

1. Affordable Housing: Estimates show nearly half of all D.C. renters spend more than 30% of their income on rent. What resources will you implement to create more affordable housing options in the District?

Far too many DC residents are rent burdened, paying a majority of their income just to keep a roof over their heads. And in Ward 1, two-thirds of our residents are renters. Wages have stagnated, housing costs continue to rise, and too many families have been forced from the communities, into shelters, or onto the streets. Last year, DC lost 78 unhoused residents. In the capital of the richest country in history, that is unacceptable. As an organizer, I have fought to prevent evictions, raise wages, expand emergency rental assistance, fund housing vouchers and protect tenants' rights. And as Councilmember, making housing more affordable and preventing displacement and homelessness will be among my top priorities. To address this crisis, I will focus on three key areas: expanding rent stabilization, building more housing for all income levels, and investing in programs that keep people stably housed.

First, DC's rent stabilization laws only apply to buildings constructed before 1975, meaning fewer tenants are protected every year as older buildings are torn down to make way for new development. Rent stabilization limits the amount by which landlords can raise rent from year to year, keeping housing affordable while still allowing landlords to receive a return on investment. I have talked to so many families, including seniors and young parents, who have credited rent stabilization with allowing them to remain in their communities, raise families, and age in place. That community stability and long-term affordability is why fighting to expand rent stabilization to all multifamily buildings is one of my key priorities, along with closing loopholes that allow landlords to impose unreasonable rent increases that push tenants out.

Second, we must build significantly more housing and use public dollars more effectively to create truly affordable homes. As Councilmember, I will fight to end exclusionary zoning laws and make it legal to build apartments, like sixplexes, across DC, especially along transit corridors. We also need stronger oversight of the Housing Production Trust Fund to ensure investments actually produce deeply affordable housing, and we must restore and strengthen the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act to allow so tenants have a real pathway to collective ownership, long-term affordability, and a voice in the future of their communities. I will also reintroduce a Green New Deal for Social Housing, so that in the long term we can use public land to build mixed-income, publicly owned, tenant-controlled housing that meets both people's means and their needs.

Finally, housing security also means investing in residents facing housing instability right now. I will fight to fully fund housing vouchers, bridge housing, permanent supportive housing, and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program so that every resident has access to stable, affordable housing and the support they need to remain housed long-term. These plans for housing

affordability are the reason why I'm endorsed by two tenant unions in Ward 1, as well as the #1 choice of Greater Greater Washington.

2. Safe Housing: What policies will you advocate for to provide safe housing to people across D.C., including those living in poor rental conditions?

As a tenant organizer, I spent years fighting alongside residents across DC who were dealing with slum conditions, unsafe units, and neglectful landlords. Organizing with Marbury Plaza eventually led to a \$41 million judgement from the Office of the Attorney General against the landlord there. I also know from my own experience living under a slumlord that the District does not do nearly enough to protect tenants or hold bad actors accountable. Safe housing starts with giving tenants real power and making sure the government actually enforces the law.

As Councilmember, I will work to make it easier for tenants to take legal action against negligent landlords. Right now, tenants dealing with housing code violations are largely limited to filing cases through the Housing Conditions Calendar, where judges can order repairs but cannot grant rent abatements or compensation for the harm tenants experience. I will fight to create stronger enforcement mechanisms, including a public rent escrow system that allows tenants to withhold rent when landlords fail to maintain safe living conditions.

I will also push for much stronger oversight and enforcement from the Department of Buildings. Every year, thousands of housing code violations are issued, but only a tiny fraction are ever meaningfully enforced. Repeat offenders continue operating with little consequence while tenants are left living with mold, leaks, pests, broken heat, and unsafe conditions. I will fight to fully fund proactive and reactive inspections, increase enforcement action against repeat violators, and ensure the District uses tools like liens and legal action against negligent landlords.

I also strongly support Councilmember Janeese Lewis George's Housing with Integrity Amendment Act, which would prevent landlords with serious unresolved code violations from expanding their real estate portfolio until their properties are brought into compliance, and revoke the business license of any landlord responsible for a significant number of unabated violations. I will also work closely with the Office of the Attorney General to ensure tenants have real support from the whole of District government when confronting unsafe housing conditions. Every single person deserves a safe, dignified place to call home.

3. Shelter Capacity: D.C.'s low-barrier shelters are often at high capacity. Do you think there are enough shelter beds and locations in your ward, including spaces for women, men, youth, and LGBTQ+ individuals? If not, what new facilities (low-barrier, non-congregate, etc.) would you advocate for?

No, Ward 1 does not currently have enough shelter capacity or supportive housing options to meet the need, particularly for vulnerable populations like LGBTQ+ youth and young families.. As Councilmember, I will prioritize expanding both emergency shelter and longer-term transitional and bridge housing in Ward 1 so that residents are not left cycling between the streets, shelters, and unstable housing situations.

One urgent need is shelter specifically for LGBTQ+ transition-age youth. LGBTQ+ youth are disproportionately likely to experience homelessness, and too often face unsafe conditions or discrimination in traditional shelter settings. I would advocate for low-barrier, affirming, well-resourced shelter and transitional housing options that are specifically designed to meet their needs.

