

January 14, 2021

Honorable Councilmember Andrew Lewis, Chair
Select Committee on Homelessness and Housing Affordability *via e-mail*

Subject: Reducing barriers for permanent supportive housing

Dear Councilmember Lewis,

The Seattle Planning Commission is eager to inform you of our support for the passage of the permanent supportive housing ordinance that is being considered in the Select Committee on Homelessness and Housing Affordability. As Seattle's ongoing homelessness crisis merges with the public health and economic damages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to provide stable housing for our homeless neighbors only grows more urgent. This ordinance's removal of barriers for the development of permanent support housing (PSH) could not be more timely, and the close partnership between CM Lewis's office and proven PSH providers during the development of this ordinance increases our confidence in achieving successful outcomes.

The Planning Commission agrees with the decision to sustain requirements for PSH projects to conduct community outreach, while releasing those developments from design review, and its associated review time and costs. Additionally, while the Planning Commission advocates to maintain bike parking requirements in other forms of development, we agree with the decision to exclude bike parking requirements from PSH developments as a means to remove as many potential barriers to creating PSH as possible. Lastly, the Commission encourages the Council to consider coordinating with the Seattle Department of Transportation to allow loading zones at PSH developments to facilitate the transportation of residents to medical appointments and other activities.

The Planning Commission strongly recommends adopting the permanent supportive housing ordinance and taking a necessary step towards increasing housing opportunities for our most vulnerable homeless neighbors. Thank you for your creative and diligent work towards ending homelessness in Seattle.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or our Executive Director, Vanessa Murdock, at 733-9271.

Sincerely,

Michael Austin, Chair
Seattle Planning Commission