Dear Members of the Harvard Community,

The present moment of challenge and change for higher education is also a moment of great promise for Harvard. Society depends more than ever before on the capacity of universities to generate new knowledge and to prepare individuals to lead lives of value. Our university brings together faculty and students whose talent and energy drive an academic agenda of remarkable scope. At such a time, Harvard is especially fortunate among universities to have the prospect of substantial room to grow. We have, in our Allston properties, a historic opportunity to build our long-term academic strength, while contributing to the vitality of one of our important home communities. The choices we make in the coming years about this extraordinary opportunity will do much to shape Harvard for decades to come.

The properties acquired in Allston over the past twenty years cover some 200 acres. Much of the land is (in real estate parlance) highly encumbered, and will require much effort and expense—as well as time, measured in decades—to become available for university use. We expect, however, that we will be in a position to begin some limited building within the next several years, and to pursue some additional development within the ensuing decade.

As we contemplate an initial phase of development, it seems important to have in mind a set of working hypotheses about the broad outlines of a larger Allston plan, so that we can further explore those ideas, and so that the end result of our planning efforts will be not a patchwork but a cohesive whole. In this letter, I suggest such a set of hypotheses for our opportunity in Allston, which have evolved in light of discussions and deliberations over the past few years. Many more discussions and analyses, reflecting input from many perspectives, will be necessary before we are in a position to reach definitive judgments.

Even for a centuries-old institution that prides itself on taking the long view, planning for how best to take advantage of the Allston opportunity poses an uncommonly challenging task. It calls on us to think over a longer-than-usual time horizon, a more expansive physical terrain, and a wider span of academic and other domains. We face questions, foremost, of academic opportunities and aspirations. But we also face complex questions of real estate development and finance, of urban planning and community relations, and of relationships among different parts of Harvard as they exist and as they might exist. And we need to weigh not only our own immediate concerns but also the best interests of generations to come.

We must remember, too, that this rare opportunity for Harvard also represents an opportunity for the City of Boston and the Allston community. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with the Mayor, who has so thoughtfully engaged with these questions, and with our Allston neighbors, to ensure that this undertaking will benefit the larger urban community of which our expanded campus will be a part. And, insofar as our planning bears on how our campus evolves on both sides of the Charles, we will need to stay in close touch with Cambridge representatives as well.
The progress to date in exploring a number of important questions and possible scenarios is due to the helpful counsel of many people within Harvard and beyond. I want especially to acknowledge the faculty members and administrators who have served on the University Physical Planning Committee, which has thought attentively and creatively about these issues for the past several years. We have also profited from the work of the Provost’s advisory groups on science, the professional schools, culture and community, and housing; of the various faculty-based committees and groups that have invested time and care in contemplating possibilities for Allston; and of the Harvard Planning + Allston Initiative team, which has provided helpful support to all involved. With the benefit of these diverse efforts and perspectives, a set of promising ideas has come gradually into focus. Those ideas, in turn, have been discussed in recent months by the Academic Advisory Group (including the Deans of all the Faculties), the Corporation, the Board of Overseers, and others.

In light of these discussions, I write now at the Corporation’s request to outline a vision encompassing key elements to guide our Allston planning efforts going forward. These programmatic planning assumptions are, at this stage, neither immutable nor merely conjectural. They are meant to suggest a promising path forward, intended both to sharpen discussion of prospective advantages and disadvantages and to outline broad parameters for a next, more focused phase of planning.

Some General Considerations

Before describing these programmatic assumptions, let me relate several more general themes that have recurred in deliberations to date. These considerations do not all point in a single direction, nor are they all equally salient. But together they suggest the higher-order aspirations from which the programmatic assumptions have taken shape:

- We should aspire to have our extended campus in Allston emerge as an integral part of Harvard’s academic enterprise, as magnetic in its drawing power as other key parts of our campus.

- We should take full account of our near-range goals and how best to meet them, but given the scope of the Allston opportunity and the associated time frame for physical development, we must ultimately frame our choices by considering what will likely best serve the University for many decades to come.

- We should consider not only how our opportunity in Allston can provide more or better space for existing activities, but also how it can enable us to undertake new activities and to pursue traditional activities in novel ways. This includes forging productive connections across disciplines and professions and pursuing initiatives we would be hard-pressed to realize elsewhere, given existing space configurations and constraints.

- We should plan an extended campus in Allston that will engage and be part of the surrounding community, rather than an enclave that sets the University apart.

