

THE EFFECTS OF CASINOS ON HOST COMMUNITIES AND THE  
POTENTIAL IMPACT OF A CASINO ON THE EAST BOSTON  
NEIGHBORHOOD

A thesis

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Adrian C. Madaro Moro

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ADVISER: James Jennings

READER: Jon Witten

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This thesis reviews and assesses the impacts of casinos on host communities. In particular, I use costs and benefits associated with the building of casinos in various locales throughout the country as case studies to extrapolate on what could happen if a casino is to be built in Boston's East Boston neighborhood.

For the past several months, I have been in the thick of the casino debate. I work as the chief of staff to the state representative of East Boston, Carlo Basile, an original co-sponsor of the expanded gaming legislation. This has given me a very unique perspective on the inner-workings of the political process, as well as the dynamic interplay between state, municipal and community wants and desires. Proponents of expanded gaming argue that a casino in East Boston will bring much needed jobs to the area, increase city and state revenue and boost local tourism. Conversely, opponents claim that with this development, the social costs will outweigh the aforementioned benefits, as the host communities will be burdened with increased crime, traffic and congestion, squeezing East Boston between an international airport and a resort casino.

Under *Background and Significance* I provide an overview of gaming in the United States, including its history and impact, as well as an explanation of why this is a significant topic for me and my neighborhood. To this purpose, I present the players and the environment in which they operate, together with the legal network that will define their actions. This section is followed by an overview of the methodology used for the completion of the thesis. Next a literature review is presented, focusing on major issues, themes and debates

relative to relationships between casinos and host communities, based on scholarly literature and content analysis of news articles. The review covers a wide range of topics, exploring the many facets of the issue. The *Discussion and Findings* section presents statistical analyses highlighting the correlation between casinos and crime and a set of GIS maps that show characteristics of East Boston in its current landscape (a community inventory), as well as visual projections of what could happen if a casino were to be built. Under *Conclusions and Recommendations* I discuss a set of mitigation measures that the City could adopt as a framework for the community mitigation agreement and its implementation.

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

References of gaming date to the furthest antiquity. Casino gaming in particular, “is classified [...] as part of the U.S. economy’s arts, amusement, and recreation sector [...] as well its hospitality sector” (Barrow, 2009, iii). During the 1990s the casinos experienced a dramatic rise, becoming one of the country’s fastest growing industries. By 2001 more than 425 commercial casinos were in operation in 11 states, and some form of casino gaming was approved in 30 states across the country. These casinos generated over 14,000 new jobs in the year 2000, bringing the total number of gaming employees to more than 370,000, earning a total exceeding \$10.9 billion in wages, with tax revenues just short of \$3.5 billion (Hashimoto and Fenich, 2003). In 2011, U.S. commercial casinos employed 339,098 people, paid wages of \$12.9 billion, contributed \$7.93 billion in direct gaming taxes, and earned \$35.64 billion in gross gaming revenue (American Gaming Association, 2012, 2). Moreover, in 2011, the gaming equipment manufacturers accounted for \$12.3 billion in sales revenue producing or servicing “over 837,000 gaming machines in 39 states nationwide” (ibid.). By 2011, 15 states had land-based or riverboat casinos, 13 had racetrack casinos (also known as racinos), 29 had tribal casinos, five had card rooms and six had electronic gaming devices (ibid., 4). While it is clear casinos can generate great employment and income for states and municipalities, they also have adverse effects.

Studies show that casinos often have a negative impact and cause social instability in host areas, including increased crime, addiction, suicide, youth

delinquency, child abuse, divorce, bankruptcy, domestic abuse, etc. In 2011, Massachusetts passed its expanded gaming legislation, with a proposal of up to three resort casinos and one competitively bid slots parlor in the Bay State. The law allows the selection of:

up to one casino in each of three regions: an eastern region that stretches from Boston to Worcester, a western region that includes the counties of Hampton, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire, and a southeast region that includes the Cape, the South Shore, and cities like New Bedford and Fall River. (Cheney, 2011<sup>a</sup>)

One of the applicants for the eastern region license is Suffolk Downs, a horseracing facility in East Boston, the neighborhood in which I was born and raised. If a casino were to be located there, it would be the greatest land use and development decision for the East Boston community since the early expansion of Logan International Airport.

Casino gambling has often been treated as an economic panacea for the dwindling coffers of states and municipalities, but the results have been mixed. With the passage of expanded gaming in the Commonwealth, which Governor Deval Patrick signed into law on Tuesday November 22, 2011, the process has commenced for Suffolk Downs to bid for the eastern zone license for a resort casino, one of three developers vying for this license. The two alternative sites proposed are in Everett and Milford. Six other development teams will compete for the western zone license in communities ranging from Springfield to Palmer, while the southeastern zone license has been reserved for tribal gaming, with the Mashpee Wampanoag likely becoming the licensee (the United States Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs is currently reviewing the tribal gaming

application, as any land-in-trust must be approved federally). There will be no further discussion of tribal gaming in Massachusetts in this thesis because of the different legal and regulatory frameworks under which sovereign entities operate. The communities of Raynham and Plainridge will vie for the state's sole slots parlor license.

### *Regulatory Framework*

The issuance of licenses is governed by the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) in accordance with Title 205 of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) (Massachusetts Trial Court), pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 23K (Commonwealth of Massachusetts). The MGC consists of five members including the chairman, Stephen Crosby, former Dean of the McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston. Crosby, who was once a critic of expanding gaming to the point of calling it a “regressive and thoughtless and unproductive way to raise money,” has now gone through “an ‘evolution’ on expanded gaming from reticence to acceptance” (Murphy, 2011<sup>b</sup>). He and his Gaming Commission are tasked “to build a casino industry from scratch” (Cheney, 2012).

In accordance with the new legal context, the chairman was appointed by the governor, one member by the attorney general, one by the treasurer, and the final two jointly by the governor, attorney general and treasurer (in this case Deval Patrick, Martha Coakley and Steve Grossman respectively). This commission has “a \$15 million budget and broad authority to implement and regulate a fledgling casino gambling industry in Massachusetts” (Murphy,



2011<sup>b</sup>), which is expected to reach \$20.6 million by FY2016 (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2013). In fact, this:

budget is consistent with cost of gaming regulation in other comparable states and, for example, places Massachusetts roughly on par with the current cost of operations for the State of Michigan. Other states such as Nevada, Pennsylvania and Illinois rank higher in cost as compared with Massachusetts. (ibid., 49-50)

This budget also forecasts “nearly \$1.2 million to be spent on research projects, including \$100,000 on economic impact and \$937,000 for a baseline study of compulsive gambling” (Metzger, 2012). In April 2012, the Gaming Commission “voted to ratify a one-year, \$256,000 lease at 84 State Street for a space expected to accommodate up to 30 employees” (Murphy, 2012). On February 7, 2013, the MGC hired Rick Day as its Executive Director, who after a 20 year career in law enforcement, launched the gaming commission in Montana, and more recently has served as the Director of the Washington State Gambling Commission (Quinn, 2013).

The Commission’s first task was to develop a strategic plan for regulating casino gambling. It was published on October 15, 2012 and prepared by Michael & Carroll PC and Spectrum Gaming Group LLC (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2012). This document draws in broad strokes the institutional steps leading to the inauguration of casinos in the Bay State. Commissioner Crosby defines it as, “a flexible, working document which presents a [...] critical path for the Commission” (Crosby). The strategic plan presents a tentative timeline that includes the following:<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As of March 2013, this schedule is on track and no delays are anticipated (Ring, 2013).

Year	Month	Step
2012	October	Release of the Strategic Plan
	October	Phase 1 - Applications for licensing made available on the Gaming Commission website
	November	Determination of the scope of licensing for investigations
	December	30 day period opens for completed application filing
2013	January	Hiring of Executive Director and Deputy Director of the Investigations and Enforcement Bureau
	June	Phase 2 - Drafting of regulations
	June	Completion of suitability investigations
	Summer	Hiring of investigative staff and conduction of investigations on construction companies
	October	Review of investigatory reports
	October/ December	Release of construction application
2014	October 2013 – December	Execution of agreements with surrounding communities
	October 2013 – December	Approbation by referendum of the host community agreement
	February	Awarding of licenses

Source: Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2012, p. 34-39

These thirteen milestones are organized according to a two-phase approach. Phase 1, i.e. the qualification process, includes the determination of licensing parameters, the gathering of licensed applications (which recently occurred on January 15, 2013) and the definition of investigative protocols. Furthermore, the completion of Phase 1 requires the performance of background investigations of the applicants (which commenced upon official application submission), the issuance of investigative reports and the conduction of public license hearings for each license applicant (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2012).

Phase 2 is the selection process according to statute, culminating in the awarding of up to three category one licenses (resort-casinos) and one category two license (slots parlor) (ibid.). The granting of these licenses will be determined by criteria which will include, “architectural design, integration of the establishment into its surroundings, access to multi-modal transportation, tourism

appeal, capital investment, and the applicant's financial strength" (Murphy, 2011<sup>b</sup>). The licenses will be awarded for a length of 15 years, with the option to renew.

The Strategic Plan defines the criteria to be applied to Commission and applicants alike. In particular, the process must be transparent, objective, exhaustive and fair, while the applicant must demonstrate the supportability of its plan, including "Projections regarding revenue, employment, investment and other quantifiable elements" (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2012, 82). It should be emphasized that while the Commonwealth can award up to three resort-casino licenses and one slots parlor, there is no compulsion to issue any if the bids are deemed unsatisfactory or opposed by host community voters in local referendums. To this effect, Chairman Crosby said, "If there are no proposals that meet the standards that we set out in combination with the standards set out by the Legislature, we would certainly not approve anything" (Cheney, 2011<sup>c</sup>).

As already noted, the official filing of the applications has been concluded with the submissions of eleven applicants. According to the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, it "has already made significant progress in planning the regulations necessary for the Phase 2 process, which will focus on an applicant's site specific plan. Phase 2 regulations are expected to be released Summer 2013" (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2013).

The Commonwealth's expanding gaming legislation necessitates the creation of various governmental bodies to enact and enforce the gaming laws. According to the MGC Strategic Plan, some 180 positions will be created in order

to staff these new entities, with a projected salary cost of \$17.4 million (out of the \$20.6 million budgeted for FY2016) (ibid.). A Division of Licensing will be “responsible for all of the functions related to licensing and administration [...] [which] includes the receipt, control, follow-up and licensing or other disposition of applications for licensing” (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2012, 22). The twelve person Division of Licensing will access the resources of the MGC Legal Division, whose eight staff members “will be variously assigned to litigation, regulatory compliance, legal research and legal advisory functions” (ibid., 23).

The resort-casino selection process requires the establishment of a Background Investigations Section, charged with investigating entities with a financial interest in the acquisition of a gaming license and who own five percent or more of the common stock of the applicant company (ibid.). This twenty-seven member investigational unit is part of a larger Investigations and Enforcement Bureau (IEB) whose head count is expected to reach 116 positions in total. The IEB will include a new State Police unit specialized in gaming-related crimes, the Gaming Enforcement Unit, which will have “exclusive criminal jurisdiction within a gaming establishment and appurtenant facilities” (ibid., 72). Responsible for operational investigations, this unit works closely with the newly established Division of Gaming Enforcement within the Attorney General’s Office and the inspectors and agents who will be supervising the casinos’ operations at all times (ibid.).

The institution of the aforementioned bodies and the determination of criteria and parameters will also require further legislative action with amendments to M.G.L c. 23K, the Commonwealth's expanded gaming statute (ibid.). More importantly, as is the case with any gaming development in the state, the host communities have the final say. In the end, the Commonwealth may not grant any expanded gaming licenses if all prerequisites are not met, including the favorable vote of the host communities. With Suffolk Downs, both East Boston and Revere must vote in favor of a casino for it to become a reality. As of now, the communities are just about split between those in favor and those against. If one of the two communities vote against the casino proposal, in accordance with the Commonwealth's expanded gaming law, Suffolk Downs would have the opportunity to reapply once more, but the process would start anew, requiring another \$400,000 application fee and a new host community mitigation agreement (ibid.). Thus, the onus is on Suffolk Downs to convince the mass of people who are undecided on the issue to vote in favor of their plan through a strong and incentive-laden host community mitigation package.

This mitigation package will be negotiated between Suffolk Downs and the City of Boston, through its Host Community Advisory Committee (HCAC). This five-member committee is responsible for advising Mayor Menino “on issues concerning efforts to establish a resort destination casino in the City of Boston” (City of Boston, 2013<sup>b</sup>). The responsibilities include:

[Prioritize the] interests of the residents, families, businesses and visitors of Boston; [...] ensure the City's and all relevant interests are appropriately represented in the Host Community Agreement; engage public opinion through public meetings as well as community and online

forums; [...] offer independent guidance concerning the siting, authorization, construction, and operation of a resort casino in the City of Boston; and advise the City of Boston on potential impacts, policies, and best practices related to the establishment of a resort casino. (ibid.)

The mitigation package, aimed at benefitting the City of Boston, is currently being negotiated. The HCAC, led by Executive Director Elizabeth Dello Russo, is doing its due diligence by holding community meetings and surveying residents to establish mitigation priorities (see Attachment 1). This advisory panel has also retained several consultants, namely CDM Smith (environmental assessment), Stantec (transportation study) and Ernst & Young LLP (gaming costs and benefits). In the meanwhile, the Boston Police Department is producing a crime report along with consultants, such as Boston College professor Richard McGowan. Upon the announcement of a formalized Host Community Agreement, a local referendum vote will be set at no more than 90 and no less than 60 days from date of said announcement.

#### *Suffolk Downs and its Partners*

Suffolk Downs has existed in East Boston as a pari-mutuel horseracing facility for 78 years. It covers 163-acres of land, straddling the East Boston/Revere city limit. Over the years, its one-mile racetrack and related facilities have provided thousands of jobs, “employing three generations of East Bostonians” (East Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2012, 1). It has had ups and downs, peaking in the late 1930s with memorable races, including one of Seabiscuit’s fame, putting East Boston on the map. The grounds remained a major entertainment venue until the mid 1970s, attracting big names like the Beatles and

Aerosmith. The early 1990s marked the nadir of the East Bostonian venue, following a general decline in horseracing across the country.

In 2007 a new ownership team headed by Richard Fields brought hope and promise back to Suffolk Downs, forming Sterling Suffolk Racecourse LLC, a subsidiary of Coastal Development, LLC. The protracted contraction in attendance and purses was finally offset by the current shorter racing season, better purses and the growing popularity of simulcast. Suffolk Downs continues to be a good employer and corporate partner to the East Boston community.

Over the years the management of Suffolk Downs has shown a commitment to gender equality in the workplace. This racing season, seven female jockeys competed, with three of them finishing in the top five in wins for the year. One of them, Tammi Piermarini who not only finished the season on top of the standings, but also moved into third place for career wins (2,138) by a female jockey said about Suffolk Downs, “I never expected to find a spot like this where everybody is so accepting of female riders” (Hoyt, 2012). The employees of Suffolk Downs are unionized under IBEW 123 and their employer has long signed collective bargaining agreements. In its quest for a casino, Suffolk Downs is supported by local unions, such as the Boston Metropolitan Building Trades Council and the Greater Boston Central Labor Council (Tuttle, 2012), in addition to the Massachusetts AFL-CIO (Massachusetts AFL-CIO, 2012).

