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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 14, 2016

MSGA/LISC Boston Announce Winners of 2016 Placemaking Mini-Grants

Ten community organizations awarded \$45,000 for projects creating active and engaging public spaces

BOSTON, MA – The Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance (MSGA) together with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Boston have awarded 10 Placemaking Mini-Grants ranging from \$2,250 to \$5,000.

These placemaking grants will support quick, inexpensive strategies that build visible momentum for long-term improvements in underinvested and vulnerable communities. Goals include creating public spaces that draw people together, encouraging more walkable and healthy neighborhoods, and strengthening vibrant commercial areas. The projects will also help improve collaboration among the arts community, residents, businesses and local government.

“The best way to transform a place is to transform the way people work together in that place,” says André Leroux, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance. “People don’t just want to talk about change—they want to do it. These projects are great examples of the creative and inexpensive ways to get people involved in solving their own challenges.”

“Reinvigorating public spaces is a critical step towards improving quality of life in neighborhoods all across the state. Each of these projects has tremendous potential for taking a disused space and making it a vibrant and inviting part of the community,” says Bob Van Meter, Executive Director of LISC Boston.

The awardees were selected from 35 proposals submitted from across the state. “The fact that there were so many proposals shows how much demand there is in the state to bring arts and community development together,” says Matt Wilson, Executive Director of MassCreative. “We want this program to build support for a larger state investment in placemaking.”

Examples of projects include the establishment of a community marketplace in Waltham, an international mural festival in Worcester, a T stop marketplace in Four Corners Station in Boston, the activation of Washington Square in Haverhill, and an art installation using bodega signs and poetry on the border of Roxbury and Jamaica Plain.

LISC Boston and MSGA were delighted to see so many promising proposals, and congratulate every applicant for their work in promoting the positive potential of public spaces.

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MSGA (Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance) promotes healthy and diverse communities, protects critical environmental resources and working landscapes, advocates for housing and transportation choices and

supports equitable community development and urban reinvestment. For more, visit www.ma-smarthgrowth.org.

LISC (Local Initiatives Support Coalition) Boston equips struggling communities with the capital, strategy and know-how to become places where people can thrive. Since 1981, we have invested more \$273 million in housing, health, education, public safety and employment - all basic needs that must be tackled at once so that progress in one is not undermined by neglect in another. For more, visit www.bostonlisc.org.