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MassDevelopment president and CEO Liss to step down at end of the year

November 13, 2020 - Financial Digest

Lauren Liss

Boston, MA According to MassDevelopment, after three years as president and CEO, Lauren Liss will step down from this position at the end of the calendar year. Housing and economic development secretary Mike Kennealy, who serves as chairman of the board of directors of MassDevelopment, will lead the search for the next head of the state's finance and development agency.

“Lauren has been an incredible partner and leader as she has put MassDevelopment’s many programs and resources to work creating jobs for our residents, increasing investment in our communities, and spurring economic growth statewide,” said Kennealy. “From providing critical financing to growing businesses to supporting the construction of new housing units, Lauren and the MassDevelopment team have played an essential role in our administration’s work on countless projects and initiatives.”

Governor Charlie Baker appointed and the board approved Liss to lead MassDevelopment (formally the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency) in 2017, where she first served under former board chair Jay Ash and current chair, secretary Kennealy. Prior to joining MassDevelopment, Liss held leadership positions in both the private and public sectors, including commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and a partner in a local law firm.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to return to public service to lead MassDevelopment during a period of such tremendous growth,” said Liss. “I have thoroughly enjoyed my tenure, working with the Baker-Polito Administration, the MassDevelopment Board, and all our dedicated colleagues and staff to spur economic development across the Commonwealth, particularly in our underserved communities.”

In fiscal year 2020, MassDevelopment financed or managed 341 projects generating investment of more than \$2.69 billion in the Massachusetts economy. These projects are estimated to create or support 10,871 jobs and build or preserve 1,787 housing units. As president and CEO, Liss

expanded its work in Gateway Cities through an array of finance programs and real estate services – such as the Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) and Commonwealth Places program – and oversaw tremendous growth at Devens, MassDevelopment’s iconic mixed-use redevelopment of the former Fort Devens.

This year, under Liss’ leadership and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, MassDevelopment pivoted programs and tools to support small businesses in some of the state’s hardest-hit communities and aid in economic recovery.

These efforts helped to stabilize businesses in TDI districts, and created crowdfunding opportunities for community partners to prepare public spaces and commercial districts to safely serve residents and visitors.

MassDevelopment, the state’s finance and development agency, works with businesses, nonprofits, banks, and communities to stimulate economic growth across the Commonwealth.

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