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General Questions

Q1. Every candidate is talking about the housing affordability crisis. Housing costs are increasing for everyone, but renters in particular are bearing the brunt of this crisis, with many frequently spending 30, 40, and even 50% of their income on rent. What is your plan to bring down rent prices for both subsidized and market rate housing?

Answer:

Most recently, I was proud to be one of the first ten signatures on the recently filed binding ballot petition aiming to lift the ban on rent control in Massachusetts. This proposal aims to cap rent increases at 5% or lower annually for landlords with more than four units. This would add a clearly needed layer of oversight in the market and provide stability to rent prices that have been skyrocketing in recent decades.

Moreover, we must expand our deeply affordable housing supply through more community centered, hyperlocal approaches. As it stands, affordable housing rates are determined by a federally-set Area Median Income (AMI) figure. This figure captures data from wealthy Boston suburbs, and does not account for income disparities that exist among Boston neighborhoods. I support localizing the AMI to redefine what we consider affordable so that more low-income Bostonians can actually secure housing.

Finally, we must get creative about increasing available funds to invest in creating more affordable housing. I have advocated for exploring a “displacement tax” where any project that poses a risk of displacing residents receives a tax that gets invested in creating more affordable units.



Q2. A 2023 report commissioned by the Boston Planning Department found that the Boston Zoning Code is “bloated, outdated, inconsistent, and inequitable.” At over 4,000 pages, it is layered with districts, sub-districts, and other confusing variations that make most new development, from the smallest additions to large multi-family projects, more expensive and time-consuming than they need to be. What efforts do you support to simplify the zoning code and create consistent standards across the City?

Answer:

Like any decisions that impact our residents, a rewriting of the zoning code must be done in lock-step with the communities most impacted. We are seeing currently that people are feeling as though development is happening to them, without them. I support robust community engagement in the re-drafting of a zoning code that promotes economic development without displacement, ensures that the cultural fabric and identity of neighborhoods is able to be maintained.

Q3. What specific housing policy initiatives will you prioritize as an elected official?

Answer:

In my next term, I will prioritize:

1. Exploring a displacement tax
2. Leveraging my influence to advocate fiercely for rent stabilization at the State House
3. Auditing available City parcels and vacant City buildings which could be transformed into affordable housing
4. Pushing for a localization of the AMI
5. Ensuring that large LLC's and large, tax-exempt, private institutions are held accountable for displacing residents



Current City Policy

Q4. Since the Squares and Streets initiative was launched in Q3 of 2023, one new district has been approved in Roslindale Square. What does it do well and how should it be improved? Which neighborhoods should be after Roslindale and why?

Answer:

Since the Squares and Streets process has been operational, it has been an initiative that our office identified as needing improvement when it comes to community engagement. According to the Planning Department's data, in Roslindale Square, 74% of those engaged were white, 5% were Latino, and 4% were Black. Moreover, over 80% of those engaged were homeowners. We acknowledge that community engagement is not easy, but the aforementioned data strongly suggests that there is much more work to be done. Development impacts everyone, and it is critical that every perspective is accounted for and heard before those decisions are made. Historically, development processes in Boston have excluded people of color and renters, so we have an opportunity and obligation to change that now in 2025. Our office held a hearing on the community engagement process within Squares + Streets, and until outstanding concerns raised by Black and Brown residents are addressed, we do not advocate for the initiative's advancement to new neighborhoods.

Q5. Boston's new Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP), which went into effect in October 2024, raised the affordability requirements for new residential buildings requiring zoning relief and changed the structures of the cashout and off-site options. What do you think the impact of the new IDP policy has been?

Answer:

I support the increased minimum requirements to 20%, but I do not think it goes far enough. In my first campaign, I turned heads when calling for 50%, but I truly believe that if we want to be serious about housing Bostonians, that we need to be bold in our approach.



Q6. This past December, the Boston City Council hosted members of the Austin City Council for a two-day visit, during which the Austin City Councilors presented recent zoning changes they enacted that resulted in increased housing production and lowered rents. Austin has made national headlines as one of the few cities in the US to see rents decrease over the past year. After a building boom resulting from these reforms, rents fell by more than 20% year over year from August 2023 to August 2024. Do you support Austin-style zoning reforms as a strategy for bringing down home prices?

