

MEMORANDUM

NOVEMBER 14, 2013

**TO:** BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND  
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

**FROM:** KAIROS SHEN, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING  
RICHARD MCGUINNESS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR WATERFRONT  
PLANNING  
CHRIS BUSCH, SENIOR WATERFRONT PLANNER

**SUBJECT:** REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR FEMA RISKMAP PROGRAM FLOOD  
INSURANCE STUDY AND DRAFT FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP  
TECHNICAL EVALUATION AND FLOOD ZONE MODELING FOR  
THE CITY OF BOSTON

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**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests authorization for the Secretary to advertize a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for consultant coastal engineering services to: (1) evaluate the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s RiskMAP Program, Flood Insurance Study and Draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Boston; and (2) develop dynamic flood modeling for the City’s coastal areas based upon need and availability of funding.

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**BACKGROUND**

Following on a 2009 Congressional directive the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) initiated its Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (RiskMAP) Program to provide an updated coastal flood hazard analysis, and develop new Flood Insurance Rate Mapping (“FIRM”) specific to the City of Boston. This past August FEMA’s mapping contractor, STARR, provided the City of Boston with coastal flood hazard workmaps for review. The work maps represent an increase in the Base Flood Elevations and proposed delineations of flood hazard areas (the 1% Annual Chance Floodplain Boundary and 0.2% Annual Chance Floodplain Boundary) that are far more extensive than the Special Flood Hazard Areas represented on the current FIRM’s. The proposed, expanded flood hazard areas have significant implications for both public and private property owners within the City of Boston as they represent those properties that must carry flood insurance. The new flood zone elevations and delineations are based upon a new engineering analysis, field survey analysis, tide gauge and buoy data specific to Boston Harbor, and recent LiDAR data. FEMA intends on issuing preliminary Draft FIRM’s by November 15, 2013, with a

90-day appeal period commencing in early 2014. A FIRM Letter of Final Determination is anticipated by June 2014, which will make the maps effective by December 2014.

### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The scope of services will include an analysis of FEMA's methodology for the RiskMAP Program and resulting Flood Insurance Study and flood hazard area delineations as represented on the FIRM's, to assess the validity of FEMA's results and identify any errors. Based upon the results and findings of the technical review, the consultant may also be needed to assist the City of Boston in filing an appeal with FEMA and to conduct further dynamic flood modeling of the City of Boston's coastal areas.

### **FUNDING**

Project funding will be provided by the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA").

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The BRA staff recommends that the Secretary be authorized to advertize a Request for Proposals ("RFP") for consultant coastal engineering services to: (1) evaluate the Federal Emergency Management Agency's RiskMAP Program, Flood Insurance Study and Draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Boston; and (2) develop dynamic flood modeling for the City of Boston's coastal areas based upon need and availability of funding.

An appropriate vote follows:

**VOTED:** That the Secretary be, and hereby is, authorized to advertize a Request for Proposals ("RFP") for consultant coastal engineering services to: (1) evaluate the Federal Emergency Management Agency's RiskMAP Program, Flood Insurance Study and Draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the City of Boston; and (2) develop dynamic flood modeling for the City of Boston's coastal areas based upon need and availability of funding.