

Mayoral Candidates Express Strong Support for Affordable Housing Responses to Candidate Survey Shows Consensus on Many Issues

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(Boston) – Candidates for Mayor of Boston expressed strong support for a robust affordable housing agenda in their [responses](#) to a recent candidate questionnaire released today by a coalition of affordable housing advocates. Most or all of the candidates expressed support for direct city funding of affordable housing, holding banks accountable for sound lending practices and maintaining foreclosed properties, building and preserving affordable rental and homeownership housing, and promoting comprehensive neighborhood redevelopment.

“We are heartened that all the candidates who responded to our survey recognize the central role that housing plays in shaping the economic future of our city,” said **Joseph Kriesberg, President of the Massachusetts Association of CDCs**. “We need our next Mayor to ensure that all Bostonians can find and maintain a safe and quality home that they can afford in the neighborhood where they want to live.”

The housing questionnaire was organized by a coalition of groups, including **Citizens Housing and Planning Association, Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations, Boston Tenant Coalition, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership, the Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance and the Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston**. Questionnaires were mailed and emailed to all candidates on July 15th, included 15 questions, and allowed candidates to use up to 50 words for answers. The completed questionnaires are available exactly as they were received on CHAPA’s web site. As a tax exempt organization, the sponsoring organizations seek not to influence the election but rather to educate the public. Publication of these questionnaires should not be construed as an endorsement of any candidate. Surveys were received from Felix Arroyo, John Barros, John Connolly, Charlotte Golar Richie, Mike Ross, Bill Walczak, Marty Walsh, and David James Wyatt. The surveys are available on the [CHAPA](#) and [MACDC](#) websites.

While each candidate articulated his or her own views and priorities, there were many areas of agreement among the candidates:

- If the candidates voiced support for building and preserving more affordable housing throughout the City
- All of the candidates articulated the need to meet the housing needs of our diverse population – from homeless individuals and families to young families looking to buy their first home.
- All of the candidates expressed support for promoting green building technologies in new housing developments.
- All of the candidates expressed support for direct city funding of affordable housing through the use of various programs and tools, including Linkage, Inclusionary Development, general appropriations and/or Community Preservation Act funds.
- All the candidates recognized the need to break down silos and support comprehensive neighborhood improvement initiatives.
- All the candidates expressed support for holding banks accountable by making sure they maintain foreclosed properties under their control and by directing City Funds to those banks with strong community investment track records.
- All the candidates expressed support for maintaining robust resident services for seniors living in public housing, despite recent cuts in federal funding.
- All of the candidates expressed support for ensuring that local residents and minority or women owned businesses are able to fully participate in the business and job opportunities created by affordable housing development projects.

While no candidate spoke against the City’s Inclusionary Development Policy, some of them explicitly endorsed steps to strengthen the program by increasing the percentage of units that must be affordable, deepening the affordability levels and increasing the fees to “buy out” of the program. Most of the candidates also expressed support for enacting the Community Preservation Act in Boston via a ballot referendum in order to bring new state resources to the City for affordable housing development, historic preservation and open space protection. Several candidates also spoke to the need to build more student housing on campus.

“The quality of Boston’s future is closely linked to our ability to address the serious housing challenges we face,” said **Brenda Clement, Executive Director of CHAPA**. “23,000 lower income Bostonians are paying more than half their income for housing and our middle class is shrinking. We need to produce more housing, help people stay in their homes, preserve the affordable housing we have, and create the type of mixed income, healthy neighborhoods that enable families to thrive. We are pleased to know that the candidates for Mayor understand that imperative.”

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