- We should seek to identify not a single programmatic use for the Allston properties, but a mix of uses that will draw in people from many parts of the University community.

- We should, in contemplating Allston, affirm the centrality of Harvard College to Harvard University, and aim to strengthen the interdependence of undergraduate learning, graduate education, and advanced scholarship and research.
• We should affirm the importance of a campus that offers suitable residential opportunities for our students, including a substantial proportion of our graduate and professional school students. This is a matter not just of convenience, but of the quality of the educational experience Harvard can offer.

• We should link our Allston activities as effectively as possible, both academically and physically, with other parts of Harvard—both Cambridge and the Longwood Medical/Academic Area. In addition, we should carefully weigh what our ultimate decisions about Allston (including potential relocations) imply for future opportunities in both Cambridge and Longwood.

• We should recognize the reality that Harvard’s long-term physical development capacity in and around its current major academic precincts—particularly in Cambridge, and eventually in Longwood—is finite, and that we would not be serving Harvard’s long-run interests if we planned as though the reality were otherwise. We should also bear in mind that certain kinds of university activities have special space requirements, which may be particularly difficult to accommodate through the adaptive reuse of existing buildings or the construction of new facilities within the existing campus.

• We should plan for the Allston opportunity in a spirit of boldness yet also of flexibility—willing to venture beyond the established and traditional, while aware that we cannot forecast with precision what academic currents and developments in the world will shape higher education decades from now.

Programmatic Planning Assumptions

Such general considerations are easy enough to express and to endorse. It is harder to identify a cohesive mix of programmatic elements likely to foster progress along these multiple and not always convergent lines. As with any set of difficult judgments, tradeoffs are inevitable, and the risks and rewards of pursuing any given direction will inevitably be assessed differently by different individuals or groups. With that in mind, what follows is a set of programmatic assumptions aimed to sharpen and guide our thinking as we proceed. As noted, they represent a set of considered hypotheses, not crystallized decisions. After outlining them, I will briefly sketch a planning framework for going forward.

• Science and technology: The sciences are undergoing dramatic and exciting changes. Many of the most intriguing challenges place a high premium on the integration of knowledge across traditional disciplines and on the opportunity for interaction among multiple investigators and their teams of colleagues. This is increasingly the case in fields that range from genomics to bioengineering, from neuroscience to nanoscience, from systems biology to the information sciences, from global health to the science of global environmental change, and beyond.

As part of this development, innovations in engineering and technology are driving discovery as never before, as powerful new technological tools are forging novel pathways for fundamental science. A university committed to leadership in the sciences must not only embrace those tools but participate actively in their conception and creation—for the progress of basic science, and because of the growing intellectual significance of engineering and technology in their own right.

As the scope of activity in science and engineering expands, and as the pace of discovery accelerates, progress depends more and more on the capacity to mobilize broad-ranging teams of
researchers in settings that encourage their creative and flexible interaction, and to develop and make accessible the sophisticated technology they need to do their best work.

Harvard has a long tradition of distinguished achievement in the sciences, and a commitment—as in other intellectual domains—to sustain and renew that record of leadership. To succeed, we will need to invest not only in the more traditional approaches to science, led by single investigators with largely autonomous laboratories and research teams, but also in the more integrative approaches that hold growing promise for the future. In addition, while affirming our paramount commitment to fundamental, hypothesis-driven science, we will need to sustain our growing investment in engineering and technology. All this will mean substantially more space for science, both basic and applied. It will also mean new kinds of space, well configured to accommodate larger groups (or changing arrays of small groups), to stimulate flexible collaboration, and to house broadly accessible state-of-the-art technological tools.

We have recently expanded the available laboratory space in Longwood, with the construction of the Medical School's New Research Building. We also aim to create additional space for the natural and applied sciences along the Oxford Street corridor in Cambridge. But even assuming we fulfill those plans over the next several years, we will before long confront an insufficiency of space for science. Technical surveys and analysis of a range of existing Harvard buildings in Cambridge indicate that we cannot realistically hope to overcome that problem, and to create the number and quality of modern facilities we eventually will need, by retrofitting nonscience buildings for scientific use.

Projected growth needs and a clear-eyed assessment of future development opportunities and constraints in Cambridge (and eventually in Longwood) point toward the same conclusion: if we are genuinely committed to a thriving scientific enterprise for the long term, and if we aspire to full-scale participation in the approaches shaping much of the leading edge of scientific discovery, Allston should figure prominently in the future of Harvard science, as home to a robust critical mass of scientific activity.

