

Throughout this budget you will find these and other investments that push us into new territories, anticipate new challenges, and test new approaches. If you look back to the nineteen documents that came before this one, you'll find that same forward orientation.

The story of our work together will be told in many places, but nowhere in more detail and with more credibility than in the budgets we crafted to support this city and push its progress.

Over twenty budgets, we have also kept this city at the forefront of municipal finance. We stalled by making leaders more accountable for results - we named them in the budget. We laid out new performance commitments. We instituted Boston About Results to track outcomes and then we opened it up to the public so they could, too. We made unprecedented commitments to meeting our long-term obligations; we put the city on the path to fully fund its pension obligations and we made the first ever down-payments on our health care commitments to our retirees. We formalized long term forecasting and multi-year budgeting. We have not only helped to reinvent the city time and again through our budgets, but we have helped to re-invent budgeting itself. The process is more thoughtful, more transparent, and more responsive every year. We continue that progress in this budget with the city's first Participatory Budgeting program. We have allocated \$1 million for our youth, and the process by which they allocate it will improve their neighborhoods and their own sense of civic participation.

With all the change, there has been one constant: balanced, responsible budgets. The financial principles that shaped the first budget have remained through this one:

We save for rainy days because they do come;

We fund recurring operations only with recurring sources;

We estimate revenues conservatively because balancing budgets on "hope so" is a recipe for trouble; and

We make down payments on our future because our best days are ahead, but not if we mortgage them.

We also know the city's resources are for all people, not some people, so in this budget as in the nineteen prior we invest to raise up every neighborhood. We have worked to open up this city and the opportunities in it to people from all backgrounds and places. The annual budget process is essentially one of exercising the public trust. We have strived to meet that trust by being prudent and by being inventive, and most of all by being fair. The FY 14 budget provides resources to help this administration share any lessons that might be sought by the next one. I am confident, however, that the pursuit of opportunity for all of our people would transfer in any event because it is at the root of who we are.

I look forward to working with you during the budget review process, and I respectfully request your favorable action on the FY 14 Operating Budget and the Five Year Capital Plan for FY 14 to FY18.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thomas M. Menino", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston