



Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate -

Thank you for taking the time to provide your point of view on the following six questions. Your candid responses will help us to inform and engage the nearly 150,000 tech employees who live and work in the city of Seattle. This in turn will help you engage them more effectively as an electorate. Once we have processed responses from all the candidates, we will invite selected finalist candidates to meet with members of the WTIA Advocacy Committee to gain a more thorough understanding of your answers.

While the WTIA represents the interests of more than 10,000 tech companies in our state, the Advocacy Committee includes a sample of those companies. Each member of the committee is a subject matter expert who contributes time and effort to help steer the WTIA in achieving advocacy goals for the industry. The WTIA Advocacy Committee includes experts from the following organizations --

Accenture	Amazon	Big Fish Games	BitTitan	BoldIQ
Comcast	Expedia	F5	Facebook	Flying Fish
Flying Fish VC	Galvanize	Google	Impinj	Madrona Ventures
Microsoft	Moz	Nintendo	Sprint	T-Mobile
Tune	Uber	UW CSE	WSU	Zillow

Please send your responses to the following questions to WTIA Legislative Aide Ian Griswold
IGriswold@washingtontechnology.org

1. Seattle faces many challenges associated with rapid growth. What are your top 3 priorities for the city and why? (500 word limit)

I am the only candidate in this race with experience working in the private sector and with city government to find solutions to our city's problems. As mayor my top three priorities would be:

1. Tackle the affordable housing crisis with bold solutions. First, we need to expand affordable housing from roughly 6% of Seattle's housing supply toward a goal of four times that. I would pursue new progressive taxes to fund affordable housing, perhaps using our bonding capacity to speed delivery; work with Olympia to increase the housing trust fund; encourage more philanthropists to contribute to non-profit housing providers and community land trusts; and aggressively pursue using surplus public land for non-profit housing. Second, we also need to adjust the land use code and the permitting/ SEPA/ entitlement process to facilitate viable housing options for working people in the "missing middle" like duplexes, rowhouses, ADUs, congregate housing, and co-ops. Too much of our land is zoned for single family homes, blocking new housing we need. Finally, we need to understand how speculation in our housing market is escalating housing prices, and implement target taxes to deter this activity.

2. Invest in transit to match growth: Our transit system must keep up with our population growth. Regional and local jurisdictions need the authority to decide how to allocate investments by mode. When gas tax money is siloed for highways, and transit must be funded with only local limited sources, it starves Seattle of the transit funding we need. Cities must be empowered to determine most efficient and cost effective investments according to local goals and conditions. When transit is fast, reliable, and convenient, people will use it.

We also need to shift the culture of SDOT more quickly toward pedestrian safety, expanding bike facilities, transit reliability and convenience, and ensuring we have adequate drop off and delivery zones through-out commercial areas. And we need to speed up delivery of Sound Transit 3 by optimizing design and planning process, and using our bonding capacity to help fund Seattle projects sooner.

3. Establish a 21st century economic development strategy: A robust and diverse business base, with employers across several industries and businesses of all sizes, is essential to the economic well-being and resilience of a city. The Mayor must work with employers across all industries to set the vision and then lead the action agenda to guide our thriving economy so that it creates broad prosperity and access to opportunity for everyone. Let's build a pro-active strategic plan: where we're headed, how we can ensure the prosperity our businesses create recirculates back into the community, how infrastructure and housing can grow in parallel, and how can we improve access to family wage jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities so that our city moves closer to racial and social equity.