Suffolk Downs has had a long history of social involvement and philanthropy, generously providing space for community events and financially supporting local non-profits. In 2008, track ownership instituted the Community

Winner's Circle program that celebrates volunteerism in the communities of East Boston and Revere (Ransdell, 2012) and since 2006 Suffolk Downs has played host to the Greater Boston Walk Now for Autism Speaks, attracting over 18,000 participants to walk its historic one-mile oval track (Greater Boston Walk Now for Autism Speaks, 2012). In 2008 Suffolk Downs became the first racetrack in the country to institute a life ban against those involved in the slaughter of horses (Allin, 2011).

The environmental record of the racetrack has not been as remarkable as its social commitment. In 2012 Suffolk Downs was fined \$1.25 million by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice for discharging horse manure and other pollutants into Sales Creek. This tributary of the Chelsea Creek runs through the property, "becoming part of Boston Harbor and the Atlantic Ocean and endangering aquatic life" (Valencia, 2012). As part of the settlement Suffolk Downs agreed to invest "more than \$700,000 for water quality monitoring of watershed areas along the Mystic and Saugus Rivers" (ibid.).

In its bid for a resort-casino license, Suffolk Downs has partnered with a leader in the gaming industry, Caesars Entertainment, headed by CEO Gary Loveman. With more than 70 years of experience and an empire stretching over four continents, Caesars Entertainment employs over 70,000 people and operates under the brand names Harrah's, Caesars and Horseshoe. Furthermore, Caesars Entertainment also owns the World Series of Poker and the London Clubs International casinos (Caesars Entertainment, 2013). In addition, "with over 40



million customers, Caesars' Total Rewards® program is the leading loyalty program in the gaming industry" (Suffolk Downs, 2012). Nevertheless, according to Moody's Investors Service, Caesars Entertainment's financial outlook may be jeopardized by its high debt (almost \$20 billion), accounting for "interest expenses of nearly \$1.7 billion annually [...] that consumes about 90 percent of its property EBITDA – earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization" (Green, 2011).

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23K, § 21, gaming applicants must "reach agreements with 'not-for-profit or municipally-owned performance venues' in the potential licensee's region" (ibid.). As a result, in December 2012, Suffolk Downs and Caesars Entertainment entered into a partnership with "one of the nation's foremost nonprofit performing arts institutions," the Citi Performing Arts Center, located in Boston's historic theatre district (Citi Performing Arts Center, 2012). This 501(c)(3) owns and operates iconic venues such as the Wang, Shubert and Emerson Colonial theatres, as well as provides "educational workshops and community activities; [...] collaborates with artists and local performing arts organizations, and acts as a champion for the arts in the Greater Boston community" (ibid.).

The three partners have different roles. Suffolk Downs will own and manage the land, license and racetrack; Caesars Entertainment will manage all casino operations; and Citi Performing Arts Center will "work with Suffolk Downs and Caesars in cross promotion, operations, cooperative booking of acts and shows [...] expand[ing] arts education/community programs for local youth

and families” (ibid.). This arrangement presents obvious synergies. Suffolk Downs, which must retain its racetrack operations as part of the gaming law, will revamp its operation at a much higher level. Caesars Entertainment can count on location, infrastructures and high integration within the facility and its customer base, while Citi Performing Arts Center will enhance the entertainment value of the resort-casino integrating it into the larger theatre scene of the whole city and opening up opportunities for local youth and community based performing arts programs like East Boston’s Zumix (Lynds, 2012<sup>b</sup>).

### *The Anti-Casino Movement*

The history of the opposition to expanded gaming in Massachusetts is long and complex. When Governor Patrick first proposed expanded gaming in 2008, he faced the insurmountable opposition of Speaker of the House of Representatives Salvatore DiMasi, whose House colleagues voted 108-46 against the Governor’s bill (Norton, 2011). However, after DiMasi’s 2009 indictment and subsequent conviction, the new Speaker of the House, Robert DeLeo, was instrumental in supporting Governor Patrick’s plan, garnering a House vote of 124-30 in favor (GovTrack.us, 2011).

After the passage of Chapter 194 of the Acts of 2011, An Act Establishing Expanded Gaming in the Commonwealth, the most vocal opponent of casinos remained former Attorney General Scott Harshbarger, president of Citizens for a Stronger Massachusetts, who vowed to “continue to do all we can to speak out against this ill-advised, poorly-structured, pro-casino bonanza” (Cheney, 2011<sup>a</sup>). On the ground, a coalition of concerned groups and citizens also emerged. This

alliance was formed by United to Stop Slots Massachusetts, led by Tom Larkin; Stop Predatory Gambling, directed by Les Bernal; the Massachusetts Family Institute, presided by Kris Mineau; and a grassroots local ballot committee called Repeal the Casino Deal, led by John Ribeiro of Winthrop (Murphy, 2011<sup>a</sup>). The coalition attempted to include a referendum vote to repeal the Commonwealth's 2011 expanded gaming law on the ballot for the 2012 elections. Their plans were thwarted by Attorney General Martha Coakley who stated in her ruling on the subject, "I have reviewed c. 194 and have concluded that it is not lawfully the subject of a referendum petition" (ibid.).

Undeterred, the Repeal the Casino Deal committee and other casino opponents in East Boston and neighboring towns have coalesced together to form No Eastie Casino. This grassroots organization of resident volunteers travels to community groups to inform them about the potential negative impacts of a casino in East Boston. No Eastie Casino began with just a few individuals and has now gathered support from a diverse coalition of people, including all ages, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds. In particular, this group has been calling for an independent community impact analysis on the proposed casino development, a request that up to this point has been ignored (No Eastie Casino, 2013).

#### *East Boston: The Historical and Social Context*

East Boston may soon become a synonym for expanded gaming as it currently is for the airport. Annexed into the City of Boston in 1836, East Boston lies 42.2252 degrees of latitude north and 71.0206 degrees of longitude west

(geographic.org, 2012) and is a peninsula, formed by several islands bridged by landfills. It is divided into three separate sections, namely Jeffries Point, Eagle Hill and Orient Heights, grouped around as many low lying hills. It borders with the Town of Winthrop to the northeast, the City of Revere to the north and the City of Chelsea to the south-southwest, and is flanked by the Chelsea Creek, Belle Isle Marsh and Boston Harbor.

After an early pastoral beginning, East Boston became the theatre of the first naval engagement of the Revolutionary War, the Battle of Chelsea Creek, and the first successful skirmish against raiding British troops (Sumner, 1858). East Boston acquired international fame in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century thanks to its shipbuilding facilities and the extreme technological advancement of their vessels, epitomized by Donald McKay's Flying Cloud and Great Republic clipperships (Sammarco, 1997). With the passing of the age of sail, the neighborhood started to decline. The early Victorian mansions became surrounded by tenements and heavy industry, as East Boston welcomed every successive immigrant wave that landed in the Bay State (ibid.). The Irish immigrants, exemplified by Mr. and Mrs. P.J. Kennedy, grandparents of late President John Fitzgerald Kennedy (Howard, 1976), together with Canadians from the Maritime Provinces, were followed by eastern European Jews, who established the Temple Ohabei Shalom Cemetery in 1844, the oldest Jewish cemetery in Massachusetts (ibid.), and then by Italians, like the grandparents of Red Sox Hall of Famer Tony Conigliaro (Nowlin). More recently, Central and South Americans, Southeast Asians, North Africans and Middle Easterners have made East Boston their home.

The most direct gateway to points north, East Boston was the center of a mid 1930s civil engineering feat, the digging of the William H. Sumner Tunnel, which was followed by the 1961 Lieutenant William F. Callahan Tunnel (The Boston Globe, 2012). More recently, the Ted Williams Tunnel was opened in 1995, and at a depth of 90 feet below the surface, is the deepest tunnel in North America (City of Boston, 2013a). East Boston's role as communication and transport hub has fully benefitted Logan International Airport. From a modest 1923 beginning as Boston Airport, or the U.S. Army's Jeffries Field, General Edward Lawrence Logan International Airport was opened for business in 1943, to become today the 19th busiest U.S. airport and the 28th busiest airport in the world, with nearly 13.5 million departures and more than 29.3 million passengers altogether (Massachusetts Port Authority, 2012).

Every East Bostonian would agree with the East Boston Chamber of Commerce when it says, "East Boston is a vibrant and diverse community known for its unparalleled views of the Boston skyline, flourishing ethnic restaurant scene," (East Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2013, 3) and an extremely well integrated population with a strong community life. East Boston is proud to be the home of four restaurants featured on the Food Network: Rino's Place, Angela's Café, Italian Express Pizzeria and Santarpio's Pizza. More importantly, it hosts two of the best charter schools in the state, Excel Academy and Brooke Charter School (Excel, 2012; Brooke Charter Schools, 2012).

Eastie is one of the most densely populated and low-income neighborhoods in the city (Boston Redevelopment Authority, 2010). It sports

some of the lowest tree coverage and some of the most limited green space, and is a community where minority residents make up the majority of the population (ibid.). East Boston has a median household income of \$40,960 compared to that of \$51,914 for the City of Boston, an income which is 21.1 percent less than the Boston average and 39.7 percent less than the Massachusetts average (ibid.) Furthermore, the per capita income in East Boston is 35.2 percent less than the city average and 41.2 percent less than the state average (ibid.). East Boston is and has always been an immigrant neighborhood. Eastie, as it is locally known, is currently 53 percent Latino, many of whom are recent immigrants from El Salvador and Colombia (ibid.). One of the reasons for this concentration is the greater number of affordable housing units as compared to the other neighborhoods in the city (Boston Redevelopment Authority, 2011).

As noted, East Boston is already one of the most densely populated communities and has one of the fastest growing populations in the city, issues that are exacerbated by the lack of trees and open space (City of Boston, 2011). Almost all of the land along the Chelsea Creek, the second most polluted body of water in Massachusetts, is zoned for industrial use and includes parking overflow parking lots for the airport, rental car facilities and one of the largest oil tank farms in New England (Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, 2003, 2). These tanks store hundreds of millions of gallons of oil, including all of the jet fuel for Logan Airport and about 80 percent of the New England region's heating needs (ibid.).

Due to its scarcity of green space, proportion of the minority population, industrial presence and low-income status, East Boston is recognized by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Environmental Protection Agency as an Environmental Justice community (Mystic River Watershed Association, 2012). To this effect, between East Boston and neighboring Chelsea alone, there are 398 state-designated hazardous waste sites (Emerson College, 2012) and the two towns are respectively the fifth and third "most environmentally overburdened cities/towns in Massachusetts" (Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice, 2003, 2).

These disproportionate environmental burdens borne along economic, ethnic and racial lines may be heightened by the presence of a casino. However, such a situation is partially offset by Belle Isle Marsh Reservation and Piers Park. Belle Isle, Boston's last intact salt marsh, covers 152 acres, 28 of which are fully accessible by the public (Department of Conservation and Recreation, 2013). Piers Park, established in 1995, is a \$17 million community mitigation project that covers 6.5 acres (The Boston Harborwalk, 2012). Completed by the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport), it offers amenities such as the Piers Park Sailing Center, which provides free sailing lessons to East Boston youth (Piers Park Sailing Center, 2010).

Notwithstanding this and other fine athletic institutions and services in the community, East Boston is saddled with high rates of obesity, drug and alcohol addiction, asthma and non-smoking related lung cancer (Boston Public Health Commission, 2011). Adding a resort casino into the mix could intensify some of

these problems through increased traffic and pollution. In fact, the proposed traffic management solution would reduce the existing green space and further decrease air quality, thanks to the expansion of McClellan Highway/Route 1A.

East Boston is a diverse, yet cohesive and tight-knit neighborhood, home to a budding artists community and in the midst of a slow gentrification process. This has coincided with a spike in the demand for condominiums, as seen with the conversion of the former gumball and bra factories in Jeffries Point, which have been transformed into high end condos. In the last few years, East Boston has also been the recipient of much needed public investment. In 2012, the federal government, through President Barack Obama's stimulus package, contributed \$24 million (Fitzgerald, 2011) for the construction of the new Maverick Square headquarters of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, in recognition of its national excellence (Mass.gov, 2013).

That same year, federal and state monies paid for the construction of a new Chelsea St. Bridge, a \$125.3 million project that greatly improves navigation along the Chelsea Creek (Commonwealth Conversations, 2012). The state also paid for renovations at Eastie's local Atlantic beachfront, Constitution Beach, locally known as Shae's Beach, building new facilities and tennis courts (Fox, 2012<sup>b</sup>). Finally, since 2009, the state has further implemented its capital improvement plan with the modernization of two of East Boston's major subway stations. Maverick has been completely redesigned at a cost of \$56 million (Fitzgerald, 2011) and work has begun at Orient Heights, with a projected completion date of 2014 and a price tag of \$51 million (Times Staff, 2012).



On the municipal side, the city is currently building East Boston's new public library, a \$17.4 million project, and is working on an extension of the local Greenway, which once completed, will create a continuous walking/biking path from one end of East Boston to the other (Mayor's Press Office, 2012<sup>a</sup>). The city has also committed \$4 million (Fox, 2011) to redesigning one of the local business districts, Central Square (Fox, 2012<sup>a</sup>), as well as the refurbishing of one of the community's most highly used parks, American Legion Playground, a project worth \$3 million (Lynds, 2012<sup>a</sup>).

East Boston is a geographically isolated community, the only part of Boston across the harbor. Perhaps this is why Eastie (which undeniably has the best view of the city skyline) is the only community in Boston where the waterfront has yet to be developed. South Boston, Charlestown, and the North End have all undergone significant revitalization within the past 20 years, a trend that has not reached the shores of my neighborhood.

The experience with Logan Airport is one example of the impact of isolation. During the mid 1960s, Massport sought to expand, and in the process, through eminent domain, the airport forcibly relocated an entire neighborhood of residents and razed Wood Island Park, a Frederick Law Olmstead designed jewel that had been enjoyed by generations of East Bostonians before its destruction. In its stead, Massport extended a runway, built a parking lot, and supported the MBTA as it created the train station that today bears the park's original name. At the time, East Boston was not well represented politically and was not organized. This experience led to a meteoric rise in community activism, as residents

coalesced against Massport, staging protests and forming human walls to block bulldozers and airport commercial traffic. Today, East Boston is very organized and politically active, with countless residents involved in various groups and organizations to help protect the community and its environment. While in the 1960s, East Boston's isolation worked against it, today the isolation unites residents in a forceful advocacy on behalf of the community.

Isolation has other advantages as well. In 2011, East Boston was the safest neighborhood in the city, due in large part to a new police captain who emphasizes community policing (hiring police who are born and raised in the community in which they work) (Boston Police Department, 2011). While no longer the safest, this trend has continued to the present, as East Boston still experiences some of the lowest crime levels in the city. Given what the literature says, East Boston's low crime rate could be compromised if a resort casino were built at Suffolk Downs. As mentioned earlier, studies also show that rates of addiction, suicide, child and domestic abuse, drug and alcohol use, and bankruptcy significantly increase in host communities of casinos. These are burdens East Boston must be prepared to face if we are to have a casino in our midst.

