

# 2023 Boston City Council Candidate Questionnaire

JP Progressives \* Progressive West Roxbury/Roslindale \* Allston/Brighton Progressives

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## PUBLIC SECTION

*The public part of the questionnaire contains a mix of yes/no and open-ended questions. Please keep all answers to open-ended questions to no more than 150 words. A non-response to a yes/no question will be treated as a no.*

### (A) Your Candidacy

#### 1. What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve?

I am committed to expanding access to quality public and affordable housing. I will advocate for funding for affordable housing initiatives, support community land trusts, and promote policies that prevent displacement and ensure housing stability. Another priority is public safety: we need to invest in our communities and eradicate gun violence. I will advocate for major investments in youth programs, summer and afterschool initiatives. By providing our youth with safe spaces, educational opportunities, and mentorship, we can empower them to make positive choices and break the cycle of violence. Uplifting civic engagement opportunities is crucial for a vibrant democracy. I will work to create better pathways for everyone, especially our most vulnerable residents, to be involved. And I believe in a green overlay on every issue: we need civic advocacy and youth leadership to combat the climate crisis, and to achieve health equity our affordable housing must also be green.

#### 2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

My experience and commitment to service qualify me for this role. My family moved to Boston from the Dominican Republic when I was three, growing up in public housing, attending BPS elementary schools. My career has been dedicated to giving back to my community, helping our most vulnerable, and inspiring the next generation. I have over 15 years of experience with the Mission Hill Summer Program, have served constituents in Councilor Kenzie Bok's office, and served under Mayor Wu as the City's first-ever Director of Civic Organizing. I know how municipal government works, I've benefited from the best social programs that Boston has to offer, but I also know the struggles of being a young Black Latinx renter trying to stay and thrive here. It's time for a new generation of progressive leadership in City Hall that is focused on leading with empathy and making things better for all Bostonians.

**3. What do you see as the role of the City Council in our strong-mayor system?**

The Council's new ability to amend the budget should allow it to serve as an important check on the Mayor's authority, ensuring transparency, accountability, and representation of the diverse interests and needs of constituents. But this doesn't work if every Councilor "goes it alone" on amendments; by working together, I know we can make much more effective use of these budget powers. Beyond budgetary oversight, the Council can play a crucial role in policy-making and legislation. This past term, the Council has been extremely unproductive in terms of passing new ordinances. With a progressive majority and progressive mayor, it should be taking the opportunity to write strong model legislation for the rest of the country. I don't think the City Council is structurally weak so much as it has a collective action problem; I would bring a strong focus on actually achieving successful budget amendments and legislation, not just grandstanding.

**4. What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to see Boston adopt?**

I am excited to see Boston adopt the idea of Participatory Budgeting as modeled throughout the world. As Boston continues to implement PB, I am dedicated to ensuring the process is inclusive, transparent, and meaningful by actively involving community members, advocates, and grassroots organizations. Their perspectives and expertise are invaluable in determining how public funds should be allocated to address the pressing needs of our neighborhoods. I will advocate for clear guidelines, comprehensive communication strategies, and user-friendly platforms that enable meaningful participation from diverse communities. I will also champion

open data practices, providing residents with real-time information on budget allocations, project progress, and outcomes. This transparency will build trust and accountability between the city government and its constituents. Perhaps most importantly, I will push for larger allocations for PB, so residents can have confidence that their voices will have a meaningful impact by leading to real at-scale programmatic investments.

**5. Which of the following groups have you chosen to reject / would reject campaign contributions from?**

- a. For-profit developers
- b. Fossil fuel executives or lobbyists
- c. Charter school advocates and lobbyists
- d. Police unions

I don't believe in empty promises; as a first-time candidate running a grassroots campaign, I cannot dedicate the staff capacity to constantly screening our donors based on professional area or views, and I don't want to commit to something I cannot ensure. You have my commitment that my strong progressive support for housing justice, climate justice, truly public schools, and police contract reform will never be quieted by donations. As an at-large councilor, I'll be subject to less direct advocacy for particular development projects. Very few fossil fuel professionals donate in Boston municipal races, and my advocacy for rapid decarbonization won't attract them. I am glad that in Boston, the charter school question was conclusively settled with the decisive 2016 No-on-2 victory; our educational focus must be on investing in BPS. I'll always be clear with police unions that I'll only vote in favor of a serious reform contract.

