

CITIZENS OF BOSTON

Do you know why you have no say in development?
Do you know why your property taxes keep rising even if your home value falls?
Do you know why the city budget is soaring while services decline?

DO YOU WANT MORE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN CITY HALL?

Did you know....



CITY PLANNING

- Boston has no planning agency to guide long-term, comprehensive city planning.
- Development is controlled by an unaccountable 1950's urban renewal authority, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) that changes zoning to suit developers, seizes city-owned property for development and keeps the money, and defeats fair market competition with developer cronyism.
- The BRA qualifies developers for tax breaks simply by declaring their site "blighted."
- Community input consists of sham public meetings and "advisory groups" and city council has no say.
- We get luxury residential towers, hotels, office towers, convention centers, but little middle-class housing and day-to-day shopping options like supermarkets.



TAXES

- The City raises residential property taxes every year to the maximum allowed by law, regardless of home values, without budget justification.
- Big commercial-tower rents fall due to overbuilding, shifting the tax burden to residents.
- Developers get hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks with no public benefit, with little city council say.
- The BRA pays no taxes on its billions of dollars of property although it legally can pay PILOT.
- Tax-exempt institutions buy up taxable land, shifting the tax burden to residents.. and pay little in PILOT.



EDUCATION

- The public school system uses up almost half the city budget, yet it is failing.
- Instead of assuring quality schools everywhere, the city focuses on the assignment system.
- The city closes schools and gives the buildings to charter schools, which are not open to all but can pick and choose their students.
- Downtown neighborhoods have had no local schools at all for decades.
- The School Committee is mayorally appointed instead of publicly elected, so there is no independent voice for the students and families.

If you want better city government, YOU have to take action.

- **ELIMINATE THE BRA**
 - Create a real planning department, accountable to city council and the public
 - End urban renewal and its predatory eminent domain takings
 - Return billions in public assets to the city treasury
 - End cronyism in development and taxes
- **REFORM THE CITY CHARTER**
 - Set term limits for all elected officials
 - Restore checks and balances -- give city council normal legislative powers over budget, development, and taxation
 - Re-establish publicly elected School Committee to work for our schools
- **DEMAND TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**
 - Require that all city documents be posted online – no more unfulfilled requests
 - Expand the watchdog City Finance Commission to monitor waste, fraud and abuse
 - Demand zero-based budgeting, requiring justification for each expenditure every year.

**THE 2014 ELECTION IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION!
LET'S FIND CANDIDATES WHO WILL DO WHAT WE NEED, AND PUT THEM INTO OFFICE.**