In addition to the local elected officials, Mayor Thomas Menino, Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo, Senate President Therese Murray, and Governor Deval Patrick have all been vocal supporters of a casino in East Boston. Their concern is mostly fiscal, as a casino could bring greatly needed jobs and revenue to the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and they present

the idea as an economic dynamo that would solve the fiscal and employment woes of both city and state. Governor Patrick, while signing the casino law in 2011 said, “Expanded gaming in Massachusetts, for me, is about creating jobs” (Deehan, 2011). But no one has been more vocal than Mayor Menino in lauding Suffolk Downs as ideal because, “It’s near the convention center. It’s near the airport. It’s natural to me. Suffolk Downs has been there for many years. [...] There will have to be some improvements made in the infrastructure around Suffolk Downs. But I still believe it is the perfect location for a casino” (Cheney, 2011<sup>b</sup>).

#### *Next Steps*

As previously noted, the expanded gaming legislation calls for a local referendum, allowing for the host communities (in the case of Suffolk Downs, the towns of East Boston and Revere) to veto a casino proposal. However, the process could be skewed, as Suffolk Downs has no cap limiting the amount of money it can spend to lobby for affirmative votes in both communities, while opponents have nothing but their voice and the little funds they are willing to spend.

The economic power of the developers will be put to use exploiting two fundamental arguments. In both the short and long term, the casino will create jobs. The majority will be limited to the construction phase and the remaining permanent positions will be mostly low skill low wage positions (Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth, 2010). If in the current economic climate, any job is better than no job at all, this is particularly true in the fields that have suffered most during the recession, namely construction, hospitality, and food and

beverage services. Thus, it is not difficult to understand the strong union support for a casino in East Boston (ibid.). If this argument were not compelling enough, the second pro is that the casino could well facilitate and foster urban revitalization through the development of the East Boston waterfront (Ryan, 2011; East Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2012).

The trend of my parents' generation was to move to the suburbs, while my generation is moving back into the city. This has been a major factor in the revitalization of other waterfront communities in Boston. This population shift is present in Eastie, but to a lesser extent and would reasonably increase with the development of the waterfront. One has to agree with the local elected officials and Mayor Menino when they present the casino as a possible catalyst for progress. In his 2012 State of the City address, Mayor Menino declared his support for a casino at Suffolk Downs and the development of the East Boston shoreline, dubbing it his "Waterfront Development District" (ibid.; City of Boston, 2012).

This is an important and timely topic because a casino would undoubtedly change the landscape of my community for the foreseeable future. As mentioned above, it would represent the largest land use decision in East Boston since Logan International Airport. A casino could offer many job opportunities and a local economic boon in a particularly depressed area, could trigger the development of the ultimate waterfront area in the City of Boston, could catalyze the long-promised improvement in the public transportation system (i.e. the Red Line/Blue Line Connector and a publicly subsidized water ferry), could make East Boston a

desirable destination instead of just a transit point, would secure green/open spaces in one of the most congested and densely populated neighborhoods in the City, and the mitigation package would finance important social, environmental and community programs that otherwise may never be funded.

Conversely, casinos seemed to be linked to an increase in crime and traffic, with a limited spill over of financial benefits (beyond the mitigation) for the host communities. Similarly, the bulk of new jobs will be time limited and focused on construction and the permanent jobs which will be created may not be as significant as they are presented, further reducing the positive effect of such presence.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This thesis is a case study of the politics and policy debates associated with the proposal to build a casino in East Boston. It is based on findings evinced from recent literature on casinos and the effects they have had on their host communities. It should be noted parenthetically that nowhere else has a casino been placed within a very densely populated residential community with characteristics comparable to East Boston. The data from the current literature, however, are still indicative of the overall issues faced by casino host communities. In addition to an extensive literature review, statistical analyses and GIS applications are utilized as the basis for this thesis.<sup>2</sup>

In my analysis I used data derived from current literature in order to establish the pros and cons of casinos and define a set of mitigation measures capable of addressing the future social and environmental impacts of a potential casino at Suffolk Downs. Using other domestic host communities of casinos as case studies, I have attempted to extrapolate established trends into possible future scenarios for my community, thus providing an indication of what could be expected if East Boston is to become host to a world class, resort casino. This extrapolation will also serve as a roadmap for the mitigation measures that are yet to be finalized between the two parties, the City of Boston and Suffolk Downs.

The data is based on the extant literature, popular media sources, and documentary reports used in the legislative process. Both my statistical analyses

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<sup>2</sup> No particular attention has been placed upon the ownership (private vs. tribal) of the casinos themselves, because I am not interested in the development process of said entities, but rather their impacts on host locales. I also excluded foreign experiences due to the different rules and framework under which foreign casinos operate.

and my GIS maps were based on data reported by MassGIS, the US Census, and the City of Boston.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Impacts of Gaming on the Local Economy*

The effect of casinos on the economy of their host communities is a hotly debated topic among experts. There is a commonly held belief that “casinos with their ‘comps’ would have a devastating effect on local bars and restaurants,” known as the ‘cannibalization’ effect (Hashimoto and Fenich, 2003, 108). According to the 1999 National Gambling Impact Study Commission Report, “over 70 percent of local businesses shut down in Atlantic City” after casinos opened (23). In fact, “In Atlantic City, 100 of the 250 existing local restaurants disappeared with the advent of casino development in 1978” (Hashimoto and Fenich, 2003, 103). In total, since the opening of casinos in Atlantic City, 66 percent of independent restaurants (Nieves, 1997) and a third of the city's retail businesses have closed (Goodman, 1995). To compete with nearby casinos, many local restaurants have added video poker to their operations. For example, in South Dakota, “restaurant owners kept 55 million in payouts from video poker and video lottery” (Hashimoto and Fenich, 2003, 109).

In a 2003 study of expanded gaming in Mississippi, however, Hashimoto and Fenich found different results. They concluded that in fact, as opposed to suffering, local restaurants were aided by the development of casinos nearby.

They found that:

In the four different counties in Mississippi, the legalization and subsequent development of casino gaming did not drive all the local restaurants out of business. Casinos did not cause the predicted drop in the number of businesses, nor the drop in people employed, nor the drop in payroll. In fact, just the opposite occurs. When casinos are developed, in each of the four cases studied, the activity of the local food and beverage



industry increases: the number of establishments increases, the number of people employed increases, and payroll increases. (108)

The Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth estimates that small businesses will thrive with resort casinos in Massachusetts, positing that there will be “more than \$600 million in new annual spending by the resort casinos among our state’s small and medium-sized businesses” (2010). This organization uses the example of Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun casinos in Connecticut to illustrate its point. The Coalition claims that:

Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun spend over \$900 million annually for goods and services necessary to their daily operations, and about 70% of the expenditures – \$630 million – are spent among Connecticut businesses creating Connecticut tax revenues, Connecticut jobs, and Connecticut small business growth.” (ibid.)

Although the local Chamber of Commerce in Connecticut was at first opposed to expanded gaming, they are now a vocal supporter, as the casinos have helped the region economically thrive. Even state business leaders claim, “In the throes of an economic recession, Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun have become even more critical to the region and state’s fiscal and economic health” (ibid.). They claim that over 24 million people visit the casinos annually, many of whom “stay in the region’s non-casino hotels, dine in the region’s non-casino restaurants, and visit the region’s non-casino tourism and retail outlets.

Nevertheless, even the studies supporting the positive correlation between casinos and small businesses do not mention an increase in small businesses. Instead, they only point out a possible increase in small business revenue, which could well be concentrated in very few hands, leaving the rest of the field worse off. The impact of casinos on small businesses may be best summarized by

business magnate Donald Trump, who stated, "People will spend a tremendous amount of money in casinos, money that they would normally spend on buying a refrigerator or a new car. Local businesses will suffer because they lose customer dollars to the casinos" (The Jackpot State, 1994).

Representatives of the East Boston business community have a different view. In its report, *The Prosperity Agenda: a proposal for building the economic vitality of the East Boston business community to capture the benefits of the resort casino opportunity*, the East Boston Chamber of Commerce, chaired by former City Councilor Diane Modica, recognizes the specificity of the Suffolk Downs site and its value as an economic catalyst. A section called "Hybrid Location and Connectivity" reads:

The unique characteristics of the proposed Suffolk Downs site make it a hybrid location when compared to the urban casinos of New Orleans, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and soon-to-open in Cincinnati [sic]. In each of these locations, the casino is located within the midst of a walkable urban commercial district or downtown environment; whereas the Suffolk Downs location is between Boston city limits making it urban, yet it is adjacent to a residential neighborhood and the East Boston commercial districts are not within walking distance. [...] The hybrid nature of the proposed Suffolk Downs location requires strategic and concerted efforts to facilitate connectivity to benefit the East Boston businesses community and to prevent the casino from becoming an inward focusing island. (8)

Notwithstanding the challenges, connectivity among them, the East Boston Chamber supports the casino initiative. It recommends focusing mitigation upon the business district of Orient Heights, the closest neighborhood to the proposed casino development (ibid.). The organization also recommends, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 23K § 9(a), to concentrate the required follow-up studies on monitoring "the casino impacts on local businesses and other indicators measur[ing] the

economic condition of the host community” (ibid., 13). The East Boston Chamber of Commerce views this casino opportunity as part of a larger “rebranding” process that will propel the long-delayed economic revitalization of East Boston.

The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce is also supportive of expanded gaming in the Commonwealth, including a casino at Suffolk Downs. In its report analyzing casino gaming, the Chamber highlights positive impacts on local businesses. For example, “To the extent that casinos draw visitors from outside the region, local businesses may benefit from spillovers from the casino developments if casino patrons also purchase goods and services from local businesses” Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2010, 102). Additionally, local businesses will benefit from supplying goods and services to casinos. Nevertheless, “All else equal, the net benefits to local businesses will be greatest for destination casinos and lowest for casino developments that draw primarily from a local clientele” (ibid.) At the end, an analysis of over 100 writings on the subject, commissioned by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission that was established by President Bill Clinton, concluded that, “a new casino of even limited attractiveness and placed in a market that is not already saturated, will yield positive economic benefits on net to its host economy” (Rose, 1998, 31).

#### *Social Costs and Impacts of Gambling Addiction*

The social costs of casinos are another contentious topic. Some, such as Grinols and Omorov claim that “casino gaming created social costs between \$39 billion and \$145 billion annually in the U.S. economy; furthermore [...] the introduction of casino gaming to a state like Iowa or Illinois would create

additional costs of \$42 billion annually” (Marfels, 1998, 415). These authors also state that gambling is a “sterile transfer of funds” and is a “good where a large share of revenues is explained by addiction” (417).

A portion of the cost is attributed to pathological and problem gamblers, whose almost universal risk factors include, “male gender, age under 30 years, low income and a single marital status [...] low occupational status, less formal education, and non-Caucasian ethnicity [...] as [well as] residence in large cities” (Volberg et al., 2006, 17). In 1990, a Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene task force pointed out that the state’s 52,000 adult gamblers cost the collectivity \$1.5 billion in lost work, theft, embezzlement, bounced checks and unpaid taxes (Florida Governor's Office, 1994). Moreover, the same task force determined that the “cost per individual compulsive gambler exceeds \$28,846 and significantly increases when related costs for social services, healthcare, bankruptcy, legal and correctional fees are considered” (ibid.). Moreover, the Massachusetts Family Institute legislative brief on expanded gaming indicates that, “Problem gambling and addiction rates double within a 50 mile radius of a casino [and] for every \$1.00 in revenue, the state will be burdened with between \$3.00 and \$5.00 in social costs” (2010).

A 2006 study done by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago reported that out of a population of nearly 36.5 million, “there are nearly 300,000 pathological gamblers and another 450,000 problem gamblers living in California” (Volberg et al., 2006, viii), which translates into 1.5 percent of the Californian population classified as pathological gamblers and

2.2 percent as having a “lifetime prevalence of problem gambling” (ibid., 3).

Furthermore, this study found that gambling addiction is particularly high among black minorities and individuals who are disabled or unemployed (ibid.).

Some of these claims are supported by data from the World Health Organization (WHO). In 1999, United States Congress commissioned the WHO to study the correlation of casinos and addiction. The study found that while “gambling [does] provides socioeconomic benefits to communities, such as tax revenues, economic growth, job creation, and infrastructure improvements, it is also a direct cause of ‘problem and pathological gambling’” (Singleton, 2008, 39).

Grinols and Omorov attribute “39 percent of gross gaming revenues [...] to the contribution of pathological gamblers’ losses” (Marfels, 1998, 418). Some estimates are much higher. As the Massachusetts Family Institute highlights, “40-50% of gambling revenues of a typical casino come from problem or pathological gamblers, [...] [and moreover] 80% of gambling revenues come from people with less than \$50,000 in annual income” (2010). Overall, Welte et al., argue that gambling addiction rates rise in communities near casinos, doubling from about one to two percent to three to five percent (2004). Others posit that the estimates such as those of Grinols and Omorov and the Massachusetts Family Institute are unsubstantiated and that the social costs are in fact far lower (Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2012; Rose and Associates, 1998; American Gaming Association, 2012).

Data supporting the correlation between addiction and crime, gathered in a Gamblers Anonymous survey, indicates “57 percent of 400 surveyed Gamblers

Anonymous members admitted to stealing in order to maintain their gambling habit” (National Gambling Impact Study Commission Report, 1999). Moreover, about “22 percent of gamblers have been incarcerated compared to 7 percent for non-gamblers” (ibid.). The study conducted by Derevensky et al. (2004) reports that, “45% of pathological gamblers committed crimes solely for the purpose of financing their gambling” (113). Furthermore, “For incarcerated adults, 97% of the pathological gamblers reported committing illegal acts to finance gambling-related debts” (ibid., 114). Additionally, the authors remark that, “Prevalence rates for adults who report committing an illegal act to finance their gambling generally fall between 65-89%” (ibid., 113).

According to the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, the state has "between 85,000 and 185,000 residents of the state likely have experienced 'disorderly gambling' during their lives" (Van Voorhis, 2013). The Commonwealth may soon face a spike in these numbers, as the National Gambling Impact Study Commission "estimated that the number of problem gamblers roughly doubles within 50 miles of a new casino or slot complex." This trend was "further advanced [...] when a study by John Welte of the University of Buffalo's Research Institute on Addictions found that problem gambling rates doubled again within 10 miles of a casino" (ibid.). To address problem gambling, the Gaming Commission intends to hire a "full-time staff member to coordinate problem gambling prevention and treatment efforts [...] [as well as] hire an outside research firm to [...] look at the current extent of gambling addiction and then track any potential increase as casinos open up in the state" (ibid.).

According to the New England Center for Investigative Reporting, "Massachusetts has axed \$560,000 from this fiscal year's budget for the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, the state's main prevention and treatment program" (Van Voorhis, 2013). Expressing her concern over this cut and the approaching rollout of casinos, Marlene Warner, the Council's Executive Director said, "we would like to have some time to better prepare for this fairly inadequate treatment system" (ibid.). The lack of preparation may be evidenced by the absence of "in-patient, detox-style treatment programs," and the limited outpatient counseling (ibid.).

#### *Gambling Effects on Youth*

Youth gambling is also a serious issue that must be addressed, as there is "ample research to suggest that gambling begins early and that adolescents engage in most forms of non-regulated gambling [...] and as a group, adolescents may be particularly susceptible to gambling-related problems" (Derevensky et al., 2004, 107). In fact, the "prevalence rates for pathological gambling amongst adolescents is higher than that reported for adults" (ibid., 108). This is evident in Louisiana, where, "although the 18-20 year old age group only comprised 8.2% of the adult population, [...] it represented almost three times (22.5%) the percentage of adults with significant gambling disorders" (ibid., 111). Moreover, "Prevalence rates of problem gambling were found to increase dramatically for incarcerated adolescents, with 21% of these youth being identified as a problem gambler and 18-38% displaying pathological gambling symptomology" (ibid., 114).