**(B) Racial Equity & Community Engagement**

**1. Name three accomplishments you've been able to achieve to advance racial justice or equity.**

In my time serving under Councilor Kenzie Bok, I actively engaged with constituents and organized a rally to bring back the #55 bus, addressing transportation disparities in the community. Additionally, I ensured that the voices of BIPOC youth were heard in the redesign of the Mission Hill Playground, resulting in the addition of a full court basketball court. I also ran an impromptu youth program out of our Council office in the summer of 2020, to help increase the number of summer opportunities for young people despite the Covid-19 emergency. This was an extension of my 15 years of involvement participating in and then leading the Mission Hill Summer

Program, an affordable and engaging academic summer program. Through my roles as a counselor, camp director, and mentor, I have empowered many young people from diverse backgrounds, particularly those from marginalized communities, to become leaders and advocates.

**2. What steps would you take, if elected, to engage all the diverse communities of Boston in policymaking, and what past actions of yours should give voters confidence that you will follow through?**

My commitment to community and civic engagement will drive my approach to policymaking. Understanding the challenges faced by diverse communities, I will take steps to actively engage all residents in shaping policies that affect their lives. I will work diligently to reduce barriers for community participation, prioritizing multilingual translations and accessibility. By providing clear and concise information to constituents, I will empower residents with the knowledge necessary to actively participate in the policymaking process.

My past actions demonstrate my dedication to community empowerment. As the Mayor's Director of Civic Organizing, I collaborated with residents and community groups across all neighborhoods to plan inclusive community events, service projects, and initiatives that fostered civic action. I firmly believe that our democracy thrives when we build a diverse coalition of voices.

**3. The future of democracy depends on robust youth engagement. Describe how you engage youth formally in your work as city councilor, or would plan to do so if elected.**

Youth engagement is paramount for the future of our democracy, and a key priority of mine. I have personally experienced the transformative power of mentorship and guidance from public servants like Jeffery Sanchez and Michael Ross, who invested in me at a youth and inspired me to serve. As Director of Civic Organizing, I established a meaningful partnership with the Mayor's Youth Council to work closely with our city's young people to plan a service day to commemorate One Boston Day and the Boston Marathon. If elected, I will continue to prioritize partnerships and initiatives that involve our bright young people in our democracy. I will work to expand opportunities for youth to contribute to policy discussions, community projects, and decision-making processes. By providing platforms for their voices to be heard, I will empower them to actively shape the future of Boston and inspire the next generation of leaders.

## **(C) Budget & Revenue**

### **1. Do you support dedicating at least 1% of the operating budget to participatory budgeting?**

YES. In my capacity as Director of Civic Organizing, I worked directly with participatory budgeting advocates and collaborated with both the Mayor's Office and City Council in drafting an ordinance to shape the launch of Participatory Budgeting in this year's fiscal budget. Throughout the process, I pushed internally for allocation of more significant funds to participatory budgeting for the purpose of establishing an office and working with the community. While this year's budget does not seem likely to achieve nearly as much as we had hoped for, I believe that by building a strong participatory budgeting program with deep community roots, we can launch a strong positive cycle where the successes of participatory budgeting projects and the overall program lead to unified political support for increasing its budget share dramatically over time.

