

10,000 HOMES IN TEN YEARS

**CONSTRUCT
AND REPAIR**



**CUT POLICY
BARRIERS**



**SYSTEMS &
PROCESSES**



BUILDING OUR FUTURE

Mayor Suzanne LaFrance Housing Strategy

10,000 HOMES IN TEN YEARS

December 5, 2024

BACKGROUND

THE PROBLEM

Our community needs more housing. The Municipality of Anchorage needs to see at least 1,000 units of housing built or rehabilitated each year to meet the needs of residents. For 2024, our records show just over 500 units. Housing security requires more housing of all different types, from multi-family to first-time buyer. To make Anchorage a sustainable place to live for the long-term, we need to take action.

HOW LACK OF HOUSING HURTS US

Lack of adequate housing undermines our economy, shutting out workers and business owners. It's a major contributor to outmigration and homelessness. It makes it harder for families to invest in our community or stay close to home.

WHERE WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Housing availability isn't entirely within our control: We're a local government, not a construction company! But there is creative action we can take now to relieve pressure. We can't add land to the Anchorage Bowl, but we can use the land we share more efficiently. We can't set interest rates, but we can speed permitting to limit costs. We can start by setting an ambitious goal, and creating a road-map to accomplish it, knowing we'll continue to adapt as we go.

WHAT WE WILL DO

Three specific strategies will immediately improve our community's housing situation. We can incentivize the repair and maintenance of existing housing options, and the building of new ones. We can make sure our regulations reflect our most important priority: making it easier, not more difficult, to build. And we can streamline internal operations so permitting and approval processes are predictable, consistent, and reliable for all users.

GOAL

Anchorage needs 10,000 units of housing built or rehabilitated over the next 10 years.

STRATEGY

1. Incentivize construction and repair.
2. Cut red tape. Remove regulatory barriers to building housing.
3. Streamline municipal systems and processes for permitting and approval.



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10,000 HOMES TEN YEARS

Housing Strategy
Mayor Suzanne LaFrance

GOALS		TARGET COMPLETION: DEC. 31, 2024	JUNE 30, 2025	JUNE 30, 2026	JUNE 30, 2027
1 CONSTRUCT AND REPAIR 	1a. Close the feasibility “gap” in residential development and reuse	Expand geographic scope and timeline of property tax abatements for multi-family housing. Modify requirements to better align with housing goals. Fix issues identified by current recipients.		Strengthen code and enforcement to address dilapidated, vacant, or abandoned properties.	Incentivize repair and reuse using a combination of tax incentives, state funds, and federal grants. Promote weatherization and energy efficiency.
	1b. Reduce the cost of infrastructure		Create flexibility in offsite requirements so they can be waived when the adjacent infrastructure is already publicly maintained.	Identify funding for AWWU to promote utility connections within the water and sewer service districts.	Update Design Criteria Manual. Eliminate redundant and conflicting standards in zoning code.
	1c. Leverage public-private partnerships to build housing	Issue a request for proposals to build housing or mixed use on the former Archives site in Midtown.	Obtain title and redevelop vacant and abandoned properties to prepare land for development, using federal grants.	Support Heritage Land Bank partnerships in Girdwood that create public value for the local and broader community.	Activate Anchorage Community Development Authority to develop attainable workforce and market-rate housing in Midtown and Downtown.
	1d. Increase the supply of housing units for low-income and unhoused people	Apply for the HUD PRO grant to research & test new approaches such as modular and manufactured housing for cold climates.	Use MOA resources and convening power to leverage federal & philanthropic funds to produce housing units for people experiencing homelessness.	Incentivize more hotel conversions, single-room occupancies, efficiencies, and other housing options for people at 60% of area median income or below.	
2 CUT POLICY BARRIERS 	2e. Simplify the zoning code to make it more usable and effective	More consistent communication between the Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Community Councils.	Identify common reasons that existing buildings don’t conform to current code. Assess whether those aspects of code create public value.	Institute a regular review process to inform a yearly clean-up of ordinances. Empower staff to raise issues. Develop clear systems for tracking process and problems.	Eliminate reliance on old versions of Title 21. Address cross-references and Special Limitations to make zoning code more self-contained.
	2f. Make it easier to build more cheaply; promote the efficient use of land	Convene working group with the Assembly to draft ordinance(s) to fix Site Access issues.	Reform design standards, including Site Access, especially when they discriminate against multi-family homes.	Allow denser development in transit corridors.	Legalize manufactured & modular housing in more residential areas. Decrease min. lot sizes and setbacks, increase heights and max. lot coverage.
	2g. Increase the diversity and vitality of Anchorage’s neighborhoods		Remove remaining barriers in code to recent housing reforms passed by the Assembly: HOME Initiative (duplexes), triplex/fourplex, ADUs, parking, etc.	Review the Comprehensive Plan and consider updates to better align goals with actions.	Remove barriers to residential uses in commercial zones. Allow small-scale, low impact commercial uses in some residential zones.
3 SYSTEMS & PROCESSES 	3h. Increase the predictability and speed of the permitting process		Conduct an external review of the permitting process. Publish accurate and accessible guides for the public, including a map of the entire permitting process. Scope improved software.		Increase use of “by-right” rather than discretionary approvals by: (a) reducing number of decision points; and (b) identifying commonly granted discretionary approvals that could be approved by-right.
	3i. Continuously improve internal systems and processes	1. Build internal systems that empower front-line staff to raise and fix common issues. 2. Hire a Building Official and other key positions.	1. Improve customer survey to increase response rate and transparently track feedback. 2. Create a phone tree for internal and external use; include clear job and departmental descriptions.	Review and remove institutional barriers to filling jobs at the Permit Center. Strengthen the career ladder for all Permit Center staff.	Create check-in system to welcome people to the Permit Center. Have a monitor display available staff, or when they’ll return.