Adolescent pathological gamblers have lower self-esteem, suffer more from depression, and are at a heightened risk of suicide. Clinical evidence indicates that there are many long-term effects that are very difficult to overcome, including criminal records, dropping out of school, mental health and behavioral problems, and fractured relationships with family and friends (ibid.). To combat adolescent gambling, some states, such as Arizona and Louisiana, “have raised the minimum gambling age for casino playing from 18 to 21, primarily to be consistent with the legal age required for alcohol consumption” (ibid.). In the case of Suffolk Downs, this pathology may be more significant due to the high number of students attending colleges and universities in the Greater Boston area.

Suffolk Downs has proposed various forms of gambling, including table games and slot machines. This could be significant, as “Some forms of gambling have a particularly strong association with problem gambling, most notably those that are continuous in nature and involve an element of skill or perceived skill (e.g., electronic game machines and casino table games” (Volberg et al., 2006, 15). Nevertheless, “While the prevalence of problem gambling tends to rise when access to gambling increases, research suggests it will eventually level out, even when gambling accessibility continues to increase” (ibid., 98).

### *Gambling and Bankruptcy*

According to the US International Gambling Report (2008), gambling is the fourth leading and fastest growing cause of bankruptcy in the nation. Research conducted by the United States Department of the Treasury concluded that “individuals gambling in high-risk venues tend to have a high probability to



declare bankruptcy” (Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2010, 97), and concluded that the troubles of problem and pathological gamblers “are likely to [...] increase parallel to the availability of casinos” (ibid., 98). According to one report, an 18 percent increase in personal bankruptcies occurs in communities near casinos (SMR Research Corporation, 1997). Baton Rouge, Louisiana could be taken as an extreme case. Casinos opened there in 1994, and by 1996, bankruptcy rose by 53 percent (ibid.).

This data is supported by a study analyzing bankruptcies in eight casino communities. In their report, Nichols et al. (1999) determine that "casino gambling is associated with an increase in personal bankruptcy in seven of the eight communities [and] in five of the seven, the increase is statistically significant" (247). This leads the authors to suggest the presence of, "a positive correlation between casino gambling and consumer bankruptcy" (ibid., 259).

### *Gambling and Suicide*

The US International Gambling Report states that suicide levels are two to four times higher in gambling counties, with Las Vegas having the highest suicide rate in the country (2008). Volberg et al. (2006) also report this in their study, noting "problem gamblers are significantly more likely than [...] low-risk gamblers to have experienced symptoms of major depression at some time in their lives and within the past 12 months and to have ever contemplated or attempted suicide" (82). This is not a new notion, as Phillips and Smith posited in 1997 that residents and visitors of Las Vegas, Reno and Atlantic City have higher rates of suicide than their counterparts in nongaming areas. Furthermore, they state

"gambling or some factor closely associated with gambling settings is linked to elevated suicide levels" (Phillips and Smith, 1997).

Using the same methodology adopted by Phillips and Smith (1997), a report prepared for the American Gaming Association by McCleary and Chew (1998) found different results. They claim that "The risk of suicide for gaming area residents is no higher than the risk faced by residents of nongaming areas [...] [and] when gambling was legalized [...], resident suicide rates did not rise by more than they would be expected of chance alone" (1).

#### *Treatment and Countermeasures*

It is commonly agreed that the casino industry should contribute funds for the treatment of compulsive gamblers. According to Singleton (2008), "Research has established that compulsive gambling is a public health issue that requires a comprehensive, cohesive, and standardized legislative and regulatory framework based on public health principles" (53). This has been acknowledged by states throughout the country where casinos have been legalized. Many states have a policy whereby an individual can place him or herself on a no-gambling list, thus barring them from entry into casinos within that state. State legislators of the Commonwealth have committed that Massachusetts "will lead the nation, by having the most intensive, aggressive and successful prevention and treatment programs for problem gamblers" (Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth, 2010). The legislation passed in Massachusetts goes further, allowing any close friend or family member to place an individual on the no-gambling list. Once on

the list, these persons are eligible for addiction treatment services, a cost borne by the casino industry (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2011).

The Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth notes that, “Massachusetts casinos will generate the revenues necessary to provide aggressive problem gaming prevention and treatment programs in the Commonwealth” (2010). They claim that the one to two percent of Bay State residents who are already problem gamblers, spending their money on lottery tickets and Keno, will now have access to addiction treatment services through the casinos that was not previously available (ibid.). In fact, according to state legislation, \$5 million will be annually assessed in proportionate shares on all gaming licenses to fund compulsive gambling programs (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2011). Furthermore, all applicants for a gaming license must agree to provide complimentary on-site space for a counseling service center and visibly display information on problem gambling, how to access assistance and how to add one’s name to the list of excluded people (ibid.).

#### *Impact on Traffic*

Any casino development will impact resident quality of life through increased traffic and congestion. In the case of Suffolk Downs, a Boston Globe article notes that traffic mitigation will be key in impact talks. Suffolk Downs sits on Route 1A, known locally as McClellan Highway, “one of the region’s most congested arteries”, and is near Route 16, another traffic bottleneck (McCabe, 2013). As a lifelong resident of East Boston, I can personally attest to the dense traffic load that already exists in the area, due in large part to limited lanes on

thoroughfares and large commercial trucks that service the industrial sectors of surrounding cities and towns. A casino at Suffolk Downs is estimated to “generate about 10,000 car trips on weekdays and up to 15,000 trips on a Saturday [...] [and] 55 percent of the casino’s traffic would come on Friday, Saturday and Sunday,” further congesting Route 1A, which already “carries about 60,000 cars a day past the main entrance to Suffolk Downs” (Arsenault, 2012). Conversely, a preliminary estimate offered by the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office projects a traffic increase of 24,600 vehicle trips per day, bringing the daily total to 40,500 trips per day, versus the existing 15,900 (Buckley, 2013).

To counter the additional traffic Suffolk Downs has proposed a \$40 million transportation plan aimed at directing the flow onto regional highway systems and off local roads. Plans call for the construction of a flyover/overpass “at Boardman Street on Route 1A in East Boston, an access lane on Route 1A, and ramp improvements made to Route 16” (McCabe, 2013). However, these regional highways are the same roads that already experience some of the highest traffic congestion in the North Shore and residents are skeptical that the proposed traffic mitigation plans will be sufficient to truly alleviate the inundation of vehicular congestion in and around the area.

Moreover, in 2009, an independent study commissioned by East Boston Senator Anthony Petruccelli and completed by local transportation expert and former Commissioner of the Boston Transportation Department John Vitagliano, indicated that whether a casino is built at Suffolk Downs or not, the “costs to improve the infrastructure along the Route 1A corridor from the Sumner/Callahan

Tunnels to Copeland Circle in Revere would cost the state almost \$500 million” (Lynds, 2010). This is in large part due to Revere’s Belle/Mahoney Circle, a mere 364 feet away from Suffolk Downs, which “was the scene of 288 accidents between 1999-2001, according to Revere Police records” (Vollmer Associates, 2002, 3).

In fact, since 1993 when it was ranked second in the Statewide Top 1000 High Accident Frequency Locations, the rotary has “retained its ranking between the top 10 accident locations in the state” (ibid.). The estimated cost of fixing Belle/Mahoney Circle by itself was between \$29.7 and \$33.1 million in 2002 (ibid., 21). While it is unreasonable to expect Suffolk Downs to pay for the entire cost of the Route 1A redesign, a true solution cannot be achieved with the \$40 million Suffolk Downs has committed to transportation infrastructure improvements.

Former Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and East Boston native James Aloisi points out the complexity of the transportation issue in an article discussing the potential casino development at Suffolk Downs. He starts by noting that, “\$40 million in road and infrastructure improvements [...] are likely more talking points than reflective of any serious plan” (2012). Secretary Aloisi defines the idea of a ‘fly-over’ on Route 1A as, “an old and very bad idea – an eyesore, and a band-aid that will not solve the current congestion on Route 1A from the airport to Bell Circle in Revere” (ibid.). Instead, Aloisi proposes an increased development of the public transportation network, including an expansion of the MBTA bus network, the extension of the Blue Line to Lynn and its connection to

the Red Line, accompanied by the introduction of user fees for all vehicles entering the Suffolk Downs complex to offset the early and continuing costs of transit and roadway improvements and maintenance. Additionally, he urges the use of both a parking cap that would limit the spillover effect and the outfitting of electric vehicle charging stations to encourage alternative modes of transportation. In the final analysis of “what is necessary to make this site a success”, a “Re-design and reconstruct[ion] [of] Route 1A from Logan Airport to Bell Circle” is critically needed to truly alleviate congestion (ibid).

#### *Impact on Environment*

Considering the acreage (over 160 ac.) of the proposed casino and its potential effects on vegetated wetlands and riverine systems, a preliminary environmental assessment, known as an Environmental Notification Form (ENF), has been submitted by Suffolk Downs and reviewed by the MEPA Office (Buckley, 2013). According to the ENF, the project at Suffolk Downs would affect 480,000 square feet of wetlands and 40,000 square feet of riverfront area, while the height of new structures would reach 166 feet (ibid.).

During the public commenting phase of the ENF, which ended on March 26, 2013, the local elected officials expressed a number of important concerns. State Senator Anthony Petrucci, State Representative Carlo Basile and City Councilor Sal LaMattina wrote a joint letter calling for a more detailed analysis of the traffic impact on the community. More specifically, they asked for data on projected weekday and evening commutes for residents, a "three-dimensional or digital model depicting the proposed [traffic] improvements" (Petrucci, Basile

and LaMattina, 2013). Furthermore, the elected officials requested a detailed shadow analysis for the neighborhoods surrounding the proposed development.

Mayor Menino's Host Community Advisory Committee (HCAC) also submitted comments on the ENF. Elizabeth Dello Russo, Executive Director of the HCAC, suggested "recommendations to protect the community from any potential [traffic] impact" (Dello Russo, 2013). In addition, the City sought a:

detailed analysis of vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and boat access connections to the site; an analysis on the MBTA, including availability of service and station improvements; an overall comprehensive parking study; and a detailed construction management and demand management plan. (ibid.)

Regarding the environment, Dello Russo made the following requests on behalf of the City of Boston:

detailed consideration of energy and water conservation and alternative energy measures; use of sustainable building materials; details evaluation of local and regional air quality impacts, and information on soil and hazardous materials; information on stormwater management, sea level rise, and storm surge preparedness. (ibid.)

To address some of the environmental concerns, Suffolk Downs has proposed a resort-style casino that would be the greenest in the nation. In addition to a reduction of pavement by 30 percent, impervious surfaces would be transformed to natural landscape (ibid.). Furthermore, the proposed plans calls for Suffolk Downs to "develop an innovate green infrastructure and pursue sustainable systems by using the landscape for purifying storm water, improving soil, providing opportunities for environmental education and create aesthetic experience" (Lynds, 2013). The landscaping plans would also include the creation of an accessible marsh ecology that is consistent with the natural environment, that will "connect the resort landscape with the overall Greenway

system in Eastie," and that can serve as an "amenity and educational component for the community" (ibid.).

### *Emergency Preparedness*

Since September 11, 2001, and more recently Hurricane Sandy, emergency preparedness has emerged as an important element to be considered in planning and public policy making. Given the scope of a development like Suffolk Downs, security and emergency preparedness are particularly relevant for East Boston. The City of Boston is on the forefront of this trend, having recently received full accreditation from the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) for its Emergency Management Program, one of four cities to be accredited nationwide, based on meeting national standards for disaster preparedness and response (Mayor's Press Office, 2012<sup>b</sup>).

Boston's emergency plans include Alert Boston, an emergency notification system using phone, email and text messages to inform residents in case of emergency alerts, and Ready Boston, a community preparedness initiative to educate and inform residents on the hazards and emergencies that might arise. Furthermore, the City has a plethora of online resources that guide residents in emergency situations according to Homeland Security guidelines. Such materials include instructions to prepare evacuation plans and survival kits (City of Boston, 2013<sup>c</sup>). Additionally, in 2011 the City's Office of Emergency Management organized a citywide exercise named Urban Shield, "designed to assess [...] the [...] effectiveness and efficacy of capabilities, [...] regional policies, plans, procedures and protocols" (Local Emergency Planning Committee, 2011). That



exercise dealt with the regional response to a variety of potential terrorist and environmental threats.

For any development of the size and importance proposed at Suffolk Downs, a foremost consideration must be evacuation and emergency preparedness. The City of Boston has long prepared an evacuation plan that has assessed and established the types of warnings, orders and routes to follow. Appropriate signage has been posted throughout the city and the populous has a general idea of the main routes of evacuation. East Boston fully shows the fundamental weakness of such plans. While part of the South Boston and Downtown population would have to use bridges and tunnels to leave the area, East Boston residents and evacuees alike will be funneled along two relatively narrow corridors – Bennington Street and Route 1A. Both of these routes converge into Revere, at which point evacuation signage and planning seems to stop.

To this effect, it is interesting to verify the data published by the City of Revere. The only reference found online refers to an evacuation and disaster plan that is presented as comprehensive, albeit it consists of appointing the fire chief as emergency management director (City of Revere, 2012). Other than this, Revere's evacuation plans are lacking in detail. Such a lack is particularly significant in view of a proposed plan by Global Oil to transport "1.7 million gallons of ethanol every three to five days in 60-car trains" to Revere (Conti, 2012). If an ethanol train were to derail, as was the case in Ohio in 2012, a one-mile radius area would need to be evacuated and the subsequent blast and/or fire could not be doused or

contained without special equipment and alcohol-resistant foam (The Associated Press, 2012; Conti, 2012).

The arrival of a casino to Suffolk Downs clearly complicates the picture if a disaster occurs, as East Boston and Revere would experience the additional flux of vehicles and pedestrians frantically looking for a way out. There is no indication that such a scenario has been contemplated and appropriate measures studied, as evidenced by the confusion currently existing in M.G.L c. 25K § 25(j) about “who can order an evacuation of the gaming establishment due to emergency circumstances” (Massachusetts Gaming Commission, 2012, 169).

In order to get a full picture of the possible impact of an emergency evacuation of East Boston, the worst-case scenario must be considered. It includes some 50,000 residents of East Boston, an unknown number of passengers and personnel at Logan Airport, up to 10,000 attendees at an event at the Suffolk Downs entertainment center and an unknown number of guests at the resort casino itself (including those in hotels, restaurants, shops, gaming facilities, etc.). The evacuation of the airport alone is already a serious consideration for East Boston. Adding an additional 10,000 visitors who could be unfamiliar with the area may lead to a fully unmanageable situation, only compounded by roads that are already heavily congested and by the fact that the evacuation routes converge at Revere Beach, a low-lying marsh area prone to flooding, particularly when faced with similar conditions to Hurricane Sandy.

