



August 16, 2019

Dear Friend,

I have spoken with people across every neighborhood in Boston over the last 10 months. No matter where I am in the city one issue inevitably comes up – the pressures people are facing relative to housing. This may be the most commonly felt public policy and quality of life issue of the moment.

As the real estate market in the city continues to push average Bostonians to the breaking point we must take a wide ranging view of policies and actions, and leave nothing off the table for consideration. This must be balanced with an understanding that some solutions may be viewed in different corners as too radical – or in fact counter to the goals of creating greater housing access and affordability. Therefore all stakeholders, like [Right to the City](#) as well as realtors & developers, must be at the table.

Since the beginning of this campaign I have said housing, like certain other issues, requires simultaneous conversations at multiple levels. At the municipal level this means working on items that can be more effectively directed from City Hall. These include:

- Raising Boston's Inclusionary Development Policy rate, which dictates what percentage of units in larger housing projects must be dedicated as affordable, from 13% to 20%, in line with most major cities;
- Making changes to the zoning and variance process in order to make it more efficient to create housing that is denser and provides more options and vacancies;
- Working with the Boston Planning and Development Agency to provide more comprehensive information to residents about both the direct impact of projects in their neighborhood, and also what the cumulative effect on quality of life issues is when these projects are connected to others in the immediate past.

These ideas and policies must be linked to robust regional conversation around the housing crisis. There is no municipality, Boston included, that can build, zone, or otherwise find a sustainable solution to the housing crisis on its own. It is only by working with other cities & towns in the area that we can begin to develop real strategies to solve this. I support work currently being done by leaders like the [Metropolitan Area Planning Council](#), but we can do more. Boston should be leading this regional discussion as the community which bears the most burden in terms of housing demand.

As one example it was a statewide initiative that rolled back rent control as a viable policy tool. Boston should lead the charge via our State House delegation, in partnership with the Mayor and City Council, to create consensus among cities and towns, rescind this law, and give communities the ability to consider it as one component of a larger strategy to fight housing affordability & displacement issues. Work to pass the [Jim Brooks Stabilization Act](#) at the State House would provide yet another such tool.

I look forward to hearing your feedback on this important issue. Reach out to us on social media using "@VoteHalbert" and at info@davidhalbert.com.

Thank you.

- David