

2021 Boston Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire

Michelle Wu

Office Sought: Mayor

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(A) Your Candidacy

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

Keeping families in Boston. Our city has seen a population boom, but the number of kids in Boston has actually fallen because families are being displaced. Making Boston the most family-friendly city in the country requires bold action to break down silos and deliver more on affordable housing, world-class education and childcare for all, and accessible transportation.

Closing the racial wealth gap. Boston is one of the most unequal cities in the country, but we have the resources to tackle disparities in home ownership, business ownership, and educational access as the foundation for creating generational wealth in BIPOC communities.

Delivering on a Boston Green New Deal. Boston should set the tone for all cities on securing our future through climate justice as racial and economic justice. Our plan centers environmental justice communities in democratizing decision-making, transforming our infrastructure, delivering public health, and creating good jobs in the green economy.

2. What qualifies you to hold this office?

I know Boston and what's possible through city government. I've had the honor and privilege of representing our entire city for eight years as an At-Large Councilor, and am the only candidate whose time in City Hall spans two mayoral administrations.

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I've delivered on progressive change. I've passed groundbreaking legislation and stood up for Bostonians to tackle seemingly impossible challenges, setting the tone for progress nationally through fearless leadership in partnership with community.

I have a track record of building coalitions to empower organizing and activism. From municipal legislative pushes, to statewide conversations on public transportation, to empowering grassroots organizing through Democratic ward committees, I've had an impact on building activism through shifting the political ecosystem.

I'm living the stakes of policymaking in our city. As a BPS mom, caregiver, and regular MBTA commuter, I bring an urgency to be bold and do more to close gaps in our city.

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

I've looked to partners in other cities for many impactful policy ideas that we've already implemented with their feedback, including our Good Food Purchasing ordinance, ordinance banning racially discriminatory face surveillance technology, Community Choice Energy, and more.

I'm currently working on creating an Urban Conservation Corps program in Boston, based on a program in Philadelphia that connects young people from disinvested communities with essential jobs in urban conservation, from maintaining tree canopy to installing green stormwater infrastructure, all while providing wraparound services, like expungement of criminal records and housing assistance. I'm excited to bring this program to Boston to center our young people in our pandemic recovery, creating good jobs with good wages, benefits and worker protections to build a greener, more just economy. This is one of the central policy proposals in our Boston Green New Deal plan.

4. Which of the following groups have you chosen to reject / would reject campaign contributions from: For-profit developers, Fossil fuel executives or lobbyists, Charter school advocates and lobbyists, Police officers?

Fossil fuel executives or lobbyists, Police officers. We have taken a pledge to reject campaign contributions from fossil fuel executives or lobbyists, as well as police unions.

(B) Racial Equity & Community Engagement

1. Name three policy changes you've been able to accomplish to advance racial justice and/or equity in the city of Boston.

Equity in City Contracting: For 5+ years, I've led the charge on the Council for action and accountability to align spending with closing the racial wealth gap. In partnership with then-Councilor Pressley, I authored successful legislation requiring supplier diversity and

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reporting to quantify the abysmally low percentage of city contracts going to minority-owned businesses to spur action.

Face Surveillance Ban. As lead sponsor, I worked with a wide community advocacy coalition and Councilors Arroyo and Janey to pass groundbreaking legislation prohibiting city agencies, including Boston Police, from using racially discriminatory face surveillance technology threatening basic civil rights.

Transit Equity: I led a coalition protesting MBTA fare hikes and pushing for public transit as a public good, resulting in a roll-back to shield bus riders (disproportionately BIPOC), seniors, and youth from fare increases. After my Boston Youth Transportation Project report, BPS expanded free MBTA passes for all students as we'd urged.

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?

The foundation of good government and effective policymaking is civic engagement, building trust with communities and following the lead of residents most impacted. I would ensure representation of Boston's diversity across agencies and leadership, work to get City Hall out of City Hall through neighborhood and remote access, expand resources for multilingual and cultural competency, and implement structural changes to democratize decision-making including participatory budgeting and reforming our planning and development system.

