

appointed by the governor to staggered, seven-year terms. Unlike the San Francisco Port Commission, Massport is a multimodal transportation agency which owns and operates not only the traditional seaport but also Logan International Airport and the Mystic Tobin Bridge, a principal harbor crossing. Massport formed by merging three formerly separate agencies: the Port of Boston Commission, the State Airport Board, and the Mystic River Bridge Authority. Only a handful of other American port authorities – among them New York / New Jersey, Seattle, and San Juan – have similar compositions.

From the outset, the assumption was that other facilities would cross-subsidize the port of Boston, which by the late 1950s was in obvious physical and economic decline. Thanks largely to the economic success of the airport, Massport has been able to sustain and grow all of its facilities without any state or local financial assistance. Overall, Massport employs 1,200 and supports 20,000 jobs on its premises. The airport, seaport, and toll road operations contribute more than US\$5 billion annually to the regional economy.

In the last decade, Massport has invested over \$100 million in the modernization and adaptation of the seaport. The key projects include doubling the capacity of Conley Terminal, the principal container facility; converting Moran Terminal, the older, more constrained container site, to a new, state-of-the-art automobile import center; building the new Black Falcon cruise terminal; and modernizing the Fish Pier. Massport also worked with federal officials to find an environmentally acceptable strategy for deepening the harbor channels. This is nearly complete.

It is important to understand, however, that the entire seaport does not fall within Massport's jurisdiction. At its creation, Massport inherited only those maritime properties owned by the Port of Boston Commission, and has acquired relatively little waterfront property since then. Consequently, the petroleum terminals in Chelsea Creek and the Mystic River – a critical regional resource – are purely private facilities (although Massport's sponsorship of the harbor-dredging program is essential to their viability). Equally important, Massport owns some but not all of the vast expanses of piers, wharves, and filled tidelands which housed the port activities of generations past. In East Boston, South Boston, and parts of Charlestown, Massport is the principal owner of fallow maritime land ripe for redevelopment. In the downtown, the North End, and the Charlestown Navy Yard – areas no less ripe for waterfront redevelopment – Massport does not own any land.

### **The water line in Boston: a maze of jurisdictions**

Over the last fifteen years, the planning, regulation, and redevelopment of Boston's shoreline have become the subject of the most engaging and controversial land use debate in the city's recent history. Massport shares this mission with two other powerful public actors.

One is the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); a powerful agency created and empowered by state legislation to serve as the city's urban renewal authority, industrial development corporation, and planning board. As a development agency, the BRA is an important landowner on