

Seattle Renters' Commission 2019 Work Plan

Background

The Commission spent 2018 developing its first work plan, which was robust and included more work than could be completed in one year. The topics listed on the back reflect the Commission's identified priorities for 2018 and will roll over into 2019. The Commission brainstormed potential topics that would be important to the renters of Seattle, and that they wanted to discuss and examine further. Information was gathered from numerous city departments regarding potential topics for Commission consideration, and then prioritized among the 64 potential work items.

The Commission received several background presentations from City staff and others, and those will continue into 2019 as new Commissioners come on board and new programs and policies become relevant to their work. This will be useful to provide information, baseline data, and the status of current activities for some of the topics the Commission wants to address.

As a means to use the time the full Commission has together, work groups were created based on the groupings of priority issues/topics identified by Commission members. The work groups can be used to dig deeper into topics, and in some cases, develop draft position statements for consideration by the full Commission. The work group meetings will occur outside of the regular Commission meetings. Each work group should have a minimum of two people. Commission members can serve on more than one work group.

Commission Work Groups Based on Priority Voting of Issues:

- Rent stabilization and/or Rent Control
- Housing Supply
- Renter Protection Laws
- Outreach Strategies for Engaging Renters

The following represents suggested agenda topics for the full Commission meetings in 2019. The Co-Chairs may modify these issues, based on emerging issues, as they develop agendas for each month's meeting.

Housing Supply

- Fort Lawton housing development
- Explore all options for increasing affordable housing supply
- Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) policy (2018)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) and Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADU's)

Rent stabilization and/or Rent Control

- Address excessive rent hikes
- Tie rent increases to inflation or tied to wage increases
- Rent control and/or rent stabilization
- Support legislation to lift statewide ban on rent control

Develop Outreach Strategies for Engaging Renters

Assistance for Renters

- Economic Eviction Assistance
- Rental Assistance Voucher
- Affordability Portal
- Renter Assistance for Building Purchases, and First Right of Refusal to Purchase Apartment Buildings

Renter Protection Laws

- Renter protections related to immigrant populations
- Support for undocumented immigrant renters
- Evaluate effectiveness of existing tenant protection laws
- Tenant's Bill of Rights
- Rental Screen criteria
- Amend City law to require 60-day notice for rent increases < 10%, and 90 days for increase > 10%

Lower Barriers to renting for homeless. Examine effectiveness of rapid rehousing

Social Justice

- Explore how race and sex impacts housing accessibility and affordability
- Explore how class impacts housing accessibility and affordability
- Housing availability and resources for LGBTQ low-income seniors