

The Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King County (HDC) is the nonprofit membership association of 190+ private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and public partners dedicated to the vision that all people throughout King County live with dignity in safe, healthy, and affordable homes. HDC invites you to join us as we advocate for the following policies in 2023.

FUND AFFORDABLE HOMES

Despite significant progress on funding at the state and local levels in recent years, great and unaddressed needs remain. Affordable housing and homelessness service providers are successfully creating pathways into stability – but for every person they serve, there's another to take their place. As we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, the pre-existing housing and homelessness crisis has only worsened. Construction costs have risen over 15% in just one year and rents and home prices have continued to spike beyond wage growth for low-income people. We have been woefully behind in adequately investing in housing for our community, and the combined crises of COVID-19, housing unaffordability, and homelessness threaten to set us back even further. Not only has it significantly increased housing insecurity overall, but it also disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

The Washington State Department of Commerce estimates that King County needs to add 212,000 homes affordable below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) by 2044, or over 8,800 per year. At current capital costs of approximately \$330,000 per home, this totals \$2.9 billion in annual capital investments to produce the income-restricted homes King County needs. Existing public capital resources for income-restricted affordable housing creation in King County totaled \$984 million in 2021. This means that the region needs \$1.9 billion in additional public revenue for capital funding per year, as well as expanded operating funding to support affordable homes.

Addressing the affordable housing crisis will take a comprehensive and holistic approach and cannot be solved without vastly increasing the funding for affordable housing. Significantly increasing capital and operating dollars to support the production of permanent housing options affordable for low-income households is a priority for us. Because our need for housing is tremendous, we need funding at every level – local, state, and federal – to collaborate and think creatively about leveraging resources. In times of uneven economic growth, this robust public funding is critical. In 2023, HDC will:

- **Advocate for a state bill in 2023 to authorize an expanded Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) for affordable housing**
- **Lead the advocacy and coalition mobilization work to renew and expand the Seattle Housing Levy in 2023**
- **Advocate for a commercial fee and mandatory inclusionary zoning that leverages Bellevue's commercial and residential development growth**

Adopted 2023 Advocacy Agenda | This is not a comprehensive list of all policies HDC intends to advocate for or support throughout 2023. For more information, contact jesse@housingconsortium.org 206-682-9541

- **Lead the work to create a framework for subregional investments in affordable housing at the state level**
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BUILD & MAINTAIN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

To promote equitable growth and prosperity for all, King County and our cities should implement best practices and policies that ensure low-income residents can live or remain in communities of opportunity near jobs, services, and access to transit. This must be accompanied by recognizing that housing segregation achieved by government policies, such as redlining and other discriminatory practices, resulted in long-lasting racial inequities in housing. In 2023, HDC will:

- **Lead coalition work on the major update of Seattle’s Comprehensive Plan – a rare, critical opportunity to change the City’s land use strategy and its support for housing affordability. In addition, shape the framework for Housing Element updates across the King County region**
- **Advocate for a statewide missing middle housing bill, allowing duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and sixplexes by right within all urban growth areas**
- **Lead education and coalition building efforts on a state bill allowing counties and cities to establish housing benefit districts (HBD) for the acquisition of land for affordable homes**
- **Advocate for regulatory reform that accelerates housing production and reduces the cost to build housing. This includes:**
 - **Increasing allowed densities, height, and floor area ratios**
 - **Facilitating efficient permitting and coordination between responsible departments**
 - **Advancing utility waivers for affordable homes**
 - **Exempting affordable housing developments from infrastructure improvement fees**
 - **Eliminating design review for affordable homes**
 - **Reducing or eliminating parking requirements**
- **Partner in leading and continuing support for the Black Home Initiative policy framework and regulatory reform recommendations**
- **Advocate for siting of permanent supportive housing as the proven solution for homelessness throughout King County**

IMPROVE HEALTH, STABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY OF HOUSING

King County is experiencing explosive growth and unprecedented inequity in access to housing. We face a shortfall of 149,000 homes affordable at less than 80% AMI today and a projected deficit of 212,000 homes by 2044. Capital dollars currently available to King County's affordable housing developers are nowhere near what is needed.

