

<b>Candidate name (first and last):</b>	Said Abdikarim
<b>Office the candidate is seeking:</b>	At-large City Councilor
<b>Transportation, housing, and climate issues are currently siloed in City Hall. How do you see these issues connecting and how will you work to align them if elected? [600 character limit]</b>	They're all connected as they affect the most vulnerable population in Boston, underserved communities. If we don't have a city with clean parks or access to healthy foods, that means that there are not equitable resources throughout the city. It makes the city less competitive and vibrant. For example if you don't have affordable housing these people will be displaced, if we don't have affordable food options, they will go hungry. If we don't have a city that looks clean and beautiful that is less dependent on fossil fuels it becomes unhealthy and less desirable.
<b>1a. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly in Boston? (Check the top 3.)</b>	Car, Subway, Walking
<b>1b. What types of housing have you lived in or owned throughout your life? (Check all that apply.)</b>	Duplex/Triple-decker, Over-six-unit apartment building, Public housing / Section 8
<b>1. While the MBTA controls bus service, the City of Boston controls the streets the buses operate on. How would you accelerate bus service and bus priority infrastructure? [1200 character limit]</b>	Residents are very dependent on public transportation and a public transportation system that works efficiently and consistently; from getting their kids to and from school, going to and from work, to appointments, and more. The first area I'd start with is pushing for more energy efficient transportation starting with public buses. Next and in line with this push, I would work to make the MBTA free for the veritable population; essential workers, low income individuals and families, and students to name a few. This would save a lot of overhead costs in the long run that can be used to keep these upgrades moving forward, up to date, and go to other underserved facets of city infrastructure. I would also take into consideration making sure we have better bike lanes and bicycle access in underserved communities. Access to bicycles at discounted rates can encourage less driving and more public transportation. This would also include making sure buses have the adequate bike storage and racks necessary.
<b>The MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) makes important decisions regarding MBTA service, projects, and programs. The FMCB is sunseting in July and the MBTA will be without a dedicated governance board. Will you advocate for a new governance board and a seat on it for the City of Boston, and how? [1200 character limit]</b>	Yes, and this will take collaboration with city level officials, heavy community input, experts in transportation, and environmental experts. Public transportation is very important in the city of Boston and should not be taken lightly, especially in terms of excluding valuable members of the public from being able to give their direct input. It will require all these people to create a new board and once we have the right members together we can quickly collaborate with the right communities to better work with the MBTA and show the importance of community involvement.
<b>3. The City of Boston's comprehensive transportation plan, Go Boston 2030, includes the implementation of 26 priority Better Bike Corridors and other bike projects. How will you ensure all short-term projects are implemented within three years, and long-term projects are implemented by or before 2030? [1200 character limit]</b>	As I am not an expert on transportation, similar to the question above, I would propose bringing together a compilation of different community and neighborhood residents, MTBA members, and various experts in transportation and the environment to collaborate on the recommendations for the best possible outcome. Once a comprehensive plan is established, I will absolutely move forward with better bicycle lanes and making sure it happens as safely and efficiently as possible.

<p><b>4. Often street projects designed to improve safety involve removing on-street parking or reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes to make space for people walking and biking. How would you advance safety projects when there is active opposition to narrowing the roadway and removing parking? [1200 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I believe in finding a common ground as I can see the argument on both sides of the aisle. Coming from a numbers background I can understand the data and understand that this will require a collaborative effort even with the opposition. Community members, transportation experts, bicycle unions, city and state officials to make sure we come out with a plan that is comfortable for all parties. Obviously you don't want to be too far to one side on things like these. I don't like to politicize these kinds of issues, I believe in finding common ground that is mutually beneficial. It is the bedrock of city issues and making sure Boston is great for everyone.</p>
<p><b>5. Boston's inclusionary development policy (IDP) program requires that new developments of 10 units or more include at least 13% of the new units be affordable and income-restricted. There is conversation about increasing the IDP percentage; however, experience and research around the country has shown that setting an IDP percentage too high can actually reduce the total number of new affordable units built. Would you support a new 12 unit building where 50% of the units are affordable over a 60 unit building where 20% of the units are affordable? Why? [1200 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I do not believe that this here is not something you can just determine as an individual, elected, community, or at a state level without proper input by the data and committees. There are many factors such as the area median income which determines the area of affordable housing in Boston that need to be considered. You have to look at the demographics and income levels of people and calculate that. You cannot include two different kinds of neighborhoods in the IDP and think that that can find an optimal solution. I want that number to be increased, yes but I would like to do more research on my own and if elected to find out how this number was settled upon and determined.</p>
<p><b>6. Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030 determined that Boston needed 69,000 new homes by 2030. The last public update (Q4 2019) indicated that the city is likely behind schedule. The current lengthy permitting process in Boston is a well-known barrier to meeting this challenge. How would you reduce timelines and unnecessary costs to create more homes for people in neighborhoods across the city? [1200 character limit]</b></p>	<p>One of the areas I would use to address this is through zoning reform or zoning limitations. Allowing affordable housing in the heavier transit areas would help alleviate commutes to and from the city centers for work. And I do not just mean creating more dense housing and crowding up these transit areas but working with the Boston planning development and having a community elected board as part of Boston Planning and Development Agency that can advocate for every specific neighborhood. They can understand the structure of the neighborhood and speak for those needs directly. These boards would include lawyers, experts in the necessary fields such as housing, transportation, construction, city development, and of course community elected members that can represent the neighborhoods and districts that would be most affected.</p>
<p><b>7. What actions or policies that fall under existing municipal powers (i.e. do not require a home rule petition) do you support to help prevent displacement? [1200 character limit]</b></p>	<p>What the city can do is they can offer families legal assistance who do not understand the legality of being evicted or displaced and offer legal services for free. They can allocate reasons for more affordable housing, work with landlords that are understanding of the situation of the tenant and they can be rewarded by the city for their corporations. They can be utilizing zoning, city funds for legal assistance, and work with landlords on their corporations with the tenants.</p>

