

# Sam Yoon

## Affordable Housing

I understand affordable housing. I spent ten years building affordable housing -for seniors and people with disabilities. It is my passion. I understand that financing and competing community needs are the major stumbling blocks for any project — and so is Boston’s disjointed and divisive development process.

City government should be a strong partner in developing housing. We have the talent and skills in our community development and tenant communities, but we need a city government willing to work with them. Most importantly, we need a total overhaul of our development process. Comprehensive planning must guide our development. We can start by eliminating the Boston Redevelopment Authority and establishing a genuine Community Development and Planning Agency.

As Mayor, I will strengthen the City’s Inclusionary Development Policy to build more units of affordable housing and push for solutions to the problem of expiring use properties, so we preserve those units as affordable.

## Development

- Balancing modes of transportation — transportation planning and development needs to be about moving people, not just cars — on foot, bike, wheelchair and via public transportation
- Community Economic Development through production of affordable housing, local hiring and small business support. (The Forest Hills Project and Blessed Sacrament are clearly critical to this effort)
- Open Space — JP has an amazing heritage on this front as a community that fought I-93 to make the Southwest Corridor and trail blazed community gardens for this city. We can do more — Seattle has a city community garden program and conducted comprehensive planning to identify which city owned land is best for housing and for community gardens.

## Environment and Energy

- **Energy Efficiency Retrofit program** — working in collaboration with youth organizations, community groups and unions to create good jobs and energy savings for low income families
- **Comprehensive Zoning & Permitting changes which encourage Green Neighborhoods** — Underlying zoning changes will increase community gardens, streamline

permitting for farmer’s markets, and incentivize healthy food options in neighborhood convenience stores and bodegas

- **City Zip Car Fleet Management** — allowing us to convert to a smaller, hybrid fleet

And there is plenty more we could be doing!

## Youth Violence

There is no single issue that has influenced my decision to run for Mayor more than this one. I live in a community affected by violence, these are my neighbors and our children. We need cooperation, collaboration and a comprehensive approach to prevention— we did it before, we can do it again but not without new, invigorated leadership that isn’t all about credit.

1. **Focus on prevention** — youth workers, trauma protocol, funding for youth programs
2. **Create a City Office of Re-entry** — to coordinate recovery programs, CORI reform & help, housing searches, skills training to prevent recidivism
3. **Green Jobs** — Boston jobs for Boston residents for the new economy
4. **Boston Children’s Zone approach** — Violence is about public health as much as public safety. We need a seamless continuum of public health services from pre-natal health to college and career. Schools, Community Health Centers, non-profits, Boston Community Centers and libraries should be working together to reduce chronic diseases, persistent unemployment, and foreclosures; and to promote healthy homes, conflict resolution, & family unification.

## Accountability, Transparency

1. **Open up the budget process** — That begins by scheduling budget hearings before a budget is drawn up and advertising the hearings. We need to ensure an engaged citizenry participates in the process.
2. **Bring development dollars back to the budget** — Right now, the Boston Redevelopment Authority controls billions of dollars in real estate and land and not a penny of it is accounted for in the city’s budget. I will establish a fully accountable city agency for planning and development, to ensure those dollars fund our schools, roads and parks.
3. **Establish Transparency 2.0** — Boston deserves a one-click searchable online budget. Citizens should be able to find detailed information about tax breaks, contracts, and spending on a single website. Performance measures will be fully reported and department heads will make data informed decisions. City employees will be rewarded for doing their job and providing services only.

## Education

We should expect and insist that every child in our city have access to a quality public education in his or her own neigh-

borhood. The problem with Boston public schools and urban education in general is bigger than Tom Menino and it is certainly bigger than the transportation budget. Bottom line: the current transportation and busing debate in Boston is divisive and totally unproductive. All of our energy must be focused on transforming our failing schools and closing the achievement gap.

I believe that the achievement gap is caused by a myriad of factors — not all of which can be solely addressed in the school setting: poverty, poor health care, language, misdiagnosed learning challenges, trauma and other factors can prevent learning for individual children and for communities affected by these issues. The most important change needed to address the achievement gap is to take a Harlem Children’s Zone approach which engages all youth serving city agencies as well as community based services towards measured goals around educational achievement and health outcomes. This approach will require new leadership that values cooperation.

