



Office of the Mayor

City of Seattle

Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Executive Order 2024-02: Establishing the Downtown Activation Team and Neighborhood-Focused Strategies to Restore and Sustain the Vibrancy of Seattle

An Executive Order establishing the policy framework to restore and sustain a vibrant Seattle and directing City departments to work together to address the challenge of maintaining clean, safe, and revitalized neighborhood and downtown business districts with a compassionate, coordinated, and place-based approach.

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle is committed to fostering a clean, safe, vibrant, and inclusive environment for residents, workers, business owners, and visitors in neighborhood and downtown business districts; and

WHEREAS, ensuring the safety and vitality of all neighborhoods, including Downtown Seattle and the Chinatown-International District and surrounding areas, is essential to the economic health of our city and region; and

WHEREAS, the City leads with compassion in all its efforts, including how it cleans and restores vibrancy in specific places and how it addresses public safety challenges; recognizes the importance of a holistic approach, including supportive services and collaboration with community organizations, local businesses, and law enforcement to address the root causes of street disorder, open drug use, and other underlying public safety concerns; and is focused on taking a place-based approach to prioritize places with significant crime, address safety concerns, and enhance quality of life; and

WHEREAS, research shows that place-based strategies, including community engagement, supportive services, environmental improvements, and constitutional policing, are effective in creating safer and more welcoming neighborhoods, recognizing in many circumstances that arrests are a measure of last resort; and

WHEREAS, improving the environment of neighborhood and downtown business districts, including the removal of graffiti, the repair of damaged storefronts, and more, will lead to a

safer and more welcoming atmosphere for residents, workers, business owners, and tourists;
and

WHEREAS, in June 2023, Mayor Harrell released the Downtown Activation Plan, a bold and ambitious roadmap to revitalize and transform Downtown Seattle through updating zoning policies, encouraging residential development, supporting small businesses, addressing the fentanyl crisis, and more; and

WHEREAS, over ninety percent of the Downtown Activation Plan's forty-six action items have been completed or are in progress, including restoring vacant storefronts with local artists and entrepreneurs, activating downtown by bringing in mural artists and satellite farmers markets, and updating downtown core retail zoning; and Downtown Seattle is poised to open the new Seattle Waterfront, an extensive revitalization of twenty acres along the seawall connecting the waterfront to Pike Place Market and the rest of downtown, which will further drive tourism and economic activity; and

WHEREAS, the City has created and launched the Community Assisted Response and Engagement (CARE) Department's crisis response teams and Seattle Fire Department's Post-Overdose Response Team, contributing to a 23% decrease in overdoses compared to 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City has contracted with We Deliver Care (WDC) to lead the Third Avenue Project, which connects individuals involved in illicit activities with services and addresses downtown stakeholder concerns; and has seen significant progress over the last three years, contributing to an 8% decrease in all reported crimes in Downtown Seattle since 2023; and

WHEREAS, the City participates in and funds Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), which offers pre-arrest and pre-booking diversion, receives community referrals, and provides intensive case management, legal assistance, and ongoing coordination with police, neighborhood leaders and prosecutors to support participants' stabilization and recovery, with the aim that community-based care and recovery support will form the primary approach to problematic conduct stemming from mental illness, substance use disorder, or extreme poverty;
and

WHEREAS, the City funds CoLEAD, which provides intensive case management, overdose prevention, behavioral health connections, legal coordination, and housing navigation in non-congregate shelter for individuals having a significant impact in Seattle neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, equitable public safety strategies depend upon strong relationships of mutual trust between public safety agencies and the communities they serve; and the City currently invests heavily in community engagement and outreach programs across many different sectors; and

WHEREAS, to create a safe and vibrant environment throughout Seattle in a sustainable and effective manner, the City must take a multi-faceted approach that includes law enforcement, human services, diversified departmental responses, and other vital stakeholders and partners working together; and

WHEREAS, public safety impacts every City department, and we have an opportunity to centralize the City's public safety, community engagement, and outreach functions, and an opportunity to rethink the use of City resources and organizations to improve all of the City's attempts to sustain a vibrant, safe, and clean environment focused on a new era of police accountability; and

WHEREAS, with this Executive Order, the Mayor will release the One Seattle Restoration Framework, outlining the City's holistic and iterative approach to addressing public safety, public health, and the root causes and impacts of crime; and

WHEREAS, the One Seattle Restoration Framework recognizes that to restore the vibrancy of Seattle we must build neighborhood safety, reduce violent and other high-impact crime, maintain secure transportation networks and pedestrian areas, and create safe and clean conditions in our commercial areas to allow for economic revitalization; and