Answer:

I think we can learn a lot from what Austin has done, but Boston isn't Austin. Any zoning reform here has to start with centering the voices of those who are most impacted by our housing crisis: renters, working-class families, and communities of color who have historically been left out of these conversations. We need bold solutions to bring down rents and increase affordability, but we can no longer just build, build, build. If we don't make equity and community engagement a priority, we risk repeating the same patterns of displacement and gentrification that have pushed so many of our loved ones out of Boston. So, while I'm open to considering reforms like parking reductions or density bonuses, my support depends on whether those changes come with strong tenant protections, meaningful affordability requirements, and a real engagement process that ensures every neighborhood, and not just large LLCs, has a real seat at the table.



AHMA's Vision for Boston

Q7. The Affordable Homes Act signed by Governor Healey last summer legalized Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) everywhere in the state except Boston. ADUs have frequently been cited as a “win/win/win” way to create much needed new homes, while providing rental income and/or multigenerational housing opportunities for homeowners. Do you support or oppose legalizing ADUs by right citywide? If so, what should the timeline be for implementation?

Answer:

I support legalizing ADUs citywide. Too many families are being priced out of Boston, and ADUs are one practical tool we can use to expand our housing options while helping longtime residents stay rooted in their communities. Whether it's creating space for an aging parent, a young adult just starting out, or providing rental income to offset rising costs, ADUs can be a win for both homeowners and renters. That said, implementation must be paired with strong community engagement and safeguards to ensure equity. We need to make sure homeowners, especially seniors, working-class families, and residents of color, have the technical and financial support to actually benefit from this opportunity, and that new units contribute to affordability rather than just fueling speculation.

Q8. There is a large body of research showing that parking minimums add significantly to the cost of development, which leads to higher rents and home prices. In 2021, the City eliminated parking mandates for affordable housing citing the cost of such requirements and because it gave the homebuilder the ability to provide parking that matches the needs of the residents, rather than an outdated and arbitrary city formula. Do you support or oppose expanding the elimination of costly parking mandates to all new residential development?

Answer:

I support expanding the elimination of outdated parking mandates for all new residential development. Parking requirements drive up the cost of building homes, making it harder to create affordable housing, and they often encourage more car dependence rather than supporting sustainable, transit-oriented communities. Boston residents, particularly working families and communities of color, should not bear the added cost of unused or unnecessary parking. Allowing developers to match parking supply to actual need can lower housing costs and promote equitable access to transit. At the same time, we must ensure that these changes are paired with investments in public transit, safe streets for pedestrians and cyclists, and protections for residents who already rely on street parking. The transition cannot further burden historically underserved communities.



Q9. The City of Boston's population has been growing steadily for the past three decades. As this trend continues, we will need to build a lot more homes to ensure that current and future residents can afford to live here. To that end, do you support or oppose allowing residential construction up to 6 stories by-right citywide?

Answer:

I support bold action to tackle Boston's housing crisis, but we have to make sure that solutions like by-right zoning for six-story buildings actually work for the communities most impacted. Ending exclusionary zoning is necessary, too many neighborhoods have used restrictive zoning to keep people out and drive up costs. Allowing more homes across the city is one way to push back on those barriers. With that, opening the door to taller buildings without guardrails is not going to meet the moment. We have to tie these reforms to deep affordability requirements, strong protections against displacement, and investments in community-led development. I believe Boston can learn from Cambridge's example, but we need to implement this change alongside robust tenant protections, clear pathways for nonprofit and community developers, and strong accountability to make sure growth doesn't just mean luxury housing.

Q10. A recent study from Boston Indicators and Transit Matters found that Boston does not build enough housing around public transportation to support a high-functioning system. Given the reliance of Boston residents on public transportation, do you support or oppose permitting residential construction up to 12 stories by right citywide within 1/2 rapid transit, commuter rail, and bus stations?

Answer:

I strongly support investments into transportation justice. For too long, communities of color such as Mattapan and Hyde Park have been excluded from our city's transportation infrastructure. We must correct those injustices by ensuring that new housing and new investments are aligned with reliable, affordable, and accessible transit. Allowing more housing near transit is an important step toward building a sustainable city, but it must be done in a way that centers community voices and prevents displacement. I support permitting taller residential buildings near transit hubs if paired with strong affordability requirements, anti-displacement protections, and commitments to improve service in underserved neighborhoods. Building more homes near transit only works if those homes are accessible to the very people who rely on public transportation the most: low-income residents, working families, and communities of color. Otherwise, we risk repeating the same patterns of exclusion that got us here in the first place.