Mayor LaFrance's Health and Homelessness Strategy

OCTOBER 15, 2024

CONTACT

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ACTION

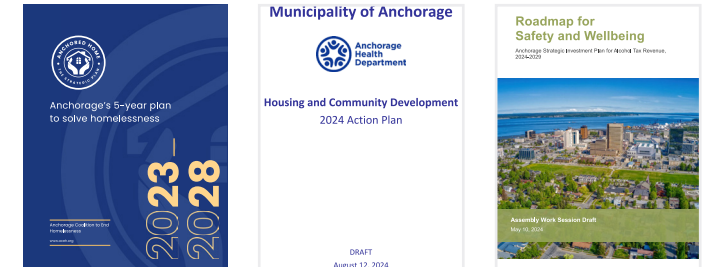
Our strategy includes:

- Maintain adequate year-round shelter and transitional housing.
- Connect people from shelter to reliable navigation, housing, and services.
- Improve access to behavioral and physical healthcare.
- Reduce racial disparities in access to shelter and housing.

RESULTS

In three years, we will see:

- Significant reduction in unsheltered homelessness.
- Fewer families experiencing homelessness.
- Higher quality of life and business confidence city-wide.
- More Anchorage residents have equitable access to health and safety.



This strategy builds from current MOA and partner plans, including:

1. Anchored Home Plan;
2. Housing and Community Development Plan;
3. Roadmap for Safety and Wellbeing;
4. Mayor LaFrance's Housing Strategy

INTRODUCTION

The LaFrance Administration is committed to a comprehensive and coordinated strategy to address homelessness and related health and safety issues.

With a public health approach that focuses on harm reduction and prevention, we can improve the health and safety of the entire community, including those experiencing homelessness, with immediate action and long-term solutions.

Root causes of homelessness include mental illness, substance misuse, financial hardship, personal and generational trauma, and lack of affordable housing. As we face another winter, nearly 500 people are living without shelter in our community.

The good news? That's fewer people living unsheltered than a year ago. Public, private, and nonprofit partners are bringing new resources to the table. We are making decisions with better data than ever before. The public is committed to being part of the solution. We've heard from businesses and community members (housed and unhoused) that high rates of substance misuse, camping along trails and in public spaces, and the impact of crime make Anchorage feel less safe. Addressing homelessness and improving public safety will make our community a safer place for all.

Our strategy does not reinvent the wheel. We are building on efforts already underway. We know we must work closely with housing, law enforcement, physical and behavioral health, social services, community groups, faith communities, businesses, and housed and un-housed residents.

We will adjust this strategy as we learn more and as conditions change. We will continue to create pathways to health and stability for people while reducing the impact of homelessness on neighborhoods, public spaces, and local business.



