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Boston can still win: The vision for a better city

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Over the next weeks and months as we reflect with hindsight on Boston's unsuccessful move to bring the 2024 Olympic Summer games to our abundant city, it is easy to play the Monday morning quarterback. Against a wave of unpopularity in the stadium of public opinion, our Boston business leaders stood up to the world body and voiced strong support in favor of the bid noting the benefit to the Commonwealth and its diverse population. Although our time is not just yet, we are reminded that much good can still come from the doors that were opened by the Boston 2024 proposal. Boston is envied across the world for its hospitals, universities and technology, and is nearly ready to be a major player on the global stage; but there is still work to be done.

While the naysayers claim that the pursuit of the Summer Olympic Games was strictly about global notoriety and would have resulted in financial disaster, it also offered an opportunity to pull together around a common vision for our great city. The Olympic venue feasibility study envisioned an accessible network of revitalized districts that would form a truly "walkable" Boston. What once seemed like a utopian Bay State fantasy grew into the first-ever potentially realizable attempt at building a cohesive city for all. This future Boston requires that public and private institutions and developers work together with city planners and share resources. For example, why can't the positive energy created from the proposed Olympic Village live on as the future affordable housing that Boston so desperately needs? The big picture concepts that characterized the Olympic bid, like collaboration, sustainability and urban renewal, can live on as does the eternal flame.

Experiencing Boston's growth one building project at a time over the last thirty years, it was refreshing for me to see an exciting, actionable solution for uniting the city. As Imagine Boston embarks on its first citywide master plan in fifty years, let us continue to partner to fulfill this vision. In doing so, the five interlocking rings can remain in Boston as symbol of the shared values of our community.

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