My track record includes authoring and passing Boston's language and communications access ordinance to guarantee translation and interpretation for limited English proficient residents, and assistive technology for residents with a communications disability. As Council President, I led the first renovation of the City Council Chamber for universal accessibility. Since joining the Council, I have sent out weekly summaries of Council meetings and upcoming hearings--the only information source to follow Council business week to week--for the last eight years.

(C) Charter Reform & Balance of Power

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

In our system of government, the City Council is powerful as a legislative body that scrutinizes and approves the budget, advances municipal ordinances, convenes hearings for oversight, and ensures democratic accountability at the citywide and neighborhood levels. I've been proud to deliver impact through the City Council platform and to lead this institution as Council President, so I know the unique role that Councilors can play in lifting up issues and creating a platform for community voices to

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be at the table. I will always value the importance and independence of the City Council as a policymaking body and force for accountability, and as partners for community empowerment. The City Council should help shape the agenda and provide a platform for grassroots engagement.

- 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/ NO**

Yes.

- 3. Would you support Charter Change to allow for Ranked Choice Voting in Boston? YES/ NO**

Yes. I would support Ranked Choice Voting in the Preliminary Election to identify the top two finishers to advance to the Final Election. I do not support eliminating the Preliminary Election with RCV.

- 4. Would you support changing the city charter to impose term limits for the office of Mayor in Boston? YES/ NO**

No.

- 5. What, if any, other changes to the City Charter would you like to see?**

I support moving to a majority-elected School Committee.

(D) Revenue

- 1. Do you support the PILOT Action Group's [recommendations](#) for a standing PILOT commission with community representation? YES/ NO**

Yes.

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

Boston must diversify our revenue sources--an increasingly unsustainable share of our municipal budget is funded through property taxes (73% in this next fiscal year), which means Boston is reliant on growing the tax base through new development and boosting property values. We need to ensure hospitals and universities are contributing their fair share through PILOT payments, advocate for matching funding from the state for the Community Preservation Act, and advocate to the state for funding sources such as the real estate transfer tax and vacancy fee.

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In the short term, Boston will be receiving an infusion of one-time federal relief funds for pandemic recovery, and we must plan sustainably to use these funds not as bandaids on longstanding challenges, but to align this spending for long-term needs.

(E) Education

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

Universal Early Education and Care. Tremendous cost barriers and gaps in access particularly impact BIPOC and low-income families. Read our plan here to close the gap so every child gets the brightest start to their education.

Whole Child, Whole Community: We need a transformational approach to move beyond incremental change. We'll create a Children's Cabinet for coordination and accountability in City Hall, and a Family Corps to connect each student and family with the full force of city resources outside the classroom so kids come to school healthy, happy, and ready to learn.

Facilities Overhaul: We'll overhaul aging infrastructure by implementing a Green New Deal for BPS to address crumbling buildings and disparities across the district so every student and teacher are in a healthy, inspiring learning environment.

Vocational Education: We'll center Madison Park to build out career pathways for the future and connect students to hands-on vocational training.

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

Yes.

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/ NO If so, what would your ideal structure be? If not, why not?

Yes. I support a majority-elected school committee, with elected members for democratic accountability and additional appointed members to ensure representation of Boston's diversity and expertise, and mayoral accountability. I also support giving full voting power to the student representative on the committee. I would appoint school committee members with expertise and lived experience in early childhood, school facilities, and vocational education--to close the gaps that BPS has maintained for too long.

4. Do you support removing police from Boston public schools? YES/ NO

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Yes.

5. Do you support making a permanent change to the admissions process for Boston's exam schools? YES/ NO And if so, what would your proposed alternative system be?

Yes. I've visited every BPS high school and seen the wide disparities across our district. Structural barriers in selective admissions shut out too many Black, Latinx, and economically disadvantaged students seeking academic rigor and programming.

I supported the temporary changes to exam school admissions as a thoughtful and equitable alternative during a pandemic, but this model also had flaws. Within zip codes, there are wide variations in income and socioeconomic levels. I support replacing the ISEE with an exam aligned with the BPS curriculum and adopting targeted criteria to account for different resource levels in a more granular way, such as census tract data.

