



Homelessness

Four years after declaring a State of Emergency, Seattle continues to be in the throes of a homelessness crisis. We must act immediately and treat this as the emergency it is, quickly implementing the solutions proven effective. I will expand enhanced shelters, hasten the production of Permanent Supportive Housing, and lead efforts to address this crisis at a regional level. I will also expand programs to keep people housed, create more affordable housing, and tackle the root causes of homelessness.

Housing First

We need to address this crisis with a Housing First approach: providing every person experiencing homelessness four walls and a door they can lock, connected to the services they need. This includes mental health, chemical dependency, and social services. We know that when a person is stabilized with housing we can address the other issues they are experiencing, whether it is mental health, addiction, or trouble navigating disability or social security.

Enhanced Shelters

Enhanced shelters provide 24/7 access and storage with case managers on duty working to connect people with permanent homes. By scaling up this data-proven solution, we create the shelter space people will use. With the necessary political will, we can bring more enhanced shelters online within six months, providing visible reductions in people living in tents throughout our city. I will bring this political will to the Council.

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing is critical for keeping people from falling back into homelessness. Transitional homes provide people a stable place to live and access to mental health and chemical dependency services. I will expand the stock of transitional homes and providers in Seattle so the people we bring off the streets are able to stay in homes and begin to rebuild their lives.

Permanent Supportive Housing

Study after study has shown that the only way we can break the cycle of chronic homelessness is to provide permanent homes with wraparound services. A home and consistent care for those who need it enables people to get back up on their feet. The approximately 2,000 Permanent Supportive homes in Seattle have a **99% success rate** at keeping residents from re-entering homelessness.

Permanent Supportive Housing is the proven method of combating homelessness, and is also the most cost-effective. The cost for Permanent Supportive Housing, with wrap-around services and utilizing the Housing First model, costs around \$16,000-\$22,000 per year. By contrast, leaving those who are chronically homeless with untreated mental health care needs costs \$30,000-\$50,000+ per year. We don't need more studies - we know what works, and we need to start building it at four times the rate we are today. As your Councilmember, I will work tirelessly with partners across King County ramp up the building of the permanent supportive housing our region needs.

Expanded and Improved Rental Assistance

Emergency rental assistance is a critical tool for people who are on the brink of falling into homelessness. Not everyone who is homeless is in need of full wraparound services - some just need a little help to get back home. Rental Assistance allows providers like Ballard Food Bank to cover someone being short on rent by paying a landlord directly. This keeps people in their home and ensures one hard month does not lead to living homeless.

Currently, there are dozens of rental assistance providers, each with separate application requirements and processes for getting help. I will work with the providers to create a single intake point and set of requirements, so people know exactly where to go for help.

Youth Homelessness

A one-size-fits-all approach to homelessness isn't appropriate or responsive to the unique developmental needs of youth and young adults. Young people need specific assistance like education and employment training to help them find and hold jobs. Transitional housing is one of the most effective and age-appropriate interventions for youth experiencing homelessness, as it builds up life skills and equips them to live independently.

Navigation Team

I support Navigation Teams and will not cut the program. In fact, after we have enough safe, secure places to move people into, I will support expansion of the program. I also support the very successful Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), which encourages law enforcement officials to develop relationships and build trust within communities and directs frequent offenders away from jail and into diversion programs. While we have a LEAD team at the North Precinct, we have not seen them in Ballard or Fremont. We need this program in Ballard and Fremont.

A Regional Approach

Homelessness is a regional issue - there are people experiencing homelessness in every community, and currently Seattle is bearing the burden of the regional crisis. We need our entire region to step up and help us combat this crisis, which is why I support coordinating efforts with our regional partners. I strongly support the new Regional Homelessness Authority, and will work with the county and other regional governments to respond at the scale of the crisis we are facing.

More Affordable Housing

Ultimately, our homelessness crisis is about insufficient affordable housing. Seattle has 60,000 fewer affordable homes than we need for people making less than 50% of AMI (\$38,750/yr), and we need to make a massive investment to create the housing stock we need. I will make full use of our bonding capacity, fast-tracking permit for affordable housing, waive city fees, and identify city property we can lease to housing providers.

I come face to face with this homelessness crisis everyday. We cannot wait another day to take action and treat it as the state of emergency that it is. I look forward to working on your behalf to achieve the outcomes we need in our city.