

Boston Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire 2013

Housing and Community Development

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

The deadline for submission is Tuesday, July 30, 2013.

Please email your completed questionnaires to Joe Kriesberg at JoeK@macdc.org

For questions, email Joe or call 617-379-5922.

Completed questionnaires may also be mailed to CHAPA at 18 Tremont Street, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02108

General Information	
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The responses provided by you will be distributed to the members and affiliates of the organizations included in the cover letter. Your answers may also be made available to the general public for educational purposes. Our publication of your response is not an endorsement of any candidate or political party.

We will not alter or edit your answers. Please spellcheck and proof read your answers before submitting this questionnaire. Candidates that do not submit answers to this questionnaire will be noted as "Did Not Respond". Answers left blank will be marked "No Answer". Thank You.

Record answers in "Answer" field. Electronic submission is appreciated.

Limit to 50 words or less.

Please sign below.

July 31, 2013

Candidate Signature

Date

Question	Answer
<p>1. What is your opinion on enacting the City's Inclusionary Development Policy as an official ordinance with a higher percentage of the units required to be affordable to Boston residents and a larger cash-out payment for developers who do not provide on-site units?</p>	<p>1. I favor a more pro-active role for the city in affordable housing. Simply, Boston needs to produce more affordable housing. Every option should be explored, including requiring units in new development, increasing linkage funding and utilization and cooperating with Greater Boston municipalities on siting affordable housing.</p>
<p>2. Do you support increases in city resources for developing affordable housing, such as the City's Linkage Fee, maintaining a specific line item in the City Budget of at least \$10 million, and the Community Preservation Act? Please explain.</p>	<p>2. I do favor increasing city resources for affordable housing. I am not prepared at this time, however, to specify the exact amount of the city budget to dedicate to it. I need to look comprehensively at the full budget before I could agree to an amount. I have a concern about the Community Preservation Act. I believe too many municipalities have used CPA funds for purposes other than affordable housing. The CPA should be re-evaluated.</p>
<p>3. What will you do as Mayor to increase business opportunities for minority and women owned small businesses on housing development projects, including both professional services and construction work, as well as employment opportunities for Boston residents?</p>	<p>3. I would review existing goals for including minority/women owned small businesses. I will work with construction companies to assist small businesses with bonding, insurance and training to help them reach the threshold to bid on larger projects. I would enforce reasonable goal requirements by adding to enforcement staff, and personally talk to and work with developers and construction companies to achieve these goals.</p>
<p>4. How will you ensure that people of all incomes have housing options in neighborhoods throughout Boston?</p>	<p>4. I would take a broad look at metropolitan Boston and work with the state and other municipalities to promote more development of a range of housing. It is critical to increase the supply of housing (affordable and moderate income) throughout Greater Boston, and I favor transit oriented developments with higher density. More housing supply outside Boston helps to moderate the city's housing prices.</p>

<p>5. How would you use your leadership role to stand up for new affordable housing development in the face of opposition from a small, but vocal, number of local residents?</p>	<p>5. I believe that each neighborhood should have an open, comprehensive and transparent Master Planning process. It is imperative that the public's needs be outlined, discussed and debated before individual developments are considered. There will never be full agreement on any development in a neighborhood but the key is to have fair, objective and publicly vetted development goals available to guide development.</p>
<p>6. Do you support a Responsible Banking city ordinance that would mandate annual rankings of which banks are best serving Boston's neighborhoods with loans and services to first-time homebuyers, small businesses and non-profits? Please explain.</p>	<p>6. Yes. Public information on banks' lending practices can help inform investors and borrowers as they seek banking services. The City of Boston should also include a bank's ranking with regard to serving neighborhoods as it decides on its own banking services.</p>
<p>7. As Mayor, would you direct the Department of Neighborhood Development to link city-funded down payment assistance grants exclusively to lenders that offered the ONE Mortgage Program, the state's most affordable product for first-time homebuyers, or other comparably affordable mortgage products? Please explain.</p>	<p>7. Yes. The city should help work to maximize the benefits of its programs for homeowners. Helping homeowners understand the pros and cons of available banking services and select the best services will strengthen the city's investments in neighborhood home ownership.</p>
<p>8. As Mayor of Boston, would you advocate for increased BRA funding for pilot green building and sustainability projects for multifamily affordable housing? Would you also support a health-based housing standard for all rehab investments made by the City that ensures the creation of healthier housing?</p>	<p>8. I certainly support green/sustainable construction and healthier housing. I am not prepared to specify funding for this. As a long time public health official, I support health-based housing standards, but would need to know the specifics before endorsing.</p>
<p>9. What tools and strategies would you implement to stabilize neighborhoods where owner occupants and long-term tenants are leaving due to a rising rents driven by more and more students living off campus?</p>	<p>9. I would continue Mayor Menino's push that every college/university in Boston create dormitory living for its undergraduates. I would also use the PILOT program to work with the city's graduate schools to develop creative ways to house grad students. I love the vibrancy created by our students but we, the city and the colleges, must work together to house all students in ways that everybody benefits.</p>

