

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR MINIARD CULPEPPER



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO EXAMINE NOTICE, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND EQUITY IN THE SITING OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

WHEREAS, The City of Boston administers and supports housing and service programs, including Continuum of Care housing, to address homelessness and promote public health, including efforts to transition individuals from the Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard area (“Mass. and Cass”) into temporary and permanent housing placements; *and*

WHEREAS, These efforts often involve partnerships with nonprofit service providers delivering transitional and permanent supportive housing, including housing-first models designed to move individuals into stable, long-term housing; *and*

WHEREAS, Residents and neighborhood organizations have experienced instances in which housing programs were sited or expanded without adequate advance notice or meaningful engagement, resulting in communities feeling unprepared, excluded from decision-making, and unable to plan for or respond to changes in their neighborhood environment; *and*

WHEREAS, Community feedback has highlighted situations in which service providers were placed in residential neighborhoods without prior consultation with neighborhood associations or local stakeholders, underscoring the need for clear standards and protocols for community notification and engagement; *and*

WHEREAS, The City has acknowledged the importance of proactive communication, transparency, and coordination between service providers and community stakeholders in order to ensure successful integration of housing programs and maintain trust between residents and public institutions; *and*

WHEREAS, Concerns have been raised regarding whether siting decisions for transitional and supportive housing may disproportionately affect neighborhoods with fewer economic resources and communities of color, including Black and Brown residents, raising important issues of equity and fair distribution of services; *and*

WHEREAS, The City of Boston has a responsibility to ensure that housing and service delivery decisions are made in a manner that is equitable, transparent, and inclusive, and that no community is repeatedly burdened or excluded from decisions that directly affect neighborhood conditions; *and*

WHEREAS, Establishing clear notice and engagement requirements would promote accountability, improve coordination, and ensure that communities are informed and meaningfully involved prior to the siting of Continuum of Care housing programs; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine current policies and practices related to the siting of Continuum of Care housing programs, including notice requirements, community engagement processes, and equity considerations, particularly as they relate to placements associated with the Mass. and Cass area; and that the Mayor's Office of Housing, Boston Public Health Commission and other interested parties shall be invited to attend.