Most importantly, students at EVERY high school must have access to well-resourced academics, facilities, health and wellness supports, and extracurricular activities. The exam schools conversation must be part of a comprehensive community planning process to reform the offerings and quality across all high schools.

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

Early education and care is a public good, and it requires public investment. I've proposed a comprehensive early education and child care plan to close the gap for families. We'll implement universal pre-K for all 3- and 4-year olds and affordable, high-quality care for all infants and toddlers, matched with investment in childcare providers as professionals so that we can create a talent pipeline to meet the demands of the next generation.

At the city level, we will create a one-stop shop for enrollment and access, eliminate cost barriers and childcare deserts through connecting existing seats, build sustainable childcare career pathways through leveraging BPS infrastructure for professional development and vocational training, and build a coalition to drive state and federal policy. With unprecedented momentum at the federal and state level to invest in childcare as critical infrastructure, we need bold city leadership to ensure equity and urgency in our decisions.

(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/ NO

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Yes. I'm proud to be part of the coalition that introduced this ordinance, along with the face surveillance ban ordinance that has already passed.

- 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/ NO**

Yes.

- 3. Do you support ending information sharing between the Boston Police Department and ICE? YES/ NO**

Yes. This is part of the ordinance I've sponsored mentioned above.

- 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/ NO**

Yes.

- 5. Do you support shuttering the Boston Police gang database? YES/ NO**

Yes.

- 6. Would you support a hard cap on overtime for individual officers? If so, what percentage of an officer's salary? YES/ NO**

Yes. From a workers' rights perspective, any employee deserves to be paid for their work and compensated accordingly for overtime hours, but in this case the data reveal significant overtime costs for hours not worked due to policies such as the 4-hour minimum court appearance policy, and an increasing average overtime as percentage of salary with more senior rank. The public depends on officers to be healthy and alert, which is not sustainable at the level of hours that some are taking on. Any specific individual cap should come from full transparency on overtime shifts and numbers, and a deeper analysis of the types of overtime across various units. But the department budget overall must see a true reduction of overtime, not through arbitrary cutting of the line item without plans to effect this change, but reforms built into police contracts so overtime is not treated as a routine measure.

- 7. What changes to the 2017 Boston Police Patrolman's Association (BPPA) contract would you advocate for in the latest round of contract negotiations?**

The next contract must include provisions for transparency and public accountability for use of force and abuse of power. Following the recommendations of the Boston Police Reform Task Force, we must ensure that contract language enables the sharing of data with the public on officers' use-of-force and misconduct and allows disciplinary records to be made publicly accessible, in accordance with privacy laws. We must also end the

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practice of mandatory arbitration, which has overturned 72% of BPD disciplinary actions, and transition the power to fire or discipline officers away from unaccountable arbitrators back to police chiefs. We also need concrete changes to the contracts to enable a transition to a public health approach to public safety, so that people experiencing homelessness, substance use disorder, or mental health crises can be met with service providers and care, rather than criminalization.

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?

BPD routinely responds to nonviolent calls for service involving mental health, homelessness, substance use, which would be better served by a public health response. Last June, I called for the city to develop a crisis-response plan for nonviolent emergency calls that would replace law enforcement presence in nonviolent, non-criminal situations with unarmed service providers including health care professionals, mental health workers, and other unarmed professionals with specialized training. This community safety response should fit under the public health organizational structure and governance, not law enforcement. The hackney licensing division, which oversees taxi medallions, could shift to inspectional services instead of BPD.

9. Would you advocate for the reallocation of money from the Boston Police Department budget to reinvestment in communities? YES/ NO If so, how much?

Yes. We need structural changes to ensure that we are reforming the 911 crisis response system so that calls related to mental health and social services can go to the appropriate departments; so that we fully fund our schools and remove police from schools; and so that we are demilitarizing police. At the same time, we urgently need reform to our overtime system and guardrails against fraud to prevent cost overruns--without which, any reallocation of funds will be rendered meaningless.

Grants are another source of financial support that the BPD receives each year on top of the operating and capital budget allocation made through the City's budget process. I will see to it as mayor that the grants sought by BPD and the way grant dollars are spent is in alignment with the priorities and values described above.

