

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

As mayor, I will treat housing affordability as one of the District's most urgent responsibilities. Too many residents are being priced out, and more than 35,000 low-income households are spending over half their income on rent.

My plan is to build more homes, protect renters from extreme rent increases, and make sure our housing dollars are producing deeply affordable housing for the residents with the greatest need.

I will create more affordable housing by building 72,000 new homes over five years, preserving existing affordable housing that is at risk of being lost, legalizing more homes near transit and on public land, and allowing small apartment buildings up to six units across the District. I will also launch Dignified Homes DC, a social housing program that builds publicly owned, mixed-income housing with permanently affordable units.

I will modernize rent stabilization so tenants have predictable housing costs, while making sure the system is clear and workable for housing providers. I will also make DC a better steward of the housing dollars we already have by improving the Housing Production Trust Fund, making sure it meets its deep affordability goals, making sure we do not leave federal housing dollars on the table, and increasing transparency in how housing funding decisions are made.

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 mayor, I will crack down on slumlords who allow residents to live in unsafe conditions like mold, broken systems, and long-standing code violations. I introduced the Do Right By Tenants Act so tenants are not left to enforce the law themselves.

Right now, the city too often fails to follow through for tenants. Fines are issued but never collected, reinspections do not happen on time, and unsafe conditions persist. I will make sure violations are fixed and that the city does its job.

I will defend and restore TOPA, which gives tenants the first chance to buy their home when it is sold, so they can have a chance to buy their homes instead of being displaced.

I will increase funding for home repairs, expand the Safe at Home program, and help seniors stay in their homes and age with dignity.

I will make housing easier to access for residents with disabilities, and I will end MPD cooperation with ICE so immigrant residents can live without fear.

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

No. D.C. does not have enough shelter capacity to meet the need, and too many people are still navigating a system under strain.

As mayor, I will make sure people have access to safe, dignified shelter, including spaces that meet the needs of women, men, youth, LGBTQ+ residents, and people with disabilities. I will support expanding low-barrier shelter options where they are needed so people have more privacy, safety, and stability. I will support expanding non-congregate shelter options where appropriate so people have more privacy and stability.

At the same time, I will focus on fully implementing Homeward DC 2.0, the District's plan to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring, and expand deeply affordable housing so people can move out of shelter and into permanent homes.

Shelter should be a short-term solution. The goal is to make sure no one is stuck in shelter because the city failed to create enough permanent 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 would your encampment policy be? Should the city be closing more or fewer encampments? What resources should people be offered during encampment closures?

Residents should not be moved from place to place without a stable path to permanent housing. Too many people still lack that path, and the primary driver of homelessness is the lack of available, low-cost housing.

My approach will be guided by Homeward DC 2.0, the District's community-developed plan to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring. I will implement that plan with urgency, efficiency, and effectiveness.

When the city engages with encampments, the goal should be to meet people where they are and connect them to real support, including shelter, healthcare, treatment, recovery, stable housing, and wrap-around services. People need more than a bed for the night. They need reliable mental

health care, trauma-informed support, help accessing benefits, and practical support like getting basic documents, including IDs.

Safety is the presence of care. My administration will focus on helping people stay stable and move into permanent housing, instead of simply moving people from one place to another. No encampment should be closed unless and until there is a plan for every encampment resident that meets their needs.

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

I have been one of the Council's leaders in the fight for additional vouchers, such as when I worked with colleagues to pass the *Homes and Hearts* amendment to fund over 2,400 new long-term rental subsidies and housing vouchers.

Vouchers are essential to making sure many Washingtonians have secure housing. The failure to invest in vouchers in recent years means more people will die on the street, because street homelessness is so traumatic and harmful. As mayor, I will get DC back on track with funding a range of vouchers, from Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) to the Local Rent Supplement Program. I commit to funding enough vouchers to put DC on a path to ending chronic homelessness. However, we must also recognize that vouchers are only one part of the solution. They must be coupled with a comprehensive strategy that includes building more permanently affordable housing and providing the necessary supports to ensure stability for all residents. That is why my plan is to build 72,000 new homes over five years and to focus on fully implementing Homeward DC 2.0 to expand deeply affordable housing so people can move out of shelter and into permanent homes. Critically, when residents move into housing, they must be connected to real support, including reliable mental health care, trauma-informed support, and wrap-around services. Furthermore, we must protect our existing community. As we create more deeply affordable housing, we must also preserve existing affordable housing that is at risk of being lost and support vulnerable residents, like seniors, to stay in their homes and age with dignity.

6. DCHA: With Keith Pettigrew leaving the District of Columbia Housing Authority, what do you think are the qualities of an effective leader for the agency? What are some objectives you'd want a prospective appointee to achieve?

An effective leader for the District of Columbia Housing Authority (DCHA) must possess verified expertise in public housing maintenance, affordable housing finance, and the management of public housing. This individual needs a deep understanding of DCHA's unique operational requirements and a proven history of overseeing housing repairs to ensure safe living

conditions for all residents. And as with any agency director, they need a proven track record of transparent leadership and excellent governance.

Key objectives for a prospective appointee include:

- Ensuring repair funds are managed efficiently and effectively.
- Utilizing DCHA properties as leverage to expand the District's housing supply.
- Optimizing the voucher process to facilitate faster transitions into housing for residents.
- Protecting the integrity of the voucher program by preventing landlords from charging unreasonable rents.
- Centering the voice of tenants and public housing residents in DCHA's decision-making and ensuring that DCHA policies do not contribute to displacement.

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

As a Councilmember, I have benefited tremendously from the insights and wisdom shared by people with lived experience of homelessness, particularly the People for Fairness Coalition. That insight has helped us understand failures of DCHA to administer PSH vouchers, the many quality and capacity issues in DC's low-barrier shelters, the trauma of encampment clearings, and ways that our homeless service system has failed particular groups of residents, like couples without children. This direct engagement has translated into concrete policy commitments, such as fighting to protect tenants' rights and secure funding for additional housing inspectors, simplifying the public benefits system to help unhoused residents obtain necessary ID, and ensuring community-based services are prioritized over institutionalized care for disabled residents to maintain their stability. As mayor, I will continue to listen to and focus on the voices of people with lived experience, particularly by ensuring strong resident voices on the Interagency Council on Homelessness.