

Michael McGinn Responses to 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)

1. Above all else, we must face the affordability crisis and housing shortage through a comprehensive approach that expands the types of housing available to our residents, increases the available supply of housing, and finds the resources to accommodate a more direct public sector role in the provision of city dwellings. Seattle needs to be a city you don't have to be wealthy to call home. It has been that city for a great deal of its history.
2. Scale the response to the homelessness crisis to the increasing scale of the problem. More people than ever are being moved out of homelessness but not nearly enough to outnumber everyone who is becoming newly homeless. We have a duty as a city to make sure that no one is forced to go without shelter.
3. Accelerate the construction of SoundTransit's Seattle projects through continued technical and financial partnerships with the City. As Mayor, I worked to accelerate planning for ST3, which resulted in a ballot measure four to eight years earlier than originally planned. Better transit is an essential resource for Seattle's future and for the world's. Climate change threatens the very habitability of our planet, and a transportation system that provides too few alternatives to the automobile threatens our local economy. We can't get more light rail fast enough, and I intend to get it faster.

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)

Seattle is not a secret, although it was back when the Space Needle was being built. We are now known as one of America's great engines of economic and technical innovation, and as a city of unparalleled natural beauty and local character. That has been true for more than a century, from Boeing to Microsoft, but our profile is growing as quickly as our population.

In twenty years, if we unite around our shared responsibility to our community and to future generations, Seattle will be the city that other cities aspire to be. It will be known not only as one of the world's great centers of technological innovation but also as a city that is as welcoming and accommodating to every newcomer as it is to the world-leading businesses who have flocked here for our unmatched quality of life, talent, and culture, and who have so much to add to those strengths. It will be a city where young people can grow up, find community, and remain so that they too can contribute their talents and dreams to the city that raised them.

It should also be known for leadership on climate, demonstrating that we can avert the worst effects of a changing climate, in a way that increases equity and enhances our economic sustainability.

That future is promising, but it is also in peril. To achieve it we will need to face real challenges, to do so together and with a commitment in full proportion to those challenges. I am running for Mayor because I believe in that future, and because I am committed to it.

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)

It starts with listening and finding common ground. As Mayor I did over 100 town halls, where I visited communities and took questions from anyone who attended. We also held industry specific roundtables where we heard from business leaders on their needs, and acted upon them. For example, in South Lake Union we heard support for more reliable power, better biking and transit connections, and flexibility in the fire code for upper-floor laboratories. We worked on all of them - siting the new substation, investing in bus and bike lanes, and changing the fire code.

I've run for mayor twice before. Never before have I seen this city so divided. In part this is in response to growing inequity nationwide and in the city. I also believe national government is stoking fear and anxiety with its anti-immigration policies. Because mayors interact with every part of a city, they are in a unique position to identify where employers and the community can work together. While growth is far better than the deep unemployment of the last recession, Seattle is not dealing with the impacts of growth. The businesses enjoying the benefits of growth, and the benefits of a city created over a long period of time by its residents, will have to step forward to do more to deal with those impacts. I am committed to using my prior experience as mayor to work with every constituency in the city to determine the best way to do that, that enhances our quality of life and preserves our competitive advantage in the global economy.

I believe we need to start looking to European cities that have combined strong social support for residents with continued technological innovation. We know it can be done.

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)

Seattle is facing a shortage of housing, a circumstance with implications that reach across every sector of our economy and every neighborhood in our city. While the economy is benefiting tremendously from newcomers (and current residents) drawn to the activity of Seattle's technology sector, many of the people who live here and do not directly benefit from the boom are finding it harder and harder to remain in the city where they have put down roots and built a life for themselves and their families. This has resulted in individuals and families moving to suburbs further from where they work, which not only erodes local culture and imposes longer and costlier commutes, but also exacerbates our regional traffic problems.

It isn't only that so many of our neighbors are forced to move away that causes such grave concern, but it is also the alarming increase in the rate at which our neighbors are moving into a state of homelessness. Our government and nonprofit emergency response systems are operating at their highest capacity, but it is nowhere near enough. More people than ever are being moved out of homelessness, but those inspiring successes are being dwarfed by an unprecedented flow of people into homelessness.

Seattle cannot be a better city now or in the future if we do not drastically scale up our response to this heartbreaking state of affairs, and we will need committed partners from the private sector to do so. Under the Obama administration, federal funding for services that support people experiencing homelessness was reduced. As Mayor, I prioritized city spending to backfill federal cuts and substantially maintain existing services during the nation's longest and deepest recession since the Great Depression. Under the Trump/Pence administration, the outlook is alarming, and it will be not a sustainable strategy to fund social services with cuts to other essential priorities.

We will need to explore every avenue available to us to be sure we have the resources to be able to respond appropriately to the crisis on our doorsteps. To that end we will need to explore all the possibilities of public-private partnerships as well as arrangements like Amazon's laudable partnership with Mary's Place.

But it will also mean taking responsibility for the reality that our state has the most regressive tax code of any state in the country. Those who benefit most from Seattle's people and infrastructure can do more to not only offset the negative impacts of their success, but ensure that this city is a place where anyone--from MIT grads and Silicon Valley veterans to the students of Rainier Beach and Garfield--can dream of a future. We need industry leaders to step up and join with elected and community leaders to reform our state's unfair tax code and find new ways of funding our priorities so that we can maintain the sustainable public infrastructure that will ensure our success as a city, and which has been such a boon to the businesses that have thrived here.

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)

This is a great question, and if elected I would ask that of the industry. Having said that, I believe that increasing the number of women and people of color who are candidates for tech jobs, and increasing the number of local job candidates in general, would be of great benefit to the tech industry, and to the city. Supporting our rapidly growing city by ensuring world-class transportation options, affordable housing, and livable neighborhoods will provide a good base that attracts and keeps people in Seattle. I spent a major portion of my administration focusing on these critical issues by supporting progressive land use, laying the groundwork for ST3 and other high capacity transit, and promoting sustainability in a myriad of ways.

I also invested in job programs to connect diverse communities with training and resources. In 2010, we started Pathways to Careers, a partnership with Seattle Colleges, to help working people get the skills they need to get better paying jobs in the future. We also launched Career Bridge, designed to help people facing significant challenges (language barriers, poverty, prior convictions) in finding new employment.

As your mayor I would be supportive of finding more ways to connect women and people of color with tech jobs and resources specifically. Helping create a tech industry that is more representative of the population helps the tech industry and it helps Seattle.

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)

I agree that the current model we have for benefits for large sectors of workers is unworkable and unsustainable. And, this is not just a problem for tech industry either; there are other sectors that suffer as well. I have strongly supported workers rights for other key issues like paid sick and safe leave and increasing the minimum wage. I'm happy to discuss City-supported policy solutions that can get us closer to having a true portable benefits system, and to work with labor, business, and the tech industry to get there.