

2021 Boston City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Brian Worrell

Office Sought: District 4 City Council

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(A) Your Candidacy

1. What would be your top three priorities if elected to serve? My top 3 priorities will be Education, Workforce Development and Housing. If we are intentional in building upon these 3 topics we will create equity within our community that will result in sustainable growth that is not easily derailed in times of recessions/pandemics.
2. What qualifies you to hold this office? First and foremost, It is the love that I have for my community. There is no place like home. I'm a lifelong district 4 resident. I graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in accounting and entrepreneurship. While at Northeastern I also received my real estate license. The skills and experiences that I have gained over my lifetime are directly correlated to the issues I have heard at community meetings. With 20 years of experience in real estate I understand and know how to navigate the industry, I have plans on how we can increase homeownership and reduce homelessness in our community. As a real estate broker it is the law that I uphold a fiduciary responsibility to the people I serve, which is placing their interest above everything else. I work with professionals and institutions to help the people I serve reach their goals. My clients will tell you that I know how to work a deal. As an entrepreneur I have a vision, although there will be resistance, I understand that through hardwork and dedication we will be able to see the vision come true. I have experience working with budgets, building business infrastructure, I have over 10 years of experience in management, I know how to create partnerships, I have 10 years of experience in facilities management so I understand the importance of the maintenance of the community. I also love giving back. Throughout the years I have worked and organized fundraisers for Balfour Academy, a non-profit summer enrichment program for inner city students that provides free tutoring throughout the school year, free SAT prep and exposes High School students to college classrooms. I have organized back to school drives with local businesses. I have worked with organizations to raise donations to help end homelessness. I have organized networking events for young professionals,

organized food drives, I have given book scholarships to High School seniors, worked with the Carribean foundation and 180 degrees. Through my brokerage I have hired people through the re-entry program, sponsored young adults to become licensed mortgage brokers, real estate agents and appraisers. My company has also given first time home buyers from our community down payment assistance. During COVID-19 we have recognized the food challenges facing our community and provided groceries to those in need. The work is not done. There is a vision that we all share, which is for a more equitable city. We just need someone crazy enough to help us navigate the politics and see it through.

3. What is the one policy you've seen pioneered in another city that you'd most like to see Boston adopt? A mixture of The CAHOOTS program that was established in Eugene Orgeon and LEAD Program in Seattle Washington. They are similar models but police reform is necessary and this is the way we get resources to those that are calling for help! Underserved communities do not get the resources they need when it comes to mental health. This is a clear way of putting the resources in the middle of our communities.
4. 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 officers

(B) Racial Equity & Community Engagement

1. Name three accomplishments you've been able to achieve to advance racial justice or equity. 1. I have started a few businesses right here in District 4. I have been in the opportunity business since College. Since I was a teenager I saw small businesses as a solution to creating equity and opportunity in the community. I currently have a brokerage that has 12 agents. All of whom I coach one-on-one. I have also expanded my brokerage to 3 other states to replicate the model. 2. I have paid for young adults to take real estate classes and mortgage broker classes. I have also tutored people to pass these tests. 3. I have contributed toward first time home buyers' from my community down payment on a home. 4. I have organized fundraisers for Balfour Academy, a summer enrichment program for inner city students that offers tutoring year round, free SAT prep and exposes High School Students to college classes. I have also worked as a tutor and summer counselor for the program. 5. I have helped various people open their own small business as well as help them establish the accounting, marketing and sales infrastructure. 7. As a real estate broker I have educated first time home buyers and sold them their first home.

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? As a small business owner you understand that being engaging is the only way your business can be sustainable. As a real estate broker it is the law that I uphold a fiduciary responsibility to the people I serve. I plan on bringing this same mindset to City Hall. I wholeheartedly believe that by engaging the community is what we are missing in local politics. I will walk each neighborhood on a Monthly basis with the community, I will visit all the neighborhood businesses on a monthly basis, I will hold forums to listen to the community, I will host office hours within the community where I will request that the essential services of the City and other elected officials attend with me and I will have open lines of communications whether through WhatsApp, Text, Phone and/or email. It is important that we make City services efficient to build trust in our neighborhoods. I have been in the service business for 20+ years and as a small business owner I understand the importance of following through and engaging the people you serve.