10. Which of the following would you support banning the use of by the Boston Police Department: Tear gas and other chemical weapons, Rubber bullets, Attack dogs?

Tear gas and other chemical weapons, Rubber bullets, Attack dogs.

11. Do you believe that affiliation or sympathies with white supremacist organizations among officers is a problem with BPD? YES/ NO If so, what measures would you take as mayor to combat that issue?

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Yes. I have advocated for terminating any BPD employees who were involved with the January 6th Capitol insurrection. Under the new police contract, any officers who have been found to have affiliation with white supremacist organizations should be terminated. I will also call for this provision to be added as an amendment to the contracts held between the City of Boston and each of the other organizations representing BPD personnel.

12. Do you support safe consumption sites? YES/ NO

Yes. I support interventions to save lives that would be claimed by the opioid crisis. At the same time, we must be very intentional about the siting of safe consumption sites not to exacerbate a concentration of impacts in one area of the city, but expanding access to substance use treatment supports across the city and region.

(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?

Yes. For our climate, cleaner air, health and safety, and racial and economic justice, we must dramatically shift commutes to sustainable transportation.

Commit to safe streets: Boston must prioritize pedestrian safety across every neighborhood and invest in protected cycling infrastructure, moving away from a system of rationing safety through application processes or negotiations about traffic calming interventions.

Make public transportation reliable and accessible: The City must accelerate dedicated bus lanes and transit signal priority to speed up bus service for greater reliability, implement fare-free transit to boost ridership and reduce delays on buses, and expand water transportation. We'll also push the state for more urgent service improvements.

Plan for people, not cars: Transportation planning must be integrated with housing and development, and Boston should require that any road construction or resurfacing must include Complete Streets improvements. By bringing more design and engineering in-house, we can reduce costs and time in implementing projects.

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?

My top three priorities are 1) Implementing a Boston Green New Deal and Just Recovery; 2) Protecting public health with clean air, clean water, and healthy, localized food systems; and 3) Fighting for environmental justice communities.

The foundation of our Boston Green New Deal is that climate justice is racial and economic justice. BIPOC communities, working-class families, and immigrant communities are more likely to live near environmental hazards and face exposure to pollution, urban heat island effect, flooding, and other climate change impacts. From

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accelerating decarbonization, to implementing net zero building requirements and sustainable transportation access, we must act urgently to mitigate these threats and build resiliency, through following the lead of our most impacted communities. Green infrastructure improvements must be intertwined with community stabilization and closing the racial wealth gap so people benefit from green investments in their neighborhoods without fear of displacement and green jobs for the future.

3. Do you oppose the creation of new fossil fuel infrastructure in Boston? YES/ NO

Yes. And we must accelerate the transition to local clean energy alternatives. Our Boston Green New Deal & Just Recovery Plan commits to citywide carbon neutrality by 2040, 100% renewable electricity by 2030, and transitioning all municipal buildings to 100% renewable electricity by 2024. We must transition with a clear focus on equitable procurement of renewable energy, sourcing as much of our energy needs as possible from more local, community or publicly owned sources, with an emphasis on racial equity in procurement.

4. Do you support fare-free public transit? What steps would you take to achieve this goal? YES/ NO

Yes. Public transit is a public good, and it should be free--everyone benefits from investing in fare-free access, just like our public schools, libraries, and parks. I've been proud to lead the charge in changing the conversation about fare equity in Boston and around the country, organizing for transit justice and laying out a vision for fare-free transit that initially sent shockwaves, but quickly resulted in examples of transformational investment in fare-free transit in the city of Lawrence, and progress towards codifying this in Worcester. I would continue working with federal and state partners to secure funding--Congresswoman Pressley and Senator Markey have filed a bill to fund fare-free transit and equity improvements, and State Senator Boncore has filed legislation to make buses free. At the City level, I would start with fare-free bus, including designating specific bus routes serving environmental justice communities to be free through city revenue if necessary.

5. Do you support the adoption of a curbside composting pickup program? YES/ NO

Yes. So far, we have only had pilot composting projects in the City. My Boston Green New Deal and Just Recovery plan commits to introducing curbside composting to Boston to help eliminate a significant amount of municipal waste. Having a composting program will also directly affect the need for any trash incineration facilities to seek expansion.

(H) Housing

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

Safe, healthy, accessible, affordable housing is a human right. Yet in Boston, a stable home has become a luxury not everyone can afford.

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Ensure protections through the pandemic: Boston should extend the evictions moratorium until the public health emergency has been lifted.

Generate and invest City resources: Through the City's capital budget, Boston can issue green and social bonds to directly invest public dollars in affordable, resilient housing to expand the portfolio of publicly owned subsidized housing. We should prioritize community land trusts in public land dispositions, and continue dedicating public funds for housing stability and home ownership.

Restructure our development process: Create a separate planning agency to lead a zoning code overhaul to strengthen affordability and fair housing protections, and streamline processes.

Organize for state action: Advocate for the tools of rent stabilization, a transfer tax, boosting Community Preservation Act funding, and other revenue sources for affordable housing creation.

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

Boston can set up preferences for community land trusts in public land disposition processes, ensuring permanent affordability. We can also redevelop municipal buildings into mixed-use developments that are climate resilient and include affordable housing, such as over libraries or municipal parking lots. We could also expand the Boston Housing Authority's portfolio through scattered-site ownership, acquiring vacant parcels or distressed units for affordable housing.

3. Do you support a real estate transfer tax for commercial and residential sales, with the revenue going to an affordable housing trust? YES/ NO What exemption threshold, if any, would you advocate for?

Yes. I support the legislation previously advanced by the City Council, which includes a \$2 million exemption threshold.

4. Do you support rent control? YES/ NO If so, how would you structure such a policy? If not, why not?

Yes. To stem Boston's displacement crisis, we need to stabilize rents in the short-term while increasing the supply of affordable housing--but right now, state legislation prevents Boston or any municipality from using rent stabilization to protect families from immediate displacement. I support lifting the statewide ban so municipalities can employ more tools to stabilize communities while creating more affordable housing.

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

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their unit, relocation assistance, just cause eviction, and relocation benefits if their unit is converted to a condominium? YES/ NO

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/ NO

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/ NO If so, to what? Please List %

Yes. I support increasing this to at least 20%. As our goal is to increase the total number of affordable units, I would increase this threshold further if analysis from Boston's new city planning department supports a higher percentage.

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? YES/ NO

Yes.

9. Do you support breaking up the BPDA and creating an independent public office of planning? YES/ NO If so, how will you make it happen?

Yes. I outlined the steps in a 2019 report. First, I will appoint a BPDA board to transfer all BPDA assets to the City of Boston, creating the revenue source from these assets to establish a separate City planning office, accountable to the public, to undertake citywide planning and zoning overhaul. During this transition period, current proposed projects in the pipeline will be transferred to the new department. Once the BPDA has no employees, assets, or cash flow, we will legally abolish the agency.

10. Do you support increasing the number of units that are ADA compliant in projects that receive City funds? YES/ NO

Yes.

(I) Economic Opportunity

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

Boston is one of the most unequal cities in the country, and the pandemic has widened the racial wealth gap even more.

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Equitable City contracting: I've led the charge on the Council for action and accountability through legislation and reporting. As Mayor, I'll ensure that we have a coordinated strategy for outreach, technical assistance, and streamlined accountability through a citywide purchasing plan to align our public contracting dollars with wealth creation in our neighborhoods and BIPOC communities. Our public contracting should give preference to worker cooperatives or employee-owned businesses that build worker power and community wealth.

Equitable home ownership: Boston should invest more resources into supporting first-time homebuyers in Boston, prioritizing residents of color. We should also launch a city home ownership production program that empowers residents to build generational wealth.

We must also address racial disparities in educational access and transportation access that perpetuate the racial wealth gap.

- 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/ NO**

Yes. I was proud to file this legislation last term.

- 3. Do you support ending subminimum wages for tipped workers in Boston? YES/ NO**

Yes.

