

King County Democrats Endorsement Questionnaire:

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**What type of position are you running for?** City of Seattle

**Which position are you running for?** Seattle Mayor

**Are you a Democrat?** Y

**Have you ever been a member of another political party?** N

**Does your campaign have a code of conduct for staff and volunteers?** Y

**What motivated you to run for this position and how will you evaluate your success over time?**

I am running for re-election because Seattle needs a mayor with a track record of success– to continue building on our progress as a city that is welcoming, affordable, and safe. My motivation comes from my roots as a lifelong Seattle resident, father, and grandfather– and deep commitment to the people that make this place such a vibrant and diverse city. To evaluate my success over time, I will continue to lead using a One Seattle approach, and execute the plans I created with public input to make our city more affordable, and serve as a roadmap for where and how our city will grow and invest in our communities over the next 20 years and beyond. I have and will continue to evaluate my success based on the responses I receive from the people I serve– using metrics like housing and affordability, safety, community and neighborhoods, and climate and sustainability.

**In 2024, the Seattle City Council adopted 14 pieces of public safety legislation – the most since 2015. How do you rate the effectiveness of Council’s efforts to reduce crime and improve public safety? What other actions do you support?**

I’ve been glad to see reports that indicate crime rates in Seattle have been on a steady decline, but there is still more work to be done to reduce crime and improve public safety. I support a comprehensive approach to public safety that works to foster trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

In a second term, not only will I continue thoughtful recruitment and accountability efforts at SPD, I will further expand, innovate, and strengthen the Community Assisted Response and Engagement, or CARE, Department. This is a new paradigm in public safety that my administration developed and launched – employing more behavioral health responders that are better equipped to respond to a person in crisis in order to further strengthen community trust of first-responders. Additionally, I hope to address crime through expanded youth programs, job opportunities, and social services that help provide stability for our underserved communities.

**As Democrats, we believe that everyone deserves the dignity of shelter and security. What are your ideas around creating the diverse types of housing that are needed across all housing types in Seattle?**

During my term as Mayor, I've made record investments in affordable housing, including funding over \$1 billion dollars to create thousands of units; decreasing red tape to make it easier and quicker to build housing; and a Comprehensive Plan Update proposal to double Seattle's housing capacity. I will continue to support efforts to increase multi-family housing in neighborhoods across the city through expansion of zoning for ADUs, duplexes, triplexes, and mixed-use apartments that include businesses, childcare, and other needs, critical for better ensuring more affordable, walkable and bikeable communities.

Specific to homelessness and helping people into the shelter and services they need, we have invested in both transitional housing – and the staffing to support it– in the Housing Levy and through our partnership with the revitalized Regional Homelessness Authority.

**What additional actions should the city take to safeguard residents from federal policy initiatives that may challenge the rights and livelihoods of our residents?**

The Trump administration seeks to disrupt Seattle's stance as a sanctuary city. I'm committed to ensuring immigrants and foreign-born workers are protected in this city. That's why I recently joined a lawsuit against the Trump administration due to a threat to withhold federal funds from sanctuary cities like Seattle; our local police are prohibited from collaborating with ICE; and I have been working in partnership with Washington Attorney General Nick Brown. Trump's unlawful actions will not stop us from protecting our city's, and its residents', rights. As

mayor, I will continue to protect our city from any incoming threats from the White House to tear apart families and withhold necessary funding for our communities.

**Many cities have made commitments to reducing the impact of climate change. What are your ideas for ensuring Seattle residents have access to healthy environmental conditions? [examples might include tree canopy, infill housing, bike lanes]**

I'm proud to have made significant strides in ensuring Seattle residents have access to healthy environmental conditions. I passed the nation-leading Building Emissions Performance Standard, which creates clean buildings and reduces the city's carbon footprint. I've also advanced community-driven climate investment strategies, ensuring that all neighborhoods benefit from our climate actions. My strides towards climate change have received recognition from the international "C40 Cities" coalition of urban areas leading global response to climate change. One of the key pillars of my One Seattle plan includes expanding regional transit to help curb carbon emissions while ensuring that Seattle becomes more accessible for our city's commuters. As Mayor, I have championed adoption of Clean Building Standards, ensured EV infrastructure and clean transit investments were included in last year's Transportation Levy, and leveraged state and federal funding for clean energy upgrades. We will remain strong and engaged partners in these efforts, and continue to implement our climate agenda to keep Seattle and the surrounding environments healthy.

