



**BOSTON, MA**

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

### **THE SEARCH**

The American City Coalition (TACC), a nonprofit organization that serves as both a catalyst and thought leader for urban planning, economic development, and supportive service strategies in poverty-concentrated urban neighborhoods, is seeking a new Executive Director. The new leader will be expected to guide the organization into the future by leveraging its past successes, sustaining its internal culture of collaboration and innovation, and strengthening its capacity to scale up its impact. While TACC is recognized as an independent voice working to improve quality of life and access to opportunities in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty in Boston and throughout the Northeast, currently, its primary focus areas are the neighborhoods of Lower Roxbury and the Fairmount Indigo Corridor.

Rooted in comprehensive, mixed-income housing development, TACC facilitates multi-sector partnerships and promotes holistic approaches to balanced real estate development, community planning, economic development, and supportive service strategies. The organization provides technical assistance and collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders (local resident groups, elected officials, government entities, community-based organizations, public housing authorities, and nonprofit and private developers). Facilitating research and its dissemination, TACC works to ensure quality data and assessments are easily accessible to stakeholders engaged in strategic planning, programming, and other efforts to guide equitable and sustainable neighborhood revitalization.

Reporting to the board chair and the board of directors, the Executive Director will be responsible for a budget of 1.3 million and a 5 member staff of talented and committed professionals.

This leadership position requires a person who combines a passionate commitment to social and economic justice, sensitivity to community needs, and strong management skills to lead this organization, which occupies a unique and important position in Roxbury and Boston.

Isaacson Miller, a Boston-based, executive search firm, has been retained by TACC to assist in its search. After consulting within TACC and with external partners, the firm prepared this position description, which will be shared with candidates and important sources in the search. It describes our understanding of the organization's current organizational structure and its range of services, as well as the challenges and opportunities facing the new Executive Director and the personal and professional characteristics the ideal candidate should possess.

## **MISSION**

TACC's mission is to revitalize neighborhoods so that urban families flourish in safe environments and benefit from the full economic opportunities of American cities.

## **HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS**

Founded in 1994, TACC has an inclusive and collaborative approach that grew out of lessons learned from the transformation of Columbia Point, in the Dorchester section of Boston. Once a failed federally-funded housing project, Columbia Point became Harbor Point, one of the earliest mixed-income communities in the United States. TACC's founder and current board chair, Joseph E. Corcoran, partnered with a coalition of residents and community organizations to ensure that local knowledge and quality-of-life needs shaped the future of Harbor Point. The conversion of Columbia Point into Harbor Point became a model for the de-concentration of poverty and the preservation of affordable housing. The project informed the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's HOPE VI and Choice Neighborhood Initiative policies for urban redevelopment.

Currently, TACC's primary focus area is Lower Roxbury. Both an historic and culturally important neighborhood, Lower Roxbury is one of the largest geographically concentrated areas of extremely low-income families in the northeast. TACC is deeply committed to the residents of Lower Roxbury, a neighborhood of 4,000 households facing significant transformational forces due to a changing real estate market.

TACC's second area of focus is along the Fairmount Indigo Corridor which runs through Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park. The 135,000 residents of the corridor are supported by a growing network of embedded community-based organizations working to harness and build off of ongoing investments in the Fairmount Indigo Commuter Rail Line. TACC is committed to supporting initiatives that can bring quality housing and new employment opportunities for residents of the corridor.

Originally established as a private foundation, on January 1, 2015 TACC shifted from a private foundation to a 501 (c)(3) public charity to better reflect the public benefit of the organization's work.

## **PROGRAMS**

Through interrelated programs in inclusive community planning, equitable economic development, and supportive service strategies for public housing and mixed-income communities, TACC provides the technical support needed to advance positive social change.

TACC advance integrated approaches that respond to both place-based and people-based need; the organization seeks to drive public and private resources to work on behalf of the needs of low-income residents and communities. Our collaborative, collective impact approach prioritizes objective research and the expertise of local stakeholders through the delivery of technical support to multiple entities within a single neighborhood. Currently, TACC is engaged in multiple collaborative efforts supporting comprehensive community revitalization and quality

of life improvements, including balanced housing development, public safety and infrastructure, supportive services, small business development, job attraction, civic engagement, arts and culture, health, and education.

TACC delivers services through three core programs:

**Community Planning:** TACC supports the planning and pre-development needs of multiple stakeholders within a single neighborhood by identifying opportunities and bringing partners together to develop a common agenda and shared vision. TACC seeks to provide in-depth analyses of neighborhoods' assets, needs and potential strategies for change. Utilized by governmental agencies (planning and redevelopment authorities, housing authorities, and elected officials), community-based organizations, and the private-sector, these studies connect major revitalization initiatives to the interests of all stakeholders.