This scenario does not include some 18,000 residents of Winthrop who are funneled to the same location, plus some 52,000 residents of Revere who may be

directly impacted by a larger disaster. The relevance of this issue is such that it is imperative for Suffolk Downs and the cities of Boston and Revere to work together in addressing plans of emergency preparedness, conducting evacuation drills at the resort-casino similar to those routinely performed at Logan Airport.

### *Impact on Crime*

Increased crime is one of the elements most discussed in the literature on casinos and their impact. A U.S. News & World Report analysis found “crime rates in casino communities to be 84 percent higher than the national average. Further, while crime rates nationally dropped by 2 percent in 1994, the 31 localities that introduced casinos in 1993 saw an increase in crime of 7.7 percent the following year” (Shapiro, 1996). Moreover, one comprehensive study that measured crime rates across many host communities in the country reveals a time lag between the opening of casinos and a marked crime rate increase. After five to seven years of relative stability, both violent and nonviolent crime rates soar, increasing by 22-114 percent (Grinols, et al., 2000). Overall, “the American Insurance Institute estimates that 40 percent of white collar crime” is committed by gambling addicts, and “problem gamblers are responsible for an estimated \$1.3 billion worth of insurance-related fraud per year” (Florida Governor's Office, 1994).

Many case studies postulate the link between increased crime and casinos. For example, “in the first six years of casinos in Minnesota, the crime rate in counties with casinos increased more than twice as fast as in non-casino counties. [...] The median crime rate in casino counties rose 39 percent during that period

as compared to an 18 percent increase in non-casino counties” (McGrath and Ison, 1995). Atlantic City, New Jersey is another prime example, where “the total number of crimes within a 30-mile radius of [...] [the city] increased by 107 percent in the nine years following the introduction of casinos” (Buck et al., 1991). In fact, “In just three years following the opening of its first casino, Atlantic City went from 50th in the nation in per capita crime to first (Florida Governor's Office, 1994).

Yet another example is offered by the Mississippi Gulf Coast, which “experienced a 43 percent increase in crime in the four years after casinos arrived” (Mississippi Coast Crime Commission). This same report found that “Harrison County, where most of the Gulf Coast casinos are located, witnessed a 58 percent increase in total crimes” in the years following the casinos (ibid.). Furthermore, the number of court cases filed in Tunica County, Mississippi (a host county of casinos), “went from 689 in the 1999 National Gambling Impact Study Commission Report, the year before casinos began operating there, to 11,100 in 1996” (Sullivan, 1997). Further north, in Ledyard, Connecticut, home to Foxwoods Casino, the annual number of calls to the local police department “jumped from 4,000 to 16,700 within five years after” the opening of the casino (Johnson, 1997).

Researchers have also analyzed the link between increased crime and casinos. Dr. John Kindt, Professor of Business and Legal Policy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, reports that, “1.5 million people or 0.5 percent of the U.S. population became new criminals from 1994 to 1997 as a direct

correlation to states' government-sponsored legalized gambling. The cost for this rise in crime ranged from \$12 billion to \$15 billion" (Kindt, 2001). Researchers at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas concluded, "the state of Wisconsin experiences an average of 5,300 additional major crimes a year due to the presence of casinos in that state" (Thompson et al., 1996). They also attributed an "additional 17,100 arrests for less-serious crimes each year to the existence of casino gambling" in the state (ibid.).

In San Jose, California, the local police department reported significant increases in crime in the year after the opening of a new card room. In fact, "Narcotics offenses increased by 200 percent, property crimes by 83 percent, petty thefts by 56 percent, auto thefts by 21 percent, and traffic accidents by 55 percent in a single year" (Cobarruviaz, 1995). Similar stories are echoed across the country. In Black Hawk, Colorado, "the number of police calls [...] increased from 25 a year before casinos to between 15,000 and 20,000 annually after their introduction" (Curran, 1995). In neighboring Central City, Colorado, "the number of arrests increased by 275 percent" the year after casinos arrived (ibid.). In Cripple Creek, Colorado, "serious crime increased by 287 percent in the first three years" after casinos (ibid). In Lawrence county, South Dakota the "annual number of felony cases has increased by approximately 69 percent" since the introduction of casinos (Eighth Circuit Court of South Dakota, 1997). In the same area of South Dakota, "child abuse cases increased by 42 percent and domestic violence by 80 percent" after two years of casino gambling.

The statistics are most telling when analyzing Nevada, the bastion of casinos in the United States. As evinced from an analysis of the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Uniform Crime Report statistics, “Nevada ranked first in crime rates among fifty states in both 1995 and 1996 [...] Further, the violent crime rate in Nevada increased by close to 40 percent from 1991 to 1996, a period in which the national violent crime rate dropped by approximately 10 percent” (Koch, 1997).

Not all agree about the correlation between casinos and crime, however. The Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth, a prominent vocal supporter of expanded gaming in the Bay State, claims that although “any community hosting a casino, mall or neighborhood shopping area will, on any given day, experience some incidental crime [...] crime is not endemic to a casino, any more than it is due to a mall or neighborhood shopping area” (2010). The Coalition believes that if there exists a commitment to vigilance and responsiveness in aggressive prevention, host locations will not see a significant rise in crime. By working with “local law enforcement, citizens and neighborhood groups and businesses, the [...] [host location] can maintain a strong, secure community every day of the year” (ibid.).

### *Impact on Jobs*

A chorus of political figures across Massachusetts comment that the expanded gaming bill is really a jobs bill, echoing the gaming industry and its claim of one million jobs created nationwide (American Gaming Association, 2013). Casinos will employ people in a variety of roles, from thousands of

temporary construction jobs, to thousands of permanent jobs at casinos and in the food, beverage and hospitality industries. According to the Massachusetts Coalition for Jobs and Growth, the Bay State needs expanded gaming to pass because it will “create construction and permanent jobs, generate much needed revenue, bring our dollars home, expand tourism, convention business, and create economic activity” (2010).

Studies estimate that casinos will bring “between 17,000 and 21,000 [jobs] based on a mid-point estimate of \$2.15 billion in gaming revenues” (Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, 2010, 7). The Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth estimates that in addition to thousands of temporary construction jobs, over 15,000 resort casino jobs, and several thousand new jobs within the state’s tourism and hospitality sectors will be available for Bay State residents, contributing to lower the state’s unemployment rate (2010). Massachusetts’ New England neighbors exemplify the impact casinos can have on local employment. Southeastern Connecticut, also known as Greater New London (which houses both Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun), boasted the state’s lowest unemployment rate since the recession began (*ibid.*).

A report prepared by The Innovation Group for the Massachusetts Senate forecasts that in addition to the high number of construction jobs (estimates range from 6,000 to 8,500) that would be generated from expanded gaming in the Commonwealth, another 9,500 to 15,000 permanent jobs will be created over the next 5 years (2010). Some of these permanent jobs will be added to the public sector as well. According to the 2012 Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Strategic Plan, by 2016 there will be 179 full-time commission employees, including State Police and Attorney General's Office staff (48). The Innovation Group report also indicates that many "indirect jobs are created as a result of direct spending by the casinos and employees of those casinos in local municipalities and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" (2010). They estimate that indirect job creation will range from 5,000 to 7,500, bringing the total job growth relative to expanded gaming for the state between 14,500 and 23,000 (ibid.). These are significant numbers that would undoubtedly lower the unemployment rate in Massachusetts.

A report completed by the Marlene Kim et al. of the Labor Resource Center of the University of Massachusetts Boston (2009) highlights the benefits of employment in the casino industry, stating that:

Among workers without a college education, gaming workers in casino hotels enjoy higher pay and more generous benefits than workers in non-gaming jobs. Gaming workers in casino hotels are more likely to receive employer-provided health insurance than non-gaming workers, especially health insurance plans in which employers pay for part or all of the health care premium. They are also more likely to be included in an employer's pension or retirement plan. Poverty among gaming casino hotel workers and their families is practically non-existent as none of these workers or families live below, and very few live near, the poverty line. (iv)

This study notes that those without a college degree working in the casino industry earn more than their counterparts without college degrees working outside of the casino industry. In fact, this study found that "the casino industry – particularly the unionized sector of the casino hotel industry – can provide good jobs with good wages and benefits for the parts of the workforce that are often neglected, namely those without college degrees, women and people of color



(ibid., v). For a state like Massachusetts, in which two-thirds of adults have less than a Bachelor's degree and 20 percent have less than a high school diploma, casino jobs could be particularly appealing (ibid.)

This is echoed by the American Gaming Association, which in a 2007 white paper titled "A Survey of Attitudes of Casino Industry Employees" points out that, "more than 85 percent of the nation's gaming employees find their jobs satisfying," and two-thirds of employees "have access to better healthcare since they began working in the casino gaming industry" (American Gaming Association, 2013). Almost half of the responding employees believe that they will be working in the same industry for the next decade. Their median tenure on the job is seven years and 42 percent of them have over ten years of seniority, while 30 percent have been with the same outfit for over a decade (ibid.). Equally important, in 2007 casinos employed a "greater percentage of Black, Hispanic and Asian workers than the U.S. workforce. Overall, participating casinos employed more minorities than the national U.S. workforce by 20.6 percent" (ibid.). Furthermore, compared to other businesses in the arts, entertainment, food services and hospitality industries, casinos employ 9.9 percent more minority workers (ibid.).

According to Hashimoto and Fenich (2003) the introduction of casinos does in fact boost employment in host locales. After legalizing gaming in Mississippi, several counties showed substantial increases in employment. In Tunica County, "employment saw a 9% growth rate" (105); in Warren County, in the four year period after gaming began, "employment rose substantially for a

gain of 34%” (106); in Washington County, “there was an 18% gain in the number of people employed” (ibid.); and in Harrison County, in the four years after gaming began, “employment rose significantly, up 23%” (107). Research on Detroit casinos produced similar results. Waddel and Russell (2002) point out that in the five years following the passage of Michigan’s expanded gaming legislation, “Thousands of jobs (in both the private sector and public sector) have been created as a result of Detroit casinos” (178).

This conclusion is supported by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences which stated in 1999, “Gambling appears to have net economic benefits for economically depressed communities,” as well as by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, which said “Those communities closest to casinos experienced a 12% to 17% drop in welfare payments, unemployment rates and unemployment insurance” (American Gaming Association, 2013). The job growth argument is best summarized by Richard Fields, principal owner of Suffolk Downs, who emphasized, “This is an economic development initiative that will set the standard for gaming development in Massachusetts and will create thousands of new jobs with real career paths and room for advancement” (The Associated Press, 2103). Suffolk Downs predicts a casino development in East Boston would “generate 2,500 construction jobs and more than 4,000 resort jobs for local residents” (Suffolk Downs, 2012). The construction jobs will last through the expected three to four year construction cycle and the permanent jobs will be unionized positions (ibid.) The resort hiring process will lead to a diversified workforce covering “39 job categories including

hotel/resort personnel, facility employees, food and beverage, gaming and management and operational areas” (Tuttle, 2012). These jobs will have an “average annual salary of \$42,000, along with benefits and opportunities for career advancement” (ibid.).

While much less data exists establishing a negative correlation between casinos and jobs, there are some scholars who argue that casinos can lead to job loss. Thus, Dr. John Kindt, Professor of Business and Legal Policy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, claims that each new slot machine eliminates one to two jobs per year because every machine extracts over \$100,000 annually from the consumer economy (2009). If true, this could have a significant impact on East Boston, as the casino proposal of Suffolk Downs calls for 4,000-5,000 slot machines (Suffolk Downs, 2013).

#### *State Benefits*

Some economists see casinos as failing ventures for states, due to unplanned correlative costs of housing the gambling facilities. According to Thompson (1998), casino economies:

Lose money due to the costs of government services not directly offset by casino contributions: extra police protection outside the casino, better roads to the casino, traffic control in the casino area. The casino may also attract or motivate criminal activity, resulting in increased police and judicial system costs, as well as the personal costs of victimization and rising insurance premiums for those living near the casino. Additionally, the presence of casinos will likely be associated with some increases in pathological gambling behaviors, and these result in extra costs for the economy of the casino area. (343)

Robert Goodman, an emeritus professor from Hampshire College also thinks casinos are a drain on public funds, claiming that “Indiana has been paying \$60

million per year to subsidize the racing industry and New Jersey gave \$261 million in tax breaks to an Atlantic City casino developer” (Metzger, 2012). However, the widely held belief is that casinos do in fact aid state and local economies.

As Modisett (2002) wrote, “Tax revenues in Indiana from gambling quickly exceeded all expectations [...] [and] Indiana’s government is definitely profiting” from casinos (199). Casinos in Detroit have been used as an economic revitalization tool. Waddell and Russell (2002) contribute in turn that, as a result of casinos, “the City of Detroit received nearly \$100 million in wagering taxes and the State of Michigan’s School Aid Fund received \$80 million” (178). Additionally, the Detroit casinos helped boost local tourism. In a survey conducted at Detroit’s Metro Airport, “Sixty percent of those surveyed stated that the primary reason for traveling to Detroit was to visit one of the Detroit casinos” (ibid.).

According to the American Gaming Association, opening a casino is a true cornucopia. In 2011, fifteen states saw increased gross gaming revenue, and the largest increases occurred in states in which new casinos completed their first year of operation. Maryland topped the list with an increase of 464.2 percent, followed by Kansas, 28.3 percent, and New York, 15.63 percent (American Gaming Association, 2012, 2). A public opinion polling commissioned by the American Gaming Association and conducted by VP Communications, Inc., in conjunction with national pollster Peter D. Hart, interviewed:

210 elected officials and civic leaders from casino counties in commercial casino states, excluding Nevada. [...] According to the surveyed community leaders, casinos have more than delivered on their promises of jobs, economic development and tax revenues, and those benefits can be felt throughout their communities. [...] 83 percent [...] says that the overall impact of casinos has been positive. Additionally, more than [...] 76 percent of community leaders say that casinos have done more to help than hurt other area businesses, and [...] 74 percent of those responding think that casinos are good corporate citizens. (ibid., 3)

Through expanded gaming, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts seeks to retain the estimated \$4 billion in gaming revenue streams that its citizens now funnel into neighboring New England states, mainly Connecticut and Rhode Island (Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth, 2010). The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce agrees with the Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth, but limits the out of state spending estimates to \$800 million (2010, 3). The estimates vary, but for example, a University of Massachusetts Dartmouth study found that in 2008, “Massachusetts residents spent approximately \$709 million at Connecticut’s two casinos” (Barrow, 2009, 30). The same study notes, “Massachusetts residents contributed \$93.1 million to the Connecticut state treasury as a result of its citizens’ gaming activity in the state” (ibid., 31), and “\$117.4 million to the Rhode Island state treasury” (ibid., 32). Almost another million dollars of Massachusetts income enriches the treasury coffers of New Hampshire and Maine (ibid., 33).

In their 2010 commissioned study on expanded gaming prepared for the Massachusetts Senate, The Innovation Group forecasts that casinos in the Bay State would generate between \$1.21 and \$1.86 billion in gross revenue. This would represent a recapture of between 60 and 96.8 percent of revenue that

Massachusetts residents would have contributed to casino gaming facilities in surrounding states, particularly Connecticut and Rhode Island. Furthermore, the Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth estimates that an additional \$300-\$500 million more in nongaming spending will be generated as a result of resort casinos (2010). They further posit that with resort casinos, Massachusetts will face a fiscal and economic resurgence, with more than \$400 million annually in new tax revenue for the state and its municipalities (ibid.).

