

Candidate name (first and last):	Josette Williams
Office the candidate is seeking:	District 4 City Councilor
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]	All are inextricably linked. Transportation is a major factor in job access; reliable/affordable transportation between quality homes and work is essential. Solutions must include climate justice. Transportation must include dedicated bus lanes/free transit/regulating traffic flow/city-wide cycling infrastructure/improved pedestrian safety. Include additional greenspace, particularly in D4 which has been a sacrifice zone, in roadway improvements. Locate housing programs, including on vacant lots, near public transportation. Promote policy within CH focused on the voice of advocacy groups.
1a. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly in Boston? (Check the top 3.)	Car, Walking, Carpool
1b. What types of housing have you lived in or owned throughout your life? (Check all that apply.)	Duplex/Triple-decker, 4-to-6-unit building, Over-six-unit apartment building, As a renter, Housing insecure, Public housing / Section 8, Urban, Suburban
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]	Dedicated bus lanes Free bus service Delivery truck set asides Late night T service Tax on call rides Painted or clearly defined cross walks As appropriate, off peak truck delivery Restrict truck routes
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]	It is very surprising that the FMCB is sunseting and as of now the Governor has indicated he will not extend it. I would advocate as a City Councilor to "bully pulpit" for its reestablishment or a similar body. The City must have representation. I would also push for a City Council resolution that the City appoint a representative to attend every public meeting of the MBTA advocating for the city's needs. I would also push for state legislation expanding the T Board to include representatives from the major communities served by the T.
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]	The Go Boston 2030 plan was an extraordinary effort which included many constituencies. The 4 strategic categories are specifically set forth in the plan and would be transformative for District 4 and the City as a whole. The key to implementation is funding, community engagement and oversight of progress. We must continue to lobby for the funding from the State and federal governments. As the infrastructure proposals work their way through Congress, we need to be sure that Boston gets an appropriate allocation to keep moving forward. In the meantime, there are many short term, not terribly costly, projects that could have a terrific return in terms of safety and livability. We have seen in parts of the City that crosswalk improvements, restriping of roadways, adding dedicated bicycle lanes etc can be accomplished. I will advocate for their inclusion in the City budgeting process.

<p>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]</p>	<p>Improving walking and biking safety in the city is essential and might well require a reduction in parking spaces. However, small businesses, the life blood of the city, may require spaces for delivery of supplies and parking for take out and customers. A balance is needed and most likely achieved by bringing together the two “groups” and hearing others’ points of view. We have seen during COVID that restaurants have taken over sections of streets and it has worked well. We have, as a result, a new way of thinking about shared space.</p>
<p>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]</p>	<p>In the abstract, the math dictates choosing the 60 unit project. But many other considerations must be taken into account. Location; proximity to transportation; number of other large scale projects in the area; character of neighborhood. The broader question is what is the right percentage that adds more affordable housing but doesn’t turn away developers. I have previously taken the position that the percentage be doubled and look again at the applicability to projects with fewer than 10 units. In addition, we should reconsider the developer’s ability to buy out the obligation or place the required units off site.</p>
<p>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]</p>	<p>The City must streamline the process and give housing a priority in getting through city agencies. Perhaps a one stop housing office that would draw from the constituent departments would be helpful. Further the zoning code must be amended to speed up the process by creating as of right projects or those with limited review, based upon an updated zoning code that sets out community accepted standards.</p>
<p>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]</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the City is under the thumb of the Legislature in many unnecessary areas. Housing displacement protection is one area. The BHA has created a project based housing voucher program funded by the City. We recommend expansion of the program as well as the Tenant Based Voucher Program. Home Base, a non profit organization, now partners with the BHA to reduce evictions to maintain tenant stability. I would explore expanding that relationship. In addition, the City can work with landlords to pressure them to accommodate tenants in crisis and perhaps use the power of the City if necessary- the carrot and stick approach. An effort could be made to get state legislation under a home rule petition to broaden the city’s authority.</p>