<p>10. Do you support the allocation of Community Development Block Grant and other resources for comprehensive, cross-sector (housing, jobs, public safety, education) neighborhood development efforts? Please explain?</p>	<p>10. Absolutely! We have to break away from a development and program orientation focused on parcels. We need to use neighborhood Master Planning to identify neighborhood issues and opportunities, prepare creative plans and, very important, marshal all available resources to realize those plans. A neighborhood is more than a collection of real estate parcels. We need a new focus on neighborhood development.</p>
<p>11. The rental market in Boston is out of reach for low income families. How would you address this issue to assure that all of Boston residents, including elders and people with disabilities, low wage workers, families, students, unaccompanied youth, and people who are homeless, can have a safe place to call home?</p>	<p>11. Housing is a Greater Boston issue. I will work with the state and regional municipalities to build more housing. We need to increase the metropolitan supply of housing to lower, or stabilize, housing prices. I would also work with non-profits to produce a broad program of needs-based housing. No non-profit, agency or municipality should be tackling these issues alone. We need a team approach.</p>
<p>12. How will you help address the issue of foreclosures impacting our communities and help homeowners facing foreclosure stay in their homes?</p>	<p>12. There are service providers, including financial institutions, that have programs that could help. We have to better communicate the availability of desired programs and do the "hand-holding" often necessary for distressed residents to use the programs.</p>
<p>13. What is your opinion on enacting an ordinance that enforces the upkeep and maintenance of vacant properties, including those owned by banks and mortgage companies?</p>	<p>13. I will be all for it. Problem properties are disasters in neighborhoods. It is not enough that an irresponsible property owner is current on his taxes. The city should work with the neighborhood to identify problems and push property owners for action. Eminent domain is a tool that should be considered.</p>
<p>14. How will you preserve affordable housing developments, whose affordability requirements are expiring, to maintain long term affordability to help existing tenants stay in their homes?</p>	<p>14. The most important action is to identify the development that have expiration dates coming. Then, city staff can reach out to the appropriate owners/agents/investors to determine their intentions. For any development threatened by conversion to market rates, the city can start a campaign to raise public pressure and/or funding to maintain affordability. The key is to avoid being blind-sided about any conversion.</p>

15. On May 1, 2013, the Boston Housing Authority eliminated the resident services program for over 2,500 elderly and disabled residents, citing federal budget cuts. How can you ensure that residents have access to the services and supports they need and that the BHA is able to provide safe, well maintained housing to the 27,000 residents it serves?

15. I can't say today. I certainly would review the situation with the BHA. Providing necessary services to people in need is a basic city function. Every effort would be made to serve these residents.

Additional Comments:

My housing program would include the following:

1. Comprehensive neighborhood Master Planning
2. Coordination and cooperation with other Greater Boston municipalities
3. Commitment to inclusiveness in tenancy, ownership and construction of housing
4. Partnerships with institutions, non-profit developers and for-profit developers
5. Adequate and consistent funding of housing programs
6. Commitment to green/sustainable construction and healthy buildings
7. Firm relationships with financial institutions
8. Respect for all the players involved.