What science should take place in Allston? How can we envision and create an environment that will serve over decades as a magnet for inventive minds and a powerful incubator for ideas and innovations beyond our present imaginings? How can we enable broad access to the most sophisticated instrumentation, and design new facilities conducive to flexible collaboration among research teams? How can we ensure convenient and intellectually potent links among multiple sites for Harvard science, so that productive collaboration can occur not only within Allston but across the University? How do we maximize opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to conduct mentored research and otherwise participate in a new Allston science enterprise, while also ensuring that faculty with Allston-based labs remain fully engaged with educational offerings centered in Cambridge? These are among the important questions that deserve our concentrated attention as we move into the next, more intensive phase of planning (about which I will have more to say below).

• Professional schools: One of Harvard’s defining strengths is its extraordinary assemblage of professional schools. Yet, historically, our schools have excelled more as relatively separate enterprises than as closely cooperative ones. Allston presents an important opportunity to foster greater cooperation—not out of some abstract preference for unity, but in view of the concrete academic benefits that can come from the increased flow of ideas and people across institutional boundaries.

Allston also presents an opportunity for schools now facing problematic space constraints to look forward to substantially improved physical surroundings. The question we face, of course, is not
how we would array the University’s schools if Harvard’s map were a clean slate. Rather, it is how we can use the Allston opportunity to situate schools that are likely both to take fruitful advantage of the prospect of more and better space and to stimulate useful cross-school connections. (Also important to weigh is the extent to which beneficial use could be made of the space freed up by the move of one school or another.)

The Deans of the Graduate School of Education and the School of Public Health each report substantial interest within their schools to consider an eventual move to Allston. Both schools serve important academic missions, with a strong public service dimension; each has a prominent role in bringing the scholarly and educational capacity of the University to bear on critical societal concerns. Both schools now occupy less than optimal physical facilities (with some exceptions), and each could take excellent advantage of more and better space. Both schools, by moving, would open up new long-term opportunities for schools nearby.

Both the GSE and the SPH stand to benefit academically from being close to each other, given the potential for synergistic links between health and education—regarding, for instance, how issues of health, nutrition, and social behavior bear on early childhood development and schooling, or how drug use and violence among youth pose challenges to effective school reform. Both schools also have opportunities—largely untapped at Harvard—for productive partnership with the Business School, particularly given their interests in questions of management and organizational behavior, and in the education of midcareer professionals. And both have opportunities for closer ties with the Kennedy School just across the River, given the intersection of both health and education with public policy and public service. Both schools have strong existing links to our neighboring communities—the GSE with public schools, the SPH with various health-related endeavors—and their presence could no doubt contribute to stronger connections with our Allston neighbors. And the SPH would connect in important ways with an ambitious new science enterprise in Allston and with certain Cambridge-based departments of the FAS (though it would be important, if the SPH moves to Allston, to find practical ways to preserve key relationships with the Medical School and affiliated hospitals).

The envisioned scenario presumes that the Schools of Design, Divinity, Government, and Law would remain in Cambridge, and that the Medical and Dental Schools would remain in Longwood. At the same time, it contemplates focused efforts to include those other schools in new forms of collaboration that Allston can make possible. For example, a number of our professional schools have become increasingly concerned in their research and teaching with issues relating to the leadership of institutions associated with their professions. There are surely commonalities in the challenges associated with leadership in corporations, schools, government agencies, non-profit organizations, health-care institutions, law firms, architectural firms, religious institutions, and the many other organizations in which our graduates pursue their careers. Moreover, a rising number of our most able students, including those in the midst of their careers, are contemplating professional lives in which they are likely to play leading roles within a series of different organizations and even within a combination of professions.

Can intensified joint efforts among our schools better serve our students’ needs? Can the schools gainfully cooperate in better understanding how forces such as globalization and technological change are reshaping the professions, while better equipping students with the knowledge and habits of mind needed to thrive in such an environment? Can the schools learn from one another about the educational approaches most effective toward this end—by thinking and working together, for instance, on the use of the case method of teaching, or the appropriate role of clinical experience in professional education, or the use of information technology to enhance both degree and midcareer programs? As these illustrative questions suggest, we should see Allston as a promising site for concerted efforts among the full range of our professional schools,
including their collaboration in considering leadership challenges common to the professions they serve.

That said, it is indeed a consequential matter for a school to move to Allston, and it will be essential in the time ahead for the Faculties of Education and Public Health each to engage in more intensive consideration of how such a move could best advance its mission. It will also be necessary to feed those ideas into a larger process, as further discussed below.