### **2. In 2022, almost 75% of Boston's revenue came from property taxes, but half Boston's land is tax exempt. To address this problem, then Mayor Menino created the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program, requesting large nonprofit hospitals, educational, and cultural institutions with over \$15 Million in property to pay 25% of their assessed potential property tax to reimburse the city for vital services, snow removal, fire and police protection, and sanitation. Half of that assessment can be fulfilled through provision of a community benefit. Each year fewer institutions pay their full PILOT request, and in the last 12 years, institutions have failed to pay the city over \$175 Million in PILOT requests. How will you work to create a stronger PILOT system that expands community engagement, defines community benefits and creates a fairer system to meet the needs of residents of the city of Boston?**

Creating a stronger PILOT system that expands engagement, defines community benefits, and ensures fairness is crucial. I will prioritize community engagement by actively involving residents and organizations in defining community benefits. Their input and perspectives are essential in determining the specific needs and priorities of our neighborhoods. I will also advocate for increased transparency and accountability, including regular reporting and public disclosure of PILOT payments to ensure institutions fulfill their obligations to the city. I believe we should also explore mechanisms to hold non-compliant institutions accountable, such as through the Institutional Master Plan process, or by revising the eligibility criteria for tax-exempt status

at the state legislature. Creating a fairer system requires a comprehensive review of the current assessment methodology to ensure it accurately reflects the value of tax-exempt properties. I will collaborate with experts, assessors, and community stakeholders to develop a more equitable and transparent evaluation process.

**3. Given state law, Boston is limited in its taxing power. What opportunities do you see for the city to raise revenue?**

By fostering a thriving local economy, including in our communities of color, we can boost sales tax revenue and generate additional funds for essential city services. I also believe that we should continue to advocate at the state legislature for opportunities to increase our revenue-gathering authority, as through the transfer fee. Another important opportunity is to maximize Boston's share of the competitive federal funding in the Inflation Reduction Act; as a city that believes in a green future and fostering high-quality jobs, we should be well-positioned for these dollars. Over the longer term, I would also like to advocate for a regional taxing authority to fund the MBTA, which could help cover some of the things that Boston is currently funding ourselves (fare-free bus pilot). We should be maximizing our bonding authority to do as much public infrastructure investment in our shared public goods as possible every year.

**(D) Education**

**1. What are your top priorities for reducing persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in the Boston Public Schools?**

My top priorities are centered on equity, mental health support, infrastructure improvements, and expanding opportunities. I will work to increase resources for mental health in our schools, investing in guidance counselors and licensed social workers who can provide crucial support to students, particularly those from marginalized communities. We also owe it to our students to make much-needed infrastructure improvements, particularly addressing air quality. We can do this by investing in climate resilient green infrastructure for our schools. Lastly, I am eager to see educational opportunities for BPS students expand, such as offering college-level courses to high school students, providing exposure to different experiences in trades and vocational training, and promoting equitable access to extracurricular activities and enrichment programs. By addressing these priorities, we can begin to bridge the racial and economic achievement gaps, ensuring that all Boston students have access to quality education, support services, and

opportunities to thrive.

**2. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools in Boston?**

YES. For true educational justice, we need an excellent Boston Public Schools system for all our kids, including the special-needs students and English language learners who make up a very large proportion of our BPS students; this is where all our resources should be focused.

**3. Last year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education actively considered a takeover of the Boston Public Schools. Do you oppose any such future efforts at state takeover of BPS?**

YES. DESE is not equipped to run Boston Public Schools and has not been successful in any of its other takeovers around the state; I strongly oppose any future such efforts.

**4. Do you support a change in BPS governance to allow Boston voters the right to elect school committee members, like every other city in Massachusetts? If so, what would your ideal structure be? If not, why not?**

YES. I support moving toward either a fully-elected or hybrid model for the Boston School Committee. Giving residents the power to directly elect their school committee members is essential for fostering a truly democratic and accountable education system. As we advocate for this change, we must be intentional about ensuring equity in elections. Historically marginalized and low-income communities must have an equal opportunity to participate in the electoral process and have their voices heard. For instance, the new level of Spanish-speaking BSC representation in recent years has been very important for our large Spanish-speaking student population. This is why I think a targeted hybrid system that gives certain core interest groups a guaranteed seat makes sense. By actively working to level the playing field and amplifying the voices of underrepresented communities, we can create a school committee that truly reflects the diversity and needs of our city.

