



Boston City Council

Erin J. Murphy

Councilor-at-Large

September 8, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

On the few occasions over the four years I have been on the Council when hearings have been held in the neighborhoods, the response from residents has been overwhelming. These hearings have drawn packed rooms, powerful testimony, and meaningful dialogue, giving residents a chance to be heard in the heart of their communities.

We have held hearings across the city on issues that directly affect residents' lives. In Codman Square, we addressed summer public safety; in Charlestown, the reopening of the Clougherty Pool; in Mattapan, the Blue Hill Avenue redesign; in Fields Corner, redistricting; in West Roxbury, the expansion of senior services; in South Boston, traffic concerns; in East Boston, food insecurity; and budget hearings in Grove Hall and other neighborhoods brought residents out to share their priorities. Most recently, in the South End, hundreds of residents came out to address the public health and safety crisis at Mass and Cass, providing meaningful, powerful testimony about how this crisis affects their daily lives.

Each of these hearings has been well-attended and highly engaged, demonstrating that residents want to participate when we bring the Council into their neighborhoods. This stands in contrast to many hearings that, once assigned to committee, never move forward or result in little meaningful action. By taking the Council to residents, we ensure that their voices are heard, that accountability is demanded, and that these hearings lead to real results and improved quality of life. They also provide a clear opportunity for transparency, allowing residents to see the administration respond directly to their concerns, ensuring their voices are heard and creating accountability in a visible way.

I urge us to build on this momentum by expanding City Council off-site hearings, bringing the Council directly into neighborhoods where residents live and work. We must work closely with central staff to plan these hearings in a way that balances their workload, but these logistical considerations should not prevent us from increasing engagement and holding the administration accountable. By committing to more off-site hearings, we can ensure that residents' voices are heard loud and clear and that the Council remains accessible and responsive to the people we serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Murphy

Boston City Councilor-at-Large

Chair of the Strong Women, Families, & Communities Committee

Additional Note Regarding Hearing Order:

Pursuant to Rule 15 of the Council Rules, I must withdraw the hearing order I filed because it is substantially similar to one filed by Councilor Santana on February 5, 2025: “*Community Engagement & Public Participation for City Council Hearings*” (**Docket #0420**). That docket has been in committee for the past eight months without action.

Although I am withdrawing my order, I am attaching both Councilor Santana’s original docket and my own for the record:

- [Councilor Santana – Docket #0420 Hearing Order](#)
- [Councilor Murphy – Withdrawn Hearing Order](#)

I strongly urge that this topic be scheduled in the Rules & Administration Committee so the Council can finally hold a hearing, hear from residents, and address the need for greater community engagement and public participation in our hearings.

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