

MP Boston and Building Trades Unions sign Project Labor Agreement for Winthrop Center

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Boston, MA MP Boston and the Building Trades Unions signed a groundbreaking Project Labor Agreement (PLA) that will cover the development of the forthcoming Winthrop Center, slated for completion in 2022. The signing demonstrates the leading-edge efforts and unified commitment by all parties to advance best practices in diversity and inclusion for the project.

Over the past decade, MP Boston and the Building Trades Unions have worked successfully to increase diversity and Boston resident hiring in the local construction industry.

For the Building Trades Unions, that has included innovative programs like Building Pathways, among others, which have led to major increases in women and people of color achieving life-changing careers in the union construction industry. Building Trade Unions have created a host of partnerships with nonprofit organizations, community organizations, high schools, and career centers, while also updating their means of communication to intentionally recruit workers from Boston neighborhoods to join their ranks.

Boston building trade unions lead the nation in the percentage of women apprentices in the construction field overall, and 95% of women in the construction industry receive their training through a union apprenticeship program.

MP Boston has not only helped fund many diversity-oriented programs organized by the Building Trades Unions, but has also agreed to fund the “Care that Works” campaign which seeks to provide childcare services or construction worker families; has initiated a mentoring program that has successfully placed 45 people of color into the building trades unions; and has agreed to provide on-site diversity training to all workers at Winthrop Center. These programs, and others, done in partnership with the building trades unions, have become a national model for best practices in the industry.

“This Project Labor Agreement further affirms MP Boston’s leadership role in fostering an inclusive industry culture and advancing its goal to make Winthrop Center a project for all of Boston,” said Kathleen MacNeil, principal at MP Boston.

“The agreement will usher in key resources to help train and employ Boston residents through cutting edge union apprenticeship programs, including people of color and women. The agreement will also incentivize and advance the utilization of minority-owned and women-owned business for contracts at Winthrop Square.”

Project Labor Agreements have a proven track record of projects being completed on-time and on-budget, and are an important tool to increase equity and inclusion on construction projects.

“This agreement goes to the heart of what the Building Trades Unions seek to promote: increased opportunity and equity for all workers in the construction industry with careers that strengthen our communities,” said Brian Doherty, general agent, Building Trades Unions. “The work done at Winthrop Center will result in positive generational change and new careers for countless residents and families. The establishment of formal union protections across this jobsite mean that equitable wages and working conditions are not just promised to workers – they are guaranteed in the form of a union contract which is further bolstered by the overarching project labor agreement. Family-supporting wages and benefits, pay equity, access to the very best training, workplace protections, and a voice on the job, happen in too few workplaces, but they will happen at Winthrop Center with this agreement. We have a dual mission: to make every job a good job, and to make sure everyone has access to them, and this agreement and partnership with MP Boston advances that mission.”

“This agreement advances inclusion throughout the construction workforce and reflects our shared commitment to improving opportunities for all of Boston’s residents,” said Mayor Martin Walsh. “I thank MP Boston and the Building Trades Unions for this forward-thinking pact that builds on our inclusion-focused efforts for this project, and across development in Boston.”

Key Details:

ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY COMMITTEE

The Winthrop Sq. Project Agreement specifically calls for an Access and Opportunity Committee which will serve as the central forum for all parties to exchange information and ideas and to provide advice regarding operations and results. As part of these responsibilities, the committee will assess any and all obstacles to success in achieving maximum inclusion of people of color and women as both vendors and as labor and shall make recommendations for additional efforts to overcome those obstacles.

CHILDCARE ACCESS FUND

Through the “Care that Works” campaign, MP Boston will also establish a designated fund to provide advocacy, research, development and implementation of alternative childcare models and childcare subsidies to assist the construction industry, especially single mothers, with the challenge of accessing quality, affordable day-care with hours that support a career in construction unions.

HELMETS TO HARDHATS

The agreement also supports Helmets to Hardhats, a national, non-profit program that connects retired, reserve and transitioning active-duty military members to skilled training and career opportunities in the construction industry.

Upon completion in 2022, Winthrop Center will include office and commercial space, residential units, retail, dining, and below grade parking. The project’s 800,000 s/f of commercial office space will set new standards for workplace efficiency, adaptability, environmental sustainability, and wellness. This forward-looking office space will substantially

increase its occupying organizations overall productivity, re-establishing Downtown Boston's commercial preeminence.