<p>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]</p>	<p>Each project is unique and impacts its community in unique ways. One size does not fit all. Each element, housing, parking, open space, and environment must be considered. The highest preference is to housing, but it must be balanced with the other elements. Parking is essential for access to jobs if the project is not near quality public transportation. Green space is essential to quality of life, and community peace and safety.</p> <p>As for opposition, different people have different points of view and are impacted differently. A key to finding a balance among priorities is to provide opportunities for people to hear and listen to different points of view. Balance often means compromise. At some point the permit granting authority must be the final arbiter after a decent respectful exchange.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Fatalities decreased due to other non-policing actions. The Coalition is working to create safer streets, accomplished by city actions: lower transit fares, clear pedestrian crossings, dedicated bike lanes, enhanced technology for speed issues, decreasing police encounters.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Civilian flaggers were first authorized in 2008. This is a community employment opportunity that would in no way negatively affect safety. Many many states utilize civilian flaggers at lower cost with no resulting effect on safety.</p>
<p>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 & towns to opt-in to a speed or red light camera program, would you support your municipality using this tool?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Absolutely. See answers above</p>

<p>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?</p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>In theory I strongly support implementing those measures. However each situation is unique and must be assessed on a case by case basis. The bias should be in favor but a particular location may have unique circumstances.</p>
<p>5. The Go Boston 2030 plan was released in 2017. Do you support updating the plan and working to advance the plan's goals?</p>	<p>Somewhat Oppose</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>This went through an exhaustive process. While any plan must be continually refreshed, considering new conditions and new learning (ex: learning during COVID), an exhaustive review will delay implementation, creating Vision 2035. Keep moving forward with our eyes always open to specific corrections.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Mode shift is an important aspect in terms of air quality, safety and quality of life! However, the reduction in car trips must be linked to quality, frequent service, free or low cost and environmentally sensitive public transit.</p>
<p>7. Do you support reassessing the plans and viability of major capital projects, such as the Northern Avenue Bridge or the Rutherford Avenue redesign?</p>	<p>Neither Support nor Oppose</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Projects presumably have been through community review, environmental assessment, extensive permitting, often replacing crumbling infrastructure. Need case-by-case assessment, not broad statement. New state law includes procedures for additional review by residents of environment justice communities.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Many areas where this work has already taken place, including parts of D4:Blue Hill Ave, Columbia Road. Where no assessment has occurred, I strongly support the effort. We need data-supported plans for set asides for delivery trucks, cycling lanes, clear pedestrian walkways and a green umbrella.</p>
<p>9. Do you support charging an annual fee for residential parking permits?</p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>

<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Basically the fee is a regressive tax which will disproportionately affect lower income individuals. Before implementation, there must be a social justice impact analysis. This is the biggest concern for one of my neighbors on Fowler St.</p>
<p>10. Do you support free bus service on the MBTA and a low-income fare option for other public transit options?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>See previous answers</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>See previous answers</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Economic development+creation of well-paying jobs is essential to residents' well-being. But the health of the city must be defined more broadly, including the creation of greenspace, walkable areas and areas where people play and decompress. Frederick Law Olmstead: "Parks preserve democracy."</p>
<p>13. Do you support prioritizing and advancing the housing production goals outlined in the 2018 update to Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Unfortunately we are very far from achieving our goals. Housing must be prioritized if we want to continue to have a diverse, vibrant , livable city where all can thrive. We must increase density, particularly near public transportation.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Transportation is essential for lower-income people for job access. We need balance: how close is the development to public transportation? Elimination may result in more on-street parking; this may work in some areas. Makes sense to authorize parking elimination/reduction w/ certain criteria.</p>

<p>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?</p>	<p>Somewhat Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>See above response.Reducing # of parking spaces is not going to make a “luxury” price development into a “moderately” priced development. Current parking requirements should be reviewed as part of the overall review of the Zoning Code and the result may vary by district.</p>
<p>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)?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>It is actually astonishing that these neighborhood plans are not in the Zoning Code, given the effort and community input that has gone into them. Again, a thorough code update is also essential. It has been piecemeal since 1964.</p>
<p>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?</p>	<p>Strongly Support</p>
<p>Please explain. [300 character limit]</p>	<p>Great program providing housing to more people facing displacement/without housing and builds on the federal Section 8. It is one small step in the reduction of homelessness. Given it is a City funded program, it is subject to budgetary constraints but must be given priority.</p>