**Communities across the city continue to face behavioral health issues. What actions are making a positive impact and what else will you advocate for?**

Behavioral health is a critical issue in every jurisdiction, and an integral part of our safety, housing, education, and healthcare policies. In my second term I will advocate for further expansion of behavioral health services and the CARE program, including dramatically increasing funding for mental health professionals in schools through the upcoming Every Child Ready (FEPP) levy renewal, and through existing city programs for people in crisis. I will push for long-term investments in prevention programs, particularly those that focus on Seattle's youth, to ensure we are addressing issues and creating interventions at a young age. I plan to work with SPD and CARE personnel to prioritize better coordination between city departments, healthcare providers, and community

organizations to ensure that individuals receive holistic care that meets their needs.

**What actions should the city take to strengthen its commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging and promote an inclusive work environment to set an example for all employers in Seattle?**

I am a lifelong Seattle resident, the son of a Japanese American mom whose family lost everything and spent WWII incarcerated under armed guard, and a Black father from the Jim Crow South. I was raised in the Central Area at a time when families that looked like mine were not shown real estate in other neighborhoods, and even in my diverse neighborhood I was called names that would not be tolerated in today's Seattle Public Schools. As a Mayor who has had to deliver "the talk" to my own children, and having marched in 2020 to once again demand an understanding that Black Lives Matter, I can tell you that my commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is rooted in my DNA – and was a catalyst for why I first ran for Mayor.

While in office, I have ensured that cultural organizations are empowered and that there are sufficient resources to preserve and celebrate Seattle's diverse heritage. I aim to build more inclusive public spaces for all communities to engage, share their voices, and connect with one another. We can continue to send a message that representation matters by re-electing Seattle's first AAPI Mayor, and only second Black leader for our city.

And while some try to erase the letters "DEI" from the alphabet, I'm proud that Seattle recognizes what diversity, equity, and inclusion actually mean – that giving every person a fair shot improves outcomes and that seeking a level playing field is one of the most basic principles of building a strong and just America.

**What is the best approach to reducing the Fentanyl crisis in the city?**

I understand that the Fentanyl crisis needs a two-handed approach: One to crack down on the distribution of the drug and another to assist those facing substance abuse with empathy. I have worked to establish a dual public health and public safety approach to the crisis of fentanyl, by tripling our spending on

substance use disorder solutions, including new strategies like the Health 99 Post-Overdose Team, ORCA Center, treatment beds, and services like contingency management; investments in SFD's staffing and Health One; and enforcement efforts that are contributing to an over 20% reduction in fatal overdoses. If reelected, I will continue to make strides to ensure that we live in a safer Seattle for everyone.

**Cities thrive when they have a vibrant downtown core. What is needed to sustain continued revitalization of the downtown core of the city?**

This is a key priority in my One Seattle approach. I am focused on initiatives like the Downtown Activation Plan, which supports visitor growth and prepares for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The Waterfront redevelopment, including Overlook Walk and the Ocean Pavilion at the Aquarium, is transforming the area and boosting tourism. I have been dedicated to supporting local businesses by helping entrepreneurs open doors, creating programs to assist with vandalism and graffiti, and bolstering opportunities for growth in new neighborhood centers. Seattle has a rich ecosystem of organizations working to establish, support, and preserve arts and cultural life and prevent displacement including Seattle's Indigenous community, BIPOC residents of the Central Area and other historically redlined neighborhoods, and the Chinatown International District. Moving forward, I will continue these efforts by enhancing infrastructure and fostering public-private partnerships to ensure a vibrant, thriving downtown for all.