<p><b>8. In a new housing development where space is limited, and parking adds substantially to the cost, how would you prioritize space/think about tradeoffs (between more units, parking, open space, etc.)? What would you do in the face of community opposition to developments that seek to balance these priorities? [1200 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Number 1, everything centers on community input and community involvement because every neighborhood and community member understands first hand what is best and most needed for their specific area. This could include members that are involved with neighborhood associations and nonprofits that deal with housing developments. I believe we also need collaboration with city and state leaders to find common ground with those who might be at opposition to these developments. It is important that we work with developments and private corporations to find common ground to find what is best for the community to not lose the opportunity to have affordable housing developments. Priority is to make sure people are not homeless and displaced. But we also have to be sensitive to the needs of the developers and private corporations and work together. I am trying to avoid wasting time and energy with unnecessary hurdles and discussions that will just prolong these developments.</p>
<p><b>1. The Massachusetts Vision Zero Coalition supports the removal of direct policing from Vision Zero goals, citing issues of safety and equity and a lack of effectiveness in improving safety. You can read about these issues in the Boston Vision Zero Progress Report and the Coalition Statement on Gov. Baker Administration's Road Safety Legislation. Do you support removing police enforcement from Vision Zero?</b></p>	<p>Neither Support nor Oppose</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Basically vision zero protects safety and takes a people first approach so if something has to do with public safety we need the collaboration between the law enforcement and their expertise to make sure vision zero is effective.</p>
<p><b>2. Police details are often required for construction projects and open streets events -- it would save money and create jobs if community members were allowed to do this work. Civilian flaggers were first authorized in 2008 to help fill these roles in Massachusetts; nevertheless, these projects and events are still primarily staffed by police on overtime, and detail requests often go unfilled entirely. Do you support reducing police involvement in streets-related projects and events?</b></p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I suggest a certificate program where civilians complete, in collaboration w/ public health officials, transportation, city and police to handle street-related projects &amp; events.</p>
<p><b>3. One key strategy that has been proven to effectively reduce speeding, improve safety, and remove racial bias in traffic enforcement in other states and countries is automated enforcement (i.e. speed cameras and red light cameras). If the State House passes automated enforcement legislation that allows cities &amp; towns to opt-in to a speed or red light camera program, would you support your municipality using this tool?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I support it for multiple important factors. It removes racial bias and frees officers to do other important work such as solve crimes, community policing, instead of traffic stops.</p>

<p><b>4. The Boston Transportation Department's Neighborhood Slow Streets program has been very popular when implemented on smaller neighborhood-level streets, but many injuries from traffic crashes happen on busier arterial roads. Do you support traffic calming for high-crash intersections and roadways of arterials to prevent crashes and save lives, even when it means taking away parking or travel lanes?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Anything that relates to public safety is a very important priority for me.</p>
<p><b>5. The Go Boston 2030 plan was released in 2017. Do you support updating the plan and working to advance the plan's goals?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Yes to The Go Boston 2030 plan because it works to create equitable travel choices, while creating economic opportunities and addressing climate change. Growing up in underserved neighborhoods, we lacked equitable travel choices, economic opportunities and were mostly affected by climate issues.</p>
<p><b>6. Mode shift occurs when people get out of their cars and choose other ways of getting around. Do you support the City's Go Boston 2030 goal of reducing car trips by 50% by 2030?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I support this because the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is good for the environment, public health, and reduces traffic in the city.</p>
<p><b>7. Do you support reassessing the plans and viability of major capital projects, such as the Northern Avenue Bridge or the Rutherford Avenue redesign?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>We need to think about the environment, public safety, and how we can benefit as a city with the redesign of these products and making them less hazardous to the environment. We should also make sure a new design takes into consideration the need for bicycle lanes and public transportation access.</p>
<p><b>8. How curb space is managed can impact many different city functions, including bus service, commercial delivery, and residential parking. When used effectively, curb space can speed up bus service with dedicated lanes, create safe biking infrastructure, and/or allow businesses to quickly and safely receive deliveries. Do you support conducting a city-wide parking study to evaluate how effectively curb space is being used?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>An inclusive transportation avenue for everybody is important. Whether it is for private or public cars and bikes no one should be left behind when it comes to safe transportation. It would be beneficial to all parties that the best optimal solutions are found, presented, and implemented.</p>
<p><b>9. Do you support charging an annual fee for residential parking permits?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Oppose</p>

