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## 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

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

- **A Safe and Healthy Seattle.** If you need help or you see someone who needs help, you should be able to call someone, have that person actually show up, and that person should be able to solve the problem at hand. Unfortunately, right now we don't have public safety or social service systems that can guarantee that. And because we don't, Seattleites aren't getting real help when they need it, folks are falling through the cracks, and we're all worse off. I'll get serious about building a co-responder model of housing connectors, behavioral and mental health specialists, and social workers to complement our police force so we can have the right people for the right



job to truly help everyone and create the safe and prosperous city we all want and deserve. I have created a detailed [policy agenda for public safety and community well-being](#) with a range of important and actionable solutions.

- **Housing for Everyone.** I will push for big new investments in affordable housing, and I have released a detailed [housing and homelessness policy agenda](#) that contains dozens of ideas to increase our housing stock in Seattle, including big increases in workforce housing affordable for teachers, healthcare workers, and those in the trades. These changes make room for 270,000 more homes in Seattle and put us on track to be an affordable city for everyone who wants to be here.
- **Good Jobs and Great Places to Be.** Seattle is the most beautiful city in the country, and there is no reason it shouldn't also be the best. District 3 has some of the loveliest neighborhoods in Seattle, rich with culture and blessed with natural beauty, and home to beloved organizations and neighborhood businesses. We need to cherish and treasure these places and invest in their well-being. We can have excellent parks, bustling community centers and libraries, schools with enough resources, thriving neighborhood businesses districts, great transit and safe streets for everyone. But we have to put our money where our mouth is by investing in building, maintaining, and staffing these places. All of those should be good jobs with many entry points, especially to create a dignified career pathway for our young people.

### **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?**

The tech sector has been a critical and thriving part of Seattle's economy for a very long time now. I believe we can further support the sector to increase in size, influence, and economic power.

- **Workforce development.** I will champion increased and sustained investment in workforce development to train, educate, and mentor people



to be prepared for the green and tech jobs of our future - building housing and infrastructure, operating transit, installing clean energy solutions, tending to our urban forests, as well as investing in more STEAM educational opportunities and training. We must focus the future on good jobs for a healthy planet. Good news that there is a real synergy between a knowledge economy and a green economy. Many green jobs are tech jobs!

- **Housing, housing, housing.** Tech workers are attracted to Seattle in part because we enjoy an incredible range of employers and career opportunities, from some of the world's largest and most powerful corporations to the leanest upstart startups. But we cannot lose tech workers because our housing market is unaffordable for them to rent and then to buy. We must use all the levers at our disposal to create as much housing as we possibly can, and I promise you I am laser focused on doing just that.
- **Transit, more and better.** Getting to and from the office shouldn't take the better part of the day. Reliable, on-time, comfortable, and well-placed transit will attract and keep tech workers.

**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?**

- **Housing:** We need more housing at every level from deeply affordable to competitive market-rate. The City must turn up the volume on housing, through investments like the Housing Levy, by streamlining permitting to make it faster, easier, and cheaper to build housing.
- **Safety and Well-Being:** We need to be a welcoming city with a vibrant downtown, and in order to get there we need urgent and effective solutions to address and alleviate the untreated addiction and mental health crises, and the associated human suffering and quality of life issues. These are accelerated by the housing affordability emergency, our crumbling public



institutions, and our broken safety net. I will invest in proven solutions and make it easier to build shelter and housing. Getting people housed and connected to wraparound services will improve lives and our city. We need to build more shelters, tiny homes, temporary and transitional housing, and invest in programs like Co-LEAD so that offers of support meet people's needs and get them on a pathway to a better life.

### **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 led the Transportation Choices Coalition to develop an inclusive, feminist culture of care and implemented internal policies and practices committed to antiracism and undoing white supremacy culture. That meant competitive salaries and benefits, an organization-wide Racial Equity Action Plan, professional development funding, and recruiting, hiring, and evaluation practices, and building a supportive culture. Our work included fare enforcement reform, stopping an attempt to authorize armed policing forces within transit agencies, creating a coalition to repeal jaywalking laws, and reducing traffic stops.

I'll build upon that work and create to create more equitable representation and outcome in tech through:

- **K-12 STEAM Education:** I would advocate for increased funding and resources for K-12 STEAM education programs in Seattle's public schools, through our upcoming FEPP Levy renewal. These programs would focus on providing students with a strong foundation in STEAM subjects, ensuring that they are well-prepared for tech-related careers. I would focus on bringing tech education and resources to underserved communities, ensuring that all residents of Seattle have equal access to high-quality educational opportunities, regardless of their ZIP code.
- **Tech Apprenticeship Programs:** I support apprenticeship programs with local tech companies to allow high school students and recent graduates to



gain hands-on experience and mentorship within the tech industry while earning a wage.

- **Scholarships and Grants:** To make higher education more accessible, I would champion scholarships and grants for underrepresented individuals pursuing tech-related degrees at community colleges and universities in Seattle, and continue and expand our Seattle Promise program.
- **Continuing Education:** It's not just young people who want into the tech sector, and I would promote initiatives that provide opportunities for mid-career professionals, especially those from underrepresented communities, to upskill and reskill for tech roles.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaboration between the city and the industry are critical, so I would look to you for other innovative ideas we can support!

Also,

My favorite technology is real-time arrival data for public transit. It's so reassuring and convenient to know when my bus or train is going to arrive, and how long I will have to wait or how fast I have to hustle to catch it so I can get where I need to go on time! :) Our family got a Nintendo Switch this year, and we have had a lot of fun playing MarioKart together, so that's a favorite in the house as well.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve our community.

Kelly Fukai  
VP, Government and Community Affairs  
WTIA