

Third Door Coalition
901 12th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98122-1090

Dear Members of the Third Door Coalition,

Thank you for your commitment to help improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness. We are so encouraged by the work of the Third Door Coalition and your deep investment in ending chronic homelessness.

From our work, we know our region's homelessness crisis is the moral challenge of our time. Across Puget Sound, we can see the heartbreaking and debilitating impact of chronic homelessness on the individuals affected and the surrounding community.

To help address this issue from its core, the Office of Housing and the Human Services Department are working on aggressive measures the City will take to significantly increase the number of permanent supportive housing (PSH) units. Even with skyrocketing housing and construction costs, the City of Seattle is by far the regional leader in PSH investment and development. There are over 3,700 PSH units in service across the City and over 350 units under construction to come on-line over the next 3 years. As you know, last year the City leveraged new authority from the State to invest more than \$75 million to build nearly 200 units of PSH and operate and support those units over 20 years.

Despite these efforts, the COVID-19 crisis has led us to boldly consider how we can more quickly build permanent affordable housing for our neighbors experiencing homelessness. The City hopes to share a major announcement soon to allow us to build more permanent affordable housing to help address this public health crisis. But we know Seattle cannot do it alone. Mayor Durkan has worked closely with Executive Constantine to develop a bold new approach to consolidate our fractured homelessness response. The King County Regional Homelessness Authority will center its planning and program design around its customers, people experiencing homelessness, ensuring those with lived experience are engaged at all levels of governance. As a new entity, the Authority will have the power and resources to address this crisis regionally, because we all know that homelessness doesn't start or stop at any one city's border. According to HMIS data approximately 60 percent of those receiving services and shelter in Seattle last had a stable place to live outside of Seattle including Kent, Federal Way, Auburn and Renton. The Authority will also support cities in King County to develop sub-regional plans to address homelessness in their communities.

The City of Seattle was budgeted to invest more than \$100 million in homelessness in 2020. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has invested additional resources above those budgeted funds to create hygiene facilities across the City, open de-intensified shelters to accommodate public health social distancing guidelines with unlimited hygiene access and

provide meals. There is no doubt that these are temporary solutions and that people experiencing long-term chronic homelessness need long-term solutions like permanent supportive housing. Our ability to scale development and services to match our need remains, in large part, dependent upon our ability to increase new funding from the private and public sectors including state and federal resources. It is that combined commitment that will end chronic homelessness.

By working in partnership, we can do even more to improve the lives and circumstances of our most vulnerable residents and build a thriving community for all of Seattle.

Sincerely,



Emily Alvarado
Director, Office of Housing



Jason Johnson
Director, Human Services Department