

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?

The strong economic growth our city has experienced this millennium has correspondingly raised real estate prices to record-breaking levels. This is a problem in cities all over the nation. Those who purchased a home years ago have realized dramatic gains, but those just starting a career are locked out of the housing market altogether. We have excellent programs to build upon, such as the Home Purchase Assistance Program, Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), and affordable projects financed using the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF), but we must do more.

Regarding supply, I support building more housing along transit corridors, incentivizing "pop-up" additional levels on DC townhomes and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), updating residential zoning to encourage multifamily construction citywide, and converting vacant commercial properties to residential use through tax-based incentives and deferred loans.

On affordability, I support fully restoring funding for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) vouchers for single individuals with disabilities and special needs. I also support allowing qualified tax relief to take effect for new homeowners immediately upon deed recordation rather than waiting for the start of a new fiscal year. Additionally, I support creating a homeowner resource center that gives buyers the same kind of guidance the Office of the Tenant Advocate gives renters.

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?

I will push for the Department of Buildings to proactively inspect all multifamily properties in the city. Right now, the system is largely complaint-driven, which means the burden of enforcement falls on the tenant, often a tenant who is afraid to complain because they fear retaliation. Proactive inspections flip that dynamic. They put the city in the business of finding violations early, before a family is living inside a hazard for months waiting for a response to a 311 call that goes nowhere.

Alongside that, I would institute a rent freeze on properties owned by landlords with persistent, unresolved violations. And I would strengthen anti-retaliation protections to make sure tenants can report problems without fear of losing their home in the process. The oversight work I did with Councilmember Bonds's committee gave me a direct look at where these systems break down. We need more floors, more units, and more growth along metro-stop corridors. And I won't forget improving existing stock, which is most often naturally affordable housing, so it is safe for habitation.

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?

There are not enough beds. DHS plans to add more than 500 beds by 2028, including the Greencourt men's facility this year and a new New York Avenue shelter. The direction is right, but the timeline is too slow, and the LGBTQ+-specific capacity is not keeping up with documented need. I will push for more LGBTQ+-specific low-barrier beds by working with our partners at SMYAL and Covenant House to grow the non-congregate options that offer privacy. And I will perform oversight over shelters so taxpayers know their dollars are adequately tackling the issue.

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 can't simply focus on the closing of encampments. We need to provide low-barrier shelter placements to those who are affected by an encampment closure. We also need to provide regular services like trash pickup and public restroom access to reduce trauma on the displaced and the surrounding community. I would also advocate for case management services and mental health and substance abuse treatment access for those affected. We should also offer the unhoused protection against the destruction of their essential personal property during any encampment closure. My platform also calls for mandating that hotels and restaurants donate surplus food to nonprofits and shelters.

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?

I would push strongly for the city to provide services that can support people experiencing homelessness, even if for a temporary time. For example, we could expand access to transportation directly to shelters, housing sites or medical facilities. I would also strongly advocate for access to medical care and personal hygienic resources.

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

People with lived experience of homelessness need to be present when policy is being made, not brought in for testimony after decisions are already set.

My time as Committee and Policy Director for Councilmember Bonds's Committee on Executive Administration and Labor put me in oversight hearings where unhoused residents, outreach workers, and direct service organizations testified about what the system actually looks like from inside it. I attended community meetings where residents facing housing instability spoke directly about their situations. I have also built relationships with organizations including Miriam's Kitchen, the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, and SMYAL that bridge policy and lived experience.

Going forward, I will make the structured inclusion of people with lived experience a standard part of any legislative process touching homelessness, shelter, or housing services. That means building it into the hearing process from the start, not treating it as an optional add-on. People who are already in crisis should not have to navigate a bureaucratic obstacle course to get help. I will work with the unhoused community to make it easier for them to get help when they need it.