- **Housing and urban life**: There is a strong consensus that Harvard must expand the availability of housing opportunities for students in our graduate and professional schools. We now offer such housing to a relatively small proportion of our students beyond the undergraduate level. Especially given the difficulty of the local private housing market, as well as intensified competition for outstanding students, we can and must do better. We have recently made progress by constructing One Western Avenue in Allston, and we aim to make further progress by creating new housing in the Riverside area of Cambridge. But the overall challenge is considerably larger, and Allston presents an opportunity to meet it.

If we are successful, our students’ lives will be better, and our educational environment livelier and richer. To be sure, not all students in our graduate and professional schools would wish to live on campus or right nearby. But the collective presence of many such students in well-designed residential settings can make their own lives outside the classroom (or library or laboratory) more stimulating, both academically and socially. And it can transform the overall ambience of a campus, giving it a much greater sense of community and intellectual vitality. What’s more, building student housing (and perhaps, in time, some faculty housing) at carefully chosen sites in Allston—most likely where Harvard’s properties adjoin the surrounding neighborhood—is a key to ensuring that Harvard becomes appropriately integrated into our neighboring community, rather than walled off from it. Our goal should be a campus that, as in Cambridge, both enlivens and draws life from the neighborhood of which it is a part.

Consistent with that goal, our Allston plan will additionally need to incorporate a variety of features essential to a lively and welcoming residential urban community—places to eat, places to shop, gathering places for special events, open spaces to throw a frisbee or spread a picnic blanket or simply sit and talk. Improved, reliable systems of transportation (already a subject of focused preliminary study) will also be essential. Our Allston plan should derive its vitality not only from academic activities central to the University’s mission, but also from day-to-day activities central to the life of a vibrant neighborhood within one of our nation’s great cities. For Harvard, as for the larger community, it is important to envision our extended campus in Allston not just as a place to work, but as a place to live.

- **Culture and community**: Few things contribute more to the character and spirit of our university, and the enjoyment and stimulation of being part of it, than the wealth of artistic and cultural resources to which Harvard is home. Our arts organizations, museums, and other cultural resources serve important academic purposes, while providing significant links to the wider community. Allston presents a possible opportunity to create new space for some of our cultural activities, and in so doing to advance both our educational objectives and our interests in creating a sense of vibrancy within and around the expanded campus.

The opportunity coincides with a tangible need. Some of our museums have needs for improved space. Harvard possesses a range of extraordinary collections, and in planning for Allston we should further consider how our stewardship of those collections serves our scholarly and educational purposes as well as broader public interests. In addition, the supply of suitable space for students involved in the arts has in recent years not kept pace with the rising demand. Harvard
is blessed with a remarkable abundance of artistic talent; in time, our facilities can do more to serve both our performing artists and their audiences.

Considerable work lies ahead to determine how we might envision the possibilities for artistic and cultural activities in Allston. Cambridge surely will remain an essential locale for many of our hallmark activities of this kind, and we will need to consider carefully the right balance and distribution of new and improved space on either side of the Charles. We must also keep much in mind the distinctive academic mission of university museums, which our space planning should reflect. The salient point, for now, is that cultural and artistic activities should have a place in our further planning for Allston—ideally one that could help bring to the area the kind of creative energy that has long characterized Harvard’s environs in Cambridge.

- **Undergraduate life.** A final emerging planning assumption—at this point more speculative than others I have described—is that Allston might in time serve as a significant locus for activities and facilities aimed at enhancing aspects of the undergraduate experience, including the possibility of new undergraduate Houses close to the Charles River.

The prospect of an undergraduate residential presence in Allston, years from now, could stand to benefit the College and the University in a variety of ways. It could do much to ensure that the Cambridge and Allston portions of our expanded campus evolve not as separate domains, but as integrated, interactive elements of a larger whole. It could enable us to think more creatively about space for student activities in close proximity to new Houses—a challenge that has proved hard to meet in Cambridge, where facilities for social, recreational, and extracurricular pursuits are in some cases stretched to the limit. It could provide an outlet to relieve the crowding that now affects some of the Houses, and in so doing not only improve students’ rooming situations but also free up space for activities that could benefit House life. It could open up the possibility, in the long term, of relocating students from the Radcliffe Quad to a site closer to the existing River Houses. It could introduce a community of students into Allston who would doubtless invigorate the expanded campus.