**5. The Boston Public Schools district is working on a memorandum of understanding with the Boston Police Department that avoids placing police back in schools but clarifies when educators should call police to respond to incidents. What are your thoughts about such a proposal? Moreover, what would be your priorities in ensuring that BPS is a safe environment for all students to learn?**

It is crucial to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all students, and the presence of police in schools can contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline and negatively impact marginalized communities. Instead, my priorities include:

1. Investing in restorative justice practices and conflict resolution programs that promote understanding, accountability, and healing.
2. Increasing the availability of mental health resources, including counselors and social workers, to provide essential support to students.
3. Implementing comprehensive anti-bullying and anti-discrimination policies that foster inclusivity and address systemic inequalities.
4. Promoting culturally responsive education that acknowledges and values the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students.
5. Collaborating with community organizations and stakeholders to create holistic approaches to safety, such as community-based programs and partnerships.

By prioritizing these measures, we can create a nurturing and empowering educational environment that prioritizes the well-being and success of all students, without the need for police presence in schools.

## **6. What steps would you take to make universal pre-K a reality in Boston?**

Work with community organizations, educators, parents, and stakeholders to build broad support for universal pre-K.

Explore various funding sources, including seeking state and federal grants, reallocating existing funds, and engaging private partnerships. By securing sustainable funding, we can ensure the long-term viability of universal pre-K in Boston.

Partner with existing early childhood education providers, including public schools, community-based organizations, and private providers, to expand capacity and enhance quality. Collaboration and resource-sharing can help streamline the implementation of universal pre-K.

Prioritize community outreach and engagement to involve families and communities in the design and implementation of universal pre-K. Their input is crucial for tailoring programs to meet the unique needs of Boston's diverse communities.



Establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system to track the effectiveness and impact of universal pre-K. Regular assessments would allow for necessary adjustments and improvements.

## **(E) Public Safety**

### **1. Do you support closing the loopholes in Boston's Trust Act which allow BPD to inquire about immigration status or pass information along to ICE?**

YES. I and my family know firsthand what it is like to live in fear because of immigration status, and I will never condone putting our residents in that situation.

### **2. Do you support shuttering the Boston Police gang database?**

YES. I am very concerned about the way the gang database can be used to criminalize just *existing* as a young person in a certain neighborhood. As someone who grew up in the Alice Taylor public housing development, I know those stigmas are counterproductive for community safety.

### **3. Although the Boston City Council is not directly involved in negotiations over the Boston Police Patrolman's Association (BPPA) contract, the City Council does have influence by way of a final vote. What reforms, if any, would you like to see in a final contract? What, if anything, would make you vote against it?**

I believe in good policing, so I believe in the need for meaningful reforms in the contract. Specifically, I advocate for provisions that enhance accountability and transparency, strengthen civilian oversight, and prioritize community engagement. This includes improved data collection, expanded de-escalation and implicit bias training, and disciplinary procedures that allow for removal of officers who abuse their power. I also support investing in community-based programs that address the root causes of crime and promote public safety in a holistic manner. Investing in mental health services, civilian mental health response, affordable housing, and youth programs can help create safer and more equitable communities. To do this, we need contract changes that structurally reduce overtime spending, finalize the retirement of permanently injured officers, civilianize desk jobs, and allow for some traffic details to be covered by trained civilians. I would vote against a contract that fails to achieve these reforms.

**4. Would you support allowing the use of civilians to direct traffic around construction projects and street work as opposed to limiting such work to the Boston Police Department?**

YES.

**5. Would you advocate for the reallocation of money from the Boston Police Department budget to reinvestment in communities?**

YES. I believe that over time, we can invest in violence prevention upstream to reduce the need for police-based violence response downstream. I also think that certain categories of response, like mental health calls, can and should be moved into purely civilian frameworks.

**6. Do you believe that affiliation or sympathies with white supremacist organizations among officers is a problem with BPD? If so, what measures would you take to combat that issue?**

YES. Affiliation or sympathies with white supremacist organizations within BPD undermine trust, compromise the integrity of law enforcement, and perpetuate systemic racism within the department. I am committed to fostering a safe and inclusive city for all residents. I will work tirelessly to promote transparency, accountability, and a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to any form of white supremacy or racial discrimination within the BPD. I will also advocate for comprehensive vetting processes during hiring as well as the implementation of robust training programs that focus on implicit bias, cultural sensitivity, and de-escalation techniques. Lastly, it is crucial to establish channels for reporting and addressing concerns regarding white supremacist affiliations within the BPD. By actively combating white supremacy within law enforcement, we can create a more just and equitable Boston, where all residents feel safe and protected.

