

The Housing Development Consortium of Seattle-King County (HDC) is the nonprofit membership association of 200+ 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 2024.

FUND 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 affordable housing 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 2024, HDC will:

- **Advocate for a state bill to authorize an expanded Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) for affordable housing.**
- **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.**
- **Lead the work to create a framework for regional investments in affordable housing.**
- **Support the update of the Seattle Housing Levy Administrative & Financial Plan.**
- **Advocate for investments in affordable homeownership to create new homes for buyers that include those eligible for the Covenant Homeownership Account Program, among other programs.**
- **Support implementation of the JumpStart Seattle spend plan and its robust allocation for affordable homes.**

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 transit. This must be accompanied by recognizing that the segregation created by government policies, like redlining and other discriminatory practices, resulted in long-lasting racial inequities in housing. In 2024, HDC will:

- **Lead the Complete Communities 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.**

- **Advocate for mandatory inclusionary zoning in Bellevue through a Comprehensive Plan Update that leverages commercial and residential development growth.**
- **Shape the framework for Housing Element updates across King County and help jurisdictions implement zoning regulations allowing for affordable and middle housing.**
- **Advocate for regulatory reform and effective departmental coordination to accelerate housing production and reduce the cost to build housing, including:**
 - 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.
 - Exempting affordable housing from ground floor commercial space requirements.
 - Supporting funding to offset costs of creating community-serving ground floor uses.
- **Lead education and coalition building initiatives on statewide efforts to create a funding framework for counties and cities to acquire land near transit for affordable homes.**
- **Partner in leading and continuing support for the Black Home Initiative Policy Framework and regulatory reform recommendations.**

IMPROVE HEALTH, STABILITY & SUSTAINABILITY OF HOUSING

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. 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 2024, HDC will:

- **Advocate for sustainable operations funding at the state level to address the operating challenges faced by affordable housing providers.**
- **Lead education and advocacy work to ensure affordable housing providers can obtain reliable and affordable property and liability insurance.**
- **Promote policies, practices, funding, and incentives that support affordable housing in reducing energy and water use, minimizing carbon emissions, and optimizing for the health and safety of residents.**

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- **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.
- **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, including:**
 - Increase the per-household funding cap for affordable homeownership projects imposed by King County and the Washington State Department of Commerce.
 - Establish a new revolving construction loan fund for affordable homeownership.
 - Support reforms to allow jurisdictions increased flexibility to allocate affordable housing funding for affordable homeownership and operations, maintenance, and service needs.
 - Expanding the real estate excise tax exemption to all affordable homeownership developments.
- **Support policies that improve pay, equity, and sustainability in the affordable housing sector.**
- **Support the exemption of publicly funded affordable housing projects from sales taxes on construction materials.**

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 the 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 Jump Start Community Self-Determination Fund. In 2024, HDC will:

- **Support a state-level bill to enable lot-splitting.**
- **Advocate for expansion of permanent supportive housing as a proven solution for homelessness.**
- **Support Seattle's Equitable Development Zoning Pilot and facilitate expansion of land use policies to support increased capacity for affordable housing development.**
- **Support implementation of the countywide Equitable Development Initiative fund.**
- **Support use of anti-displacement strategies like acquisition of naturally occurring affordable housing, 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 implementation of the Health through Housing Initiative in King County.**

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. 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 2024, HDC will:

- **Support efforts to establish well-calibrated rent stabilization, among other tenant protections, to increase resident stability while ensuring housing providers can sustainably operate affordable housing and create new housing.**
- **Support state policies that address the arbitrary barriers that people exiting the criminal justice system face in renting housing.**
- **Advocate for increased funding for rental assistance.**

- **Support funding of housing counselors working to prevent foreclosures and assist first-time homebuyers.**
- **Support the implementation of Apple Health and Homes and its efficient utilization for permanent supportive housing development.**
- **Continue education efforts on the impact of Residential Prevailing Wage rates and work towards a methodology that supports affordable housing production and provides relief for small projects.**