

NEWSLETTERS

Critics of Wu's bike lanes get a candidate

By [Alan Wirzicki](#) Globe Staff, Updated June 3, 2024, 3:56 p.m.



North End restaurant owner Jorge Mendoza Iturralde speaks to the media in 2022. CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF/THE BOSTON GLOBE

Boston's bike-lane haters will have at least one champion at the ballot box next year, thanks to North End restaurateur Jorge Mendoza Iturralde's [decision to run for mayor in 2025](#).

Mendoza Iturralde, chef and owner of Vinoteca di Monica, is better known for fighting with incumbent Mayor Michelle Wu over outdoor dining rules for restaurants in the North End.

But in media [interviews](#), he also came out swinging against bike lanes, too. “We have a mayor who thinks that more bicycle lanes are going to turn the city into a 15-minute city and vicariously she turns it into a three-hour-I’m-stuck-in-traffic-in-Boston city,” he told WBZ. So yes to dining on streets — no to bike lanes on them.

My political predictions aren’t worth the bytes they’re printed on, but it’s hard for me to imagine Mendoza Iturralde’s candidacy picking up much steam. Still, I’m glad he’s running. On principle, we should have competitive elections. And the people who sincerely object to the way Wu is running the city deserve to have someone making their case.

Mendoza Iturralde may not be Wu’s only opponent. Philanthropist Josh Kraft is also said to be considering a candidacy, but where he stands on transportation issues — or on anything else — is a bit of a mystery.

If nothing else, the election is a chance for Wu’s critics to prove that her street-use policies are as unpopular as they often claim — and a chance for Wu to prove them wrong. Personally, I don’t think a candidate in Boston could ride the bike-lane backlash to City Hall. But stranger things have happened.

This is an excerpt from [Are we there yet?](#), a Globe Opinion newsletter about the future of transportation in the region. Sign up to [get it in your inbox a day early](#).

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