The expanded gaming legislation outlines some fiscal components in regards to the casinos. The Commonwealth will immediately benefit, as each casino license applicant must pay a non-refundable fee of \$400,000. Once licenses are awarded, each of the three potential resort casinos will be required to pay a one time licensing fee of no less than \$85 million (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2011). Moreover, these casinos will be taxed at a rate of 25 percent of gross gaming revenue, while the slots parlor will be taxed at 49 percent (ibid.). For example, Suffolk Downs estimates that the Commonwealth will receive \$200 million annually in new state tax revenue (Suffolk Downs, 2012).

These moneys will benefit the state in many ways. From the total of the licensing fees, 10% will be for community mitigation, 14.5% for transportation infrastructure, 11% for local capital projects, 15.5% for manufacturing, 19.5% for community college programs, 1.5% for tourism, 23% for healthcare payment reform, and 5% for local aid stabilization (ibid.). From the competitively bid slots parlor, 100% of the tax revenue will be for local aid (ibid.). From the resort casino tax revenue, 25% will be for local aid, 10% for the state's Rainy Day Fund

(except if there is a deficiency in local aid), 14% for education, 2% for local capital projects, 6.5% for community mitigation, 2% for the Massachusetts Cultural Council (0.75% for competitive grant program to non-profit community performing art centers), 0.5% for tourism, 10% for state debt reduction, 15% for transportation infrastructure, and 5% for public health (ibid.).

The expanded gaming legislation also contains a community mitigation provision funded by the operators under the monitoring of the Commonwealth. Casino developers must negotiate impact agreements with the host community and any surrounding communities that will be affected by the operation of the gaming establishment (ibid.).

## **DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

The literature on casinos points to one fundamental conclusion, casinos certainly have impacts. Their quantification and cost analysis present particular challenges due to the wide variety of methodologies applied in deriving figures. Additionally, the hybrid nature of a development of Suffolk Downs, close to a city, but not within its immediate center makes projections more difficult still. Therefore, any estimate should be viewed with caution since it may be unreliable, especially because there is the danger of comparing different time frames and different coexisting factors. Nevertheless, the utility of a reviewing exercise is to establish a range of ascertained phenomena that could be relevant to the specificity of Suffolk Downs and its surrounding environment. In other terms, the literature offers the opportunity to extrapolate and establish likely trends.

### *Statistical Analysis*

To this effect, I analyzed the correlation between crime and casinos through my own data analysis using Stata statistical software. The data I used comes from the “Gambling Impact and Behavior Study, 1997-1999”, part of the National Gambling Impact Study Commission, conducted by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). The study covers a range of issues related to gambling, which were split into two categories: the economic conditions (i.e. employment patterns, unemployment rates, personal income, government expenditures, etc.) and the social conditions (i.e. crimes, suicides, divorces, births, etc.). Specifically, the study was designed to determine the



effects of gambling facilities on the economic and social conditions mentioned above.

For this study, 100 communities were selected at random among “designated places” as defined by the United States Census Bureau, with 10,000 or more inhabitants. This community database was stratified by distance to a major casino and presence of legal gambling. For the purposes of my analyses, I focused on analyzing the social implications of gambling related crime, in an effort to statistically prove the correlation discussed by the experts in the field.

To address my hypothesis, I analyzed several variables. The dichotomous variable *CASIND* refers to the availability of casinos within 50 miles (respondents answered yes or no), and helped me establish distance relative to an operating gaming facility. The other variables were continuous and place-specific, and were the following: *POP1990* – reported population count; *CASSPEND* – reported per capita casino spending; *newcrime* – reported crime rate; *jobs* – reported employment rate; *income* – reported personal income rate; *welfare* – reported rate of welfare recipients; and *bankruptcy* – rate of bankruptcy. I chose these variables based on the literature review and because I thought they represent community characteristics that would serve as good control variables when analyzing the relationship between crime and casinos. The crime data are from FBI statistics from 1997-1999, while the other data was gathered from the 1990 U.S. Census and American Community Surveys from 1997-1999.

The first analysis that follows is a t-test<sup>3</sup> to determine if in fact crime is higher in locations closer to casinos. The second analysis looks at the correlation<sup>4</sup> between crime and casino spending. The final analysis is a regression<sup>5</sup> that accounts for community characteristics and controls them in an attempt to determine if they have an effect on the relationship between crime and casino spending.

### *Results*

**H<sub>0</sub>**: crime in areas near casinos (within 50 miles) is less than or equal to crime in areas far from casinos (outside of 50 miles)

**H<sub>a</sub>**: crime in areas near casinos (within 50 miles) is higher than crime in areas far from casinos (outside of 50 miles)

---

<sup>3</sup> A t-test is a statistical examination of two population means, assessing if and how two samples are statistically different from each other.

<sup>4</sup> A statistical correlation measures the degree and direction of variables to determine how well one can be predicted from the other.

<sup>5</sup> In statistics, a regression analysis attempts to determine the strength of the relationship between one dependent variable (usually denoted by Y) and a series of other changing variables (known as independent variables and denoted by X).

```
. ttest newcrime, unpaired unequal by(CASIND)
```

```
Two-sample t test with unequal variances
```

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]	
FACILITY	1181	.0591696	.000929	.031925	.0573469	.0609922
FACILITY	206	.0763418	.005968	.0856564	.0645754	.0881083
combined	1387	.06172	.0011979	.0446122	.0593702	.0640699
diff		-.0171722	.0060398		-.0290771	-.0052674

```
diff = mean(FACILITY) - mean(FACILITY)          t = -2.8432  
Ho: diff = 0          Satterthwaite's degrees of freedom = 215.033
```

```
Ha: diff < 0          Ha: diff != 0          Ha: diff > 0  
Pr(T < t) = 0.0024    Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0049    Pr(T > t) = 0.9976
```

Here, I accepted the research hypothesis with a 95% confidence level. I found that places within 50 miles of a casino facility have a higher mean in crime (.08) than places outside of 50 miles of a casino facility (.06). Moreover, this model is significant as the p-value of .0024 is less than the alpha of .05, suggesting that crime in areas near casinos is higher than crime in areas far from casinos, thus allowing me to reject the null hypothesis and accept the research hypothesis.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** crime is the same regardless of the amount of casino spending in a given area

**H<sub>a</sub>:** crime is higher in areas where casino spending is higher

```
. pwcorr newcrime CASSPEND, sig star (.05)
```

	newcrime CASSPEND	
-----+-----		
newcrime	1.0000	
CASSPEND	0.1369*	1.0000
	0.0000	

In this case I accepted the research hypothesis, because I found that there is a positive and significant correlation between casino spending and crime. It tells me that as casino spending increases, crime increases. Here there is a correlation of .14, which is a significant predictor of crime, and a p-value of 0.00, which is lower than the alpha of .05, allowing me to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis with 95% confidence.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** crime and casino spending are not related after taking into account community characteristics

