



OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ERIN MURPHY, ED FLYNN, BREADON, COLETTA ZAPATA, FITZGERALD, WEBER, WORRELL, LOULJEUNE, AND MEJIA

CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

Order for a Hearing to Review Building Safety Protocols, 311 Complaint Response, and Scaffold Oversight in the City of Boston

WHEREAS: On July 16, 2025, bricks from the facade of a building located at 57 Webster Street in East Boston collapsed onto the public sidewalk, narrowly avoiding injury and prompting evacuation of a neighboring structure; and

WHEREAS: This collapse followed a 311 complaint submitted nearly a month earlier, on June 19, 2025, reporting falling debris, and a more substantial failure on or around July 11, raising serious questions about the adequacy of response and oversight; and

WHEREAS: Despite the presence of scaffolding, the protective measures were insufficient to prevent debris from endangering pedestrians and residents, demonstrating a failure in current scaffold permitting standards and inspection follow-up; and

WHEREAS: Similar incidents have occurred across the City of Boston, including the July 2025 collapse of stone facade materials from a building at 34 Harrison Avenue in Chinatown, and a windowsill collapse at 75 Kneeland Street earlier this year, as well as a 2022 ceiling collapse in Dorchester that forced resident evacuations; and

WHEREAS: These incidents are not isolated, but rather indicative of broader structural concerns related to aging infrastructure, incomplete complaint resolution, and gaps in enforcement and accountability; and

WHEREAS: All Boston residents—regardless of neighborhood—deserve to walk on sidewalks and live in buildings that meet rigorous safety standards and are subject to timely inspection and follow-up;

THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to review the City's current protocols for facade inspection, structural complaint response through the 311 system, and oversight of scaffolding and protective infrastructure. Representatives from the Inspectional Services Department, Boston Fire Department, Boston Public Works Department, and Mayor's Office of Housing, along with building safety experts, and community members shall be invited to testify.

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