I will also fight to expand bridge housing and transitional housing programs for families and individuals experiencing homelessness, both within Ward 1 and across areas of DC that have failed to build shelter in the wake of the closure of DC General. These programs are vital, especially given the long delays many residents face between receiving a voucher and actually securing permanent housing. During that gap, people need stable, dignified places to stay and receive support.

More broadly, I believe the District must invest in well-maintained, adequately staffed, low-barrier shelters that can accommodate people of all genders, family structures, disabilities, and needs – including residents with pets. Shelter should not simply be about emergency survival; it should be part of a continuum of care that helps people move into permanent, stable housing.

4. Encampment Closures: D.C. officials recently said the city “shouldn’t have encampments” and has been closing encampments regularly for the last several years. What is your stance on the city’s encampment engagement policy, and should the city be closing more or fewer encampments? What resources should people be offered during encampment closures?

We have seen encampment clearings destabilize people, destroy beloved items, break trust in government services, and in some cases physically harm people. I oppose the routine clearing of encampments because to properly address encampments, DC must invest in the housing, services, and support systems people need to transition into stable housing – not simply displace people from one block to another.

In recent years, we have repeatedly seen unhoused residents displaced even while they were waiting for bridge housing placements, voucher matches, or lease-ups to be finalized. These sweeps often sever relationships with outreach workers, disrupt access to support services, and make it even harder for people to successfully transition into permanent housing.

As Councilmember, I will push for DC to truly implement our housing-first model, centered on dignity, stability, and engagement. The District should be closing fewer encampments and instead prioritizing placements into bridge housing, permanent supportive housing, non-congregate shelter, and other long-term housing options.

DC already has incredible teams of outreach workers able to work closely with residents experiencing homelessness, and the District should do more to ensure those teams have the resources and funding they need to address the need across the District. Residents living in encampments should be offered robust and individualized support, including housing navigation, mental health services, substance use treatment, medical care, storage for belongings, transportation assistance, and connections to benefits and case management. This includes supporting all family structures in finding permanent housing, including those with pets.

Ultimately, the goal should not simply be to make homelessness less visible – it should be to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring by ensuring every resident has access to safe, dignified, affordable housing.

5. Vouchers: This year, the mayor’s budget proposal does not include any new housing vouchers for people experiencing homelessness. How would you advocate to respond to homelessness given the city’s limited resources?

Budgets are moral documents, and the Mayor’s decision not to fund new housing vouchers reflects a failure to treat housing and homelessness with the urgency this crisis demands. At a time when rents continue to rise and more residents are struggling to remain housed, reducing investments in homelessness prevention and housing support is the wrong approach.

As Councilmember, I will fight for investments in housing vouchers, permanent supportive housing, bridge housing, shelter modernization, emergency rental assistance, and the support services that help residents successfully transition into permanent housing. Housing vouchers remain one of the most effective tools we have to end chronic homelessness and keep people stably housed.

At the same time, I recognize the District faces real fiscal constraints. But when budgets are tight, we cannot balance them on the backs of our lowest-income residents. That is why I will push the Council to consider passing more progressive tax policy and ensure that the ultrawealthy and corporations pay their fair share so we can protect lifesaving housing programs.

I also believe the District must do a far better job administering the resources we already have. Too many residents face long delays because of bureaucratic failures, understaffed agencies,

slow lease-up processes, and fragmented systems that make it harder to access housing, even after matching with a voucher and identifying a unit. As Councilmember, I will conduct rigorous oversight of agencies like the Department of Human Services and District of Columbia Housing Authority to ensure public dollars are being used efficiently and effectively to move people into stable housing as quickly as possible.

Addressing homelessness requires both immediate investment and long-term structural change. That means preventing displacement, building more deeply affordable housing, fully funding the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and voucher programs, and ensuring we have a fully funded continuum of care to end chronic homelessness.

6. Stakeholder Input: How have you involved people with lived experience of homelessness in your policy-making, and how will you in the future?

My housing policy has been shaped directly by organizing alongside tenants and residents across DC, including people who have experienced homelessness, housing insecurity, displacement, and unsafe living conditions. I do not approach these issues from a distance – my platform comes from years of organizing for greater stability, dignity, and safe housing for all.

I have worked with tenants at Marbury Plaza fighting back against slum conditions, supported residents at the Woodner organizing against a 20% rent hike, and stood alongside residents of the Buena Vista Cooperative as they fundraised to exercise their TOPA rights and collectively purchase their building after a successful rent strike. I have helped tenants apply for rental assistance, supported them in coordinating inspections with the Department of Buildings, and worked with the Attorney General's office to make sure residents' rights are respected. Those experiences fundamentally shaped my understanding of how our housing system fails people, and what policies are actually needed to address these issues at their root.

If elected, I will govern as an organizer. That means actively involving residents and tenants in policymaking, not simply asking for input after decisions have already been made. I will prioritize accessible and transparent communication around the DC budget, legislation, and agency oversight so residents understand how decisions are being made and how to participate. I will also conduct consistent outreach across Ward 1, including to tenants, homeless residents, shelter residents, and voucher holders, to ensure the people most affected by housing policy are central in shaping the solutions.