**H<sub>a</sub>:** crime and casino spending are related even after taking into account community characteristics

```
. regress newcrime CASSPEND jobs income welfare bankruptcy
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs =	594
Model	.041099242	5	.008219848	F( 5, 588) =	3.78
Residual	1.27728656	588	.002172256	Prob > F	= 0.0022
				R-squared	= 0.0312
				Adj R-squared	= 0.0229
Total	1.3183858	593	.002223248	Root MSE	= .04661

newcrime	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
CASSPEND	.0000943	.0000328	2.87	0.004	.0000298 .0001588
jobs	.0009834	.0005479	1.79	0.073	-.0000927 .0020595
income	-.0000488	.000017	-2.86	0.004	-.0000822 -.0000153
welfare	.0007003	.0012676	0.55	0.581	-.0017894 .00319
bankruptcy	.0862756	.0442989	1.95	0.052	-.0007277 .1732789
_cons	.0614466	.0026159	23.49	0.000	.0563089 .0665842

According to these results, I found that regardless of community characteristics, areas with higher casino spending have higher crime. Here I accounted for several independent variables including employment rate, income rate, rate of welfare recipients, and rate of bankruptcy. Only one of these variables, income, significantly predicted crime with a p-value of .004. The other characteristics all had p-values greater than .05, meaning that they are not significant predictors, allowing me to determine with 95% confidence that regardless of community characteristics, crime is higher in areas with higher casino spending. The  $r^2$  of .03 means that 3% of the variation in crime is accounted for by the community characteristics included in the model. Thus, while the model could be improved by adding other community characteristics, it is still significant for establishing the positive relationship between casino spending and crime.

My data analyses seem to support my hypothesis, confirming that crime is higher in areas near casinos. This is supported by many experts in the field, as noted in the earlier literature review (Shapiro, 1996; Grinols, et al., 2000; Florida Governor's Office, 1994; McGrath and Ison, 1995; Buck et al., 1991; Mississippi Coast Crime Commission; Sullivan, 1997; Johnson, 1997; Kindt, 2001; Thompson et al., 1996; Cobarruviaz, 1995; Curran, 1995; Eighth Circuit Court of South Dakota, 1997; Koch, 1997; Massachusetts Coalition on Jobs and Growth, 2010).



## *Spatial Analysis*

The social and environmental costs of a casino in East Boston can be visualized through maps. Figure 1 depicts the existing amenities in the community, such as public structures, open/green space, facilities, etc. Figures 2 and 3 show variations of traffic volumes, measured in average daily vehicle trips. Figure 2 illustrates the current flows, while Figure 3 projects a conservative increase of ten percent. This estimate is lower than the figure projected by Suffolk Downs (Arsenault, 2012) and MEPA (Buckley, 2013) and is the lowest variation visually significant. Figures 4 and 5 view the small business landscape pre and post casino. Figure 4 lays out the existing distribution, while Figure 5 showcases a decrease of ten percent. This estimate is far less than the lowest end of the published range that goes from 33 to 70 percent (Hashimoto and Fenich, 2003; National Gambling Impact Study, 1999; Nieves, 1997; Goodman, 1995). Figure 6 elaborates on the dataset of the previous two figures reducing the scale to enhance visibility. These analyses are just projections and do not pretend to be representations of reality. All data sources are listed in Appendix B.

Figure 1 visually surveys the community of East Boston and its resources. The greenest section on the northeast corner is Belle Isle Marsh Reservation, the last remaining coastal wetland in the Boston area. West of Belle Isle Marsh is another swathe of land marked as green space. In reality it is the Department of Recreation and Conservation's Constitution Beach. It is a fully furnished public area that houses a lifeguard station; tennis, basketball, baseball and handball courts; an active playground; recently renovated restrooms and concession stand;

picnic areas; and is home to the Porrazzo Memorial ice rink. Figure 1 is missing one of the five fire stations in East Boston as well as the new headquarters of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center.

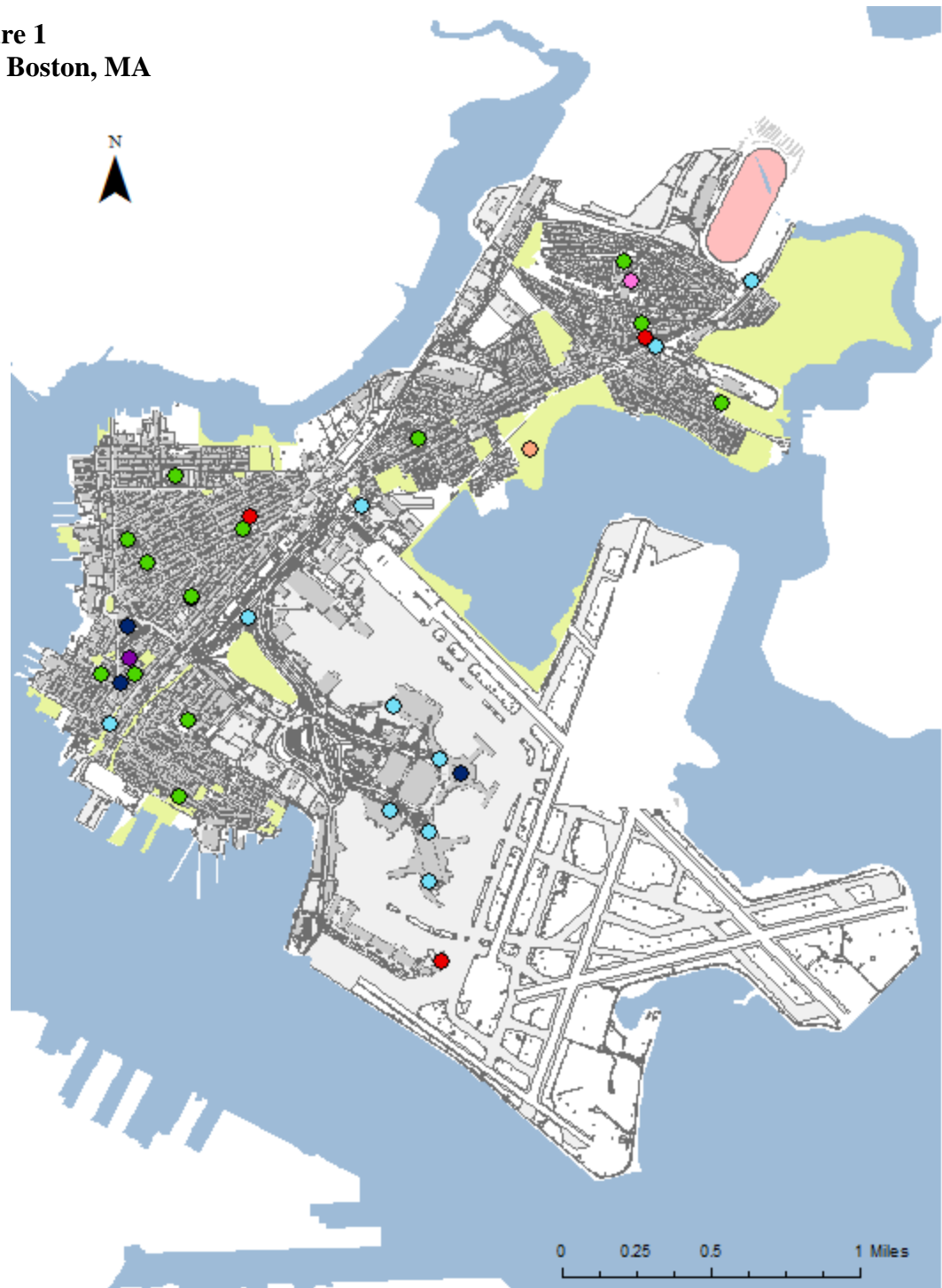
Figures 2 and 3 trace traffic volumes on five thoroughfares in East Boston, the existing and projected scenarios respectively. Figure 2 reveals the current average daily vehicle trips for the streets measured by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, which are as follows (N.B. data is not available for every street in the community): MassPike (I-90) – 66,400; McClellan Highway (Rt. 1A) – 54,010; East Boston Expressway – 36,590; Porter St. – 5,960; Saratoga St. – 5,880. If these volumes increase by ten percent due to a casino, as depicted in Figure 3, the results would be as follows: MassPike (I-90) – 73,040 (net gain of 6,640); McClellan Highway (Rt. 1A) – 59,411 (net gain of 5,401); East Boston Expressway – 40,249 (net gain of 3,659); Porter St. – 6,556 (net gain of 596); Saratoga St. – 6,468 (net gain of 588). The lack of traffic volume data of other East Boston streets is a concern, particularly because some major community thoroughfares are not included.

Figure 4 illustrates the existing 1,089 small businesses in East Boston, mostly concentrated in the four business districts: Orient Heights to the northeast, Day Square in the middle of the community, and Central and Maverick Squares to the west and southwest respectively. These businesses currently employ 11,067 people. If ten percent of small businesses closed due to the presence of a casino, as shown in Figure 5, 979 businesses would be left, employing 10,169 people. This would represent a net loss of 110 businesses and

898 jobs. Both Figures 4 and 5 include errors in the geocoded data, placing at least two businesses in the deepest section of the Boston Harbor.

Figure 6 is an attempt to avoid the visual clutter of large concentrations of small businesses such as those exhibited in Figures 4 and 5. Unlike Figure 5, which deletes the closed businesses, Figure 6 shows them in a different color in order to highlight visually. The zoomed in area represents two of the largest businesses districts in East Boston, from Central Square to the north to Maverick Square to the south. This map shows 18 of the 110 projected business closures. Again discrepancies in geocoding place a few businesses in the middle of a given street and one notably way into the harbor.

**Figure 1**  
**East Boston, MA**

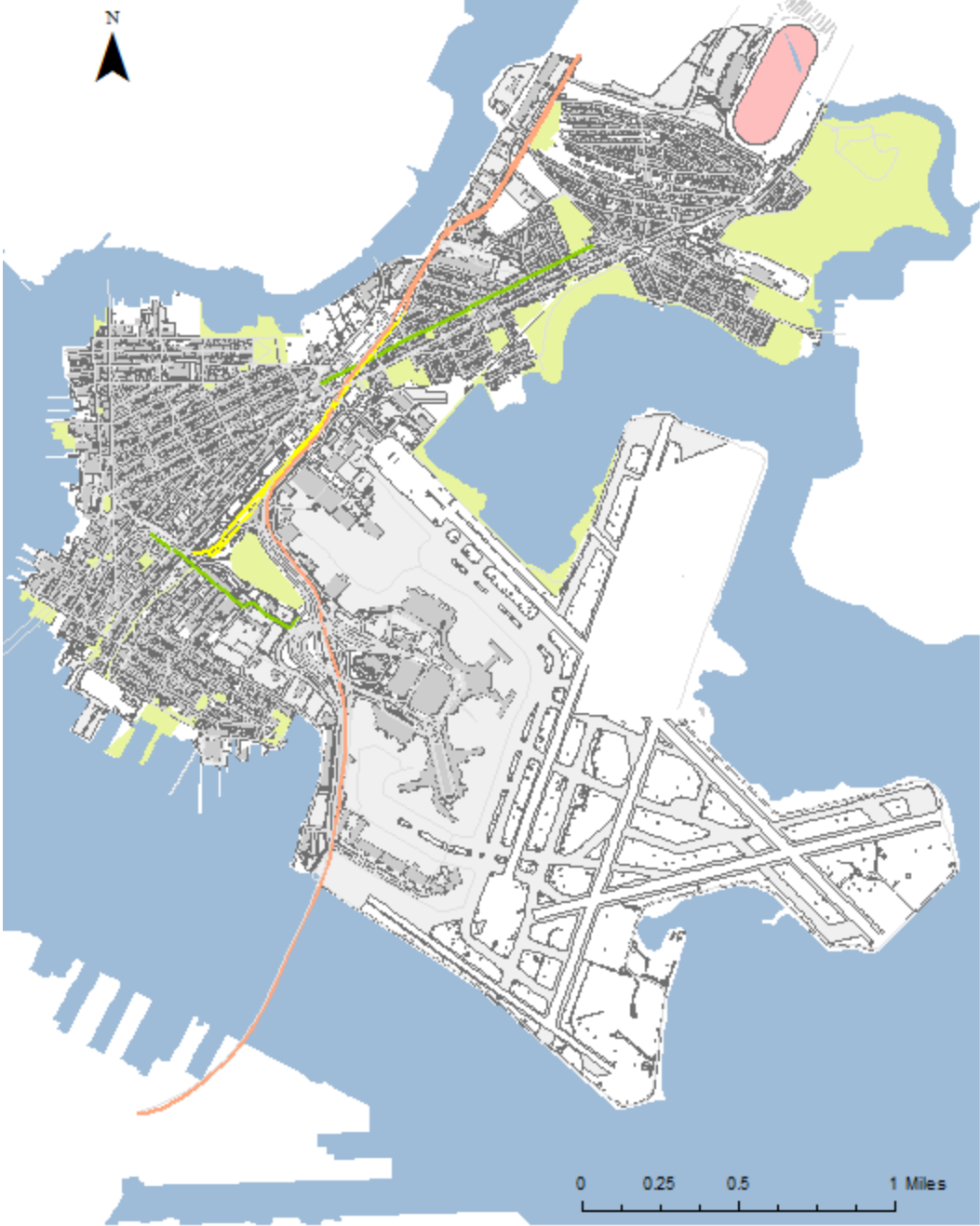


**Community Inventory**

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Nursing Home        | Community Health Center |
| Fire Stations       | Schools                 |
| Police Stations     | Water                   |
| MBTA Train Stations | Green Space             |
| DCR Ice Rink        | Suffolk Downs           |

Data Sources: See Appendix B

**Figure 2**  
**East Boston, MA**

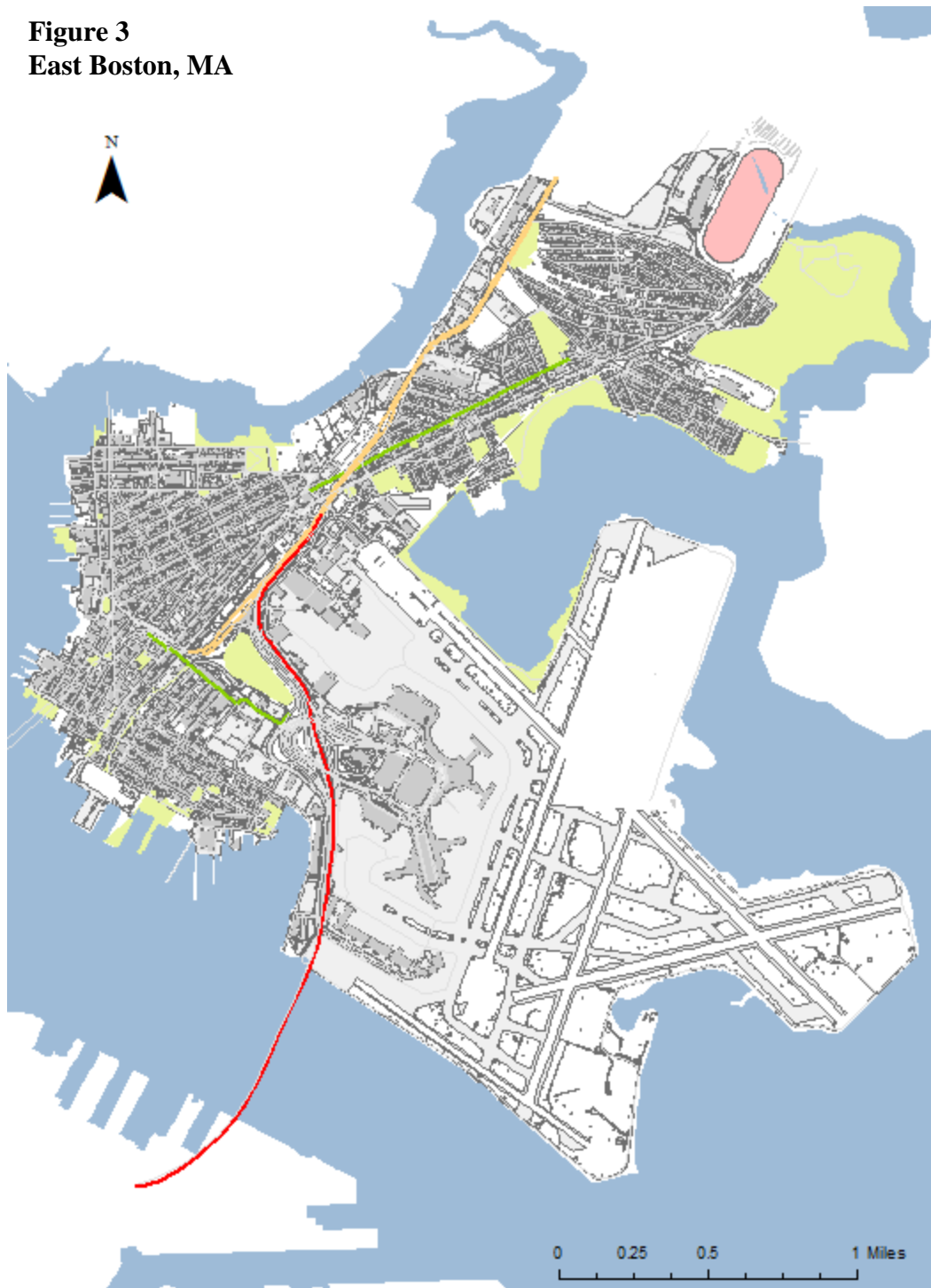


**Existing Traffic Volume**

- Average Daily Vehicle Trips**
- No Data
  - 1 - 10,000
  - 10,001 - 40,000
  - 40,001 - 70,000
  - 70,001 - 73,040
- Water
  - Green Space
  - Suffolk Downs

Data Sources: See Appendix B

**Figure 3**  
**East Boston, MA**



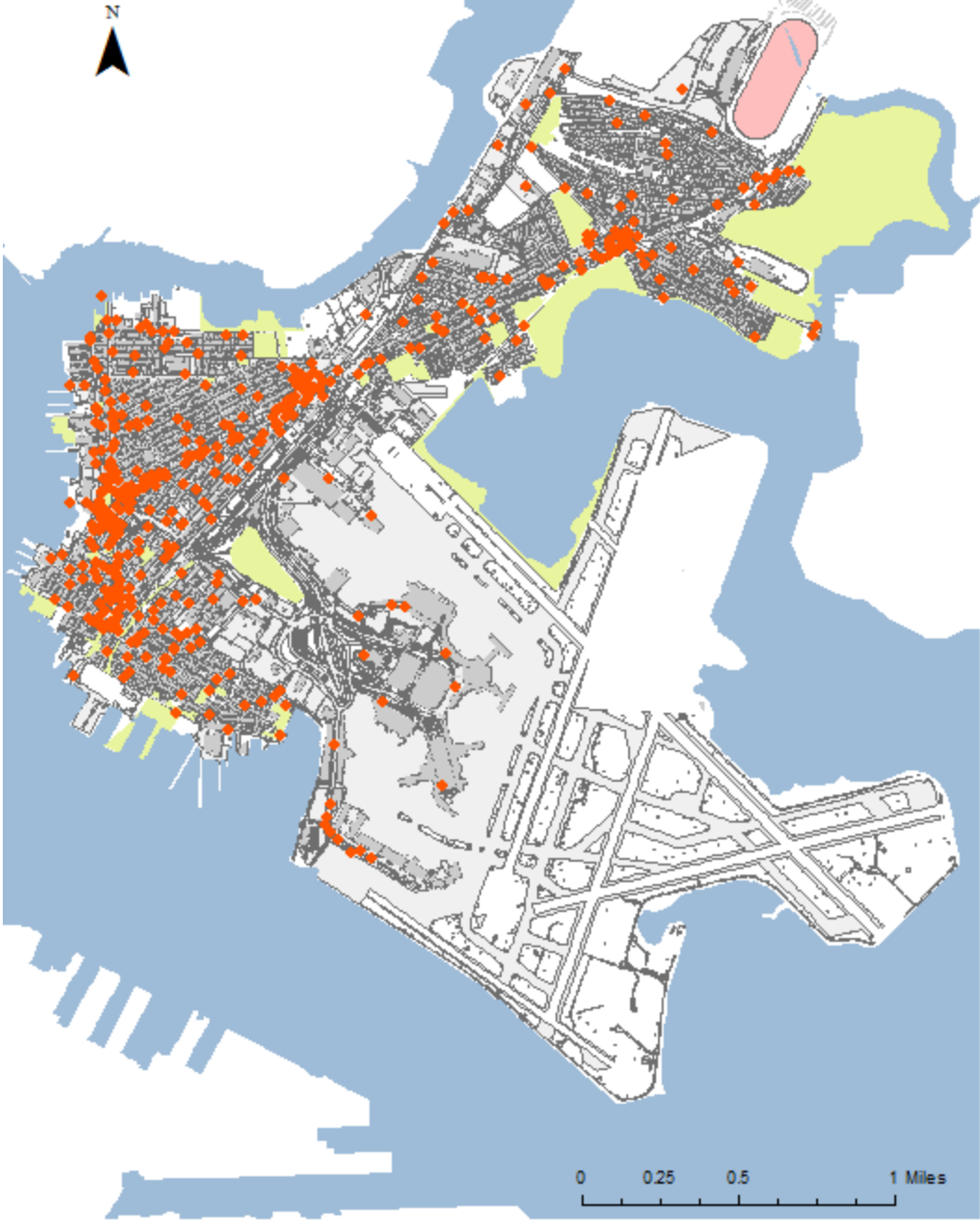
**Traffic Volume - 10% Increase**

Average Daily Vehicle Trips

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| — No Data         | Water         |
| — 1 - 10,000      | Green Space   |
| — 10,001 - 40,000 | Suffolk Downs |
| — 40,001 - 70,000 |               |
| — 70,001 - 73,040 |               |

Data Sources: See Appendix B

**Figure 4**  
**East Boston, MA**

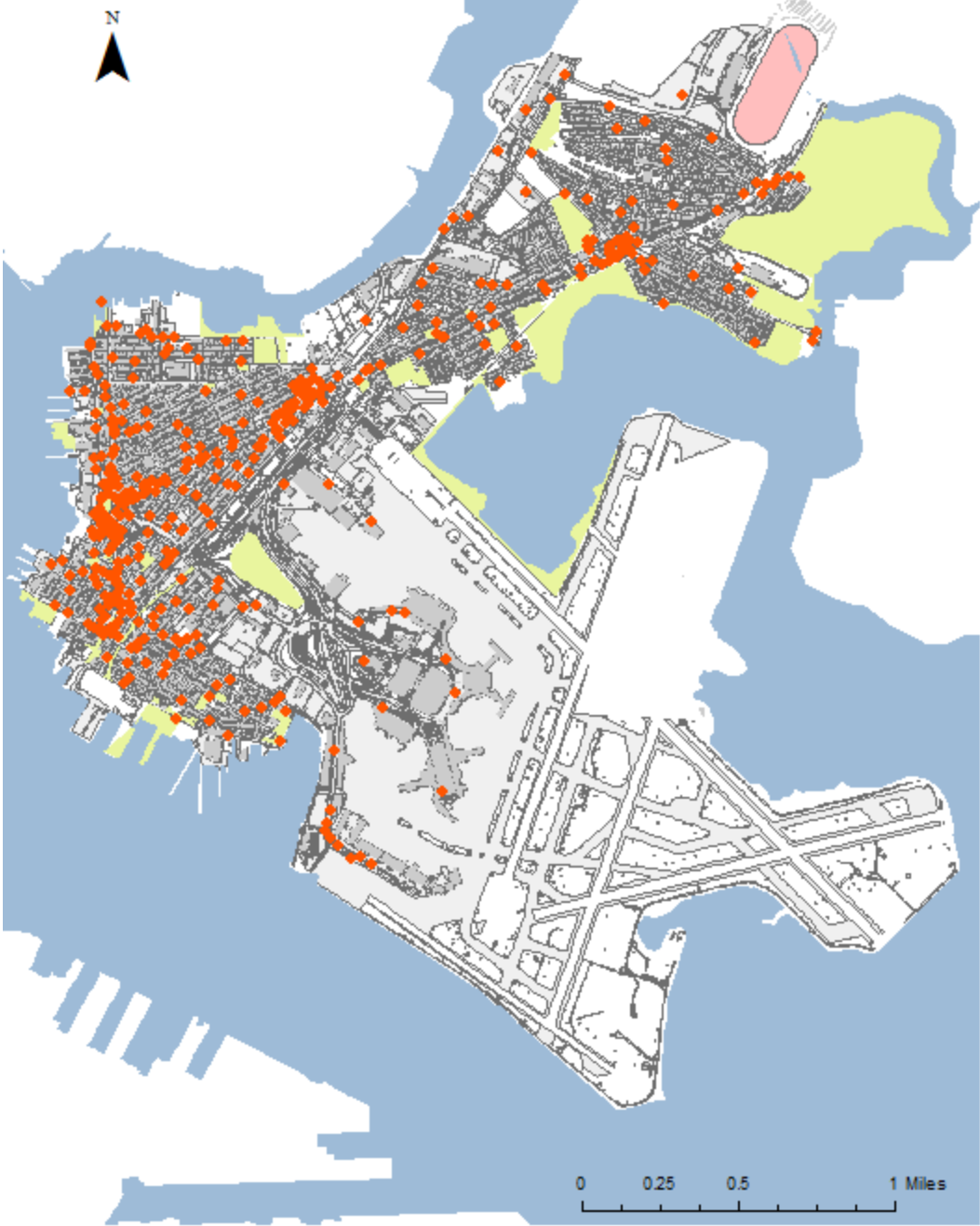


**Existing Small Businesses**

- ◆ Small Businesses
- Water
- Green Space
- Suffolk Downs

Data Sources: See Appendix B

**Figure 5**  
**East Boston, MA**



**Small Businesses - 10% Reduction**

- ◆ Small Businesses
- Water
- Green Space
- Suffolk Downs

Data Sources: See Appendix B



**Figure 6**  
**East Boston, MA**



**Small Businesses - 10% Reduction Impact**

- ◆ Small Businesses
- ◆ Small Business Closures
- Water
- Green Space

Data Sources: See Appendix B

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As expanded gaming spreads across the United States, it continues to be a source of much debate and contention. Many politicians and businessmen see it as an economic panacea, bringing much needed revenue and job growth to their respective states. However, as evidenced by the literature, the social costs of casinos may be significant and long lasting, with both serious financial and social implications. As expanded gaming has become a reality in Massachusetts, its introduction presents new opportunities and challenges. The local communities that are likely to be impacted by the selection of the casino sites should start in earnest to define the impact of a casino in their midst. Local input has to be first and foremost at the time of negotiating adequate mitigation packages.

The casino issue has been the dominant topic of the political discourse in East Boston and beyond for some time and the public opinion is divided at best.

Suffolk Downs and Caesars Entertainment may well have the inside track for the eastern zone casino license thanks to vast political support. They will face competition from Steven Wynn with his proposal for a casino in Everett on the site of the former Monsanto Chemical plant along the Mystic River, and from David Nunes who submitted plans for a casino in Milford. These three development teams filed their \$400,000 gaming license applications by the January 15, 2013, 5pm deadline. While others were interested in filing and requested an extension, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission and Chairman Crosby, declined to grant any extensions. With any casino in the state, the ultimate decision rests with the host communities in a local referendum vote. For

Suffolk Downs, this means that the residents of East Boston and Revere will have the final say on whether or not a casino will be built.

The public process has already started and is well into the negotiation phase. It will result in mitigation agreements that should offset the negative impacts on the affected communities. It is now more critical than ever for the public to be involved and for our local elected officials to assure a prudent and equitable allocation of needed resources.














In order to prevent East Boston from becoming a case study of a poor land use decision and a broken promise of economic vitality, the next planning battleground is the community mitigation agreement, which as of March 2013 is still being negotiated. For this thesis, I have drafted my own mitigation plan (see Appendix A) based on ideas generated from policy makers and community residents alike and modeled upon the existing mitigation agreement between East Boston and Massport. My mitigation plan reflects priorities and needs that the City of Boston and its East Boston neighborhood ought to see satisfied in order for the Mayor to extend his continued support. It represents the best case scenario in the sense that it covers all aspects which might require mitigation and goes beyond the scope of the real mitigation process which will be much more limited in focus and scope.

APPENDIX A

HCAC QUESTIONNAIRE: MITIGATION PRIORITIES

Distributed: February 2013, East Boston

**What would benefit your community? / ¿Qué beneficiaría a la comunidad?**

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Transportation/ Transportación</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Jobs/Small Business/ Trabajos/ Pequeñas Empresas</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Education/ Educación</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Community Programs/ Programas para la Comunidad</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Waterfront Development/ Desarrollo Urbano frente al Mar</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Parks/ Parques</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environment/ Medio Ambiente</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Public Safety/ Seguridad Pública</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Elderly Services/ Servicios para Personas de la Tercera Edad</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Public Housing/ Vivienda Pública</b>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Youth Programs/ Programas para la Juventud</b>	<p><b>Anything else? / ¿Algo Más?</b></p> 		
