

At-Large City Council Candidates Answer MAHA's Questions*

Full answers are posted on MAHA's website: mahahome.org



Would you lead a campaign to direct at least \$200 million in Boston's federal covid recovery money, (ARPA), to affordable housing? (\$100M for affordable home-ownership and \$100M for affordable rental?)
How would you lead?

Would you call for increasing Commercial Development Impact Fees ("Linkage") for affordable housing and job training to \$26.28 per square foot within your first year in office?
What would you do to get it passed?

Would you help ensure developers can't pay outdated Linkage fees on projects with multiyear build outs?
(They now lock in Linkage rates when they first propose a project to be built over many years.)

Would you vote to enact a 2% real estate transfer fee on property sales over \$3 million, with the money to be used for affordable housing?
This could add hundreds of affordable homes each year in Boston.



Said Abdikarim

YES. I Would use data to show the housing crisis and why \$200 million makes sense. Also show correlation between wealth gap and homeownership.

Yes. I would use my data background to draft a report on development boom, lack of affordable housing, displacement, & homelessness.

Yes

Yes



Kelly Bates

YES. Will champion with MAHA and other organizations these solutions to the immediate crisis of affordability, and engage constituencies to push the new mayor and council to act.

YES. Would strongly advocate for raising the fee to \$26.28

YES. I support setting fees so that they keep pace with the market at the point that construction begins.

YES. I will work with MAHA and advocates and vote yes.



Michael Flaherty

Will advocate for a variety of uses for this (federal covid recovery) funding to help increase the amount of affordable rental housing and affordable homeownership.
No commitment on \$200 million.

If reelected, I will continue to be a strong advocate for increasing the linkage fees in line with the cost of living and market realities.
No commitment on \$26.28.

YES. I will continue to assume a leadership role in ensuring developments built over many years pay the linkage fee in effect when the building is constructed.

I am fully committed to a...robust legislative process for the latest special petition (for a real estate transfer fee) currently before the Council, as well as a legislative process for any statewide legislation.



 Alex Gray	Yes. Would testify in favor at public hearings and broadcast my support on social media.	I am not ready to commit to a specific increase today. We need to take some time to see the impacts that the pandemic will have on real estate and development.	Yes	Yes
 David Halbert	Yes. Covid recovery funds will provide a unique opportunity to address the housing crisis - the #1 policy challenge facing the city. I would work to engage experts & the public, especially communities where housing justice issues are most acutely felt.	Yes. I would work to develop a list of potential projects for every neighborhood in Boston that could be initiated or expanded with such additional revenue, connecting this technical policy change to practical results and impacts in residents' daily lives.	Yes. It seems short-sighted to lock in linkage rates so early in the process. These fees should be imposed when buildings are constructed. Only using the rate in effect when projects are proposed amounts to a subsidy from the public that Boston cannot afford.	YES. This legislation can serve as a critical component to the overall policy suite available to Boston to increase housing access and justice across the city.
 Ruthzee Louijeune	YES. We need to steer covid funds to close the racial and economic wealth gaps by supporting affordable homeownership. Will partner with Equitable Recovery Task Force to center affordable homeownership and affordable rental opportunities.	Yes. I would be a strong advocate for doubling linkage fees. (Current fee is \$15.39/sq. ft. of development.) We must make developers more responsible for some of the negative externalities created by their developments. I will pressure the Mayor to see to it that that happens.	Yes	Yes
 Julia Mejia	Yes. I would absolutely support reserving as much money as possible, at least \$200 million of the \$500 million in ARPA (federal covid) funds, for affordable housing.	I would absolutely be a strong advocate for increasing commercial linkage fees. it will require collaboration between the Council, the Administration, and advocates such as MAHA.	Yes	Yes, and I believe we should push for the transfer fee to be lowered back down to \$2 million as originally proposed.





Carla Monteiro

Yes. Considering the scale of Boston’s housing crisis, I would be a fierce advocate for spending ARPA money this way. I would offer the full support of my office and particularly help with mobilizing communities of color and nonenglish dominant speaking communities, beginning the conversation with whoever wins the Mayoral election as well as my colleagues on the council and the Boston delegation would be an important first step

Yes. I am comfortable supporting increasing this amount up to \$26.28. The way I see it, we need to raise more revenue and the developers operating in Boston can afford to pay these increased fees.... I’d be happy to collaborate with advocates to take the steps they see as most useful from my office whether it be press conferences, community hearings, formal hearings, leaning on my colleagues on the council to support this measure, or other approaches.

Yes, this is another example of our rules benefiting the wealthy and well connected while not looking out for working people. It’s unfair and I’d be happy to work in coalition with advocates to bring about this necessary policy change.

Yes. We need long term, sustainable revenue. Our city was missing the mark of meeting the basic needs of our residents prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had problems and needed new revenue to solve them, that will remain true once these ARPA funds have been spent. Sustainable, progressive revenue is how we solve systemic problems for generations to come.

* There are nine additional candidates running for At-Large Boston City Council seats who did not respond to MAHA’s questionnaire. They are: James Reginald Colimon, Domingos DaRosa, Althea Garrison, Erin Murphy, Bridget Nee-Walsh, Roy Owens Sr., Donnie Palmer Jr., Jonathan Spillane, and Nick Vance.