

Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Proposed Standing Advisory Panel

The Standing Advisory Panel is made up of diverse housing experts selected to provide the Regional Affordable Housing Taskforce with counsel and to advise on a broad spectrum of topics. Drawn from a variety of housing and community backgrounds, the Standing Advisory Panel will participate in Task Force meetings on a regular basis. On occasion, the Standing Advisory Panel will meet independently to develop guidance and recommendations for the Task Force. They will provide the Task Force with independent perspectives on the causes of the affordable housing challenge and approaches to meet that challenge.

Additional panel members with particular expertise on specific topics will be identified and invited to provide input as needed.

| | Category | Suggested Member | Affiliation | Title |
|----|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Housing Authority | Stephen Norman | King County Housing Authority | Executive Director |
| 2 | Housing Authority | Andrew Lofton | Seattle Housing Authority | Executive Director |
| 3 | Housing Authority | Marc Gropper | Renton Housing Authority | Executive Director |
| 4 | Nonprofit Housing Developer | Villette Nolon | Imagine Housing | Executive Director |
| 5 | For Profit Housing Developer | Maria Barrientos | Barrientos & Ryan LLC | Managing Partner |
| 6 | Tenant Advocate | Merf Ehman, | Columbia Legal Services | Executive Director |
| 7 | Tenant Advocate | Mónica Mendoza-Castrejón | Community Representative | Community Representative |
| 8 | Property Owner/Manager | Brett Waler | Washington Multi-Family Housing Association | Director of Government Affairs |
| 9 | Unincorporated Stakeholder | Chris Szala | Community House Mental Health/Vashon Household | Executive Director |
| 10 | Affordable Housing Advocate | Marty Kooistra | Housing Development Consortium | Executive Director |
| 11 | Homeownership | Tony To | HomeSight | Executive Director |
| 12 | Communities of Color | Hamdi Abdulle | Somali Youth and Family Club | Executive Director |
| 13 | Communities of Color | TBD | | |
| 14 | Master Builders Association | Patricia Akiyama | Master Builders Association | External Relations Manager |
| 15 | Futurewise | Bryce Yadon | Futurewise | State Policy Director |

Proposed Standing Advisory Panel Brief Biographies

Stephen Norman, Executive Director, King County Housing Authority

Stephen is the Executive Director of the King County Housing Authority (KCHA), serving all of King County outside of the cities of Seattle and Renton. The Authority owns over 9,500 units of housing and provides rental assistance for an additional 9,000 households renting on the private market. Stephen has an extensive background in community organizing, urban planning and affordable housing design, development and management. He currently serves as president of the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities and as Chair of the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Stephen served as co-chair of King County's Inter-agency Council on Homelessness from 2005 to 2014, as a Board Member of Building Changes (formerly AIDS Housing of Washington) for over a decade, and as a member of the Advisory Board for the Washington Families Fund. Stephen has extensive experience in the housing and service needs of seniors. KCHA participated in the development of "The Quiet Crisis" and is working with the team to update and expand that report now. KCHA owns and operates 34 senior housing properties and serves over 4,300 senior households.

Andrew Lofton, Executive Director, Seattle Housing Authority

Andrew was appointed Executive Director of the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) in 2012, and leads strategic planning and the day-to-day operations of the organization. Prior to his promotion to Executive Director, he held the position of Deputy Executive Director—Finance and Administration for more than eight years. As Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Lofton oversaw SHA's Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance and Budget, and Housing Choice Voucher functions, including the development and management of the agency's annual budget. He has also worked closely with representatives of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding the oversight of SHA's Moving to Work agreement, regulatory reform, and funding issues. Seattle Housing Authority provides through the Seattle Senior Housing program, affordable housing for low-income older adults and individuals with disabilities, at 23 multi-family, low-rise buildings within the city of Seattle. Units are mostly one-bedroom, with a limited number of two-bedrooms. All buildings are owned by the Seattle Housing Authority. All units (approximately 1,000 total) are wheelchair accessible. SHA serves over 6,000 seniors.

Mark Gropper, Executive Director, Renton Housing Authority

Mark grew up in Woodinville and cares passionately about communities. He started his work in housing as a graveyard desk clerk at the Morrison Hotel while a student at the University of Washington. He began working at the Renton Housing Authority in 2001 and was named executive director in 2010. Mark leads the Sunset Revitalization Initiative. One of the first projects included the Kirkland Townhomes, a modular development, serving large families.

Villette Nolon, Executive Director, Imagine Housing

Villette leads the staff and Imagine Housing's Board of Directors to set Imagine Housing's vision and execute our plans to bring high quality affordable housing with the best supportive services possible to our community. Villette comes to this role as a former Imagine Housing Board member and after serving as Interim Executive Director for several months. She is a dynamic executive with over 30 years' experience leading fast growth high tech companies. Her past roles have included CEO, VP Sales & Marketing and VP Strategic Partnerships. Since 2000, she has served on the boards of PONCHO, Washington Technology Industry Association, and the Global MIT Enterprise Forum.

Maria Barrientos, Managing Partner, Barrientos & Ryan LLC

Maria is the Managing Partner at the firm she established in 1999. To date, Barrientos & Ryan has developed more than 30+ mixed use residential housing projects in Seattle- these projects include rental housing, condominiums, market rate housing and workforce housing. Maria is involved with the Urban Land Institute, Uptown Alliance, Pike Pine Urban Neighborhood Council, and the Seattle Center Advisory Committee. She has previously served on Seattle's Housing Affordability + Livability Committee, the International District Public Development Authority, the Capitol Hill 2020 Committee, the City of Seattle Transferred Development Rights Advisory Group, and the Central Youth and Family Services, among many others.

Merf Ehman, Executive Director, Columbia Legal Services

Merf is the Executive Director of Columbia Legal Services. She has deep experience with multi-disciplinary advocacy through partnerships with local universities, government agencies and national research groups to employ cutting edge research in the quest for social justice. As a staff attorney with our Institutions Project, Merf focused on removing barriers to housing and employment for people with criminal records so they could successfully re-enter society.

Mónica Mendoza-Castrejón, DataSphere Technologies, Inc.

Monica was born and raised in South King County to Mexican, immigrant, farm working parents, later by her single mother under poverty. They went through the Section 8 process, and later the HEN (Housing and Essential Needs) program, up until Mónica graduated from the University of Washington with a BA in Law, Societies and Justice and Comparative History of Ideas. Mónica has worked with the Commission on Hispanic Affairs, organized for several Progressive candidates in the Seattle area, and worked for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute in DC, the Washington State Democrats, and the Tenants Union. Currently, she volunteers as a Board Member for Progreso: Latino Progress, focusing on housing issues. She speaks and writes Spanish fluently, and has been a renter for more than a decade.

Brett Waler, Director of Government Affairs, Washington Multi-Family Housing Association

Brett joined WMFHA in early 2016 as the Director of Government Affairs. Brett works closely with Joe Puckett and lobbyist Kathryn Hedrick to represent WMFHA member's interests in local municipalities and throughout the State. Brett is passionate about the multifamily industry and knows what an important part multifamily communities play in our growing region. Prior to joining WMFHA, Brett was a litigation attorney representing individual clients in contested family law issues in the Seattle area.

Chris Szala, Executive Director, Community House Mental Health/Vashon Household

As the Executive Director of Community House Mental Health and Vashon Household, Chris has a deep understanding of special needs populations and the community of Vashon and Maury Island. This includes a deep understanding of deal structuring and housing finance. Chris has extensive experience working on the needs of seniors, a prominently represented population group on Vashon Island.

Marty Kooistra, Housing Development Consortium, Executive Director

Marty is a champion of place-based strategies for community revitalization and affordable housing in the U.S. and abroad for 27 years, Marty is recognized for progressive work in the areas of sustainable building practices, homebuyer financial readiness, community development, the rehabilitation and preservation of foreclosed and distressed properties, as well as board development and strategic alliances. Marty moved to the Puget Sound region in 2008 serving as the CEO of Habitat for Humanity Seattle –South King County. The Housing Development Consortium conducts a special affinity group for the needs of seniors and is involved in the update to "The Quiet Crisis".

Tony To, Executive Director, HomeSight

Tony is the Executive Director of HomeSight, a non-profit Community Development Corporation whose mission is “to promote equity by preserving and enhancing economically and culturally diverse communities through affordable homeownership, business development, and community advocacy”. Tony is a member of the Puget Sound Regional Council Economic Development District Board, a Co-Chair of the Regional Equity Network, and a member of the Race and Social Equity Taskforce who worked to include an Equity Development Implementation Plan in the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan update. This year Tony served on the statewide Housing Affordability Response Team that created a list of 65 recommendations to the Governor to consider for future legislative action.

Hamdi Abdulle, Executive Director, Somali Youth and Family Club

Born and raised in Somalia, Hamdi is the Executive Director and co-founder of Somali Youth and Family Club, which has grown into an organization serving families throughout South Seattle and cities in South King County. The Somali Youth and Family Club provides housing services, citizenship classes, employment training, and ELL and afterschool programs. Hamdi advocates for social change, ending homelessness and closing the disproportionality gap for the refugee community in King County. Hamdi is a board member on the Race to the Top (Executive Committee), All Home, and Seattle University’s School of Theology and Ministry/Center for Religious Wisdom & World Affairs, Puget Sound Interfaith Network.

Patricia Akiyama, External Relations Manager, Master Builders Association

Patricia is External Relations Manager for the Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties. Patricia earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Oregon, and is an alumna of the Senior Managers in Government Program at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She was recently appointed to Seattle’s newly formed Community Involvement Commission, is Board Vice President of Leadership Tomorrow (class of 2002), and is on the emeritus board of the Seattle Public Library Foundation.

Bryce Yadon, State Policy Director, Futurewise

Biography forthcoming