- 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)?**

As mayor, I will strengthen relationships with our building trades unions to ensure that Boston residents, including people of color and women, have the best skills and access to union jobs. This partnership will start with our students in our vocational schools, but will include expanding all local pipelines to the building trades. We must also invest more in monitoring and enforcing this ordinance through city staff.

- 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?**

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The current goal of 10% of contracts for MBEs is unacceptably low. Other major cities are reaching well over 20-30% of this. Boston should be leading the country in MBE contracting.

We must empower a one-stop shop for equitable access to city contracting through a new Chief Procurement Office, with a budget to streamline processes, review city contracts across all departments, and focus resources for outreach to small businesses. This office should establish a citywide buying plan for transparency and predictability for local businesses, and create a technical assistance program that helps MBEs doing business with the city to plan for business growth, scaling, and wealth creation. I will work alongside community organizations such as BECMA to define and oversee these steps and goals.

- 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/ NO**

Yes. We must have a mix of contract sizes so that new and local businesses can bid on more accessible contracts, but also create pathways to build generational wealth and empower worker cooperatives and employee-owned businesses.

- b. Will you commit to regular reporting to track progress toward and beyond this goal? YES/ NO**

Yes. I've authored and passed legislation to increase equity in city contracting, including regular reporting to ensure public accountability, and would uphold these reporting requirements. But the recent disparity study shows that to make real progress investing equitably in our communities, we need more than words and data--we need an actionable plan.

- 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?**

I was one of a very small group of elected officials that publicly supported the ballot question to legalize adult use cannabis as a social justice issue and a mechanism to create opportunity for equity applicants. However I have been disappointed with how this industry has grown in Boston, without predictability. As with any newly created industry, early access is key to staking a share of the market and therefore building wealth. This burgeoning gold rush too often benefits the well-financed and politically connected. In addition to enforcing equity provisions of the existing cannabis ordinance, I would support proactive zoning to identify locations that could, as well as making opportunities for delivery available with intentional priority for Black and brown entrepreneurs.

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7. Would you support the creation of a municipal broadband network? YES/ NO

Yes. I will explore the creation of a municipal broadband network in Boston to ensure high quality, truly affordable service for every resident and business. Closing the digital divide is a crucial step towards an equitable recovery from COVID-19 and beyond. Nearly 15% of households in Boston do not have a subscription to Internet service at home, and more than 32,000 households have no Internet access at all. These digital gaps are concentrated in census tracts home to mostly Black, Latinx, and immigrant residents. From children unable to complete their homework, to parents cut off from their job search and grandparents facing isolation, the digital divide reinforces racial and economic inequities across our city. In February, I released a five-part Digital Equity Plan that charts a framework to dismantle these structural inequities and give all Boston residents the opportunity to thrive.

(J) Democracy

1. Do you support allowing non-citizens with legal status the right to vote in municipal elections? YES/ NO

Yes.

2. Do you support allowing 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote in municipal elections? YES/ NO

Yes.

3. In 2022, Boston will engage in redistricting on the municipal level. What would an equitable redistricting process look like to you?

Keeping neighborhoods intact should be a high priority in the redistricting process, and ensuring that districts reflect representation of BIPOC communities. An equitable redistricting process starts with transparency, iterative rounds of data analysis with publicly available tools for advocates to engage, and partnership with community organizations who have been leading the charge for voting rights at the table.

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/ NO

Yes. I have led on reprecincting as a City Councilor and will use political capital to get this done through the State House.

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(K) Additional Comments

A tremendous scale of change can take place at the city level, and I'm eager to build coalitions for thoughtful planning and implementation of the bold, urgent changes we need. However, much change at the city level is also dependent on personnel, laws, rules, and funding from the county, state and federal levels of government. Our representation across these levels of government is incredibly important to what we can achieve locally. More than any other candidate in this race, I have actively been engaged in electing progressives to all levels of government and the Democratic Party. My political activism has included making endorsements, working hard on campaigns, increasing political engagement, and building movements inside and outside of the electoral process. As Mayor, I will continue to use every platform to foster activism so that we can strengthen movements for progress in implementing all of the policy objectives mentioned above.

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