to sponsor a study of banking practices in minority neighborhoods, which led to a \$400 million neighborhood reinvestment agreement that produced increased below-market mortgages and business loans to minority neighborhoods.

The City established a Linked Deposit program, requiring banks holding City funds to meet certain standards of minority neighborhood investment.

Probably the most transformative Flynn administration policy was requiring all major development projects to contribute linkage payments for affordable housing and job training. Mayor Flynn used linkage as a tool to fight poverty and slow the process of poor people being pushed out of the city. Between the early 1970's and 1983, Boston had lost an estimated 18,000 rental units through abandonment and condominium conversion. Flynn implemented redistributive policies, using his power and bully pulpit to force developers to do what they would not have done out of generosity—make a profit while at the same time supporting his social and political agenda.

"Linkage has been almost a lifesaver for Roxbury," said Ken Wade, chairman of the Roxbury Neighborhood Council. "The level of affordable housing in this community would not be accomplished had it not been for linkage." Added Tom McIntrye, vice president of the Bricklayers Nonprofit Housing and Development Corp., which built linkage projects in Mission Hill and Charlestown, "Affordable housing is a big mosaic, and you couldn't get to the batter's box without linkage. It's seed money that community groups need to solidify a whole development project with mortgage lenders." (*The Boston Globe*, Hernandez, December 5, 1989).

The data best illustrate the point. A 2003 BRA report stated that \$58.2 million of linkage funds had been awarded to affordable housing projects since the program's inception that allowed for construction or renovation of 5,979 housing units in 89 projects through 1999. Of these, 80 percent (4,812 units) were for low and moderate income residents.

Flynn's legacy for the city may best be summed up in the words he spoke at his inauguration, "[t]he tall and beautiful buildings which grace our city's skyline are monuments to a broad vision which every great city must possess. But these towers of granite and glass must not come at the expense of displacement or neighborhood neglect. We are committed to continuing the progress of downtown revitalization. But we are equally committed to ensuring that no neighborhood in Boston is left behind." - Mayor Raymond L. Flynn, First Inaugural Address

In commenting on the legacy of Raymond L. Flynn as mayor of Boston, Fletcher "Flash" Wiley, a black attorney, civic leader and former head of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, offered the following to a Commission member in a 2010 interview:

"The Ray Flynn legacy has yet to be written maybe, but a lot of people are forgetting about what a difference he made in his time. On the racial side, racial harmony side, on the economic development side, on spreading the wealth side - Ray Flynn made a difference in transforming the city of Boston."

