



Anti-displacement Strategies:

The Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King County (HDC) envisions a region where all people live with dignity in safe, healthy and affordable homes in communities of opportunity. In other words, we believe all families and individuals, regardless of income, race, or background should have the opportunity to thrive in safe and healthy communities with access to good jobs, quality schools, and strong transit service.

Current Context

In Seattle's current context of tremendous economic growth for some and escalating housing prices across the board, market forces alone will not be able to produce equitable growth. Without proactive action from government to create and foster the conditions for community stability and economic mobility, marginalized populations will continue to be increasingly at risk of being displaced from their homes leading to housing insecurity.

The city needs to support our communities through sound and proactive policy to help keep people in place and mitigate displacement. The policies must center on creating strong communities and offer community stability and resilience in the face of development pressures. We need tools that can help us minimize the unintended consequences that can occur when the intensity of growth in an area causes upward pressure on property values and rents. By ensuring that Seattle's growth doesn't leave anyone behind, communities will continue to shape their cultural environment and contribute to the vibrancy of our region. We must strive to create equitable access to communities of opportunity.

Affordable housing production is an anti-displacement tool. We have evidence of this with recent quality affordable housing developments throughout the city. New affordable housing production must be at the core of our strategy. The Regional Affordable Housing taskforce report shows that we need 156,000 additional affordable homes today to meet the community need with the greatest burden on those households earning between 0 to 30 percent area median income. Housing production must honor the entire affordable housing continuum and recognize the tremendous need for affordable housing for those with limited incomes.

We also recognize that housing production of both market-rate and subsidized housing is a key element for increasing affordability and reducing displacement only if coupled with aggressive preservation strategies like tenant protection laws. The production of income and rent restricted housing has double the effect of market-rate housing construction as an anti-displacement tool. The city must emphasize the production of housing affordable to people earning 0 to 30 percent area median income. We will be able to help communities and low-income families stay in their homes, in their communities if we recognize these key elements.

It is however important to note that no one single anti-displacement strategy can mitigate the negative consequences of neighborhood or city change on its own. A strategic set of comprehensive policies should be implemented to achieve the greatest impact.

In order to ensure Seattle is a place where people of all incomes can live and thrive, the Housing Development Consortium calls on the city to assess their existing policy landscape and create a comprehensive anti-displacement action plan that will build solutions in six key anti-displacement policy areas:

1. Affordable Housing Development and Increasing Housing Options:

- Increase funding for the development of affordable rental and homeownership housing, and acquisition of property for such development
- Expand housing diversity, particularly moderate-density housing
- Encourage the production of family-sized housing and housing options for multi-generational families
- Increase housing supply with access to employment through Transit Oriented Development
- Explore effects of housing costs on protected classes through the Racial Equity Toolkit

2. Community Ownership

- Leverage the current momentum to proactively involve the people and communities that will be affected by the development pressures
- Expand opportunities for homeownership and resources to support the Community Land Trust (CLTs) homeownership model and Shared Equity Homeownership programs as an anti-displacement strategy
- Ensure geographically targeted preservation strategies and increase affordable housing production in areas facing disproportionate cultural displacement. This is critical to advancing community control of development
- Explore regional collaborative efforts for a public development agency that would lead on land acquisition for affordable housing

3. Affordable Housing Preservation

- Prevent displacement and preserve “naturally occurring” affordable housing through sales tax waiver, low-interest loans/revolving loan fund for preservation, and code enforcement
 - Strategy A.** Expand the City’s Office of Housing capacity to work on an expansive preservation effort to strategically acquire existing affordable multifamily housing and provide funding for that strategy.
 - Strategy B.** Through the Mayor’s Executive order on data collection of impacted families, the City should work with communities to identify areas in which residents and cultural communities are at risk of displacement and deploy geographically targeted preservation strategies and increase affordable housing production in those areas.
 - Strategy C.** Educate communities of existing programs to help preserve their homes and keep them in place such as the Home Repair Loan Program, Foreclosure Prevention loan, etc
- Explore opportunities for a state level policy change to include a preservation property tax exemption (PTE) which would incentivize landlords to keep their properties affordable.

5. Equitable Development

- Adopt the Community Preference Policy which gives residents of low-income neighborhoods a greater chance to live in city-funded affordable housing that's built in their community
- Support strategic investments in areas with high risk of displacement by expanding the Equitable Development Initiative funding
- Increase housing subsidy/funding for new housing production
- Analyze and explore a citywide Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program

6. Business and Cultural Stabilization

- Ensure implementation of policies to support affordable ground-floor retail space.
- Support locally-owned small businesses with tools that would allow them to take advantage of and thrive in newly built ground-floor retail spaces.

7. Tenant Protections

- Provide funding for tenant counseling and landlord education to combat displacement and increase access to housing. Emphasize the need for education on existing programs such as rental and operating subsidies for extremely low-income households
- Strengthen the Tenants Relocation Assistance Ordinance (TRAO)
- Review the Notice of Sale Ordinance and expand the notification to tenants and incorporate a housing cooperative model to support tenant's ownership of their homes
- Adopt legislative recommendations from the Losing Home Report.