

## King County Democrats 2025 Endorsement Questionnaire

<b>Candidate name</b>
Joe Mallahan
<b>Candidate name pronunciation</b>
JO MAL A HAN
<b>Candidate pronouns</b>
HIM
<b>Campaign Filer_Name</b>
Mallahan for Seattle Mayor
<b>Campaign email</b>

<b>Campaign phone</b>

<b>Number we can text or call if we have questions about this form</b>

<b>Campaign website</b>
<a href="https://www.joemallahanforseattlemayor.com/">https://www.joemallahanforseattlemayor.com/</a>
<b>LinkedIn</b>
<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/in/joe-mallahan-7b5494/">https://www.linkedin.com/in/joe-mallahan-7b5494/</a>
<b>Link to candidate headshot</b>
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<b>What type of position are you running for?</b>
City of Seattle
<b>Which position are you running for?</b>
Seattle Mayor
<b>Are you a Democrat?</b>

Yes

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

No

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

Yes

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

I believe current city leadership lacks a clear vision and a strong leader to solve our big problems: (i) a dysfunctional, understaffed police department that impacts public safety and equity; (ii) high homelessness in a one of the wealthiest cities in the world; and (iii) housing costs that are driving out young people, workers, artists and seniors.

A strong leader who knows how to listen to, and connect with, the people of Seattle and the City workers who deliver City services, can drive significant progress. I

Seattle can show how Democratic leadership actually delivers public goods, in contrast to the Republican's mayhem. Success will be measured by (i) POLICE: material changes in civilian oversight, full staffing and improved morale; (ii) HOMELESSNESS: significant reduction in the one-night-count, tripling of mental health and drug addiction interdictions, tripling of emergency shelter beds, reaching 5,000 tiny homes, and rapid progress in the development of social housing; (iii) AFFORDABLE HOUSING: changes in construction codes that strip out \$75,000 from the average cost of new home; up-zoning that permits 50,000 units of housing; tripling of housing permits by 2027.

**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?**

New Police Contract: the failure to obtain concessions around civilian oversight make the contract a failure. We're throwing \$50,000 signing bonuses at the staffing problem, rather than fixing the culture and improving morale.

New Technologies: while new automated monitoring technologies can potentially infringe on civil rights, I believe they drive policing efficiency, particularly in a time of staffing shortages. Still, civilian oversight is required.

SODA and SOAP zones: These are desperate, ineffective approaches borne out of the understaffing. The only people being arrested are immigrants and poor people. These should be repealed.

Top priorities for public safety: (i) radically changing the culture of the police department; and (ii) establishing true civilian oversight of the police. Changing the culture takes a leader who is willing to tell the police very directly that the culture needs to change and that they must be held accountable. But at the same time, that leader needs to gain the trust of the police, which requires a Mayor who dedicates a significant portion time to policing. As a symbol of my commitment here, I pledge to 50 ride-alongs in Year 1

**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?**

Multi-story buildings in Transit-proximate upzones can provide workforce housing and relieve market pressure on rents. We should up-zone enthusiastically and streamline zoning and approval processes.

ADUs are a big opportunity, as they can add housing units without impacting the nature of a neighborhood. I'm open to understanding how you think the City can accelerate/facilitate

development of ADUs.

The voters of Seattle overwhelmingly approved the social housing initiative. The next Mayor needs to be an avid supporter of this approach, provide leadership guidance and knock down barriers to getting our first projects underway. Let's get early successes and go back to voters and ask for more funding. I would like to understand Girmay Zahilay's recent proposal to use public debt to increase government-supported housing. This is a bold idea that we should carefully consider.

Converting single home lots into townhome lots continues is a big opportunity. We need to strip out building code rules that suppress this sort of development.

Tiny homes are an excellent first step out of homelessness for thousands of people. There's no excuse for not to build 5,000 units.

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

We face a defining crisis—one that demands a response rooted in our deepest American values and ideals. Our republic is under assault from within, threatened by a lawless, authoritarian movement that openly disdains the Constitution. The Trump regime is not just dangerous—it is metastasizing in real time. This moment demands an opposition that is bold, loud, moral, and defiant.

Seattle must take a clear and unwavering stand against federal actions that threaten the rights and livelihoods of our residents—especially undocumented neighbors who contribute so much to our city. We must ensure the Seattle Police Department does not cooperate with ICE in any way. The Trump administration's mass deportation agenda is unconstitutional, immoral, and reminiscent of darker chapters in history. Seattle should resist it fully—even if it means risking punitive federal action. If we don't lead, who will?