**7. Do you support the legalization of overdose prevention centers?**

YES. In the grip of the opioid epidemic, it is important to always remember that people addicted to drugs are human beings, and we should be committed to evidence-based interventions that will save their lives.

**8. How would you evaluate the City's response to the humanitarian situation at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard ("Mass & Cass")?**

Recognizing the opioid epidemic as a humanitarian crisis, I will advocate for increased resources for mental health, addiction services, affordable housing, and comprehensive support programs. To evaluate the city's response, I will conduct a thorough assessment, engaging residents, service providers, and advocacy groups. We must work to address root causes of homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. My approach emphasizes harm reduction, housing-first initiatives, and collaboration with healthcare providers and social service agencies. I will work with community leaders to implement a coordinated response, including outreach, healthcare access, job training, and recovery support. Engaging neighboring communities is crucial as this issue extends beyond one intersection. By fostering collaboration, we can create a holistic and equitable response that supports individuals and addresses systemic causes. Through a compassionate and progressive approach, we can make progress in addressing this crisis and ensuring all residents have the necessary support and opportunities to thrive.

**9. What would be your priorities in reducing gun violence in the city?**

I will prioritize positive youth and community development, community-based models, expanding on gun violence prevention, and investing in mental health and social services as anti-violence measures. We must invest in providing our young people with opportunities for growth, education, and mentorship. In addition, building trust between law enforcement and the community is vital. Community policing models that prioritize dialogue, problem-solving, and building relationships can enhance public safety. Additionally, by increasing access to mental health resources and trauma-informed care, we can provide individuals with the support they need to prevent violence. By pursuing these priorities and collaborating with communities, we can create a safer and more resilient city.

**(F) Environment & Transportation**

**1. What steps would you take to reduce dependence on cars and better facilitate the ability of Bostonians to get around by walking, biking, or public transit?**

To reduce the impacts of climate change and to meet our ambitious climate goals as a city, we need to drastically reduce car dependence and invest in infrastructure that supports car-free transportation. To do this, we need an MBTA system that is reliable and safe. I will continue to push for better service and for Boston to have a seat on the MBTA's board. At the same time, we need to make our roads safe for everyone who uses them, especially pedestrians

and cyclists, through Vision Zero roadway improvements. I also support active engagement with communities to provide bikes, helmets, bike share access, lessons and bike repairs for residents to encourage and empower active transit in all of our neighborhoods, especially low-income, and BIPOC communities.

**2. What are your top three policy priorities for making Boston a climate-resilient city, and how would you ensure that equity is at the center of any such efforts?**

1. Upgrading and retrofitting Boston Housing Authority (BHA) facilities: I will prioritize securing funding and implementing initiatives to achieve Boston's commitment to eliminating fossil fuels from public housing by 2030.

2. Advocating for investment in green jobs and job-training opportunities: I will work to continue expanding PowerCorpsBOS and local partnerships to prepare residents for careers in the green economy.

3. Green New Deal for Boston Public Schools (BPS): I will advocate for investing in and accelerating a comprehensive plan to make needed green infrastructure improvements to our schools.

4. Protecting our environmental justice communities from flooding: our immigrant communities in East Boston and public housing communities in South Boston are some of the most vulnerable, so we need to put capital budget money into protecting them specifically.

Every one of these priorities is focused on interventions in environmental justice communities, which is how we put equity at the heart of this work.

**3. Do you oppose the creation of new fossil fuel infrastructure in Boston?**

YES. This is simple: we cannot meet our decarbonization goals as a city if we are adding new fossil fuel infrastructure.

