

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR SHARON DURKAN



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS THE CITY OF BOSTON PLANNING DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE AND 2026 ANNUAL REPORT

WHEREAS, In April 2024, the Mayor signed an ordinance passed by the Boston City Council establishing a Planning Department within the City of Boston, restoring planning as a core city function with the same oversight and accountability as other City departments; *and*

WHEREAS, The ordinance codifies the purpose and powers of the Planning Department as the city's primary land use agency, responsible for planning and designing the built environment, proposing changes to the zoning code, and evaluating and managing urban development. Its duties include developing plans and strategies to address the city's growth and infrastructure needs, providing staff and technical support for planning and zoning efforts, and reviewing large scale private development proposals; *and*

WHEREAS, The ordinance further authorizes financial transfers from the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) to the Planning Department, specifying that such funds shall be transferred to the City of Boston to support the Department's operations, subject to approval through the standard City Council and Administration budget process; *and*

WHEREAS, The ordinance further requires the City and the BPDA to execute a memorandum of agreement (the "financial transfer MOA") to memorialize the process by which such transfers are carried out. The financial transfer MOA may be amended from time to time, with any such amendments submitted to the City Council on an annual basis; *and*

WHEREAS, The BPDA is required to submit an annual audited financial statement to the Mayor and the City Council, including summaries of revenues and expenses, a list of all assets and ground leases, capital expenditures, and developer mitigation funds, all of which shall be made publicly available. The City shall also provide the Council with copies of any amendments to the financial transfer MOA; *and*

WHEREAS, To ensure transparency and oversight during the transition period, the Planning Department, in consultation with the BPDA, is required to publish an annual report evaluating its performance in advancing the goals of affordability, resilience, and equity in citywide zoning and planning initiatives. This report shall be made publicly available and submitted to the City Council; *and*

WHEREAS, The Ordinance calls upon City Council to hold an annual hearing to review the report and assess the Department's performance, until the requirement sunsets after five years; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the Boston City Council shall hold a hearing to evaluate the Planning Department's annual report and performance in 2025.

Filed On: April 27, 2026