

Oct. 25, 2016

Dear Members of the Seattle City Council:

We, the undersigned faith leaders, communities of faith, and local residents, urge the Council to invest \$160 million in the city's 2017 capital budget to build low-income, affordable housing for working families.

Today there is a dire and growing shortage of housing units available for Seattle residents who are struggling economically, the people who most need them. Tackling this crisis in the 2017 City budget is not just a matter of balancing competing interests for smart growth. It needs to be rooted in recognizing the dignity of all Seattle residents and prioritizing a commitment to a sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all.

As you well know, people in Seattle are facing an affordable housing crisis. In the last year, Seattle rents have gone up at more than three times the national rate. An average two-bedroom apartment in our city is now almost \$2,400. The median home price is nearly \$600,000. These escalating prices are driving working people, young adults, students, people of color, and immigrants out of our city, nullifying our hard-fought pay gains and forcing people to endure longer commutes and spend less time with their loved ones.

Lack of affordable housing is threatening the fabric of the economic diversity of our community and exacerbating the crisis of homelessness. Many members of our faith communities who are dedicated to and love this city are being squeezed out of the region. As people of faith, we are united in declaring that the lack of affordable housing cries out for humane, compassionate remedies and smart policy decisions by City leaders.

By allocating \$160 million to build and operate 1,000 affordable rental units, the City will be saving 1,000 individuals and families from having to move elsewhere – probably outside of Seattle – and will help improve the overall housing market for lower-income people. We are pleased to learn that with the shelving of plans for a new police precinct building, the City now has available bonding capacity and cash to make this allocation in the 2017 capital budget.

We are united and determined to see the City build more housing to alleviate this growing crisis. Housing affordability is a core issue for faith communities.

Please let us know whether we can count on you, as an elected representative, to join with us in making 1,000 new homes a priority in the 2017 City budget.

Sincerely,

Congregation signatories

- Church Council of Greater Seattle
- Episcopal Diocese of Olympia
- Northwest Washington Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- University Christian Church (DOC)
- Madrona Grace Presbyterian Church
- Christ Our Hope Catholic Church
- Our Lady of Fatima Parish
- Curry Temple CME Church
- Bethany United Church of Christ
- Columbia City Church of Hope
- Trinity United Methodist Church
- Kadima Reconstructionist Community
- Northminster Presbyterian Church
- Emerald City Metropolitan Community Church, Seattle
- Central Lutheran Church
- Seattle First Baptist Church
- Green Lake New Start
- Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ

Signatories: Religious Leaders
Affiliation for identification purposes only

- Michael Ramos, The Church Council of Greater Seattle
- Rt. Rev. Greg Rickel, Bishop Diocese of Olympia
- The Very Rev. Steven L. Thomason, Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral
- Rev. Kirby Unti, Northwest Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- Fr. Paul Magnano, Christ Our Hope Catholic Church
- Rev. Dr. Kevin Bates, Magnolia Lutheran Church
- Rev. Julie M. Blum, Maple Leaf Lutheran Church
- Rev. Dr. Joanne Carlson Brown, Tibbetts United Methodist Church
- (Rev.) Kristy J. Daniels, Church of Steadfast Love/Compass Housing Alliance
- Rev. Diane Darling, Alki United Church of Christ
- (Rev.) Darla DeFrance, Columbia City Church of Hope
- Rev. Joanne Elise Engquist, Gethsemane Lutheran Church
- Rev. Jeffrey Gill, Trinity Parish Episcopal Church
- Rev. Bryon Hansen, Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church
- Rev. Dr. Adam Harmon, University Christian Church (DOC)
- Rev. Brian D. Hutchison, M.Div., Emerald City Metropolitan Community Church, Seattle
- Rev. Beverly R Jackson, Curry Temple CME Church
- Rev. John-Otto Liljenstolpe
- (Rev.) Carol Mariano, Haller Lake United Methodist Church
- (Rev.) Wim Mauldin, Wedgwood Community Church
- Rev. Sharon L. Moe, First United Methodist Church of Seattle
- Pastor Kent Narum, Green Lake New Start
- Rev. Daniel J. Peterson, Queen Anne Lutheran Church
- Rev. Timothy Phillips, Seattle First Baptist Church
- Rev. Meighan Pritchard, Prospect United Church of Christ
- Rev. Philip Raether, Our Lady of Fatima Parish
- Rev. Megan M Ramer, Seattle Mennonite Church
- (Rev.) John M. Recher, Pastor Emeritus, St John United Lutheran Church
- Rev. Cynthia L. Salo, Central Lutheran Church
- Rev. Susan Vanhoy Burchfield
- (Rev.) Kathleen Weber, Trinity United Methodist Church
- Rev. Mark A. C. Zimmerly, Madrona Grace Presbyterian Church
- Steve Claggett, All Pilgrims' Christian Church
- Jan M Cherry, Church Council of Greater Seattle
- Andrea Fontana, Ignatian Spirituality Center, Seattle
- Susan Newbold, Kadima Reconstructionist Community
- Jonathan Rosenblum, Kadima Reconstructionist Community
- LM Kerch, Our Lady of Fatima
- Stacy Kern, Northminster Presbyterian Church
- Arthur Mampel, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- L Kathleen Mahan, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Muriel Branch, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Roland Holloway, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Rosemary I. Bell, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Abi Velasco, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Jacqueline Mampel, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Denise Parry, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Dona Snow-Miller, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Peter Henry, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Nancy, Prospect Congregational United Church of Christ
- Alexis Bacon-Yates, Prospect Enrichment Preschool
- Margaret Ann Morgan, Queen Anne Lutheran Church
- Ann Marchand, Seattle Mennonite Church
- Carrie Cates, Seattle Vineyard
- Judith Vitzthum, St. Anne Catholic Church
- Kathy Heffernan, St. Patrick's Catholic Church
- Catherine and John Parrish, St. Therese
- Rebecka McKinney, St. Therese
- Sarah Holstedt, Trinity United Methodist Church
- Elizabeth Dickinson, University Congregational United Church of Christ
- Jonathan Betz-Zall, University Friends Meeting
- Karen Eisenbrey, University Temple United Methodist Church
- Barbara Bash, Wallingford United Methodist Church
- Kathryn Olson, Woodland Park United Methodist Church
- Arnold Anderson
- Lisa Gustaveson
- Martha Ann Joyce
- Chris Shultz