2. Most of the world only knows Seattle as the Space Needle, Sleepless in Seattle, or the Seahawks. What will Seattle be known for on the world stage in 20 years? (500 word limit)

I am thrilled at the opportunity to help shape our city's future by establishing the vision and a collaborative action plan to get there. With my leadership, Seattle will be known for these successes 20 years from now:

- Ongoing tech leadership, especially in cloud computing, retail, and gaming. Our tech sector will continue to grow for the same reasons that it is robust now; concentration of talent and skilled employees across many employers, high quality of life in a livable city, and a city government that understands and supports tech sector needs and welcomes tech employees.
- A balanced and diversified economy. Beyond the ongoing growth of tech, our economy will also grow in other sectors that broaden our base and offer a broader range of family wage jobs in locally owned businesses: green manufacturing, food production and local agriculture, clean energy technology design and production, life sciences, aerospace, global trade and maritime.
- A city that leads the nation in establishing a progressive and inclusive economy, that is actively guiding the economy toward the wellbeing of everyone. Success in this will depend on several things: a strong voice for workers and collaboration between labor/ businesses/ the city in defining the vision; a robust economic development strategy, that focuses on the wealth generation nexus of innovation and production; a well resourced and effective small business economic development agency within the city to help small and local businesses thrive as our city grows; developing pragmatic solutions for portable benefits in the gig economy; a specific strategy to build pathways to tech jobs and entrepreneurship for low income communities, immigrant communities, and communities of color so we make big gains in equity.

- A city that sets the standard for climate leadership at the municipal level and is showing the nation how to reduce emissions, plan for resilience, and shift to district energy systems and efficient energy distribution during a period of high growth.
3. Seattle is seen as a progressive city. How have other progressive cities created successful partnerships with employers? How do you see that playing out in Seattle? (500 word limit)

First, I would work closely with the Mayor's Innovation Project from day one of my administration to stay current on ideas and best practices, and build a team of innovators in my staff. It is essential to stay at the forefront of new ideas, and learn from other cities all the best practices for economic growth and broad prosperity. There are several projects underway in other cities that seem worth exploring here in Seattle:

- Cleveland, with its large institutions, has developed unique programs for local procurement and local hire. This has helped boost small and local businesses and helped keep the wealth generated by the big institutions circulating locally in communities. They also have established a creative and forward looking strategic plan to retool their industrial sector for the green economy, preparing the infrastructure and talent base they already have to attract and secure opportunities coming as we shift to the next economy.
 - Minneapolis has a few model programs or practices that have helped them keep a stable and prosperous economy going for decades. The city has been mindful to sustain a wide breadth of businesses of all sizes and across several industries in their city. Because of this, skilled talent stays in the region, moving from job to job across industries and strengthening knowledge/ skill/ expertise for employers to draw from. Second, they developed a unique model for regional coordination and revenue sharing decades ago, which has allowed their regional growth, education quality, infrastructure investment and economic conditions to stay relatively balanced across the region's cities/ suburbs/ towns. In addition, they developed an agreement where all districts and neighborhoods take an equal share of affordable housing, which has allowed every community to grow with a healthy mix of folks at diverse income levels and stages of life. Their growth has been stable, sustainable, and inclusive largely due to the City's strategic leadership.
 - Chattanooga has established and built out city-wide municipal broadband as a public utility, and offers a great model to pursue here.
4. Seattle has a booming economy, in large part driven by the tech sector. This creates opportunity and challenges. In your view, what is the role of the tech industry as a partner in creating a better city as we grow? (500 word limit)

Our city is fortunate to have such a strong base of tech employers and innovators in our city. The challenge for us is not to attract jobs, but to make sure the wealth we are generating is reinvested locally, building strong base of locally owned community based businesses, and to make sure we are providing access to the abundance of good tech jobs by providing the education and training our young people need.

I believe the tech industry can be a good partner for a better city in several ways:

- Participate in crafting an economic development strategy for Seattle in the 21st century. We need to envision, together, how can we expand family wage jobs, increase access to

entrepreneurship for low income communities, keep a stable and diverse base across many sectors, and support support small and local community based businesses as we grow. This strategy must be pro-active, constructive, and forward thinking, and bold about facing the challenges of inequitable growth. How can we establish leadership via innovation in clean energy and climate solution technologies? How can Seattle reclaim and protect leadership in producing and making things, because these activities are where wealth is generated? How can we look with a racial and socioeconomic equity lens at who has access to tech jobs and entrepreneurship, and what do we need to change so communities of color can also benefit?