(C) Charter Reform & Balance of Power

1. What do you see as the role of the City Council in our strong-mayor system? Building partnerships with private and non-profit organizations to help in the advancement of the people in the community. City Council will also need to hold the Mayor accountable and call attention to areas that might be overlooked.
2. The City Council currently has very little ability to influence the budgeting process. Would you support legislation to enable line-item budgetary changes? **YES**
3. Would you support Charter Change to allow for Ranked Choice Voting in Boston? **YES**
4. Would you support changing the city charter to impose term limits for the office in Boston? **YES**
5. What, if any, other changes to the City Charter would you like to see? Participatory budget and City Councilors ability to amend budgets.

(D) Revenue

1. Do you support the PILOT Action Group's recommendations for a standing PILOT commission with community representation? **YES**
2. Given state law, Boston is limited in its taxing power. What opportunities do you see for the city to raise revenue? We can tax luxury real estate developments and/or vacant taxes on luxury apartments.

(E) Education

1. What are your top priorities for reducing persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in the Boston Public Schools? Mandatory summer enrichment for all BPS students, early college/career pathways, extending the school day and providing wrap around services to Boston Public Schools. I will advocate for afterschool and summer programs to start in Kindergarten all the way to 12th grade. Starting the school day at 7:30 am - 6:00pm by providing programs that work closely with each school would expose our students to a variety of their interests, get the extra help they need and teach them life skills.

2. Do you oppose the expansion of charter schools in Boston? **NO**

3. 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? **YES**

If so, what would your ideal structure be? If not, why not? I would suggest a hybrid model on voted and appointed.

4. Do you support removing police from Boston public schools? **YES**

5. Do you support making a permanent change to the admissions process for Boston's exam schools? **YES**

And if so, what would your proposed alternative system be? We need one that proposes a more equitable distribution of students. I believe a diverse student population, not just cultural but also in learning levels is important.

6. What steps would you take to make universal pre-K a reality in Boston? Have to start pilot programs, working with a school that has a proven track record and creating the model that schools can follow.

(F) Public Safety

1. Do you support requiring the police department and other city agencies to get City Council approval before acquiring new surveillance technologies or military equipment? **YES**

2. Do you support the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office's do-not-prosecute list and expanded approach to dealing with such low-level offenses? **YES**

3. Do you support ending information sharing between the Boston Police Department and ICE? **YES**

4. 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**
5. Do you support shuttering the Boston Police gang database? **[No answer]**
6. Would you support a hard cap on overtime for individual officers? If so, what percentage of an officer's salary? **NO**
7. What changes to the 2017 Boston Police Patrolman's Association (BPPA) contract would you advocate for in the latest round of contract negotiations?
8. What current functions of the Boston Police Department should be transferred to agencies under civilian control, and what governance would you propose for them?
9. Would you advocate for the reallocation of money from the Boston Police Department budget to reinvestment in communities? **YES**

If so, how much? 10%

10. Would you support a ban on the use of the following by the Boston Police Department?
YES
 - a. Tear gas and other chemical weapons?
 - b. Rubber bullets?
 - c. Attack dogs?
11. Do you believe that affiliation or sympathies with white supremacist organizations among officers is a problem with BPD? **YES**

If so, what measures would you take as mayor to combat that issue?

12. Do you support safe consumption sites? **NO**

(G) Environment & Transportation

1. Do you believe Boston needs to reduce its dependence on cars, and if so, how would you propose to do so? I believe we should attach incentives to those that are purchasing EVs, we can also explore how to make the MBTA more reliant and possibly free for all. These are ways we can reduce the dependence on fossil fuel cars.
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?
3. Do you oppose the creation of new fossil fuel infrastructure in Boston? **NO**

4. Do you support fare-free public transit? What steps would you take to achieve this goal?
[No answer]

I am still looking at how much this would cost the city and where the money will come from. I believe this will be beneficial to the city and is a great idea. I think at the very least there needs to be reduced fare in our community to public transit. I would work hand in hand with state representatives and state senators to draft legislation to make this possible.

