

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON AND MEJIA



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY FIVE

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR URGENT STRUCTURAL REFORMS TO STRENGTHEN BOSTON'S HOUSING PIPELINE, ANTI-DISPLACEMENT STRATEGIES, AND AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK

WHEREAS, Boston faces an unprecedented housing affordability crisis, with an average of over 5,455 unhoused residents annually between 2022 and 2025, and a deeply insufficient supply of deeply affordable housing units to meet this need; *and*

WHEREAS, Black and Brown residents in Boston continue to bear the brunt of the city's housing crisis, with Black Bostonians comprising approximately 22% of the city's population but representing nearly 47% of the homeless population; Latino residents also face disproportionately high eviction, rent burden, and poverty rates, while Black unsheltered homelessness has seen the largest increase in recent years, driven by decades of redlining, disinvestment, and exclusion from generational wealth-building opportunities; *and*

WHEREAS, In 2023 alone, while 7,389 housing units were approved, only 1,878 permits were issued, and only approximately 13% of those units met Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) affordability requirements at the time—though the policy is currently being updated to increase this requirement to 17–20%, highlighting a severe gap between project approval and actual construction; *and*

WHEREAS, Article 80-approved housing projects face a consistent 38% stagnation rate before permitting due to financial hurdles, developer delays, rising construction costs, and regulatory bottlenecks, which have resulted in thousands of units languishing in pre-construction limbo; *and*

WHEREAS, Although the City of Boston released its first comprehensive Anti-Displacement Action Plan, A Place to Thrive, in March 2025, with over 40 initiatives under the "Protect, Preserve, Produce, and Prosper" pillars, the plan does not fully incorporate mechanisms to ensure racial equity, enforce accountability, or accelerate the production of deeply affordable housing at the necessary scale; *and*

WHEREAS, Effective, community-driven, and evidence-based models such as Washington D.C.'s Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), Vienna's public housing

structure, and San Francisco's Anti-Eviction Mapping Project demonstrate the impact of ambitious, measurable interventions; *and*

WHEREAS, Existing mechanisms do not sufficiently support families aging out of DCF, low-wage workers, or formerly incarcerated residents, and do not prioritize land disposition, permitting, or investment for resident-led Community Land Trusts (CLTs) or rent-to-own models that offer a pathway to ownership and long-term stability; *and*

WHEREAS, Delays in moving housing projects from Article 80 approval to actual construction severely hinder Boston's ability to meet its housing goals, and the creation of a Permit Acceleration Strike Team across BPDA, ISD, and related agencies would ensure shovel-ready projects are expedited within a defined 90-day permitting window, reducing bureaucratic stagnation and increasing housing delivery speed; *and*

WHEREAS, There is currently no unified, public-facing mechanism to track housing development progress in Boston, and codifying an annual Housing Pipeline Dashboard would promote transparency, help identify development bottlenecks, and provide residents and policymakers with accessible data on unit production, affordability breakdowns by AMI, and neighborhood impact; *and*

WHEREAS, Far too many approved housing developments remain dormant for years, allowing speculative developers to hold land without building; thus, a "Permit or Pass" ordinance would incentivize timely construction by requiring developers to obtain permits within 18 months or forfeit their entitlement status, ensuring city resources are directed toward productive projects; *and*

WHEREAS, Rising construction costs, inflation, and financing shortfalls have rendered many mission-driven affordable housing projects economically infeasible, and launching a Housing Construction Stabilization Fund in partnership with the state would provide essential bridge loans, loan guarantees, and subsidies to get these developments to completion; *and*

WHEREAS, Boston's housing crisis disproportionately impacts BIPOC, immigrant, and working-class communities, and prioritizing permitting and land disposition for Community Land Trusts (CLTs), tenant cooperatives, and rent-to-own models would expand community control, create wealth-building opportunities, and stabilize high-displacement neighborhoods; *and*

WHEREAS, Traditional rental options fail to create long-term stability for moderate-income households, and incorporating a city-funded rent-to-own pilot into the Inclusionary Development Policy would allow residents to build equity over time, transition into homeownership, and remain in Boston despite rising costs; *and*

WHEREAS, Youth aging out of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) are at extreme risk of homelessness and poverty, and funding a campus-based housing initiative with Boston's community colleges would provide a transformative solution by

offering free housing, educational access, and family supports, breaking cycles of instability and underachievement; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council urges the Wu Administration, the Boston Planning and Development Agency, and relevant agencies to incorporate these critical solutions into the city's housing and anti-displacement strategy and commit to full transparency, timely construction, and racially just housing development. That the City Council commits to supporting legislative and budgetary measures that align with these priorities and pledges to work in partnership with mission-driven developers, residents, advocacy organizations, and educational institutions to ensure that Boston becomes a city where every resident, regardless of race, income, or background, has access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. That the Boston City Council urges the city to commit to building 28,000 deeply affordable units by 2030 in alignment with the city's homelessness data and AMI thresholds, with annual targets, racial and geographic equity indicators, and publicly reported progress.

Filed on: June 25, 2025