

AMANDA ZIMMERMAN FOR SELECT BOARD

I'm Amanda Zimmerman, running for one of two seats on the Select Board this year. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to speak with you next week.

I'm running for Select Board to make sure individuals and families can afford to stay in Brookline. I chose to raise my family in Brookline because of the strong public schools, walkable and transit-accessible neighborhoods, outstanding Town services, and thriving local economy, not to mention our welcoming and diverse community.

But let me focus for a minute on the word "stay." While homes are increasingly out of reach for growing families and young professionals, they are also prohibitively expensive for seniors who wish to downsize while remaining in our community. And renters of all ages and life stages are finding it harder to afford living in our town. A home that doubles or triples in value from the time you bought it doesn't actually help someone financially unless they move to a lower-cost area. As a town, we all benefit when long-time residents can stay part of our community as they age.

We face other challenges to livability as well. Our streets are becoming increasingly unsafe for pedestrians, bicyclists, and individuals with mobility issues. Yet we lack sufficient revenue to maintain funding for our strong public schools and Town services, let alone address the roadway maintenance backlog. This is due to state limits on the amount of tax revenue we can bring in for the town, and decades of inaction on commercial and residential development along our major corridors. All the while, we've also slowed down our efforts to address climate change even as the threat to our planet intensifies. These issues require action, not endless conversations, and we need town-wide leaders who don't just make plans, but make *progress*.

We need leadership that knows how to plan and how to put those plans into action. I handle this daily in my work in biotech — making short-range and long-range plans, adjusting to wrenches thrown in the way, and driving projects forward to hit critical milestones in drug development. In our case, the future of Brookline's vibrancy, including who can afford to live here (and continue to stay here) and how aggressively we do our part to combat climate change, is at stake.

I want to make special mention of roadway safety and accessibility. Snowfall levels over the last couple of weeks, and the speed and consistency with which sidewalks and especially curb cuts were cleared, made it challenging, if not impossible, for those with limited mobility to get where they needed to go. Accessibility is not optional. Too many of our neighbors who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices (as well as those pushing strollers) were either stranded in their homes or forced to walk and roll among the traffic in the streets. As a Select Board member, I will work with the Town to ensure we do better.

Moreover, over 1,800 crashes occurred on Brookline's streets between 2019 and 2023, resulting in over 350 people injured and three fatalities. The Town adopted a safety policy in 2025 with a goal of ending serious injuries and fatalities. Meeting this important goal will require actions, infrastructure changes, and new policies to protect vulnerable community members of all ages.

It will take rethinking how we fund our public ways and will require close collaboration with Town Staff, the Transportation Board, and Town Meeting. By thinking holistically, we can prioritize necessary safety improvements for our streets and sidewalks.

My vision for Brookline is a place where we have homes that meet residents' needs at all stages of life; safe streets for all, whether you walk, bike, or drive; strong schools, services, and local businesses; and a climate plan that is the envy of New England.

This vision reflects my values: community, accessibility, inclusivity, sustainability, diversity, and a deep respect for data. I live those values: you'll see them reflected in my voting record in Town Meeting, in my work as a civic leader in our community, in my career in biotech, and as a parent in the Brookline school system. And I look forward to digging into the top issues on your mind next Monday. You can learn more about me and my platform at amandaforbrookline.com