**4. Do you support expanding the fare-free bus pilots and making fare-free buses permanent in Boston? What steps would you take to achieve this goal?**

YES. I fully support expanding the fare-free bus pilots in Boston and making fare-free buses permanent. The current pilot has shown promising results in increasing ridership, reducing financial barriers, and improving accessibility for residents. I believe that everyone should have equal access to reliable and affordable transportation. I will work collaboratively with state officials and agencies, advocating for Boston to have a seat on the MBTA's board. This direct representation will allow us to actively participate in decision-making processes and ensure that the needs and concerns of Boston residents are at the forefront. Additionally, I will prioritize securing funding and exploring

innovative revenue sources to support the expansion of fare-free bus access across the city, including grants, public-private partnerships, and engaging with community organizations and stakeholders. By expanding fare-free bus access, we can create a more equitable transportation system, reduce congestion, and promote sustainable modes of travel.

**5. Do you support the expansion of the City’s curbside composting pickup program?**

YES. I wholeheartedly support the expansion of the City's curbside composting pickup program. The initial success of the residential Curbside Compost program in Boston has demonstrated the value and impact of investing in residential zero waste initiatives. By expanding this program to include more households across the city, we can significantly reduce our waste footprint and promote sustainable practices. It is crucial that the implementation of curbside composting is done in an equitable manner, ensuring that all communities in Boston have equal access to this program. I am committed to working closely with community groups, neighborhood organizations, and residents to increase awareness and participation in curbside composting. Education and outreach efforts will be vital in ensuring that residents understand the benefits of composting and have the necessary resources and information to participate. We also need to build out the City's composting infrastructure so we can scale up citywide.

**(G) Housing**

**1. How would you expand affordable housing in Boston and ensure development without displacement?**

We must leverage public and private land to increase the supply of affordable housing. Boston should invest in a range of housing models, including social and cooperative housing, as well as supportive and low-threshold housing options for residents experiencing homelessness. We must also require developers to build more deeply affordable units, through an enhanced IDP policy and by better enforcing our “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing” zoning provision. We should also work with owners of vacant commercial buildings to convert them to housing.

To protect tenants, I will advocate for rent stabilization measures and robust tenant protections. With the rental market becoming increasingly impossible, it is crucial to prevent unjust evictions and unfair rent hikes that lead to displacement.

By actively involving residents in local decision-making, we can ensure that development aligns with community needs and aspirations, while also mitigating risks of displacement.

**2. What opportunities do you see for leveraging city-owned land for expanding affordable housing?**

Based on the recent Citywide Land Audit conducted by the BPDA, there is a significant potential for developing affordable housing on public land. I am committed to utilizing this land for the purpose of building affordable homes and ensuring that these projects prioritize community engagement and sustainability. I also want to maintain public community control, through ground leases or a land-trust model; we are better off when we treat housing as a basic need, not a commodity.

Additionally, I believe it is crucial to make significant investments in our public housing. This includes not only addressing necessary upgrades and repairs but also increasing the overall stock of public housing units in Boston over the next decade. It is essential that residents have a range of options and rights when it comes to renting affordably, as well as pathways to homeownership.

**3. Do you support the City of Boston's Home Rule Petition to establish a small transfer fee on real estate transactions over \$2 million? If so, how do you plan to advocate for it at the State House?**

YES. I am a strong supporter of the City of Boston's Home Rule Petition to establish a small transfer fee on real estate transactions over \$2 million. This fee would play a vital role in generating much-needed funding for affordable housing initiatives, including tax relief for low-income seniors.

To advocate for this petition at the State House, I will work closely with the Boston delegation and progressive allies to build a strong coalition of support. This will involve engaging in strategic outreach, presenting the case for the transfer fee's importance in addressing the affordable housing crisis in Boston, and mobilizing community organizations and residents to voice their support. I will collaborate with stakeholders and policymakers, emphasizing the positive impact this fee can have on increasing access to affordable housing and creating a more equitable city.

