



STATEMENT ON UNHOUSED, HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE DUPONT NEIGHBORHOOD

4/27/2021

Mayor Muriel Bowser
Deputy Mayor Wayne Turnage
Councilmember Brooke Pinto

The Dupont Circle Citizens Association is appalled by the failure of DC to ensure appropriate housing for all of its residents. The city has achieved tremendous progress in addressing family homelessness, but the situation for single unhoused people remains tragically awful. DCCA calls for a set of simple, well-publicized indicators that would tell us that DC is on track to reduce and then eliminate homelessness for single people through an increased availability of supportive housing and deeply affordable housing.

The [Dupont Circle Citizens Association](#) has recently worked with community leaders to organize an online [information series](#) about single people who are homeless and unhoused in the Dupont neighborhood. The series ran from February 11th to March 25th of this year and included presentations from 12 DC organizations working with homeless people and from the DC government.

DC has achieved tremendous progress in addressing family homelessness, but the situation for single unhoused people remains tragically awful - a shameful failure in civic governance. The neighborhood is witnessing a significant increase in the number of homeless encampments, evidence of the lack of affordable and appropriate options. This challenge facing the DC Government of ensuring that its own residents are housed will not be met by more rhetoric concerning inequity and inclusiveness alone, it needs specific actions to achieve those goals.

The picture that emerged from the series and from the discussion is that unhoused people in the Dupont neighborhood are served by many determined organizations and staff. These dedicated agencies and their staff are working hard to mitigate the appalling circumstances that unhoused people on the streets find themselves in but they cannot solve the problem that we see around us, a problem that is likely to grow with the ending of the eviction moratorium, despite recent [DC programs of assistance](#). Unless there is a significant increase in the availability of supportive housing for individuals who might find challenges in managing on their own, as proposed in the draft Homeward DC 2.0 plan (the update of the [current plan](#) for ending long term homelessness), and unless there is a significant increase in deeply affordable housing for people on very low incomes based on targets more specific than those proposed in the [Comprehensive Plan](#), even with the recent [proposed amendments](#), then these agencies and these dedicated workers will be ever more stretched while the misery for our unhoused neighbors will continue to worsen.

Policy isn't about claims and aspirations, it's about achievements. This is why we call for a set of simple, well-publicized indicators that would tell us that DC is on track to reduce and then eliminate homelessness for single people through an increased availability of supportive housing and deeply affordable housing - indicators that would show that the services from the dedicated and hard-working staff that we heard from are matched by an adequate supply of appropriate housing.

Note: The organizations that contributed to the DCCA information series were: Christ House; Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development; DC Department of Human Services; DC Fiscal Policy Institute; Friendship Place; Interagency Council on Homelessness; Jaydot LLC; Miriam's Kitchen; N Street Village; SMYAL (Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders); The Community Partnership; Unity Health Care; Veterans Homeless Services. This statement does not imply that these organizations are in agreement with its recommendations.