Recently, I've met with undocumented workers across the city—people who are terrified, trying to keep their families afloat, and still showing up for work every day. They are my friends. Their fear is real, and it's hurting our communities and economy. Fighting this is the Seattle Way.

**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]**

Seattle has a strong Climate Action Plan, and we should both acknowledge that progress and commit to fully implementing and strengthening it. The plan's key pillars—including building decarbonization, clean transportation, climate justice, and resilience to climate impacts—reflect the urgency and values this moment demands.

Supporting healthy transit options and facilitating electrical vehicle charging are important steps the City can continue to take to reduce emissions.

We should do everything we can to inculcate a culture of biking in Seattle. To me, bike commuting can't really take off until we have far more fully-segregated bike lanes where cars cannot impinge on the bike thoroughfares. We have made some progress in recent years, but much more could be done.

Housing density is certainly an important way to reduce commute emissions. My ideas for density are spelled out above, but the goal is clear: more people living near work and services leads to lower emissions and more livable neighborhoods.

Finally, we must close the tree canopy equity gap by planting more trees in underserved neighborhoods and supporting community-driven greening efforts.

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

The City's approach to mental health is perpetually hamstrung by our regressive tax system. We need to invest more in mental health services across multiple programs. The opportunity

to raise progressive revenue in Seattle is particularly large. Voters, including in wealthy neighborhoods, have supported higher revenue and higher investment. We just need to be bolder here. Seattle should lead the way in Washington State on finding ways to implement progressive taxation.

The City has made certain commitments for youth mental health spending, and I applaud that. But it still falls far short. There should be a mental health counselor in virtually every public school in the city. Current plans are to cover about one third of schools.

The adult mental health and addiction crisis manifests itself in our homelessness, in a sense of insecurity in our neighborhoods, and in the mistreatment of individuals in crisis. We can't solve this problem if we don't add more beds. We can't solve it by incarcerating, rather than treating, people in crisis. We also need to ensure that mental health resources are distributed equitably across all neighborhoods and ethnic communities.

### **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?**

The biggest opportunity for inclusivity and diversity in Seattle City government is stamping out the seemingly pervasive culture of misogyny and sexual harassment inside the Harrell administration. Only 15% of our police force is female. There were only two females in the 60 recently inducted new recruits at the police department.

Above, you read about my perspective on reforming the Seattle Police department culture. There is no way we are going to recruit more women to that department when every bit of news is related to gender bias and sexual harassment. I am particularly enraged by the punitive response police leadership had in 2022 when a female police officer wrote a memorandum highlighting that no action was being taken on the majority of sexual assault claims. The fact that sexual assault is deprioritized in police work is both a moral abomination and a burning red flag that sexual bias in the police force is pervasive.

My commitment to change the culture of the police department starts and ends with empowering women police officers.

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

I support Seattle's harm reduction approach to the fentanyl crisis grounded in public health principles, aiming to reduce overdose deaths and connect people with services—rather than relying solely on punitive measures. I support the "Harm Reduction" approach to the fentanyl crisis. We should be focus

- ☐ Providing safe spaces for drug use
- ☐ Not insisting that treatment requires immediate sobriety
- ☐ Providing wide distribution of naloxone and fentanyl test strips to prevent accidental overdoses
- ☐ Expanding use of medications like methadone to help people counter their drug cravings
- ☐ Deployment of health-first response teams, such as the Health One program, which pairs firefighters/EMTs with social workers to respond to substance use and behavioral health crises

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

I believe most of the elements of the Downtown Activation Plan are on the right track, although we need to be thoughtful and re-evaluate how the homeless are treated in terms in the downtown core.

We should consider if there is an opportunity to use some downtown spaces for social housing. This could be a quick win.

We should also consider how to leverage the tremendous success of the Overlook Walk that connects Pike Place to the Seattle Waterfront. We can continue to expand amenities at the

public pier and along the sidewalk, and encourage pedestrian traffic towards the Olympic Sculpture Park.

I also strongly believe that we can add additional public beaches along the waterfront, and create architectural elements that highlight the extraordinary intertidal sea life that lives right at our downtown shores (we can actually create open air aquariums that emerge at low tide). Connecting people to the Salish Sea is great for environmental awareness and increases our quality of life and our attraction as a tourist destination.

Finally, I think Pike Place and the waterfront are an excellent opportunity to install high-quality public restrooms.

### **Certification**

- The candidate hereby certifies that, to the best of their knowledge, the provided information is true and accurate.

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