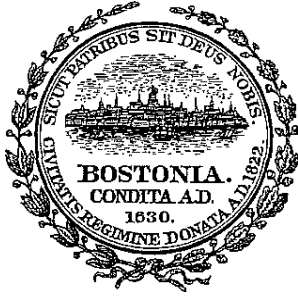


OFFERED BY COUNCILORS KENDRA LARA AND RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, BOK, BAKER, ARROYO, BREADON, FLAHERTY, FERNANDES ANDERSON, MEJIA, MURPHY, WORRELL & FLYNN



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING THE STATE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND BOSTON'S INCLUSIONARY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

- WHEREAS,** The City of Boston's Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) was created in 2000 to promote the production of affordable housing in Boston, and it continues to be a critical tool for creating and funding income-restricted housing; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Unaffordable housing costs, housing instability, and displacement cause substantial harm to individuals, families, and neighborhoods in classes protected by federal and state fair housing laws, especially households of color, including linguistic minorities, households with elderly or disabled members, households with children, especially female-headed family households with children, and voucher holders; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Recent eviction rates in predominantly nonwhite areas of Boston have been 2.38 times higher than in predominantly white areas; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The City of Boston now has the authority to require affordability in zoning and has incorporated affirmatively furthering fair housing into the zoning code; *and*
- WHEREAS,** The previous administration last revised the IDP in 2015 and conducted a feasibility study in 2019 but did not change the IDP; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Over 14.6 million square feet of new construction was approved by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) in 2021 alone, and developments that have been reviewed while the IDP is unchanged will have major impacts on working-class and BIPOC neighborhoods and the entire city. Examples include Dorchester Bay City, developments by Harvard and Suffolk Downs; *and*
- WHEREAS,** In December 2020, Mayor Wu announced she was considering taking action in the new year to change the IDP, and the Mayor's Office of Housing is launching a new study examining housing need, feasibility, and racial equity to determine how to create an IDP that includes 20% affordability or more; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Community groups have asked for: changes to the IDP even before the study is complete, strong community participation in shaping the study, open public meetings during the study, and centering racial justice and community need; *and*

WHEREAS, The City must analyze how to capture affordability when development approvals increase the typical value of land, instead of encouraging developers to pay inflated land costs based on low affordability requirements; *and*

WHEREAS, Developers have built projects at a range of profit levels, and an analysis of the IDP must include examining lower profit levels; *and*

WHEREAS, The City sets affordability standards using Area Median Income (AMI), calculated by including wealthier cities outside of Boston. 100% AMI is \$120,800 for a household of 4 and \$84,600 for an individual. The City can lower IDP income levels from the current requirements of 70-100% AMI, which are out of range of many Boston and BIPOC households who make 0-60% AMI; *and*

WHEREAS, Many developers build fewer than ten units of housing to avoid IDP requirements; *and*

WHEREAS, The current IDP requires income-restricted units to remain affordable for 30 to 50 years, rather than requiring permanent affordability; *and*

WHEREAS, The need for family-size housing is significant, and 66% of under-housed and rent-burdened households making 30-60% AMI have two or more people. But 63% of IDP units built through 2019 were studios and one-bedroom apartments; *and*

WHEREAS, This growing shortage of affordable housing, threatening to exclude or otherwise severely harm low and moderate-income residents, negatively impacts all residents of the City by frustrating the city's efforts to maintain and increase the diversity of its populace throughout the city and in neighborhoods facing displacement, maintain its status as a world-class, welcoming city, and affirmatively further fair housing, all of which are necessary for the public health, safety and general welfare; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the IDP, inclusionary zoning, and methods to ensure a greater percentage of affordable units, income guidelines that create truly affordable units for Boston households, and requirements for family-size units, permanent affordability, and affordability in smaller developments. Representatives from the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA), Mayor's Office of Office and Housing (MOH), Office of Fair Housing and Equity (OFHE), affordable housing organizations, community groups, and other interested parties are invited to testify. The hearing will also discuss immediate changes to the IDP before a new study is complete, ways to ensure a robust study and substantial community input, and the impact of developments currently under review.

Filed in Council: March 30, 2022