**4. Do you support rent stabilization? Do you believe that the City of Boston's current Home Rule Petition goes far enough, doesn't go far enough, or goes too far -- and why?**

YES. I wholeheartedly support rent stabilization as a tool to protect tenants from price-gouging and displacement. While I am glad to see a rent stabilization proposal in the state legislature and I believe that the current Home Rule Petition introduced by the City of Boston should be approved, I also believe it does not go far enough to address the full scope of the housing crisis. The proposed 10% rent increase cap is a step in the right direction, but it only applies to buildings with 6 or more units, leaving out a significant portion of Boston's renters from these vital protections. This exclusion undermines the goal of ensuring stability and affordability for all tenants. Going forward, we need a more comprehensive approach to rent stabilization that includes all rental units, regardless of size, and provides stronger safeguards against unfair rent hikes and unjust evictions.

**5. Would you support a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase ordinance, enabling tenants to purchase a building if the owner seeks to put it on the market?**

YES. When tenants come together to buy their homes, it takes housing out of the speculative market and anchors our communities. TOPA is a common-sense provision that the legislature should pass.

**6. Boston's inclusionary development policy (IDP) requires that 13 percent of the units in a building need to be affordable, and the City is currently considering increasing it to 20%. Do you support such an increase?**

YES. What we build dictates who can live in the Boston of the future; it has to have a strong inclusionary element. I also strongly support the proposal to more intentionally include voucher-holders in our IDP units going forward, since they face so much illegal discrimination in the housing market.

**7. Do you support requiring that a majority of new affordable units be built on-site, in order to ensure communities are diverse and integrated?**

YES. We need affordable housing in every part of Boston.

**8. Across the city, there are projects for large-scale supportive housing that are being fought by local communities, such as the Shattuck project in Jamaica Plain, the Comfort Inn development project in Dorchester, Charlestown's Constitution Inn project, and more. Do you support pushing forward with these specific projects and others like them?**

YES. I am supportive of moving forward with these supportive housing projects. I do believe in a community-based process that prioritizes input from residents and carefully analyzes potential neighborhood impacts. The City should do more to explain our overall supportive housing strategy and the safeguards in place to ensure that these properties are operated by responsible operators with strong staffing. But by fostering open and transparent communication, we can find common ground and develop solutions that meet the pressing demand for supportive housing while engaging with the community, listen to their concerns, and work collaboratively to address any challenges that may arise. This approach ensures that the perspectives of local residents are taken into account and that the projects are implemented in a manner that is beneficial and sustainable for everyone involved.

## **(H) Economic Opportunity**

### **1. What steps would you propose to reduce Boston's income and wealth inequality, especially the racial wealth gap?**

1. Homeownership Opportunities: Expand access to affordable homeownership programs, such as down payment assistance and low-interest loans.
2. Increase the availability of affordable housing by strengthening inclusionary zoning policies and expanding the supply of affordable rental units. This will provide stable housing options for low-income individuals and families, reducing the burden of housing costs and increasing their ability to save and invest.
3. Advocate for policies that promote equitable job creation, fair wages, and worker protections. This includes supporting workforce development programs, apprenticeships, and partnerships with local businesses.
4. Promote small business and entrepreneurship, particularly in underserved communities. This can be achieved by providing resources such as microloans, technical assistance, and access to networks and markets.
5. Education and Skills Development: Invest in quality education from early childhood through higher education, ensuring that all students have access to excellent schools and opportunities for skill development.



6. Promote financial literacy programs, savings initiatives, and asset-building strategies.

**2. Do you support requiring city contractors to give their employees at least two weeks' notice before changing their schedules and to compensate workers for late schedule changes?**

YES.

**3. What steps can the Council take to achieve greater diversity in City contracting?**

1. Advocate for policies that prioritize contracting opportunities for BIPOC and women-owned businesses. Establishing clear diversity goals, implementing targeted outreach and technical assistance programs, and ensuring fair, transparent procurement processes. Maximize use of the sheltered market pilot, and of the new bidding process to give more opportunities to MWBEs for contracts under \$250,000.

2. Streamline the certification process to make it easy to navigate and transparent. Empower MWBEs to thrive by offering support and resources to build capacity, improve competitiveness, and meet contract requirements.

3. Enhance monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure compliance with diversity goals and requirements, including public disclosure requirements.