<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I do not believe residents should be charged a fee as they already pay rent/mortgage therefore it is not fair for them to also pay a fee for having a car at their homes. Also I see this as being very detrimental for people that come from low income backgrounds.</p>
<p><b>10. Do you support free bus service on the MBTA and a low-income fare option for other public transit options?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Public transportation is already expensive as is. It's not fair to individuals who live farther away who already don't make very much to be paying just to reach their jobs in the city. It should be free for them and or at a very discounted rate.</p>
<p><b>11. Boston has many traffic signals that do not work well for pedestrians. Do you support making signal timing safer and more convenient for people crossing at all speeds, including those walking and using mobility assistive devices?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>It's a public safety issue. As someone who is a father to two children I want to make sure I don't have to worry about my kids or anyone's kids for that matter getting hurt crossing the street. I want to make sure cyclists and anyone that may need additional assistance are safe crossing the street.</p>
<p><b>12. Do you support ensuring large-scale developments (including Sullivan Square, the Allston I-90 Interchange, and Suffolk Downs) incorporate the community's desire for walkability, connectivity, open space, and resilience?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>We are trying to create a safe and efficient city. Public safety and transportation are things that can improve on to elevate Boston to be a more vibrant and competitive, 21st century city.</p>
<p><b>13. Do you support prioritizing and advancing the housing production goals outlined in the 2018 update to Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I support it because it addresses the housing issues I care about; income restricted housing, prevent displacement, home ownership, preserve demographics of existing neighborhoods.</p>
<p><b>14. Lawsuits filed against two much needed, 100% affordable housing developments in Jamaica Plain have recently underscored how mandatory parking minimums can be weaponized within the legal system to significantly slow or prevent affordable housing. Do you support the proposal by Councilors Matt O'Malley and Kenzie Bok to update the zoning code to eliminate mandatory parking minimums for affordable housing?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Anything that blocks affordable housing developments is detrimental to giving families housing opportunities. Zoning has been an issue on the overall affordable housing developments throughout the city of Boston.</p>

<p><b>15. Given the affordability crisis, many are critical of the perceived large amount of new “luxury” construction and would like to see more moderately priced housing options being built. Yet, the city’s zoning code mandates strict parking minimums for any new housing development, and parking is expensive (a single structured parking space adds an average of \$50,000 in per-unit costs). This substantial cost often pushes otherwise moderately priced new housing into the “luxury” price range. In order to increase the amount of moderately priced homes in the city, would you support reducing mandatory parking minimums for all new development city-wide?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Anything that blocks affordable housing developments is detrimental to giving families housing opportunities. Zoning has been an issue on the overall affordable housing developments throughout the city. We can't allow zoning to be weaponized against the fundamental human right to have housing.</p>
<p><b>16. The City of Boston has devoted significant resources and conducted extensive community processes to develop neighborhood-based plans (i.e. PLAN: JP/Rox, PLAN: South Boston Dorchester Ave). However, the city has failed to incorporate these plans into the zoning code, perpetuating a system of parcel-by-parcel discretion and diminishing public trust in the planning process. Do you support codifying these and future plans into the city’s zoning code within a reasonable time frame (six months of a plan’s release)?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>I believe that it is very important that we have the community at the table and their involvement in their neighborhood developments to help move these plans forward.</p>
<p><b>17. The City of Boston and Boston Housing Authority have recently launched a city project-based housing voucher program. Do you support continued funding for this program, and do you support expanding it to include additional funding and/or a mobile voucher program?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p><b>Please explain. [300 character limit]</b></p>	<p>Housing is a human right. A rich city like Boston should not allow families (or anyone) to be displaced because they cannot afford to live here. The city needs to be welcoming to everyone, whether you come from a low income background or an immigrant background.</p>