Perhaps most important, in the fullness of time and after thorough deliberation about the educational merits of any such development, it could eventually enable Harvard College to welcome a larger complement of students from other parts of the world. Certainly for the next decade, our focus must be on improving our faculty-student ratio by enlarging the faculty, not the student body. For the longer term, I believe we should seriously consider whether welcoming more undergraduates from abroad, in an age of growing global interdependence, would add important new dimensions to the Harvard College experience.

With these prospective advantages comes a host of questions, which a next round of planning will need to address. For instance, how could we create an ambience in Allston that, in time, would make it as desirable a home for undergraduates as Cambridge is now? How might Harvard, in cooperation with government agencies, work to improve the flow of pedestrian and other traffic across and along the River, so the walk or ride back and forth would be more convenient, and the riverscape livelier and more inviting? How could we best combine the possibilities of a new undergraduate community in Allston with the rich traditions of the existing Houses to create a Harvard College experience that would benefit and excite students living on either side of the Charles?

To the extent that creating undergraduate residences in Allston could affect some of the existing buildings and fields in our athletics complex, another important set of issues arises. Harvard is home to more intercollegiate varsity teams than any other university, and athletics—both competitive and recreational—is a much-valued element in the life of the College and the
University. We would need to consider carefully how to carry forward with a complex of athletics facilities that would retain its present center of gravity and compare well in quality, contiguity, and accessibility to what we have now. While reconfiguring part of the Soldiers Field area to open the way for a number of new Houses would no doubt involve complicated planning challenges, having a community of undergraduate (as well as graduate) students living right near our athletics complex—especially one with a number of modernized facilities—could yield substantial benefits all around.

The five planning assumptions outlined above provide a framework to help orient our future thinking about Allston. A great deal remains to be discussed and decided, and the continuing flow of ideas and perspectives from throughout Harvard and beyond will be essential to inform our judgments about how best to proceed. The immediate purpose is to advance from an open-ended discussion about multiple possible scenarios to a more focused discussion about the elements of one possible conception that appears to hold particular promise—and to consider how we might best realize that promise, taking full account of the complexities and tradeoffs that such a path (like any path) would entail.

Next Steps

As we move forward, our real estate planning and development activities will need to be closely harnessed to progressively refined judgments about our academic and other programmatic aspirations. The next stage of planning will need to draw strongly on the creative, farsighted thinking of faculty members and others in considering how the broad outlines sketched above can be sharpened, tested, elaborated, and ultimately converted from ideas into reality. Thoughtful, imaginative, forward-looking input from throughout the Harvard community—not only faculty, but also students, staff, and alumni—will be essential as we proceed. We will also need to draw on outside expertise as we prepare to undertake the master planning function essential to carrying out an enterprise of such size and scope. And, in turn, our internal process will need to track closely with the institutional master planning process established for university growth by the City of Boston, as we continue to ensure that our planning is informed by community interests and ideas.

Clearly, important conversations will need to continue within the faculties and schools potentially most affected by the set of programmatic assumptions described above. The Faculties of Education and Public Health will need to think more intensively about the prospect of eventual relocation. The Faculties of Arts and Sciences and of Medicine, along with Public Health, will need to think more concretely, and in closely coordinated ways, about the prospect of Allston as a major venue for Harvard science. The FAS, and especially Harvard College, will need to think more fully about the long-term possibility of new undergraduate Houses in Allston. The arts and museums communities will need to be involved in weighing both possibilities and constraints for cultural endeavors in Allston. These and other discussions will be critical as we proceed.

At the same time, if plans are to evolve coherently, and if decisions and tradeoffs are to be made in light of the long-term interests of the University as a whole, we will need a more articulated structure to advance the planning effort. To this end, a group of task forces consisting largely of faculty members will be formed to consider more fully the opportunities and challenges presented in the principal programmatic domains. Each task force will provide a channel for soliciting and evaluating input from interested faculty, staff, students, and others, and each will work to develop the broad conceptual elements outlined here into more specific programmatic options. The task forces will also be asked to consider ways we might learn from the experience of other institutions.

I am pleased to report on the following initial steps in assembling these task forces:
• Provost Steven Hyman will chair a task force on science and technology, which will include members of the Faculties of Arts and Sciences, Medicine, and Public Health. Douglas Melton (FAS – life sciences), Venky Narayanamurti (FAS – physical sciences and engineering), Edward Harlow (HMS), and Dyann Wirth (SPH) are among those expected to play major roles in their respective spheres. The group will consider alternative ways in which a powerful critical mass of innovative scientific activity could be created in Allston, complementing our strengths in Cambridge and Longwood, to build the long-term capacity of Harvard science as a whole.

