



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](mailto:kfukai@washingtontechnology.org) by Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>.

**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: Housing Justice**

**The lack of affordable housing in Seattle is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach. Ultimately, addressing the lack of affordable housing in Seattle will require a comprehensive process that involves a combination of policy changes, funding, and community engagement. Here are some potential solutions:**

**1) Increase funding for affordable housing: The city can allocate more funding towards affordable housing programs and incentivize developers to build more affordable housing units.**



**2) Implement inclusionary zoning: This would require developers to include affordable housing units in new developments, in exchange for zoning incentives.**

**3) Increase density: Seattle could increase the density of housing developments, allowing more units to be built in a given area. This can help lower the cost of building new housing and make it more affordable.**

**4) Vacancy tax: The city could implement measures similar to those used in Vancouver B.C. to prevent investors from buying up properties to artificially raise the price of housing.**

**5) Preserve existing affordable housing: Seattle could invest in preserving existing housing units through renovation or rehabilitation programs.**

## **Priority 2: Homelessness**

**As a former permanent supportive housing worker, I witnessed the failings in our system on a near-daily basis. Ultimately, addressing homelessness in Seattle will require a combination of short-term and long-term solutions that prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community. Utilizing what I learned on the ground, here are several approaches we can take to address homelessness:**

**1) Housing first approach: Adopting a "housing first" approach to homelessness, which prioritizes getting people into stable housing as quickly as possible, rather than requiring them to meet certain criteria or complete other programs first.**



**2) Increase funding for social services:** The city could increase funding for social services such as mental health care, addiction treatment, and job training programs. This would help support people experiencing homelessness and help them transition to stable housing and employment.

**3) Encampment support:** Provide necessities such as hygiene facilities and access to mental health care at encampment sites, while working to transition individuals into stable housing.

**4) Address the root causes:** Addressing the root causes of homelessness such as mental illness, addiction, and poverty through community outreach, counseling and rehabilitation, and job training.

**5) Community involvement:** Involve community members in the development and implementation of solutions, to ensure that the needs of all residents are considered and to build trust between the community and the city.

### **Priority 3: Community Safety**

**A more community-focused approach to community safety in Seattle would prioritize building trust between law enforcement and the community, investing in prevention and intervention strategies, and addressing the root causes of crime to create safer, more just communities for all residents.**

**Here's how we can do it:**

**1) Fund community policing:** Implementing community policing models that prioritize building relationships between law enforcement and the



**community, with an emphasis on de-escalation and conflict resolution will help reduce strain on our current resources.**

**2) Additional service to traditional policing: Investing in alternatives such as mental health crisis response teams, restorative justice programs, and community-based violence prevention programs.**

**3) Addressing the root causes: Investing in addressing the root causes of crime, such as poverty, addiction, and mental illness, through affordable housing, job training programs, and mental health services.**

**4) Supporting survivors of crime: Investing in survivor services such as counseling and financial assistance, and working to ensure that survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault can access resources and support.**

**5) Community involvement: Engaging community members in the development and implementation of public safety strategies, and prioritizing community-led solutions that reflect the needs and values of the community.**

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

**The tech community plays an important role in Seattle's future both as an economic driver and an important contributor to policy. I see tech's role as an employer but also as an industry that can offer insight into public policy**



**issues like housing density and transportation. I believe it is necessary to partner with tech because of how important the industry is to 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?**

**We can start by bringing down housing prices and increasing transportation access. Seattle is a world-class city and the economy and culture here are proof of that. By building more housing and transportation infrastructure we can begin to outpace the other great cities of the world. A multi-line rail system and rents that beat inflation are within our grasp, we just have to be bold enough to accomplish it.**

**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?**

**We can start by raising awareness of issues within the tech industry regarding BIPOC individuals. Seattle has good representation compared to some contemporary cities but we still have work to do to undo decades of redlining and governmental neglect. By engaging with the community and funding education we can create opportunities for people of all backgrounds, and forge a better future.**

Thank you again for your willingness to serve our community.

Kelly Fukai  
VP, Government, and Community Affairs  
WTIA