	<b>Mark any box/ Marque cualquier casilla</b>										

**EAST BOSTON**  
HCAC

## APPENDIX B

### MITIGATION PLAN – CITY’S BEST FIRST OFFER (BFO)

#### *Commitments*

The following are not part of the City’s BFO; those marked with an asterisk are required components outlined in the state’s expanded gaming legislation as part of the license issuing process:<sup>6</sup>

- \$1 billion – development
  - Caesars Entertainment casino (approximately 200,000 square feet of gaming space)
    - 4,000-5,000 slot machines, 200 table games and a World Series of Poker™ room
  - Hotel (approximately 300 rooms)
  - Parking garage
  - Renovations to race track
  - Entertainment and nightclub venues
    - One entertainment venue with a maximum seating capacity of 10,000 people → so as not to compete with the TD Garden
  - Restaurants (up to ten, including six fine dining concepts, a buffet, food court and sports bar)
- \$40 million – transportation infrastructure improvements\*
  - Flyover at Boardman St. → ease traffic burdens for community; aides traffic flow for Suffolk Downs
  - Improvements to Route 1A → ease traffic and congestion for community; aides traffic flow for Suffolk Downs
- \$150 million/year spent on goods and services among local and regional businesses\*
- \$200 million annually in new state tax revenue\*
  - State receives 25% of annual casino revenues
- Construction of casino is done through the unions → required by the City of Boston
- Creation of new State Police unit on casino crimes\*
- Creation of a new Division of Gaming Enforcement within the Attorney General’s Office\*
- A commitment to provide at least 5,000 permanent jobs within 5 years\*
- Disclosure of the number of employees to be employed, including detailed information on pay rates and benefits for employees and contractors\*
- A mentoring program for entry level workers\*
- The development of transparent career paths leading to increased responsibility and higher pay\*
- Employee access to on-site child care\*

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<sup>6</sup> See: <http://www.suffolkdowns.com/resort.html>

- Employee access to additional professional development resources, such as tuition reimbursement or stipend policies to continue their education and training\*
- Disclosure of the bidder's existing labor contracts and/or their support from labor organizations\*

### *BFO*

While I do not expect all of these elements to be included in a final mitigation offer, the following represents a wish list of ways to mitigate a development of this size and nature:

- \$75 million up front to the City of Boston for mitigation → safer to get more money up front rather than a yearly percentage of casino profits
- \$25 million/year to the City of Boston, weighted towards the host community of East Boston
- Commitment by Suffolk Downs to build the entire resort in one phase, rather than a multi-phased approach → a phased approach could result in some project elements and/or community benefits being delayed or eliminated and would negatively impact residents due to a prolonged construction period
- Commitment to 90% local hiring (between East Boston and Revere) of casino-related jobs, post construction → this has been done in a Cincinnati casino<sup>7</sup>
  - Employee trainings
  - Professional development and career growth opportunities
- Destination of the funds:
  - Large infrastructure improvements
    - Re-do Orient Heights housing development (make similar to Maverick Landing, near Maverick Square, a success story of a HOPE VI federal grant) → benefits community and Suffolk Downs due to the proximity to proposed casino
      - This would be an estimated \$100 million dollar project, Suffolk Downs could provide the seed money
    - New senior center in East Boston
    - Making all school buildings in East Boston handicap accessible (as of now only one of the public schools in East Boston is handicap accessible; there are ten public schools in the community)
  - Programmatic improvements
    - Trainings for non-casino related jobs
      - Suffolk Downs could set up a fund for this
    - Increased English as a Second Language (ESL) programs
    - Paid internship program for long-term unemployed
      - Grant money from Suffolk Downs would pay for part of salary

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<sup>7</sup> See: [http://www.wcpo.com/dpp/news/local\\_news/Cincinnati-casino-is-hiring-400-more-people](http://www.wcpo.com/dpp/news/local_news/Cincinnati-casino-is-hiring-400-more-people)

- Residents could get internships at local businesses such as the East Boston Savings Bank, Massport, or the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC)
  - The employer pays 50% of salary, Suffolk Downs covers other 50%
- Paid internship program for youth → can partner with City and East Boston High School
- Community beautification
  - Bennington Street boulevard → main street in East Boston; plant trees in middle to create a boulevard feel
  - Street trees → Suffolk Downs could fund a tree farm or wholesale tree purchases from nurseries available to residents who request a tree to be planted in front of their homes. Trees could be one way to mitigate the increased pollution brought on by additional vehicular traffic traveling to and from Suffolk Downs. Trees also keep houses cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, leading to reduced energy costs for East Boston residents, which would be an added benefit. Furthermore, trees beautify a community and can increase property values.
  - Underground placement of all utilities (telephone, cable, data, etc.) → The wires and poles are unsightly messes that limit the growth of street trees. With the utilities buried, more street trees can be planted, they can grow bigger, making the ambiance of the community nicer, and potentially leading to increased real estate values.
  - Suffolk Downs contracts a private cleaning company to increase neighborhood cleanliness (always a major issue in the community)
  - Suffolk Downs provides money to allow City to expand Code Enforcement officers → keep East Boston cleaner and safer
  - Re-do all neighborhood sidewalks with permeable surfaces
- Community health
  - EBNHC creates a satellite at Suffolk Downs → Suffolk Downs provides money towards this
  - Money to the EBNHC for gambling addiction services (required by State law)
    - Potential seed money for an in-patient treatment center for gamblers → Massachusetts residents' treatment covered by state grant<sup>8</sup>
  - Money to EBNHC to increase nursing education → furthers the partnerships with Bunker Hill Community College and UMass Boston
  - Expanding bike paths throughout East Boston
  - Creation of linkage from East Boston Greenway to Belle Isle Marsh

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<sup>8</sup> Based on the State of Connecticut model (Van Voorhis, 2013).

- Transportation
  - Intersection improvements throughout community → ease traffic burden and congestion for residents
  - Creation of angle parking throughout East Boston → increased parking for residents (always a major issue in the community)
  - Institution of smart traffic lights → improves traffic flow
  - Suffolk Downs responsible for completely renovating Suffolk Downs train station along the Blue Line
  - Docking facility and ferry service along the Mystic River → this could help alleviate vehicular traffic on the already congested roads surrounding Suffolk Downs and could provide direct water access from downtown Boston.
  - Suffolk Downs responsible for subsidizing public water transportation → water taxi system
    - From Downtown to East Boston
    - From North Shore to East Boston
      - Necessary improvements to Chelsea Creek to make this functional
  - A user-fee charged to every vehicle entering the Suffolk Downs complex → this would pay for the early and continuing costs of transit and roadway improvements and maintenance
  - A parking cap at Suffolk Downs that would limit the spillover effect into the community
  - Outfitting Suffolk Downs with electric charging stations to encourage alternative modes of transportation
- Environment
  - Creation of a parks maintenance fund
  - Money for routine water quality testing of Chelsea Creek
  - Funds for more green spaces/pocket parks throughout community
  - Seed money to fund Piers Park Phase II → has been stalled for years due to lack of state money
    - State could match funds
  - Landscaping/plantings all over the community → trees, flowers, etc.
  - Commitment to green and sustainable practices in the construction and operation of the resort
    - Construction should be at the minimum, LEED Silver certified
- Safety/Security
  - Seed money for a new East Boston police station
  - Funds to aid collaboration/trainings of Boston and State Police on casino crimes
  - Contributing to the funding of emergency preparedness and evacuations for the cities of Boston and Revere
    - Inclusion of evacuation drills at Suffolk Downs, similar to those conducted at Logan International Airport



- Local aid
  - Creation of the Suffolk Downs Foundation
    - \$500,000/year → controlled by Suffolk Downs
      - For local non-profits to apply for grant moneys
  - Creation of fund for historic preservation/residential façade restorations
    - Residents can apply for money through the fund to improve the façade of their homes
    - Money from the fund can be allocated to restoring East Boston's historically significant public structures and landmarks
  - Establishment of universal public Wi-Fi → every resident has access to free high speed Wi-Fi
    - Wi-Fi hubs would be located at all public schools in East Boston
- Small businesses
  - Fund for strategic consulting to small businesses
    - How to start, survive, grow, prosper, partner with other local businesses, etc.
    - Access to low-interest loans
  - Shuttle transportation from the casino to East Boston businesses
  - Contribution to the “rebranding” of East Boston → with Suffolk Downs as a partner, the East Boston Chamber of Commerce can further promote the wellness of the business community
  - Promotion of a marketing campaign within resort casino grounds that promotes local businesses in conjunction with the overall rebranding effort
  - In conjunction with local business and the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, development of the tourist attractiveness of East Boston
  - Option for marquee East Boston restaurants to open new locations on resort grounds
  - Development of a rewards program that assigns points to casino patrons, redeemable at local establishments
  - Partnering with East Boston Main Streets to promote and expand the Main Street initiative, e.g. commercial façade restorations

## APPENDIX C

### SPATIAL ANALYSIS DATA SOURCES

LAYER	YEAR	ACCESS SOURCE
Boston_parcel_FY09_condo_modified → land use	2009	Boston Assessor (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
BUILDINGFP_POLY	2005	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
CHCS_PT → community health center	2007	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
EOTROADS_ARC → traffic volume	2012	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012) - in the attribute table, this data layer provides me with the ADT (average daily trips) of vehicles along two thoroughfares of East Boston, indicating traffic count/volume
FIRESTATIONS_PT_MEMA	2007	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
Hydrography	1995	Boston BRA (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
ICERINKS_PT	2011	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
LONGTERMCARE_PT → nursing home	2007	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
MBTA_NODE	2007	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
Open Space	1999	Boston BRA (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
POLICESTATIONS_PT	2007	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
IMG_IMPERVIOUSSURFACE	2007	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
SCHOOLS_PT	2012	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)
Small Businesses	2012	Reference USA – in the form of a tabular data set (online, 2012)
TOWNS_POLY	2009	MassGIS (Tufts M: Drive, 2012)

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