• Dean Kim Clark will chair a task force on professional schools, with Deans Barry Bloom and Ellen Condliffe Lagemann taking the lead in the consideration of matters particular to the Schools of Public Health and Education, respectively. The task force will also include faculty members from the GSE, SPH, and several other schools. The group will consider ways in which the Allston opportunity can foster productive collaboration among Harvard’s schools, and ways to optimize the academic benefits of the prospective relocation of the SPH and the GSE.

• Professor Dennis Thompson, chair of the University Physical Planning Committee, will chair the task force on culture, housing, and urban life. The group will consider ways in which our eventual development of Allston can take proper advantage of Harvard’s artistic and cultural resources; ways in which our Allston properties can support housing for graduate students (and potentially others); and ways to ensure that our Allston plans incorporate restaurants, shops, public spaces, and other elements vital to a lively residential urban community.

• Dean Bill Kirby will oversee the work of the task force on undergraduate life, and name a chair or chairs to lead the group. This group will think broadly about ways in which the long-term development of Allston might contribute to the quality of the Harvard College experience, and more specifically about the possibility of someday creating new undergraduate Houses in Allston (and related implications for the athletics complex). Care will be taken to ensure input from the ongoing FAS review of undergraduate education.

Periodically, the Provost, the Dean of the FAS, and I expect to bring together the task force leaders, the Deans of Education and Public Health, and selected others with needed perspectives or expertise, so we can discuss progress and problems, resolve questions of common concern, and chart a productive forward course. Meanwhile, more intensive work will proceed in a number of key administrative domains, including finance, fundraising, and community relations and communications, under the guidance of the vice presidents responsible for those areas.

One crucial near-term challenge is to engage a firm that can enable us to carry out the master planning function needed to achieve a coherent and imaginative set of physical plans. This firm will provide expertise in helping us see, far more vividly and concretely, the variety of ways in which an evolving set of programmatic ideas might be converted into physical realities. It will also help us intensify our analysis of possible options for transportation improvements, a critical element of any ultimate Allston plan. I have asked our Vice President for Administration, Sally Zeckhauser, to lead a small working group of faculty, administrators, and advisors charged with identifying and evaluating firms potentially best suited to this role. The group will report its recommendations to the President, Provost, and Deans and ultimately to the Corporation. Once such a firm is chosen, we will need to integrate its personnel into our planning process, and likely make sensible adjustments to the process itself. Throughout, we will need to bear closely in mind that consequential judgments about academic priority-setting and related capital investments are a core responsibility of the University itself, not a function assignable to others.
The Corporation will, of course, be regularly involved at important stages in the planning effort, given its ultimate responsibility for the use of University resources and for the long-term progress of the institution. The full Academic Advisory Group (including the Deans of all the Faculties) will continue to have a key role in the process, to ensure that the interests of all of our faculties and schools are carefully weighed and that opportunities for collaboration are fully explored. The University Physical Planning Committee, including faculty members from different parts of Harvard, will serve as a periodic sounding board for emergent ideas and directions. And the Harvard Planning + Allston Initiative will continue to provide needed analysis and support.

Finally, I should note that with the promise of Allston comes the prospect of very substantial capital costs. We have begun to analyze this formidable financing challenge, even as we work to define with greater precision just what we will have to finance. The Corporation anticipates that, in due course, we will need to extend the existing mechanisms we have relied on to support the acquisition of key Allston properties as we begin to build on that land. We will also need to step up our planning for how programs and facilities eventually located in Allston will figure into our broader fundraising efforts in the future.

***

The kind of opportunity before us comes along rarely in the life of a modern university. That the opportunity entails hard questions and complex choices should not divert us from recognizing its enormous long-term potential to advance our shared commitment to education, scholarship, and service. I hope that the planning assumptions outlined above will bring us a further step down the road toward imagining and ultimately realizing an exciting future for Harvard in Allston, one that will secure and extend the University’s enduring academic excellence while benefiting the broader community as well. Each of us sees the possible choices from a different perspective, and each of us will have different reactions. But all of us, I hope, will continue to envision Harvard’s greater presence in Allston with a full appreciation of the extraordinary promise it holds, and with a spirit of openness to new possibilities that can best advance the interests of Harvard as a whole, for generations to come.

I welcome your comments, ideas, and reactions, and I hope that many of you who have views on these important matters will share them, either by letter or by e-mail to allston@harvard.edu.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Lawrence H. Summers