



August 14, 2023

Seattle City Councilmember Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to complete the candidate endorsement questionnaire for the Washington Technology Industry Association (WTIA). Your responses will help us 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.

We will also offer virtual candidate interviews with members of the WTIA Policy Steering Committee for a discussion to gain a more thorough understanding of your answers. Following the interview process, we will make our endorsement decisions.

Please send your responses to Kelly Fukai at kfukai@washingtontechnology.org by Monday, August 28th.

Please note that this questionnaire and your responses will be published on the WTIA website and used in a digital voter guide provided to Seattle-based tech employees.

Candidate Questionnaire

1. What are your top three priorities for the City of Seattle, and what will you do to accomplish them?

Priority 1: Safe & Healthy Communities

We must invest in the appropriate staffing and responses to emergency situations; ensuring that our first responders are equipped with relevant resources and training to respond to our community's most pressing public safety concerns. As a council person, I will:

- Ensure that our Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Technicians have the resources to address staffing needs and reduce response times.
- Provide mental health and substance use services.



- Reduce gun violence by supporting community-based programs.
- Address open-air drug use by adopting our state law to follow the recommendations from our city's task force to connect people to substance use services, mental health providers and shelters for our unhoused neighbors, and resource centers.

Priority 2: Affordable & Stable Housing

Our city is expensive, and only getting more unaffordable for renters, working people, and families looking to purchase a home and build generational wealth. To make Seattle a city we can all call home, we must support individuals and families to meet their basic needs of stable housing through policies that:

- Expand investments in shelter, emergency, and transitional housing for unhoused neighbors to get everyone inside and connected to resources as quickly as possible.
- Support community-driven solutions for affordable housing that curbs gentrification and displacement.
- Encourage pathways to homeownership for historically-excluded communities.
- Implement thoughtful planning to allow more duplexes, triplexes, and other family-sized housing options.
- Streamline the process for permitting and design review to build housing faster.
- Expand pathways for middle housing.

Priority 3: Small Business & Economic Recovery

Small businesses are the anchors of our community. They foster strong relationships, create jobs, and drive our local economy, all while providing healthy food, unique services, handmade goods, and more. During the pandemic, many of our own locally-owned small businesses were forced to close. To nourish small businesses and encourage economic recovery, we must:

- Invest in Seattle's Business Improvement Areas and Office of Economic Development for Central District Businesses.
- Engage businesses in Seattle Department of Transportation and Sound Transit construction projects.
- Provide holistic resources and support for underrepresented small business leaders.
- Center safety for our small businesses.

0. What do you see as the role for the tech sector in Seattle's future? How would you partner with the tech sector to foster a robust and resilient community?



I believe everyone plays a role in Seattle's future. The tech sector is especially critical in our city for its economic impacts, influencing the job market and our city's tax revenue. This alone underscores the importance of working in collaboration with the tech sector. In office, I will be accessible and transparent, with a willingness to listen, understand and work together. I want companies and employees to feel supported especially during our recovery efforts. Working with tech leaders, business leaders, stakeholders, and community to ensure that we are working in coordination with one another to create a safe, healthy and thriving Seattle.

0. Given the importance of the tech sector's contributions to the Seattle economy, what would you do to increase Seattle's competitiveness vis-a-vis emerging tech hubs like Denver, Miami, and Austin? What initiatives would you put forward to support tech employers, entrepreneurs, and employees?

As a small business owner in one of the most regulated industries in our state, I understand businesses, how they operate and the delicate relationship in which they must work with the government. I have also struggled with losses from the pandemic when businesses were closed. I know the impact on businesses when there's rent increases on buildings that impact budgets and payroll, when the lack of employees and new hires impact operations, and when our lack of housing affordability impacts the ability to recruit and keep skilled workers. and when the minimum wage increase lacks government support and funding to equitably pay employees, leading to businesses not being able to operate at all. I understand that these decisions impact the entire ecosystem of the tech industry from CEOs of startups and entrepreneurs to each of its employees.

To maintain Seattle's competitiveness in the tech industry, I believe we need to make our city an attractive place for tech workers to move to. That's why the top priority of my platform is creating safe and healthy communities, improving affordability across the board, and investing in the infrastructure of a modern and thriving city including transit, parks and open space, and arts and culture.

Having said that, my expertise is in community, human services, and problem solving. I am not an expert in the unique needs of the tech community, but I will always be accessible and transparent to you, learn your priorities and concerns, and build the broad coalitions required to make meaningful progress for all of us.



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

I am a third-generation District 3 neighbor, raised by a family of educators, public servants, and civil rights leaders. Inspired by them, I've dedicated my life to building community and driving equitable policy at every level. I am running to make Seattle a home where all can be successful and thrive - whether you are a third-generation Seattleite or moving here for an opportunity in one of our country's most premiere tech hubs.

As a proud member of the BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities, I represent an intersection of identities that have been long missing from City Council leadership. I hope to use my platform to amplify voices which have been historically, and often presently, excluded from the table to inform and improve decision making, especially on policies aimed at creating equitable outcomes for underrepresented communities.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve our community.

Kelly Fukai
VP, Government and Community Affairs
WTIA