Several other specific proposals:

1. **Create “Smart Caps” on charter schools** — We need to encourage the innovators who have a proven record of success to work with the children our schools are failing. That means ELL students and special education students. Let’s find the solutions that work for them and replicate.
2. **Partnerships with colleges and universities** — Our higher learning institutions train a quarter of the world’s leaders. No other city in the world has the intellectual resources that Boston does. But for the last 16 years we have done virtually nothing to tap into these resources to create partnerships that can breathe new life into our schools. We have to seize this opportunity.
3. **Hybrid elected/appointed school committee** — We’ve had 16 years of an appointed school committee that is not working toward transformational change. The Mayor needs to be accountable for the schools, and appoint some members for expertise. But because of the tight link between democracy and education, I would like to see some elected members included as well.

## Human Services

- **\$2 million into a statewide campaign for a progressive tax system** — The most important way to invest this money is to grow the pie for human services and public health funds. Many of the large social service agencies that serve senior citizens and provide mental health services rely of state funding. .
- **\$4 million to the Boston Public Health Commission** — The Commission is one of the best in the world. I would invest \$4 million to increase their capacity to treat chronic disease, improve food policy and prevent Youth Violence. I’d like to coordinate more violence prevention work through the Commission.
- **\$4 million in small community based non-profits** — In my experience small community based organizations

with budgets under \$1 million have the most impact on problems that face poor and underserved communities. Yet they are chronically underfunded. I would invest the remaining \$4 million in small community based non-profits that will stretch those dollars further.

## Transportation

Our public works department is in the dark ages. Our transportation department is still more focused on moving cars than people. We have two separate agencies responsible for planning. One has accountability, but no power. The other — controlled by the Mayor and the developers who pay for it — has power, but no accountability. My first priority for improving the overall transportation system in Boston is to insist that city agencies work with our partners in state government and in private development to ensure a cohesive, balanced, affordable transportation system for Boston.

We need a Mayor who will encourage regional and inter-agency collaboration. City government should be working with the MBTA, MassPort and the state legislature to ensure Boston has a world-class public transportation system and the resources to maintain it. A big city Mayor who believes in public transportation can have a major impact on transportation.

## Jobs and Labor

I support an Energy Efficient Retrofit program combined with a strengthened Boston Resident Jobs Policy (BRJP) to ensure that stimulus funds for Green Jobs benefit historically underemployed communities. If we get serious about a new Green economy now, we can spur the creation of new markets (tax credits for green roofs will spur green roof product and installation businesses). If we have a funded and enforced BRJP then we can work with unions and community based groups to ensure good paying jobs for Boston’s communities of color.

## Race and Diversity

In Boston, diversity is our greatest strength. As mayor, my administration will look like our city. Diversity in the workplace is not just the right thing to do — it’s good business.

### Three Steps:

- **The Boston Resident Jobs Policy must be enforced.** The City of Boston is the second largest employer in the city, and it is only right that city jobs go to Boston residents. We need to adjust this program to ensure that minorities are hired by the city.
- **Outreach** — The City of Boston should be aggressively seeking out a diverse workforce. Talented minorities who are willing to serve need to have the opportunity to do so. This outreach needs to start at Boston schools and continue into the colleges.

- **Work with Unions** — The city needs to work with unions, particularly the building trades, to ensure that women and people of color are afforded the opportunities they deserve.

### **Budget Policy**

The single biggest, untapped factor in Boston's overall revenue picture is the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Billions of dollars of real estate — some city owned land — is controlled by this black box of an agency. I will eliminate the BRA and bring that revenue back into the city budget.

As you know, Boston has limited authority to raise its own revenue. As Mayor, I would be a staunch ally for progressive tax efforts at the State House.

Significant savings can be found in a number of areas — long outlined by independent reports. Curbing out of control overtime budgets for police, fire and public works will net tens of millions of dollars. Enacting long overdue reforms to the Fire and Public Works Department will also result in real money.

We need to reinvest these resources I youth and education programming.

### **Lightning Round (Yes or No)**

*Many workers in Boston are organizing to form unions, especially in the hospitals. Will you publicly support their efforts to organize?* **Yes**

*Do you support the death penalty?* **No**

*Do you support same sex marriage?* **Yes**

*Do you support anti-discrimination laws that protect someone from being fired, or denied housing, education, or access to public facilities (including bathrooms) based on their gender identity?* **Yes**

*Are you pro-choice?* **Yes**

*Would you support a state constitutional amendment implementing a progressive income tax?* **Yes**