



Dear James Donaldson,

Thank you for taking the time to complete the candidate questionnaire for the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA). Your responses will help us to inform and engage the 200,000+ tech sector 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 the candidates, we will invite select finalists to meet with members of the WTIA Board and WTIA Policy Steering Committee for a discussion to gain a more thorough understanding of your answers.

Please send your responses by email to Molly Jones (she/her), Vice President of Government Affairs, by Friday, June 11. Her email is mjones@washngtontechology.org.

This questionnaire and your written responses will be published on the WTIA website.

Candidate Questionnaire

1. Why are you running for Mayor of Seattle, and what do you hope to achieve while you are in office?

I am running for Mayor to restore trust in our police, bring more compassion and accountability to the homelessness crisis, and do more for affordable housing. I know rebuilding our local small businesses, from local restaurants to neighborhood shops, is vital to our city's livability.

I think it is important that Seattle has a business-friendly Mayor. The current anti-business rhetoric coming from city hall is polarizing and divisive. Local government should support businesses as an integral part of our city's healthy economy and vitality, and as a critical part of our tax base funding essential services.

I share our city's values-- issue after issue my ideas are in line with the voters of our city. 71% of voters support my campaign's policy to reform the police, not defund police. 72% of voters favor our plan to reduce homelessness by increasing access to mental health and addiction services. 56% of voters agree with my campaign that we need more funding for affordable housing.

The remarkable issue is how few Seattle politicians agree with Seattle voters. Seattle politics is often a fight between well funded special interest groups, who drive the council towards the extreme. Things are bad enough that Seattle's government is used as a warning to cities

world wide of the harm politicians can do. I will do everything in power as mayor to make sure our city is back on the right track for all of these issues.

My basketball career took me all over the nation and world. I've seen examples of how other cities are solving problems. In Vienna I saw how they encouraged both private and high quality public housing, and better ran a transit system. In Newark, New Jersey they reformed policing to focus on de-escalation and haven't had an officer fire a gun in a year. In Amsterdam they've modernized their city to be foot, bike, transit and car friendly. Better leadership can bring these answers to Seattle.

2. What are your top three priorities for the City of Seattle?

Priority 1: Building back our business economy post-COVID

Priority 2: Increasing the holistic health and safety of our populace

Priority 3: More effectively addressing the root causes of homelessness, working with regional partners.

3. The tech sector has worked to support our communities throughout the pandemic by providing platforms for students to learn online and families to work remotely; tools and resources for small businesses to stay afloat during the pandemic; and critical technologies for the public health response. As we look ahead, how would you look to partner with the tech sector in powering economic recovery and building a resilient economy?

I think that the partnership of the tech sector and city government is vital in powering economic recovery and building a resilient economy. There is so much ingenuity, talent, expertise and creativity in the tech sector that can assist substantially on these pressing issues, particularly with educating our children, resources for small businesses to stay open, and more effectively addressing homelessness.

For example, Tableau employees are helping create software to better track the data of services being provided to people experiencing homelessness. As a candidate, I have actually gone out and spoken with folks all around our city that are currently visibly homeless. Listening to them, my thoughts were confirmed that we have a weakness in our city leading to disconnected services, duplicative functions, and duplicative data collection, making the system difficult to navigate for vulnerable people seeking assistance. Our region needs to consolidate command and control functions into a regional authority to appropriately identify and scale solutions and target resources to emergent needs. Collecting data of those experiencing homelessness and quantifying the need and location for services is essential to not only meeting needs, but to identifying effective strategies to address the needs. Tableau is doing that work. Our city's tech sector is positioned perfectly to truly address our economic and public health problems in an effective way. Just like with our homelessness issue, our tech sector is really the only industry that can truly quantify the problems our small

businesses have post cover, enabling our municipal government to give them the resources they need to stay afloat.

4. Nearly half of all tech workers nationwide moved during the pandemic, where Seattle saw the third-highest flight of tech workers (after San Francisco and New York City). Seattle is increasingly in competition with other rising tech hubs -- such as Denver, Miami, Austin -- to attract startup founders, entrepreneurs, and tech workers. What would you do to increase Seattle's competitiveness vis-a-vis other tech hubs?

We currently have a city government that is completely antithetical to the tech industry. Our city council has repeatedly ostracized tech companies such as Amazon and Microsoft, just for recently daring help candidates in our city, that would more effectively address homelessness and work collaboratively with our business community-get elected. I recognize that the council wanted to put in place a progressive tax since our state has such a regressive tax system, but I think that tax reform needs to happen at the state level. I would have voted against the head tax for a myriad of reasons. Homelessness doesn't end at our city borders and Seattle can't effectively address homelessness by itself. Without help from our regional and county partners, Seattle simply doesn't have the funding capacity to solve it. In fact, Seattle has about 30% of the county's population but has 70% of the county's homeless population. Seattle needs to engage with regional partners in addressing homelessness. I was concerned that some city council members called it an "Amazon Tax," and saying that "Amazon tried to buy the 2019 election"; not only vilifying our city's largest employer and provider of high-paying jobs, but speaking as if Amazon were responsible for the affordable housing crisis and causing homelessness in our region. In fact, homelessness is a problem in cities throughout our state and throughout our country. It's not Amazon's job to fix any more than it is any successful company, and Amazon has been a generous financial supporter of Mary's Place.

This is unacceptable behavior by representatives that were elected to serve our city's best interests-not extreme special interests. If we had local government leaders who recognize the value of having cutting-edge tech companies located in our region, and a willingness to work with those companies in a constructive way, that synergy could be game changing on a whole host of issues. If elected Mayor, I will work constructively with local businesses, instead of harboring an antagonistic us-versus-them relationship to businesses. I believe more positive working relationships will yield more productive results for our entire community on this and other issues.

5. How would you work toward ensuring the successful advancement of policies and programs that create equitable outcomes for BIPOC in the tech industry?

Now is the time to make progress on this issue because employers are hiring. An important part of solutions to addressing the root causes of homelessness is hiring people. I would work with the city's Office of Economic Development to bring a coordinated voice to increase equitable job prospects for BIPOC in the tech sector. We should be working as a city

with our tech industry to visit schools in our most diverse neighborhoods such as South Seattle, where I was a small business owner for 28 years.

Incentives make a difference. From a policy perspective, I would want to ensure that employers are taking advantage of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, which provides incentives for hiring individuals who “consistently found barriers to employment”.

I’m pleased that Washington state is a mentor state, meaning that we have resources and support services available for companies. People in BIPOC communities are an invaluable asset to our city as a whole, and we need to ensure companies reflect these values and the diversity in our communities.

6. What is your favorite technology, and why?

The Internet, because it allows us to instantly communicate with essentially anyone on the planet with ease. This has been especially valuable to me through my travels throughout the nation and the world during my NBA career and beyond. The internet has made all of our lives much easier and enjoyable during COVID, as we can have full conversations through messaging, can send emails anywhere in seconds and countless apps and social networks allow an unparalleled amount of communication.