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## Mayor Jenny Durkan Announces Seattle's First-Ever Affordable Middle-Income Housing Advisory Council to Deliver More Housing Options for Workers and Families

🕒 January 29, 2019 (https://www.capitolhilltimes.com/2019/01/29/)  
💬 zero comment (https://www.capitolhilltimes.com/2019/01/29/mayor-jenny-durkan-announces-seattles-first-ever-affordable-middle-income-housing-advisory-council-to-deliver-more-housing-options-for-workers-and-families/#respond)

*Recommended strategies could include equitable investment in Seattle's Opportunity Zones*

*Members reflect a range of community leaders and veteran experts from the investment and housing development industries*

**Seattle** (January 28, 2019) – Today, Seattle Mayor Jenny A. Durkan announced the establishment of the City's first-ever Affordable Middle-Income Housing Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will identify investment strategies and related tools to help close existing market gaps and attract significant capital investment to create more for-rent and for-sale homes that are affordable to Seattle's middle-income wage earners.

While the City remains committed to create more low-income housing, this new initiative addresses the growing need to help middle-income families. Since the Great Recession, the housing market has delivered thousands of new apartments for workers in the center city, but many residents continue to find it difficult to buy or rent an affordable family-sized home.

The Advisory Council is a direct response to over a year of listening to

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Seattle communities. From Mayor Durkan’s first day in office, she has attended more than 43 town hall meetings, 175 community events and 11 neighborhood walking tours where neighbors spoke passionately about the need for more help for moderate to middle-income families struggling to stay in Seattle. While the private sector has responded to market demand for smaller apartments in the city’s densest neighborhoods, and nonprofit developers are helping respond to the significant need for lower income affordability, the “missing middle” has become an area of increasing concern.

“Too many workers, including teachers, fire fighters, and police are getting priced out of this great city. Seattle urgently needs more affordable housing options,” said Mayor Durkan. “As the fastest growing city in our country, we need more affordable housing so people who work in our city can live in our city. The Affordable Middle-Income Housing Advisory Council has the opportunity to pinpoint a diverse range of housing options and creative financing models that can help Seattle’s middle-income residents and help create an affordable Seattle for all.”

“By working together and pooling resources we can find more solutions to address affordable housing than we can working alone,” said Governor Gary Locke. “We can become an example of effective collaborations between the county, the state, the federal government, community, and the private sector for the common good.”

“A lot of work has been done to understand the big ideas around equitable development and opportunity,” said Ada M. Healey, Chief Real Estate Officer at Vulcan Real Estate. “The Council is a team of individuals with comprehensive knowledge of investment, development, and community. We are ready to roll up our sleeves and apply our shared knowledge to advance the best solutions for housing middle-income households.”

“The Labor community is an unabashed vehicle for social equity and I look forward to working with this Council to create more affordable housing opportunities across the city,” said Larry Brown, President of the Washington State Labor Council.

“The foundation for a strong, vibrant, and healthy community is access to affordable housing,” said Council co-chair Ezra Teshome.

The Advisory Council will consider a range of opportunities to align with newly-created investment vehicles, including social impact funds and funds oriented toward equitable development and affordable housing in newly-designated Opportunity Zones. The Council will also look at using city-owned land to create more opportunity.

The Advisory Council hosted their first meeting today and will continue meeting into the year, paying particular attention to:

- Identify the next steps necessary to increase housing choices affordable to middle-income individuals and families

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- Provide a compilation of middle-income housing strategies that could be advanced through new investment financing.
- Deliver recommendations on the architecture of potential new housing investment fund(s).
  - Conduct outreach to neighborhoods, community and housing advocates to inform the work of the committee.
- Identify the steps required to attract equitable development investments in Seattle Opportunity Zones.

The Affordable Middle-Income Housing Advisory Council encompasses members with vast knowledge and years of expertise in the housing development and investment industries. Membership will continue to grow as those who have been asked to serve are added. At this time, the Advisory Council membership includes:

- Co-Chair Larry Brown, Washington State Labor Council
  - Co-Chair Ada Healey, Vulcan
  - Co-Chair Gary Locke, Former Governor of Washington State
- Co-Chair Ezra Teshome, Community Leader
- Maria Barrientos, barrientos Ryan
- Lisa Bogardus, Seattle Building Trades
- Bruce Brooks, Craft3
- Mark Dean, Citibank
- Dan Duffus, Blueprint Capital
- Aaron Fairchild, Green Canopy Homes
- Joe Ferguson, Lake Union Partners
- Greg Gorder, Gaard Development
- Gabe Grant, Spectrum Development Solutions
- Ed Harley, Foster Pepper
- John Hempelmann, Cairncross & Hempelmann
- Julie Howe, Urban Evolution
- Doris Koo, Yesler Community Collaborative
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The Advisory Council will seek input from a range of community-based organizations, neighborhoods, and other stakeholders to ensure a broad range of recommendations centered on equity.

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