**Economic Development:** Concentrating simultaneously on the needs of both the people and places within its geographic focus, TACC works on multiple levels to support and strengthen community-driven economic development strategies and projects. These consist of broader initiatives focused on the enhancing the economic environment, including initiatives to attract and retain businesses that will invest in residents. TACC also makes sustained, "deep-dives" into individual economic development projects, providing capacity to both community-supported businesses and developers, ensuring that projects are sustainable and better aligned with community preferences.

**Supportive Service Strategies:** TACC develops and disseminates innovative program models that respond to the needs of residents of mixed-income, public, and subsidized housing communities. TACC collects information and data on community assets and needs (through in-depth community assessments) to understand unmet resident needs and service gaps; and identifies local and national evidence-based supportive service models and develops partnerships to drive resource development and programming. From workforce training and aging in place to community safety and upward mobility, TACC collects data from residents to shape programs that are designed to connect individuals and families with quality services and supports.

## **THE ROLE**

The preferred candidate will be a practical visionary, dedicated to TACC's mission, able to envision and communicate a successful future of growth and impact for TACC and inspire staff and stakeholders to support that vision. The new Executive Director will be a dynamic, entrepreneurial, and experienced leader.

Through vision and entrepreneurial leadership, the Executive Director will build on the organization's wide array of existing relationships with community-based agencies, government officials and the private sector and expand its base of support. S/he will continue to engage, educate, convene, and coordinate with a broad array of stakeholders and institutions to support and create programs, services, public policies, research, and financial resources to enhance community development initiatives.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

TACC seeks an Executive Director who will understand its mission, vision and who has the experience, strength of character, and managerial capacity to achieve a future that exceeds its past. The position calls for a person with proven leadership qualities and imagination who can guide and build the organization.

- The Board has established the following objectives for the new Executive Director to accomplish in his or her tenure.
- Diversify funding, as required by TACC's current status as a 501(c)(3) public charity. Pursue additional revenue streams that enhance TACC's business model and financial sustainability.
- Engage and develop the board of directors, communicating closely with the founder and chairman of the board of directors, so that the changing needs of neighborhoods are studied and projects align with identified needs.
- Ensure that the staff and board are engaged in developing and maintaining core organizational strategy and processes such as a three-year strategic plan and annual work plan.
- Maintain and develop further strong partnerships and networks with other neighborhood and businesses associations, civic leaders, affordable and mixed-income housing advocates, government agencies, and other relevant organizations.
- Develop a pipeline of projects that can extend and deepen TACC's engagement within its targeted neighborhoods.
- Work with the professional staff, to continue TACC's superior-quality of performance, high-level of client satisfaction, and collegial working culture.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The successful candidate must be committed to TACC's mission and values and be able to demonstrate this commitment through his/her previous experience. The person selected to fill this position must have a strong background in several of the following: real estate development and management, neighborhood planning, economic development, funding development, finance, and management. S/he must be entrepreneurial in approach and passionate about the goals of TACC.

The Executive Director will bring most, if not all, of the following previous experience and personal qualities to this important role:

### **Experience**

- Solid competencies in long-term planning, fiscal management, and general operational management based on a minimum of ten years of successful experience in community development and/or real estate development.

- A deep understanding of cities and passionate commitment to their success; experience in a leadership role in a comparably complex and diverse urban setting.
- A proven relationship-building ability, capacity for recognizing opportunities for new strategic alliances, and for engaging and responding to a wide variety of constituencies.
- Ability to develop and leverage relationships with donor organizations, real estate developers, and state and federal entities to raise funds.
- Capacity to think creatively and strategically about the complex issues at the heart of neighborhood revitalization.
- Proven success as a team builder with ability to develop and maintain a collaborative work environment, including clear and consistent communication at all levels of the organization.
- A passion for the mission of the organization and sensitivity to the needs for the communities it serves.
- A credible and effective spokesperson/advocate/representative that is able to listen to and inspire others.
- Integrity, honesty, fairness, and an ability to listen and communicate in a timely and transparent manner.
- Entrepreneurial spirit and drive. An eye for strategic opportunities and innovative partnerships.
- Excellent communication and diplomatic skills; articulate and persuasive, comfortable in the spotlight, without necessarily seeking it; someone with the strength to take the heat but share the credit, to defer as appropriate and confront as necessary.

## **TO APPLY**

All inquiries, nominations, cover letter, and resumes may be emailed in confidence to:

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(Electronic submission of credentials strongly encouraged)

TACC is an Equal Opportunity Employer and actively seeks a diverse pool of candidates.