- Help plan urban growth. The tech industry must be at the table planning for future growth to ensure we are expanding schools, transit and housing to keep up with our rapidly changing economy. The city needs to include the long range planning of the tech industry in its planning.
- Play a strong constructive role in housing affordability challenge. Our housing prices are escalating beyond the reach of middle income folks and increasingly tech folks too. What can the tech industry do to help advocate for best solutions, and contribute resources to ensure our growing workforce can afford to live in the city?
- Be ready to help find and support revenue solutions so we have sufficient funding for public investment in education, in transit, in public safety, and parks and other infrastructure. We are falling behind, and need more progressive revenue sources to keep up with growth and ensure we are investing in giving future generations the education, training, infrastructure, and support they need to thrive.

5. What is the number one challenge facing the tech industry - and what do you see as the City's primary role in helping solve that dilemma? (500 word limit)

As I see it, there are three intertwined challenges: Housing affordability, talent supply and retention, and ensuring local young people have the education they need to access the jobs tech industry is creating.

I have laid out, above, solutions to the housing affordability crisis. There are three key parts: find the right disincentives to deter speculation that is exacerbating demand and driving up prices, rapidly increase production of non-profit and public housing to both provide the housing we need and act as an important counterbalance, and alter the land use codes to allow developers to build more neighborhood-friendly workforce housing in single family zones. Because of our affordability crisis, the ability for employers to attract and retain talent is becoming more and more difficult, as potential employees find their paychecks don't go far enough to afford decent housing, pay back student loans, **and** also maintain the quality of life young people expect. Home ownership, because of the rapid rate of increase in home prices, is now out of reach for many young families, which makes Seattle less attractive as a place to set down roots. And finally, our state's lack of investment in higher education has created a gap in our ability to provide enough training to young people from Seattle who would be thrilled to get the education and training it takes to qualify for a good job in tech.

The City's main role will be to establish a bold plan and assertively lead the solutions to the housing affordability crisis. In addition, the city must work with the state legislature to build the public will for more progressive revenue to fund education -- in public schools, community colleges, and universities -- to prepare our students for the good jobs in tech and the creative, inventive demands of modern work.

6. What is the appropriate role of a city in helping to solve the challenge of portable benefits in a gig economy? (500 word limit)

This is an essential structure to get right, as more and more Americans find themselves working independently as freelancers, independent contractors, and gig economy workers.

First, the public sector must lead on establishing new clarity on job classifications that fit with current jobs in the 21st century. Work has changed, workplaces have changed, and it's necessary to establish more accurately defined jobs to ensure employers, employees, and contract workers all have the same understanding. This will also go a long way toward preventing the unfair and exploitative practices that happen when classifications are muddled, mismatched, or vaguely defined. Second, the city/ public sector should establish a floor of basic rights and minimum standards, and allow private companies that want to do more to add more in.

I am separating out the benefits for this discussion, since they each could best work slightly different.

- Health care: I believe our state, perhaps initiated in our city, must pursue a public option for health care. We should look at expanding Medicaid for all, like Nevada is considering. This feels like the most efficient, lowest cost, most effective solution. The structure is already set up, and it is already portable, as the Medicaid system is completely detached from employment.
- Family leave: I believe we can establish a system like Unemployment Insurance, where both employers and employees pay into a statewide fund hosted by the State, and all employees may access this as needed. Whether it is housed at the state or county, the pool must be large enough so it doesn't overburden small employers.
- Retirement savings: Adapting the multi-employer pension plans that used to exist for construction workers might be the best model here. Retirement contributions can be made by both employer and employee, via a structure established as a membership based quasi-union, similar to the Freelancer Union model.

Disability, workers comp, and unemployment: All these can exist as payroll deductions, paid by both employer and employee, and housed at the state, as they are now. The structure can work in a similar way to Social Security, where an account travels with the employee for his or her whole life. Establishing a solid portable benefits system seems cost effective, pragmatic, and worth pursuing. It will prevent a race to the bottom for contract employees, who are faced with waning job security and increasingly vulnerable to unplanned work losses causing a life crisis. Having clear job classifications, and baseline standards can make this system navigable, consistent and beneficial for employers, as jobs in the gig economy seem here to stay.