WHEREAS, the strategies in this Executive Order are reflective of this comprehensive approach and are central to achieving the vision of the One Seattle Restoration Framework – a City where everyone in every neighborhood is safe and feels secure;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor of Seattle, establish the **Downtown Activation Team** and order the following corresponding actions to make Seattle more safe, welcoming, and vibrant:

- A. The Mayor's Office will launch and direct the Downtown Activation Team (DAT), a multi-departmental team modeled after Seattle's successful Unified Care Team. The Downtown Activation Team will strategically coordinate its resources to restore and sustain the vibrancy and cleanliness of Seattle. The team will initially pilot in Downtown Seattle and the Chinatown-International District and may be expanded to other

neighborhoods based on need and resources. This team will provide a compassionate, coordinated, and place-based response to the challenges associated with criminal behavior, street and sidewalk cleaning, garbage pick-up, vegetation and odor control, public space lighting and activation, graffiti abatement, art creation, street closure activations including closures for special events, business space vacancies, and short- and long-term environmental improvements. The Downtown Activation Team will also focus on improving safety in the vicinity of transit stations and access points through cleanings, activations, and addressing criminal behavior.

The Downtown Activation Team will include representatives from the following City offices and departments: Community Assisted Response and Engagement Department, Department of Finance and Administrative Services, Department of Neighborhoods, Human Services Department, Office of Arts and Culture, Office of Economic Development, Seattle City Light, Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle Fire Department, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Police Department, and Seattle Public Utilities.

The City will implement Scheduled Restoration Actions (SRAs) at least twice a day, during which City departments and the Downtown Activation Team will conduct cleaning and restoration activities in specific areas of concern, including but not limited to Downtown Seattle and the Chinatown-International District, including Little Saigon. The City will evaluate the efficacy of the SRAs based on data and determine what adjustments might be needed, including the continuation of the SRAs in those particular areas. The City will use data to determine the frequency and location of SRAs. These SRAs are intended to clean areas, enhance public safety, and improve areas with art and cultural expression whenever possible.

- B. The Mayor's Office will transmit two ordinances to the City Council intended to strengthen the City's ability to implement the strategies in this Executive Order. The transmitted legislation will focus on allowing ongoing maintenance operations, disrupting retail theft and the illegal vending of stolen goods in public spaces, and providing additional support and protections for City employees helping to restore Seattle. While subject to change based on input from stakeholders and additional legal analysis, the proposals will include the following:
 1. To promote the safety of City and transit contractors and employees, prohibit individuals from knowingly preventing or interfering with a City or transit

authority employee, contractor, or designee who, in the course of providing City or other government services, is cleaning, restoring, or conducting outreach services.

2. To reduce the selling of stolen goods, clearly authorize SPD to enforce laws prohibiting illegal vending. As part of its regulatory efforts to implement this law, the City will evaluate the harm illegal vending causes to licensed vendors and evaluate ways to support streamlining the permitting process and expanding opportunity.
- C. The Downtown Activation Team, with assistance from City departments and external partners, will identify buildings and structures that can be activated with artwork, lighting, or other means intended to produce a safe and welcoming environment in those areas improved by SRAs. The Downtown Activation Team will provide a preliminary list of sites that should be targeted for beautification by January 10, 2025.
- D. As part of its regional collaboration to develop near-term activations for Third Avenue, the City and County will include public safety partners and community stakeholders to address pedestrian safety in transit corridors. The workgroup will provide recommendations to the City and County executives.
- E. The Downtown Activation Team will be responsible for establishing a process for coordinating efforts across City-funded outreach and service providers to respond to the needs in the restoration areas, primarily focused on services related to alternatives to policing, addressing street disorder, and connections to behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment. Partners will include, but not be limited to, LEAD, CoLEAD, and WDC. This coordination should incorporate best and promising practices for multi-disciplinary team efforts and, where possible, streamline access to services for those in need in the restoration area.

The Downtown Activation Team will establish a schedule of regular intervention activities related to outreach and service delivery, which can be measured and tracked. This will include requiring metrics to track team operations and identify areas for improvement. An initial report shall be produced by January 10, 2025. Subsequent reporting will include metrics related to service delivery to people in need and associated impact.

- F. The Downtown Activation Team will work with the City's Innovation and Performance team to develop public-facing dashboards and data on the results of SRAs, place-based activations, and other activities.

Questions about the implementation of this Executive Order should be directed to Natalie Walton-Anderson, Director of Public Safety.

Dated this 15th day of November 2024.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor