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The Urbanist Seattle City Council Endorsement Questionnaire

- **Do you support Seattle’s commitment to Vision Zero, and what legislative strategies would you seek to implement the goal of reducing serious injuries and fatalities on our streets to zero within the next decade? Do you think legislative strategies are sufficient to achieve this goal?**

I am committed to Vision Zero and somewhat frustrated that the City continues to undercut our goal to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030. On its Vision Zero webpage, the City writes “...traffic collisions aren’t accidents – they’re preventable through smarter street design, targeted enforcement, and thoughtful public engagement.” This is true, yet difficult to reconcile with the City’s decision to scrap a proposed protected bicycle lane along 35th Ave NE. This decision can be viewed as an example of a more general trend; at times the City compromises the safety of residents for the convenience of those who drive.

The most effective thing we can do to achieve Vision Zero is to reduce the number of cars on the road. People will choose to walk, bike, and bus when these modes are safer, faster, more reliable, better connected, and more fully integrated with each other. The City must do more to expand and upgrade transit service, build out pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and implement policy solutions known to keep people safe.

We must reduce speed limits on more arterials, where 90% of traffic casualties occur. We must restore and increase funding for Safe Routes to Schools. We should be creating car-free pedestrian boulevards throughout Seattle’s urban centers and villages. We should prohibit right-turns-on red lights more widely across the city. We should modify adaptive signals to prioritize people rather than vehicles. We should better mitigate the impacts of construction to public right of way; sidewalk closures and pedestrian diversions should be an option of last resort. We should be proactive about installing signalized crosswalks, not wait until the MUTCD says enough people have been hit by cars to justify the installation. We should continue to pursue legislative authority for block-the-box camera enforcement and for expanded use of speed cameras outside of school zones.

Strategies like these are necessary to realize Vision Zero, but they are not sufficient. They must be supplemented by an ongoing, coordinated, public communications campaign. We have to do the hard work of convincing people to drive less and more carefully and slowly, and to be aware of their surroundings. We have to reorient people towards safety and inculcate the value of sharing space and looking out for each other, especially those most at risk of harm.

- **Do you support the completion of the current bicycle master plan? If so, what strategies, both political and financial, do you propose to ensure its completion?**

Yes. I think it is important to remember that the City Council has the authority, by Charter, “to lay out and improve streets and other public places, and to regulate and control the use thereof...” It is the prerogative of the City Council, not SDOT or the Mayor’s Office, to determine how public rights of way are used. This authority has largely been ceded by the City Council, which has relegated itself to serving an oversight function. This should change.

Fundamentally, the City must have the political will to do that which it knows it has good reason to do. It is reasonable to revise and update plans in light of changing circumstances or new evidence. It is unreasonable to scrap plans that promote public safety, mobility, and environmental sustainability simply because a small, vocal group of residents are opposed.

The recent BMP Implementation Plan is disappointing. Fifty miles of promised bike lanes are gone or at risk, including many of the most important and impactful projects. South Seattle will have to wait even longer for necessary safety improvements. Crucial parts of the Basic Bike Network have been delayed or downgraded.

We have to get back on track, with both the BMP and PMP, and that will likely require new revenue. Transportation impact fees are an obvious candidate. We should also explore congestion pricing, and increasing the commercial parking tax. Details would need to be worked out, of course, but I believe we can make a compelling case for the benefits of additional investments.

- **The current Seattle Transportation Benefit District funding bus services and transit access expires at the end of 2020. Should it be extended and do you envision any changes to the programs it funds?**

Yes, it should be extended. While I hope the County is able to pass a substantive funding package for Metro Connects, I want to retain the STBD as a dedicated funding source for transit service in Seattle.

The STBD is an incredibly efficient funding mechanism. Over 85% of the revenue it generates goes directly to improving transit service, with the balance primarily devoted to subsidized ORCA cards and maintaining a healthy reserve fund. It has improved transit service to every urban village, extended service to those who lacked it, and currently funds over 80,000 additional rides daily.

I have three basic priorities for STBD funding: I would like to provide frequent transit service to the 33% of Seattle residents who do not have it currently; we need the seven RapidRide+

lines promised by the Move Seattle Levy; we need more dedicated transit lanes, transit signal prioritization, queue jumps, and related capital improvements.

- **The Move Seattle levy expires at the end of 2024. What features should the next transportation capital project levy have? What lessons do you take away from the way the current levy has gone?**

Broadly speaking, the next levy should expand and improve transit service, accelerate the implementation of our modal plans, advance our climate goals, shore up our infrastructure, and promote public safety. The City's Racial Equity Toolkit should inform the selection and prioritization of levy funded projects. And, I want the next levy to be honest, transparent, and realistic with the public about what it can deliver, how long it will take, and how much it will cost.

Here are the lessons:

- **Do not necessarily expect help.** The City expected Move Seattle to leverage over \$560 million in federal funds that did not materialize. This undercut an array of Move Seattle projects.
 - **Be realistic about costs.** Move Seattle passed in the midst of a construction boom. It was not hard to predict that construction and labor costs would increase.
 - **Be specific about projects.** Move Seattle was sold as a list of great projects, but these projects were not mandated by ordinance. Many disappeared or were downgraded when the levy was "reset". Breaking promises erodes public support.
 - **Be specific with proposals.** Levies should not be wish lists. It is tempting to add to project lists to secure political support, but this can and will often backfire. Select the endeavors, that address and them and execute.
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- **Do you support the construction of the Center City Connector streetcar and why/why not?**

Yes. The Center City Connector will provide a great transit option through downtown and a much needed alternative to the 3rd Ave transit corridor. It will activate the South Lake Union and First Hill segments; it is projected to quadruple the current combined ridership of those two lines, providing 5-6 million rides annually. It will serve neighborhoods that are dense, diverse, and growing. It will help generate additional tourist revenue for Seattle, carrying cruise ship passengers from Terminal 46 to the shops, restaurants, and hotels along and around 1st Ave. It's also scalable; it could be extended in the future to serve other rapidly growing areas north and south of downtown.

- **What considerations should inform the discussion around finding additional funding for a light rail tunnel to West Seattle? To Ballard?**

Light rail tunnels to West Seattle and Ballard are estimated to cost upwards of \$700 million and \$350 million respectively. We must consider whether it is plausible that we can secure that much additional funding and, if we can, whether it would be better spent on extending light rail service to neighborhoods like White Center and Crown Hill. Our equity and climate goals are better served by providing more communities, particularly those most burdened by inadequate transportation alternatives and the costs of driving, with access to light rail. There is a stronger case to be made for a tunnel to Ballard than to West Seattle. It is important to protect the maritime industry around Salmon Bay and the Port of Seattle would be more likely to help with funding.

- **For what purposes should impact fees on development be used?**

I support impact fees; they are good policy with proven benefits. They are really useful in states like ours, where municipal budgets are hamstrung by a regressive tax structure and inadequate state funding.

Washington cities are authorized to impose impact fees only to fund transportation, parks, schools, and fire stations. All of these are important, of course, but my priorities are transportation and schools.

The Move Seattle project list is a good place to look for projects that could use the support of impact fee revenue, particularly those projects essential to our modal plans and Vision Zero. Safe Routes to Schools should be high up on the list, as should completing the Basic Bike Network, improving pedestrian access to transit, and adding dedicated bus-lanes and transit signal priority.

Impact fees for schools are attractive as Seattle now has over 100,000 kids, more than at any point in the last 50 years. I would like to open up single-family neighborhoods, which surround most public schools, to small-scale multi-family housing. More low- and middle-income kids should be able to live within walking/biking distance from their local public schools. These kids or their homes should not be blamed for capacity problems at local schools. Impact fees can help ensure that public schools in less dense neighborhoods can accommodate more kids.

- **Do you support imposing additional fees on ridesharing services like Uber and Lyft?**

Yes.

- **Do you support a congestion pricing program downtown? If so, what considerations should be made when setting up such a program?**

Yes. We should consider the consequences of having spent a century designing a city for cars, then abruptly charging people to use it that way. Most importantly, whatever congestion pricing program that may be adopted must include exemptions and consideration for residents or workers that would be unduly burdened by such a flat tax. We must consider that congestion pricing will disproportionately impact many communities underserved by transit. We must remember that for some residents with disabilities, or with children in daycare, or with a second job across town, or with heavy tools or equipment they have to bring to work every day, etc., driving may be - for now - the only realistic option. Additionally, as the cost of housing in Seattle pushes city workers into communities further outside of our urban center, congestion pricing done wrong could become a “poor tax” on those not wealthy enough to live where they work.

- **How do you feel about the current allocation of street space in Seattle? Under what circumstance would you support converting general purpose lanes to other uses?**

We allocate much too much space for people to drive cars and to park them. In downtown Seattle, for instance, we reserve 75% of lane miles for use by 25% of the commuter population. It is much the same across the city. This should change. Our allocation of street space should promote public safety, be conducive to fast, reliable transit and modal integration, and advance our climate goals. Thus, I generally support widening sidewalks and narrowing residential streets, converting some whole streets to pedestrian-only boulevards, rechanneling busy arterials and replacing some street parking with protected bicycle facilities, converting general purpose lanes to bus-only lanes, and so on.

- **What approaches would you take to ensure that emerging mobility options (bikeshare, rideshare, e-scooter, etc) are implemented in a manner that increases access to our mobility hubs?**

I would want to ensure that emerging mobility options are easily accessible to residents that walk, bike, or take transit. I would want to ensure that these emerging mobility options can quickly and reliably access transit hubs, since it is inevitable that our shared mobility hubs will be located at or near transit hubs. I assume emerging mobility options will, by and large, share the right-of-way with cars and bikes, so we have to make sure that enough space in the right-of-way is allocated for their safe use. Fare integration is also really important. Ideally, our phones or ORCA cards could be used to handle payment for every option available at a mobility hub.

- **What lessons did you take away from the head tax vote/debate? Would you support bringing back the head tax?**

This was handled poorly by the city. It is true that large companies like Amazon impact housing cost, and housing costs impact homelessness, but it is always better to collaborate than alienate. It is clear Seattleites are progressive and compassionate and want to truly address our homelessness crisis for neighbors living unsheltered, and for the health of our communities. I believe we very likely need additional revenue to address our homelessness crisis, and that those who have more should pay their fair share. I have made it clear to the business community that I support progressive taxation on wealthy corporations and individuals to fund needed services. We will need to collaborate with all stakeholders, including those who may be taxed, and communicate clearly and transparently, agree on the problems we want solved, utilize data, and propose clear strategies, while showing we can deliver results.

- **What responsibilities do you think that corporations doing business in Seattle have to the city, and are they meeting them? If not how would you get them to do so?**

Corporations doing business in Seattle rely upon and profit from public investments in education, housing, transportation, utilities, law enforcement and the justice system, and all the rest. They have an obligation to Seattle to strengthen and sustain the civic institutions responsible for providing these goods and to shoulder their share of the costs. They have obligations to treat their employees well and abide by our labor standards. Corporate citizenship is mandatory in Seattle, which includes actions embodying respect, compassion, generosity, and equity.

There are exemplary corporate citizens in Seattle. There are also very powerful corporations that may at times neglect their obligations. I am prepared to do whatever works to ensure that corporations in Seattle don't free ride on public investments. That might mean increased regulation, or additional taxes and fees, or a legal challenge and a court fight. I look forward to bringing leadership to the Council in this area.

- **If you had been on council at the time it was considered, would you have voted for Mandatory Housing Affordability, Seattle's version of inclusionary zoning? In what ways did the final approved plan differ from your ideal policy?**

Yes, I would have voted for MHA. My ideal policy would have converted all single-family zones into neighborhood residential zones. Neighborhood residential zoning would be less use-based and more form-based, and allow small-scale multi-family developments throughout.

- **Do you support transit-oriented development? If so, how do you ensure TOD is affordable and doesn't displace communities around new transit infrastructure?**

I support TOD, and it must be done right. We should not be building affordable housing canyons bordering noisy, dangerous, polluted corridors serving cars and freight. TOD should extend well into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Gentrification and displacement are significant risks of TOD in communities of color and low-income communities. To ensure that communities are not displaced by TOD, it is important to have a coordinated and robust affordable housing strategy. I believe we should provision land around future light rail stations for purchase by affordable housing developers so they can take advantage of the lower costs. I support requiring a 1:1 replacement for every unit of natural affordable housing lost to development within TOD boundaries of communities at risk of displacement.

- **What do you think is the most important strategy or set of strategies Seattle can pursue to make the city affordable to live in? What assumptions about affordability do those strategies rely on?**

The most important thing we can do to make Seattle more affordable is to build much more housing, and more types of housing, across the city. We need more “missing middle” housing, the 2+ bedroom apartments and condos suitable for middle-income families that our current housing policy disincentivizes. We need more subsidized housing, particularly for those between 30% and 60% AMI. We need more permanent supportive housing for the chronically homeless who are struggling with debilitating mental health disorders and substance abuse.

We also have to make it much faster, easier, and cheaper for Seattle residents to travel throughout the region. Low- and middle-income residents, who often cannot afford to live close to schools, jobs, and public amenities, are disproportionately reliant on cars. But cars cost a lot of money to operate, maintain, and store. Seattle is less affordable when you have to get around by car, fill up the tank, pay insurance, park it on the street, etc. Public transit is central to so many of our top priorities, like safety, mobility, sustainability, and racial and economic justice, and the benefits of public transit so profound for Seattle and the region, that it should be free for all residents. That would go some way towards making Seattle more affordable.

- **What would you do as a city council member to address evictions and the displacement they cause, particularly in communities of color?**

Women and people of color are disproportionately subject to eviction, and eviction is a major cause of homelessness in Seattle and the region. We should increase our investments in temporary rental/income assistance and rapid-rehousing to help those on the brink of homelessness and those who have recently become homeless, and, ensure Seattle renters are aware of these programs. We should have eviction case managers stationed at court and coordinating with tenants and their attorneys to quickly connect those at risk of eviction to financial and housing service providers. We should try again to get authorization from the state for an affordable housing preservation property tax exemption (like the MFTE, but for existing housing) that could help mitigate the risk of displacement in gentrifying neighborhoods.

I strongly believe that we should continue to reform our eviction procedures and strengthen tenant protections so that people have the time they need to recover from a temporary financial hardship or setback without it costing them their home or credit. We should prohibit landlords from initiating an eviction over a small amount of unpaid rent; prohibit landlords from assessing unreasonable late fees and penalties; prohibit landlords from using tenant payments to cover those fees and penalties first, rather than the rent owed; and allow judges the discretion to rule that evicted tenants do not have to pay their landlord's lawyer and court costs. For residents on 12 month leases, landlords do not need cause to not renew a lease -- something I know Councilmember Herbold is working on, and I would like to learn more about this well. We also must ensure that landlords fully understand these regulations, and view the city as a helpful resource to assist them from avoiding eviction procedures in the first place.

- **Do you support the proposed creation of a city-county authority to address homelessness in Seattle/King County? If so, what steps would you take to support it on city council?**

Yes. Homelessness is a regional problem and requires a regional solution. However, as with any bureaucracy, there is always a risk of administrative distractions causing the entity to at times lose sight of achieving its end goal. I plan on being intimately involved with this authority in any way I am asked to be as a Councilmember--whether it is serving on it, providing oversight, strategic input, etc. We must never lose sight of ensuring that every day, this entity is making strides towards its mission, which is to improve the situation around homelessness in our region, and ultimately end it.

This entity should also look towards Seattle King County Public Health as a model for regional partnership of this sort, and I would reach out to their staff for advice and partnership. It must prioritize homelessness strategies, responses, and investments that are proven, trauma-informed, and that of course treat those suffering from homelessness with dignity and respect.

- **What causes people to experience homelessness in the City of Seattle?**

The causes of homelessness are extremely complex. Homelessness is the result of a multitude of factors. Abuse, significant adverse experiences, trauma either in childhood or adulthood, domestic violence, inadequate treatment of mental health problems, lack of strong family or support systems, addiction, job loss, unaffordable housing, and poverty are among the most common and interrelated contributors to homelessness. Among the chronically homeless, untreated mental health problems, substance abuse, and physical disability are all common causes. These are all direct causes, but they only explain homelessness in conjunction with a more fundamental fact: that we have failed to ensure they have a home.

- **What, specifically, should the city do to address racial disparities in housing opportunity?**

Racial disparities in housing opportunity have deep historical roots. Racially segregated neighborhood maps of Seattle date back to 1900. For the better part of a century, discriminatory lending, redlining, race covenants, systematic disinvestment, and other factors all contrived to prevent people of color from living in neighborhoods across our city. Seattle remains racially segregated; the boundaries single-family neighborhoods today neatly trace the boundaries of “whites only” neighborhoods during Jim Crow.

A large section of our communities of color, particularly families that have been living in Seattle for generations and who are now being priced out, are low-wage workers. These workers are critical to our economy, and are doing the jobs we couldn't function without, including serving as home care workers, child care providers, and grocery store clerks. No one working full-time in our City should be unable to afford housing that works for their family. While we often focus on ADUs/DADUs and du-tri-four-plexes to make additional affordable housing available for communities of color that are being displaced, we need to make ALL types of housing available, including apartments and single-family homes. It shouldn't be that only people working at tech firms or in white collar jobs should be able to live in a townhouse or single-family home.

The City should adopt two basic strategies to address racial disparities in housing. It should remove zoning and land-use restrictions that make it harder for people of color to access housing, and it should invest more in communities of color.

I'd like to re-evaluate the City's Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program, which gives tax exemptions to apartment buildings that are reserving 20-25% of their homes for income and rent-restricted folk. Unfortunately, I've heard firsthand from workers in Seattle trying to access these apartments that the rental prices are still so significantly high that these middle-class employees don't make enough money to qualify to rent the apartment at the discounted rate. And finding these MFTE apartments can be a difficult undertaking as well, as there isn't a central database, and the reward is only a modest decrease in monthly rent. I've also heard there is little accountability to ensure developers are actually offering these apartments at discounted rates, which is worrisome since we are offering tax credits to these businesses. We must continue to work on refining this program, and ensuring that it is indeed producing results which are solving the problems it was initially designed to address.

I'd also like to look into how we can offset the skyrocketing price of single-family homes, such as through the First-Time Home Buyer Program. Since Seattle was exclusionary zoned decades ago, we have a segregated and redlined city. With property being passed down within families, many neighborhoods stay segregated -- or when people sell, only wealthy families, many of whom are white and new to Seattle, are the only ones who can afford to buy them.

The City should prioritize investments in the development and preservation of affordable housing to historically underserved neighborhoods in South Seattle. It should provide financial assistance and incentives for the development of new condos or the conversion of apartments to condos in historically underserved neighborhoods, so the communities of color have more opportunities to build equity, generate wealth and transfer it to their kids, and become more financially resilient. It should increase aid to families of color looking to buy their first home. It should establish impact fee assessment subareas around TOD in historically underserved neighborhoods, so that new development directly benefits communities of color. There are many ways the City could help.

- **How would you define “historic character”, and in what ways do you feel your definition is inclusive of Seattle’s indigenous communities?**

When people refer to “historic character,” they are likely referring to 2 principles--something is important to them, and, it is based on a time based ‘history’ that is unique. In Seattle, it must include the Duwamish history and the character of their river, our only river, and about how it was almost destroyed by generations of industrialists, and how the Duwamish remain and their river is healing. It must include the African American historic character of the Central District,

and that of the International District. Seattle has a unique and diverse “historic character” in many of its areas and neighborhoods, and we must not only not forget, but retell the stories, of the historic character of our city, particularly inclusive of our indigenous communities.

- **What approaches would you consider to ensure that multi-generational, affordable housing is located in high-opportunities neighborhoods?**

Essentially, the only way to meet the housing needs of lower income people is to radically increase supply by enacting policies that reduce the cost and time of developing affordable housing and significantly increase the resources available to fund production. I look forward to learning more about specific approaches from experts to ensure this type of affordable housing is located in high opportunities neighborhoods.

- **What role should Safe Seattle and like-minded groups play in our public discourse?**

Every person and group is entitled to participate in the public discourse.

- **To what extent has pursuing racial equity been a priority in your work to date? How do you plan to continue that work on city council?**

In my personal life, as the son of an Iranian immigrant, I have been personally impacted by racial inequities in our society -- mainly in the form of media and cultural misconceptions of Middle Eastern culture and people, oftentimes perpetuated by our own political leaders. Growing up with a Persian last name I was “othered” in school -- but what was more difficult was having my family placed on the no-fly list, and my father being blocked from entering the U.S. post-9/11 to meet his grandson after my wife and I had our firstborn. Having experienced racial inequity in his life and career, my dad instilled in me and my brother the values of fighting for the underdog and those that have less than you. I took this lesson with me when I graduated from medical school and chose to work in family medicine in a low-income clinic in Wallingford, rather than enter a higher-paying medical specialty. My work has always had to be intersectional, and focus greatly on filling in the large gaps in health care that our society has left for those who are people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ, and otherwise disenfranchised. I think it’s immoral that people receive lesser health care services and coverage because of the color of their skin, who they love, their gender, their income, where they work, or where they live or moved from. When I saw that Swedish didn’t have a community health program to provide services to low-income communities and people of color, I established a Community Health Program and became its Senior Medical Director. Through my work there and as Medical Director at Ballard High School we expended health services in underserved communities and communities of color where there were none before-this was accomplished through the establishment of programs like Global to Local, the Swedish Community Specialty Clinic, the Ballard Community Medical Home, and the Ballard Teen Health Center. These are all programs I either helped establish or led, and they all involved pursuing racial equity. When the ACA passed, I was asked to be CEO of an Obamacare health plan in Washington State, and helped build a plan that insured 250,000 of our neighbors. Additionally, our plan won the contract to become the sole-services-provider

for our 25,000 foster youth and young adults in Washington. That program is recognized as a successful model of bringing two large state agencies together to partner with a health plan to bring not just health coverage but extensive wrap-around services to best support Washington's foster care population and their families, with a heavy emphasis on behavioral health-mental health and substance abuse/addiction issues-with all staff comprehensively trained in trauma informed care. When I'm on the City Council I will bring the underdog perspective to every policy conversation -- specifically focusing on who are those that are the most in need, and how each bus stop, labor law, or zoning policy impacts our goal of racial equity.

Considerations of racial equity need be central to City policy and budgetary decisions. At times the City routinely seems to ignore these considerations. An example of the City's problematic approach to equity is its use of the Racial Equity Toolkit, an internal guide intended to help City departments ensure more inclusive outreach and engagement and identify racially inequitable outcomes prior to project implementation. Like other City departments, SDOT is required to use the RSJI Racial Equity Toolkit on at least four different projects, of its choice, per year. This requirement is insufficient both in application and scope. Here are some of the changes I would propose to make:

- The City should not leave it up to SDOT project/program managers to determine if/when the Racial Equity Toolkit should be used to guide their work. Determinations of that sort should be made in consultation and collaboration with SDOT's RSJI Change Team, those SDOT staff best trained and equipped to notice any prima facie racial inequities attendant to a project.
- The Change Team needs to be kept informed of all major SDOT projects and programs, and throughout the budgetary cycle, so that it may help identify those where the use of Racial Equity Toolkit is likely to be beneficial.
- It is likely that the Change Team will identify racial inequities attendant to more than four SDOT program, policy, or budgetary decisions per year. The City needs to provide sufficient time, funding, and staff support for the increased usage of the Racial Equity Toolkit.
- Finally, the application of the toolkit to a project should proceed with the help of the SDOT RSJI Change Team and other relevant City staff from OCR and OIRA, particularly when dealing with communities with which SDOT staff may be inadequately familiar.

Additionally, City policy makers must do more than "outreach and engagement" to underserved communities. They must do more than send emissaries with surveys, hold public meetings, utilize ethnic media, or provide translation services. These tactics unfortunately do not go far enough. They are primarily tactics for the distribution of information, not the tactics necessary to establish a dialogue with or truly learn from those most at risk from policy decisions made by the privileged.

City leaders must do the hard work of establishing open, honest relationships with these populations and communities. They must ground these relationships in transparency, accountability, and, eventually, shared trust. They must listen, even when listening is difficult, threatening, or politically risky. But even this does not go far enough.

Policy makers must seek to bring representatives of these communities within the very institutional structures and centers of political power from which policy decisions issue. The only truly effective way to ensure that policy decisions work for the welfare of disadvantaged communities is for these communities to help craft policy.

- **What approaches do you feel are most-important to ensuring that programs, policies, and practices are prioritized in historically underserved and underrepresented communities, who may not have the loudest voice in a public forum?**

See answer to question above; bringing representatives of these communities to the table in earnest, and at the beginning, is the only way to ensure programs, policies, and practices are prioritized in these areas.

- **What are ideas for progressive revenue sources for transportation and housing that do not burden low-income communities?**

Washington State has the most regressive tax structure in the nation. This is completely counter to our values of equity, innovation, and leadership in our state, particularly in Seattle. Those that have more should give more-whether it is individuals, or businesses. Washington State needs to adopt an income tax, and explore potentially lowering or eliminating other taxes that unduly burden the low income. I envision a state where no one is too poor to live, no one has to sleep outside, where local businesses can thrive and flourish in their communities, and where large employers hire local workers and invest back in our state by paying a fair share in taxes. I envision a City where young adults who grew up here aren't priced out because of a lack of affordable housing, and retirees aren't priced out because of property taxes. To achieve this vision I would ask the State Legislature to transition to a new tax structure by a) instituting a progressively leveled income tax, b) lowering property taxes for low and fixed-income residents, c) instituting a capital gains tax, and d) closing corporate loopholes and reforming our B&O tax to focus on profits over gross receipts so we are taxing wealth instead of low-profit margin businesses and local stores.