THREE-YEAR GOALS

1. Significantly reduce unsheltered homelessness through low-barrier shelter and connections to housing.
2. Increase access to behavioral and physical health services.
3. Add new housing and increase access to existing housing.
4. Harness community partnerships, funding, and data to reduce systemic contributors to homelessness.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Existing plans and lessons provide a starting point for Mayor LaFrance's Health and Homelessness Strategy. We've learned:

- It takes adequate year-round, very low-barrier shelter of different types, system navigation, and supports, for people to maintain housing.
- We must simultaneously address those in crisis today and prevent trauma that pushes people into crisis tomorrow.
- Anchorage needs new and rehabilitated housing, especially for households below 110% of the Area Median Income.
- Data sharing, coordination of services, housing, and employment are critical to get the right supports to each person.
- Funding must be leveraged on all sides from multiple public and private sources.
- Sharing leadership, partnership, and accountability to co-create solutions, implement strategy, and report results, is 100% necessary. We can't succeed without it.

First 100 Days
October 8, 2024

6 months
December 31, 2024

12 months
June 30, 2025

UNSHELTERED AND SHELTER

- ✓ Launch Anchorage Police Department HOPE (Homeless Outreach, Prevention, and Engagement) Team
- ✓ Increase outreach to camps before abatement
- ✓ Strengthen internal coordination among municipal departments
- ✓ Work with Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (ACEH) and other partners to coordinate shelter and housing resources for people moving from camps, prioritized by vulnerability
- ✓ Maintain 200 beds at E 56th Avenue Congregate Shelter
- ✓ Work with Anchorage Health Department (AHD) to complete RFP process and execute contracts for 400 beds of non-congregate shelter before winter



- HOPE Team and outreach partners continue engagement with camps before abatement
- Address issues related to vehicles when moving to shelter
- Identify and launch warming sites for November-February
- Maintain 200 beds at E 56th Avenue Congregate Shelter
- Launch 400 non-congregate beds
- Establish peer, transportation, and other navigation partnerships to increase movement from shelter to housing
- Use Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to work with AHD and ACEH to monitor flow of people from unsheltered to shelter to housing, adjusting resources as needed
- Develop and release RFP for rapid re-housing operator for approximately 75 people

- Establish consistent low-barrier winter services, including congregate and non-congregate shelter, rapid re-housing, and case management
- Continue to engage peer, transportation, and navigation partners with people moving from camps
- Explore and launch legal parking sites available from May through October 15, 2025
- Maintain 200 beds at E 56th Avenue Congregate Shelter
- Maintain at least 50 non-congregate beds
- Identify and launch additional low-density, low barrier, year-round shelter and transitional housing options (i.e., tiny homes, palette shelters, and other innovations)
- Identify opportunities for day shelter and community spaces for people experiencing homelessness



HEALTH

- ✓ Establish a Behavioral Health provider workgroup and host initial meetings
- ✓ Assess the availability of behavioral health treatment in Anchorage today
- ✓ Support the establishment of a care coordination group for the highest utilizers of the Anchorage Crisis Collaborative



- Maintain and monitor active referral network to behavioral health services and a care coordination group for highest utilizers of the Anchorage Crisis Collaborative
- Expand and support access to physical health providers serving individuals with complex needs
- Support development of a full behavioral health crisis continuum and connection to community services
- Maintain relationship with Anchorage therapeutic courts to increase referrals for treatment



HOUSING

- ✓ Develop Mayor LaFrance's Housing Strategy that includes housing for low- and extremely low-income households



- Continue to implement Mayor LaFrance's Housing Strategy
- Leverage public-private partnerships to increase the supply of housing units for very low-income households
- Increase access to rental subsidies
- Identify and plan to redevelop blighted and abandoned properties



DATA, FUNDING, COORDINATION

- ✓ Develop and submit budget proposals for MOA funding of safety net services for Q4 2024 and 2025
- ✓ Re-establish relationship with the Homelessness Leadership Council
- ✓ Develop strong working relationships with the Assembly Housing and Homelessness Committee, ACEH, and other safety-net providers
- ✓ Convene i-Team and GIS team around homelessness data collection and reporting
- ✓ Apply to Bloomberg Philanthropy Collaboration Track
- ✓ Launch regular updates to Assembly and the public
- ✓ Reengage the Housing, Homeless and Neighborhood Development (HHAND) Commission



- Establish relationships with advocacy and funding partners, including: Alaska Healthcare and Hospital Association, Alaska Behavioral Health Association, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and other business and philanthropy leaders
- Develop relationships with Tribal Health Organizations throughout Alaska
- Develop relationships with neighborhoods, faith-based, and community organizations to increase engagement to address homelessness
- Develop legislative priorities and participate in advocacy with state and federal delegations
- Evaluate MOA and partner expenditures related to homelessness and health, and develop MOA budget proposal for 2026
- Work with funding partners to fully leverage MOA funding with other sources

