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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:

Housing is the issue I hear about most, and I believe we need to act with the urgency that meets the scale of this crisis. Rents are out of control because Boston simply has not built enough housing for working people and young families trying to stay in the city. We need to dramatically increase production across the board (subsidized, market-rate, and truly affordable) so people aren't competing for too few units.

The City Council has to get serious about cutting through the red tape that makes building housing in Boston overly complicated and too expensive. Streamlining those processes, while still holding developers accountable to affordability and community standards, is essential if we are going to build the housing Boston desperately needs.

At the same time, we can not just build luxury housing and call it a solution. We need to prioritize deeply affordable units, reinvest in public and nonprofit housing, and ensure that development in Boston reflects the needs of our communities, not just the profits of developers.



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 A 2023 report commissioned by the Boston Planning Department found that the Boston Zoning Code is “bloated, outdated, inconsistent, and inequitable.”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

Boston’s zoning code is broken, and everyone is feeling the impact. Those over 4,000 pages of outdated rules make it painfully difficult for families to fix up their homes and extremely challenging to build the housing our city needs. All the extra costs and confusion lead to higher housing prices that push working families out of Boston. I support fixing the zoning code so it’s simple and consistent across the city. We need rules that help us build more housing faster, specifically affordable housing for working families, homes for seniors who want to stay in their neighborhood, and apartments young people can actually afford. A streamlined code means less red tape, lower costs, and more homes that meet the needs of our communities. This is not about helping developers, it is about helping our neighbors stay in the homes and communities they love.

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

Answer:

As City Councilor, my priority will be keeping Boston affordable for working families. That means bringing back rent control so people aren’t forced out by sudden rent hikes, and expanding community land trusts that keep housing permanently affordable and under community control. To meet the scale of this crisis, we need more housing at all levels, centered on what working families can afford. We can achieve this by holding developers accountable, removing needless barriers, and dedicating public land to serve the people. Combining rent control, community ownership, and new construction is how we make Boston a city where all working families can thrive.



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:

To be honest, I have not heard about the Squares and Streets initiative from people on the doors or in the community, so I am still learning about it myself. From what I have read, it seems like it has potential, especially if it helps build more housing for the community and it supports local businesses. I would want to make sure it truly delivers affordable housing for working families and that it does not just stop at the main streets, but reaches the surrounding neighborhoods too. If done right, expanding it to places like Nubian Square could strengthen our community and give more families a real chance to stay and grow in Boston.

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:

Boston's new IDP is a step in the right direction. Raising affordability requirements means more homes that working families can actually afford, whether they are renting or buying. Overall this policy helps keep our neighborhoods affordable for the people who call Boston home and make this city run. As City Councilor, I will work to make sure these affordable units are not just built, but built in the neighborhoods where families need them most.



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 Boston should be open to bold reforms like Austin's if they help bring rents down and make it easier to build more homes that families can afford. At the end of the day, what matters is making sure people in our neighborhoods can stay here and build a future. If reforms like these get us there, I would support them. If other cities are finding success, Boston should learn from them and adapt those lessons to meet the needs of our communities.

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 strongly support ADUs. They are a great way to create more homes, give families rental income, and help our seniors stay in the neighborhoods they have spent their lives in. To meet the needs of our housing crisis, we must move quickly to implement ADUs across our city so families can start benefiting right away.



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 know how much many working families in Boston rely on their cars. For parents raising kids, or workers who can not get to their jobs by bus or train, a car is a necessity. That is why I am cautious about eliminating parking requirements. I support looking at changes if they truly bring down housing costs, but it can not come at the expense of making it impossible for families to park near their own homes. If reforms give builders flexibility to match parking to the real needs of residents, rather than sticking to outdated rules that drive up costs, then I think it is worth exploring. With that being said, any changes to parking requirements must take the everyday realities of working families in mind.

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 allowing more housing to be built, including up to six stories, because Boston families need places they can actually afford to live. Right now, too many people are being pushed out because we do not have enough homes. Making it easier to build helps bring down costs and keeps our neighborhoods open to working families, seniors, and young people who want to stay in the city.

That being said, we need to make sure growth works for our communities. That means protecting families from displacement and making sure new housing comes with real affordability. If we get this right, it means more homes for the people who make Boston home, not just the wealthy few.



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 am supportive of building up in the right places, especially along our transit corridors. It just makes sense that people should be able to live close to the trains and buses they rely on every day. That being said, I know my community, I know District 7. If you are talking about putting up a 12 story building in Roxbury, that is going to take real buy-in from the community. Projects like that need neighbors at the table from the start, and they need to deliver real affordability so families in our neighborhoods can actually benefit.

I support larger housing construction if it centers the community, meaning it keeps longtime residents in mind, creates homes that working families can afford, and makes sure people have a say in shaping what gets built. Growth done this way strengthens our neighborhoods and helps Boston meet its housing needs without leaving anyone behind.