4. Facilitate networking opportunities between diverse businesses and prime contractors. Encouraging mentorship programs and establishing industry-specific business associations will also help foster partnerships.

5. Advocate for the inclusion of community benefits agreements in major development projects.

**4. The cannabis industry is expected to grow in Boston in the coming years. What steps should the City take to make sure that it grows in an equitable way, in which the communities most impacted by the drug war are able to benefit?**

1. Implement a licensing process that empowers individuals from disproportionately impacted communities, including those with prior convictions related to cannabis offenses. This can be achieved through

dedicated licensing opportunities, fee reductions, and technical assistance programs to support equity applicants.

2. Address financial barriers to the industry by establishing funding to support equity applicants in starting and operating cannabis businesses.

3. Allocate a greater portion of cannabis tax revenues towards community reinvestment initiatives in disproportionately impacted neighborhoods. This can include funding programs focused on job training, entrepreneurship, youth development, and restorative justice.

4. Encourage local hiring, particularly from communities disproportionately affected by the drug war. Collaborate with workforce development organizations to provide training programs that prepare individuals for employment opportunities within the industry. Ensure high-wage, high-quality jobs.

5. Foster ongoing dialogue with community organizations and residents by promoting transparency, actively seeking input on zoning regulations, licensing criteria, and community benefits agreements.

## **(I) Democracy**

### **1. How can Boston increase turnout in municipal elections?**

Boston can increase turnout by allowing non-citizens with legal status and 16-17 year olds the right to vote in municipal elections. At the same time, the City can do more to promote engagement and civic education for municipal elections, including by sending mail-in-ballot applications to all registered voters, posting relevant information on social media platforms, making sure residents know about language and accessibility tools available, and allowing expanded hours for early voting leading up to the election.

### **2. Do you support allowing non-citizens with legal status the right to vote in municipal elections?**

YES. My family has been Bostonians since we made this city our home, even if we only gained citizenship later; Boston is an immigrant city and its immigrant communities should have a voice in local affairs.

### **3. Do you support allowing 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote in municipal elections?**

YES. Youth civic engagement is one of my passions, and voting for 16 and 17 year olds is one of the ways we can concretely increase opportunities for youth to become politically educated and active.

**4. Would you support Charter Change to allow for Ranked Choice Voting in Boston?**

YES. Ranked Choice Voting helps better express voters' true preferences and so makes for a healthier democracy.

**5. Do you support making hybrid access to public meetings permanent?**

YES. On the one hand, I'm so glad we've been able to return to in-person engagement; on the other hand, remote participation opened our processes up to many people whose personal or work commitments prevent them from coming down to City Hall in person. I think high-quality hybrid public meetings will be essential going forward.

**(J) Additional Comments**

*(Use this space to make any final comments you deem important for progressive voters assessing your candidacy.)*

In conclusion to this questionnaire, I want to reiterate my commitment to being a voice for change, equity, and justice in Boston. My life experiences as an immigrant, a first-generation college student, and a community advocate have shaped my passion for uplifting our neighborhoods and making our city government more accessible and accountable to all.

I have witnessed first hand the barriers that exist within our systems and the struggles that many of our neighbors face in accessing essential resources. I understand the urgency of addressing issues such as affordable housing, climate resilience, transportation equity, and education. These are the issues that matter to me and to all of us, and I am ready to tackle them head-on.

I bring a fresh perspective to the Boston City Council, informed by my diverse background and years of community organizing. I have worked alongside Councilor Kenzie Bok and Mayor Michelle Wu, fighting for a more inclusive

and responsive government, and I have spearheaded initiatives that have made a tangible difference in the lives of our residents.

Now, more than ever, we need leaders who are dedicated to creating a better future for everyone. I am that leader. I will work tirelessly to dismantle systemic barriers, amplify the voices of marginalized communities, and advocate for policies that uplift and empower all Bostonians.

Together, we can achieve a future for Boston that is more equitable, just, and sustainable. Let's make sure that every resident has access to the resources they need to thrive, and let's create a city where everyone can actively participate in shaping our shared future.

I humbly ask for your support and your vote. Together, we can build a better Boston.