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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:

Over half of Boston renters are paying more than 30% of their income just to keep a roof over their heads, and the numbers are even higher for Black and Latino renters. We've got to act on all fronts and push the state to approve Boston's rent stabilization plan, build more affordable housing, and preserve the income-restricted units we already have. That's why, as a City Councilor, I voted in support of the Boston Acquisition Fund, which allows the City to purchase housing units and keep them permanently affordable. I voted in support of the rezoning efforts in Roslindale Square, known as Squares and Streets. I also led the effort to ban forced paid broker fees, easing the financial burden for renters across the city. We need stronger tenant protections like "just cause" eviction rules and more access to legal help. At the same time, we can fix the zoning and permitting process across the city so it's easier and faster to build both subsidized and market-rate housing.



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 A 2023 report commissioned by the Boston Planning Department found that the Boston Zoning Code is “bloated, outdated, inconsistent, and inequitable.”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:

Our zoning code is over 4,000 pages long, with more than 400 different districts, and it's slowing down the kind of housing production we need. The 2023 report laid it out clearly: Boston needs a zoning code that's shorter, simpler, and fairer. I support moving toward a streamlined code of about 500 pages, fewer districts, and clear, consistent rules so projects don't have to go through endless variance requests. That's why I voted in favor of the rezoning efforts in Roslindale Square Square and Streets plan, and am currently working with the residents of Hyde Park to pass a similar policy in Clearly Square.

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

Answer:

I'll keep fighting for rent stabilization, a full zoning code overhaul, and more affordable housing spread across every neighborhood and not just a few. I want to expand tenant protections, give more people access to legal support when they're facing eviction, and make sure new developments include truly affordable units. That's why I recently co-sponsored a hearing order with Council President Louijeune to prioritize the use of vacant municipal buildings for affordable housing, similar to the innovative Pryde project in Hyde Park. I'll also push for more transit-oriented development and use public land to build deeply affordable housing.



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:

Roslindale Square is a great example of what “Squares and Streets” can do. It’s making it easier to build housing and support small businesses right near transit. But we can make it stronger by locking in deeper affordability and keeping the community involved in every step. After Roslindale, I’d like to see this in neighborhoods like Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, and East Boston, where we’ve got both strong transit access and real housing needs.

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:

It’s still early to see the full results, but I think the new IDP is moving us in the right direction. By raising the affordability requirements and tightening the rules around cash-outs and off-site units, we’re making sure developers contribute more to Boston’s affordable housing supply. I’ll be watching closely to make sure this actually leads to more on-site units and spreads affordable housing more evenly across the city.



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:

Yes. As one of the City Councilors that extended the invitation, Austin showed us what can happen when you make smart changes. They focused on removing parking mandates, streamlining approvals, adding height bonuses for affordable units, and focusing development near transit. They built more housing, and rents actually dropped by over 20% in a year. Boston can take a page from that playbook to boost supply, lower costs, and make it easier for people to live here.

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 Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) across the city. ADUs are a win for everyone. They add housing, give homeowners rental income, and create space for multigenerational families. The state's Affordable Homes Act made them legal everywhere in Massachusetts except Boston, and I think we should change that within the next year or two.



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 it. We already got rid of parking minimums for affordable housing back in 2021, and it's time to extend that to all housing. Parking mandates drive up construction costs, which leads to higher rents, and they don't reflect actual demand in many neighborhoods.

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 it. Allowing 6-story buildings by right will help us get more housing built without long and expensive variance processes. It's a straightforward way to make housing more affordable and make sure Boston grows in a smart, sustainable way.

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 support it. Building more housing near transit just makes sense. It's better for affordability, better for the environment, and better for our transit system. A recent study showed we're not building enough homes near public transportation, and this is one way to change that quickly.