5. Do you support the adoption of a curbside composting pickup program? **YES**

(H) Housing

1. How would you expand affordable housing in Boston and ensure development without displacement? Homeownership is the number 1 way to decrease displacement and create equity. I will advocate to expand on programs that increase a buyer's buying power to buy a home. I would advocate to loosen zoning laws to make developing more affordable so the cost-savings can be passed on to the homebuyer. The City could also help by providing rebates to developers that are building affordable developments.
2. What opportunities do you see for leveraging city-owned land for expanding affordable housing? The city can use their Neighborhood Initiative to help provide the building plans and have the land ready to build so developers will cut their costs which will be passed to homebuyers.
3. Do you support a real estate transfer tax for commercial and residential sales, with the revenue going to an affordable housing trust? **YES**

What exemption threshold, if any, would you advocate for? \$1,000,000 at least a 2.5% tax on transfers.

4. Do you support rent control? **NO**

If so, how would you structure such a policy? If not, why not? During COVID-19 the rental market has dropped 20% in some areas. I believe we can increase the housing inventory by providing assistance to develop more ADU's and activating more City lots to build more affordable housing which will directly impact the housing market. Supply and demand increase supply and the price will fall.

5. Do you support the renewal of Boston's condo conversion law, which affords residents of covered properties a notice period, right of first refusal to purchase their unit, relocation assistance, just cause eviction, and relocation benefits if their unit is converted to a condominium? **YES**
6. 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**

7. Boston's inclusionary development policy (IDP) requires that 13 percent of the units in a building need to be affordable. Do you support increasing this number? **YES**
If so, to what? **Please List %** At least 20%
8. Do you support requiring that a majority of new affordable units be built on-site, in order to ensure communities are diverse and integrated? **NO** I believe that we can do a lot better with the current IDP program. If we are not able to get a majority I will advocate for closing the loophole and getting a mandatory percentage of onsite units.
9. Do you support breaking up the BPDA and creating an independent public office of planning? **[No Answer]** If so, how will you make it happen?
10. Do you support increasing the number of units that are ADA compliant in projects that receive City funds? **YES**

(I) Economic Opportunity

1. What steps would you propose to reduce Boston's income and wealth inequality, especially the racial wealth gap? Expand homeownership programs Black and Brown communities. Explore jobs of the future and create pipelines with private businesses to hire at entry level positions. Provide more workforce development programs in Black and Brown communities. Train the community on pandemic/recession proof jobs such as HVAC, Dental Hygienist, Web developer, CNA, etc...
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? **[No Answer]**
3. Do you support ending subminimum wages for tipped workers in Boston? **NO**
4. How would you *enforce* the hiring goals set forth in the Boston Jobs Residency Policy (which requires that least 50 percent of the total work hours in each trade must go to *Boston* residents. at least 25 percent of the total employee work hours in each trade must go to people of color, and. at least 10 percent of the total employee work hours in each trade must go to women)? I believe in checks and balances and monthly or quarterly reconciliations. If the goals are not being met we will have to identify why? And resolve for the next month or quarter. Processes should not go left unchecked especially when they are dealing with equity.
5. What targets in city contracting would you commit to for minority-owned businesses as well as Black-owned businesses in particular, and what steps would you take to realize such targets?

- a. Will you commit to immediately directing all City departments and quasi-city agencies to unbundle large contracts that are set to become available in 2021 and beyond in order to facilitate this? **YES**
- b. Will you commit to regular reporting to track progress toward and beyond this goal? **YES**
6. The cannabis industry is expected to be a major source of growth 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? There needs to be equity at all levels of the cannabis industry. I believe those communities that were most impacted by the drug war should be disproportionately impacted by the opportunities in the Cannabis Industry. Creating a Cannabis complex in one of these communities where the cultivating, retail and consumption of cannabis can all take place could help with the creation of jobs and bring tourism in communities that do not see tourist revenue.
7. Would you support the creation of a municipal broadband network? **YES**

(J) Democracy

1. Do you support allowing non-citizens with legal status the right to vote in municipal elections? **NO**
2. Do you support allowing 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote in municipal elections? **NO**
3. In 2022, Boston will engage in redistricting on the municipal level. What would an equitable redistricting process look like to you? I believe we need to redistrict to amplify the voices of the most underserved communities so that their voices are heard and needs are met.
4. Would you support the redrawing of Boston's wards and precincts ("reprecincting"), which has not happened in more than 100 years -- and which happens decennially in other MA cities and towns? **YES**

(K) Additional Comments

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