

SHARED PRINCIPLES & AGREED FRAMEWORK FOR RESPONSE TO PEOPLE LIVING UNSHELTERED 2020-2021

This framework is meant to generate wide support among the Mayor, Council, residents of Seattle, including those who work closely with people directly affected by these policies, and those who are themselves living outside. Its success depends upon public and private adherence to these agreed-upon principles; mutual support; consistent communication lifting up these intentions; and the deployment of available or additional flexible resources. It is designed to be put into practice right away and sustained through 2021. Nothing in this framework is intended to diminish the City's authority to take action to ensure public health and safety for all residents.

- (1) United front: Mayor, Councilmembers, and service providers lend their support to a common framework, and will prioritize available resources to implement these principles in practice.
- (2) Plan of action: We commit to do the most we can under current conditions and the capacity of our provider network with new, significant, one-time resources, intending to earn support across the spectrum of stakeholders for this approach. Because of City of Seattle and King County investments, we expect a significant amount of permanent supportive housing to come on-line over the next year to help individuals who are chronically homeless. We commit to collaborate with providers to address capacity issues that may impact the ability to undertake the work that is planned for 2021, bearing in mind the need for expertise to work with culturally defined populations and people with complex behavioral health challenges.
- (3) Set expectations: many if not most people living unsheltered in Seattle, including many who are longstanding residents as well as others who were last housed outside Seattle, will remain in that situation over the next year.
- (4) Principles:
 - In addition to supporting current resources, relocate at least 425 additional people from unsafe conditions on the streets into safe lodging (e.g., temporary hotels and enhanced shelters), through outreach that leads to placement in lodging appropriate to the needs of the individual given available resources.
 - Focus lodging offers towards unsheltered people who face a variety of barriers to accessing lodging and permanent housing, a group that is disproportionately Black and Indigenous and disabled; and in situations with significant impact on individuals who are unsheltered, neighborhoods and the city as a whole (public safety; impact on struggling businesses and vulnerable neighborhoods; individual and public health, including COVID-19 vulnerability; public disorder).
 - In recognition that our city cannot currently offer enough placements, the City will continue to make efforts to assist individuals camped in public spaces for the near term to care for themselves, connect with available supports, access hygiene and trash removal, while working to minimize negative impacts on them and on surrounding businesses and communities.
 - The City will continue to advocate for additional resources at the regional, state, and federal level, but Seattle does not have, and will not have, sufficient lodging or permanent housing placements to match all or most of those living unsheltered over the next 15 months. There may be circumstances in which moving people is necessary, even in a pandemic, but in those limited cases such activity should be planned and implemented with great care and alternative workable living arrangements made available.

(5) Consistent messaging:

- COVID requires an approach that promotes and protects public health. Since the beginning of March and in response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the City has primarily focused on conducting outreach and suspended scheduled encampment removals to limit the spread of the COVID -19 virus except in the most extreme circumstances. This approach is likely to continue through 2021.
- The only successful way to reduce the prevalence of people living unsheltered is to afford people access to lodging, housing and services that match their circumstances (attention to initial placement). For some, this is solely a matter of affordability with minimal supports, while for others this is a matter of affordability accompanied by appropriate support services to facilitate retention of housing over a longer period of time.
- Appropriate lodging for a particular person means accommodation that is accessible, adequate, and consistent with basic standards of shelter or housing, including support for hygiene, sanitation, food preparation, security, peace, privacy and dignity; and without barriers that could result in the individual being turned away or excluded.

(6) Outreach

- The Mayor, Council and providers commit to a transparent, accountable and collaborative co-design of a street to housing program that utilizes the temporary COVID-resources and on-going City funding for temporary lodging and permanent housing and is inclusive of other stakeholders, such as community associations and businesses. We recognize that time is of the essence, particularly as a result of COVID-19, the challenges for businesses in recovering from COVID economic impacts and the arrival of fall/winter weather. We agree to work together expeditiously, and in good faith with the common goal of housing unsheltered people.
- The City will continue to commit millions of dollars to address trash removal, hygiene, health promotion and harm reduction (sharps containers, health outreach in coordination with Public Health)
- The City concurs that removals will not be the first response and will collaborate with providers to address obstructions and behavior through thoughtful and respectful dialogue and problem-solving, engaging both unsheltered and housed residents, addressing specific neighborhood needs and priorities.

(7) Lodging and Housing

- The City will work with providers to coordinate, screen and match individuals based on the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and HUD requirements identifying the best lodging and permanent housing resource for their situation and needs. Lodging and housing availability will be transparent and known to those doing actual outreach and screening work, insisting on race equity, ensuring resources do not skew disproportionately toward white individuals or people with few barriers.
- The staffing model for hotel programs must be realistic in light of the complex behavioral health needs of many participants, and the lack of available alternative sites or programs to meet their needs.