

**OFFERED BY CITY COUNCILORS JULIA M. MEJIA, JOHN FITZGERALD,  
BRIAN WORRELL, CULPEPPER, FLYNN, AND MURPHY**



**CITY OF BOSTON  
IN CITY COUNCIL**

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**IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-SIX**

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**ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING THE CITY COUNCIL'S  
AUTHORITY TO ADOPT, AMEND, OR REJECT THE ANNUAL BUDGET  
UNDER THE BOSTON CITY CHARTER**

***WHEREAS,*** The Fiscal Year 2027 budget process has generated significant public discussion regarding the scope of the Boston City Council's authority under the Boston City Charter; *and*

***WHEREAS,*** The 2021 Charter Amendment established a shared budget process between the Mayor and the City Council and explicitly states that "the mayor and city council of the City of Boston shall hold budgetary powers together"; *and*

***WHEREAS,*** The Charter grants the City Council the authority to take definite action on the annual budget by adopting, amending, or rejecting it; *and*

***WHEREAS,*** Recent public statements have suggested that the Council's primary responsibility is limited to proposing amendments to the Mayor's budget, raising questions regarding the intended purpose and practical use of the Council's rejection authority; *and*

***WHEREAS,*** Budget rejection has historically existed as a legislative tool available to governing bodies throughout the United States to express policy disagreement, seek additional negotiations, elevate public concerns, and exercise independent oversight over executive spending priorities; *and*

***WHEREAS,*** Residents, advocates, labor organizations, service providers, and community stakeholders have raised concerns regarding proposed Fiscal Year 2027 reductions affecting youth employment, food access, immigrant services, housing stability programs, arts and culture initiatives, equity-focused programs, and other community investments; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The public deserves a clear understanding of the legal, historical, procedural, and democratic purposes of the City Council's budgetary powers, including the circumstances under which adoption, amendment, or rejection may be appropriate legislative responses; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Transparency regarding the intent of the 2021 Charter Amendment is necessary to ensure meaningful public participation in Boston's budget process and to preserve the balance of powers between the legislative and executive branches of municipal government; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

**ORDERED:** That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the City Council's authority under the Boston City Charter to adopt, amend, or reject the annual budget; the intent and implementation of the 2021 Charter Amendment establishing shared budget powers; the role of budget rejection as a tool of oversight, accountability, and democratic governance; the impact of current budget procedures on public participation and Council decision-making; and potential charter, ordinance, or procedural changes to strengthen transparency and clarify the Council's budgetary authority. Representatives from the Law Department, legal scholars, public finance experts, former elected officials, advocates, and members of the public shall be invited to testify.

Filed in Council: June 3, 2026