



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: Public Safety

The current City Council's inaction and failures regarding public safety, particularly on defunding the police, and the city's drug crisis have created a humanitarian disaster. My first steps as Councilmember will be to vote for city legislation that will start to get us out of that hole: lining up municipal law with state law on open drug use and possession, and working on staffing up the SPD. Right now, the SPD are limited in what they can do because entire divisions and sections are on hold or have been dissolved. Once we are able to fully staff up the SPD and change the permissive environment for drug use and crime, we can work on bigger



changes that will make Downtown and other areas of Seattle safer for residents, workers, and tourists.

Priority 2: Public Health

We can't succeed in public safety without also succeeding in public health. Many of the public safety changes I would make as Councilmember, particularly in addressing drug use in public spaces like buses, are also about protecting the health of the community. Seattle has a drug crisis right now that's claiming hundreds of lives. We need a robust health and safety system. We need to support our first responders like our firefighters and EMTs, and we need to work with the State and County to make sure we have enough beds at addiction recovery and behavioral health centers. So we can get those with behavioral health and addiction problems off the street and into treatment programs. As a Councilmember, I'll take the lead on bringing together all the stakeholders to ensure more facilities and more beds are available.

Priority 3: Homelessness

The City Council has set aside millions of dollars in ongoing efforts to address homelessness in Seattle, and one of the first things I want to do as a Councilmember is to review all of the programs we are paying for to ensure that are getting the results we need, as well as ensuring that Seattle's homeless have a place to stay that aren't tent encampments. Tent encampments are inhumane and dangerous for their residents, first responders, and the public. Increasing access to transitional and supportive housing will give those who live in tent encampments somewhere safe, off the street to go. I support transitional and supportive housing programs with structure and clear rules, like sobriety in public spaces, 24/7 security, and having a counselor on-site. This isn't a problem that will be solved in four years, but I know we can make a difference with structured programs put in place all over the city.

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?

The tech sector is an important part of Seattle, and both Seattle and the tech sector have a lot to offer each other. In particular, I'd like to work with the tech



sector on three primary areas: education, the Seattle public library system, and access and inclusivity of people with disabilities. We all know the importance of early childhood education from ages 0-5, and by partnering with both the City of Seattle and the Seattle Public School District, together we can invest in existing youth programs that invest in the future of Seattle. By working with the Seattle Public Library system, the tech sector could increase the kinds of programs the SPL system offers, in turn making education and access more competitive overall, such as educational programming focused on coding and graphic design, among others. All of this is to say that this is a situation where it would be a win for the tech sector *and* for the City of 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 future Councilmember, I want to invest in the City of Seattle to make the city itself competitive for more than just jobs. I want to invest in neighborhoods like Downtown, Belltown, Westlake, and South Lake Union to increase the livability of the city at large. That means first investing in public safety—we have to start from a safe base. I want to work with community organizations and city government to develop more community programs and invest, for example, in early childhood example. I don't want Seattle to be a city that people just work in for a few years and then leave. I want Seattle to be a city that people move to for work and stay, because the city has amenities to support them, their future, and their families. We can increase Seattle's competitiveness by investing in livability measures, including the libraries, community centers, public parks, etc.

As for initiatives, I want to create a place where the public and private sectors can come together to build community in the city that both sectors rely on. I want to make sure that Seattle is a city that people look forward to investing in because of all the public and social services available.

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?



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There are various grants, initiatives, and incentives that can be put in place to ensure equity for underrepresented communities and populations, with oversight and benchmarks. I would be glad to work with the WTIA to identify those specific kinds of programs and benchmarks that can be implemented to address historical underrepresentation in the tech industry.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve our community.

Kelly Fukai
VP, Government and Community Affairs
WTIA