Candidate name (first and last):	Brandy Brooks
Office the candidate is seeking:	District 7 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]	Transportation, housing and climate [and economic opportunities] are interdependent equity-based issues with respect to district-level access, distribution and administration of city services. Therefore, any approach to address these issues should not only synthesize in constituent needs but advance those needs in concert with government agencies and other council members.
1a. Which of the following modes of transportation do you use regularly in Boston? (Check the top 3.)	Car, Subway, Bus
1b. What types of housing have you lived in or owned throughout your life? (Check all that apply.)	Over-six-unit apartment building, As a renter, As a landlord, Housing insecure, Single-family home, Public housing / Section 8, Urban, Suburban, Rural
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]	As a city councilor, I would prioritize dedicated bus lanes and confirm my commitment to pursuing the goals and objectives outlined in The Better Bus Project. Prospective policy ordinances would ensure that operations, network enhancements, modernizations and accessibility features are sustained, data-informed and reduce costs.
The MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) makes important decisions regarding MBTA service, projects, and programs. The FMCB is sunsetting 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]	When the FMCB sunsets in July, a new governing board should be convened and since residents of Boston have a disproportionate need for public transportation, the City of Boston should have a seat on the board. Additionally, with the current and projected expansions and ballooning budget needs, the MBTA Advisory board should also be a part of the new governance structure because they represent the 175 communities that contribute to MBTA operations budget.
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]	Any short or long term community will involve working with residents in the district, relevant city agencies, in particular the Boston Transportation Department and other city councilors to make certain Boston 2030 is implemented and sustained.
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]	There is no one size fits all solution to this question. Transportation policy has to be balanced and created in the context of community needs. For better or worse, Boston has neighborhoods with existing automobile ownership. Therefore, there has to be an equitable balance between public safety, neighborhood interests, and environmental concerns on a case by case basis. That in turn means this all has to be subject to a truly accountable public process.

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]	First, the term affordable should be defined within the city median income as opposed to the regional or area median income. Second, the premise of this questions seems to be based on market costs of construction. There are means to construct housing without dealing with a for profit developer which reduces the cost of the units and construction costs. Affordable and income-restriction housing development could be reimagined development so that development is not exclusively conducted by for profit developers. In turn, this could decrease some of the bond and expiring use issues while working with the trade unions and neighborhood development corporations to build quality housing at below market costs. developments at less than average market costs (e.g., Back of the Hill Apartments which were part of the South Huntington Avenue Corridor).
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]	Arduous timelines and unnecessary costs can be reduced by ensuring that the permitting process involves better coordination, is more accountable to the community and is transparent from beginning to end. First, efforts to improve coordination could involve more clearly defining each agency's role in the permitting process and establishing better cross-agency information sharing and collaboration practices. Second, developers, contracts and other interested stakeholders need to be more accountable when projects exceed the budget or deadlines are missed. Third, the entire permitting process should be more transparent on the steps required and expectations of specific development projects and making sure this information is disseminated to community members. By streamlining the approval and permitting processing timelines and costs would not only be expedited but more importantly public throughout all phases of the process.
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]	While there are several policies that I would support to prevent displacement, including rent control, rent control was abolished by state referendum so it would require state legislation to overturn. With respect to displacement measures, municipal options are limited and would require state legislative input or initiative petitions.
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]	As a city councilor, it is of utmost importance that I represent the will of the community. Ultimately, it is my business to point out the tradeoffs but not to disempower community sentiments or work to push policies that are adverse to what constituents want.
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?	Somewhat Support

Please explain. [300 character limit]	While I support the arguments requesting the removal of direct policing from Vision Zero goals, specifically race-based stops and searches which further traumatize communities of color, there may be certain instances where the presence of police is warranted to ensure vehicle and pedestrian safety.
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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	For some open street events I'm inclined to support paid details as a deterrent and to ensure public safety at public events. At construction projects, community members could be part of the paid force because there is not the intrinsic public safety dynamic as at an open street event.
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?	Somewhat Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	While I support measures that would remove racial bias in traffic enforcement, at present the data is inconclusive as to whether the deployment of automated enforcement is truly equitable in nature.
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?	Somewhat Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	If the goal is public safety, the best solution would be a combination of dedicated lanes, street lights and additional signage. For example, the timing of street lights and crosswalks need to be timed in such a way to enhance public safety and traffic flow.
5. The Go Boston 2030 plan was released in 2017. Do you support updating the plan and working to advance the plan's goals?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	Future iterations of Go Boston 2020 should be the result of public forums where constituents are able to weigh in because the average resident in the district may not know of the existence of the plan.

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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	In the abstract, a 50% reduction of car usage by 2030 would require an honest assessment of the tradeoffs involved, included but not limited to, access to a 24-hour public transit system.
7. Do you support reassessing the plans and viability of major capital projects, such as the Northern Avenue Bridge or the Rutherford Avenue redesign?	Neither Support nor Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	Because I haven't researched the North Avenue Bridge or Rutherford Avenue redesign projects and any reassessments would involve working with at-large colleagues as well as the District 1 City Councilor, it is premature to commit one way or the other.
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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	I support a city-wide parking study to evaluate how effectively curb space is being used because beyond community input study results help to make informed decisions on issues such as these.
9. Do you support charging an annual fee for residential parking permits?	Strongly Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	Annual fees for residential parking permits is regressive and disproportionately impacts low-income residents of the district that need to use their automobile for employment or for personal reasons (e.g., grocery shopping, medical appointments, etc.).
10. Do you support free bus service on the MBTA and a low-income fare option for other public transit options?	Somewhat Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	In a state-supported MBTA system, the political support is not there for a free system but I do support lower fares for elderly, students, low-income and disabled riders.
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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	There should be an evaluation of the timing of all traffic signals to ensure pedestrians have enough time to cross the street, in particular, including constituents that depend upon mobility assisted devices.

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?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	I support large-scale developments incorporating walkability, connectivity, open space and resilience with the condition that it is done with the approval of residents and elected representatives in neighborhoods outside of District 7.
13. Do you support prioritizing and advancing the housing production goals outlined in the 2018 update to Housing a Changing City: Boston 2030?	Strongly Support
Please explain. [300 character limit]	Suggested housing production goals should reflect a realistic analysis of the needs of moderate and low-income Bostonians. Relative to market costs, high quality low-cost housing options are limited. f you're making $15 an hour and have children, finding affordable housing within district is hard
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?	Strongly Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	For better or worse, some of the biggest supporters for mandatory minimum parking comes from existing and accountable neighborhood associations within District 7. Supporting this would not reflect the sentiments of the district.
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?	Strongly Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	For better or worse some of the biggest supporters for mandatory minimum parking comes from existing and accountable neighborhood associations within District 7. Supporting this would not reflect the sentiments of the district.

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)?	Strongly Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	The existing structure does not empower the residents of District 7 to advance their own interests in the zoning process. Therefore I would oppose codifying these and other codes until a mechanism accountable to the residents of District 7 is created and maintained.
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?	Neither Support nor Oppose
Please explain. [300 character limit]	At present, the application and access to the program 's waiting list is closed. While I support continued funding to make it accessible to new applicants within the district, I don't know enough about the structure of the mobile voucher program to make an informed decision.