Far too many low-income King County households – disproportionately people of color – are now perpetually housing insecure or pushed into homelessness. Enveloping everything is the climate crisis. In recognition of the issue's urgency and the effects of the built environment, HDC looks at housing unaffordability, the inequity that leads to housing insecurity, and climate change as fundamentally interdependent and not as issues in isolation of each other. Affordable, safe, quality housing is a social determinant of health and a key element in creating an overall healthy community. This calls for a proactive approach to ensure housing stability for renters and low-income homeowners, and a sustainable built environment for healthier and livable places. In 2023, HDC will:

- **Advocate for public funding of resident services in non-permanent supportive affordable housing in the 2023 City of Seattle budget and the 2023 Seattle Housing Levy renewal**
- **Advocate for increased funding for rental assistance at the state level**

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FUND AFFORDABLE HOMES

- **Support renewal of the King County Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy in 2023**
- **Advocate for progressive revenue that will ease the burden on low-income and working households, adequately fund affordable housing and homelessness programs, and make our economy more resilient in the long-term**
- **Support federal advocacy for expanded funding for affordable housing, including through Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) reforms to:**
 - **Renew the temporary 12.5% increase in LIHTC allocations that expired in 2021**
 - **Increase the allocation of the 9% LIHTC by 50%**
 - **Reduce the tax-exempt private activity bonds threshold test for the 4% LIHTC from 50% to 25%**
 - **Provide a 50% basis boost for homes set aside for extremely low-income households in 9% LIHTC properties**
- **Fund the State Housing Trust Fund (HTF) at a historically high level in the biennial Capital Budget and establish a permanent funding source for the HTF**
- **Support policies that improve workforce pay, equity, and sustainability in permanent supportive housing**
- **Support implementation of the codified JumpStart Seattle spending plan and its robust allocation for affordable homes**
- **Increase the per-household funding cap for affordable homeownership projects imposed by King County and the Washington State Department of Commerce**

BUILD & MAINTAIN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

To promote equitable growth and prosperity for all, King County and our cities should implement best practices and policies that ensure low-income residents can live or remain in communities of opportunity near jobs, services, and access to transit. This must be accompanied by recognizing that housing segregation achieved by government policies, such as redlining and other discriminatory practices, resulted in long-lasting racial inequities in housing. Support policies that empower BIPOC-led community-based organizations such as the JumpStart Community Resiliency. In 2023, HDC will:

- **Support implementation of the countywide Equitable Development Initiative fund to prevent and mitigate displacement within areas most at risk of experiencing physical, cultural, and economic displacement**
- **Advance funding and policy solutions that reflect the role of affordable homeownership in ensuring wealth building for individuals and families affected by racial and ethnic segregation, marginalization, and discrimination**
- **Support local tools and policies to reverse historic and current patterns of racial and ethnic segregation through effective use of HDC’s recommended Anti-Displacement Strategies like community ownership or preference, right of first refusal, tenant opportunity to purchase, etc.**
- **Support disposition of publicly-owned surplus or underutilized land at reduced or no cost for affordable housing. Support a state bill to facilitate the disposition of publicly-owned surplus or underutilized land for affordable homeownership**
- **Support state-level reform of condo development regulations and liability laws**
- **Support and advocate for the implementation of the Health through Housing Initiative in King County**
- **Continue legislators’ education efforts on the impact of Residential Prevailing Wage rates and work towards a new methodology that supports affordable housing production**

IMPROVE HEALTH, STABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY OF HOUSING

Households faced with high-cost burdens, housing instability, and homelessness may see the impacts of those experiences on both their physical and mental health. In addition, housing quality can have significant impacts on health.

Too many homeowners and renters are currently living in unhealthy or substandard homes, particularly in areas of South King County. Renters in these homes may be unable or afraid to report their inadequate housing conditions. Affordable, safe, quality housing is a social determinant of health and a key element in creating an overall healthy community. In addition, the 'climate crisis' intersection with housing calls for a proactive approach to ensure a sustainable built environment for healthier and livable places. In 2023, HDC will:

- **In coalition with climate, health, and labor advocates, promote policies, practices, funding, and incentives that support affordable housing projects to reduce energy and water use, utilize renewable energy, minimize greenhouse gas emissions, and optimize the health and safety of residents**
- **Support state policies that address the arbitrary barriers that people exiting the criminal justice system face in acquiring rental housing**
- **Support reforms to the state Home Repair Loan Program, including authorizing loans for all counties in Washington State, and capping the interest rate charged to low-income homeowners**
- **Support creation of a Covenant Reinvestment Account, which would address historic racism in housing policies by funding down-payment assistance for first-time homebuyers with a document recording fee**
- **Support funding of housing counselors working to prevent foreclosures and assist first-time homebuyers**