



Katie Wilson Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Seattle Mayor

What are your top three priorities to achieve in your term?

- Affordable and abundant housing.
- A real reduction in homelessness.
- Protect Seattle residents against attacks and funding cuts by the Trump administration.

How will you boost housing options, particularly for families of all incomes to live near where they work? How will you expand shelter space, emergency housing, and permanent supportive housing? How do you weigh community objections with the housing goals for your jurisdiction, while encouraging engagement from neighbors?

- Zone for more housing in neighborhoods throughout Seattle. Reform permitting, design review, and other bureaucratic hurdles that make it so expensive and difficult to build right now. Work to build inclusive neighborhoods and incentivize housing types that support aging in place, people with disabilities, and young families — especially near public transit.
- Build social housing!
- Support community land trusts like Homestead and Africatown, creating opportunities for affordable homeownership and stable rental housing in communities at risk of displacement.
- Expand Tiny House Villages and other forms of shelter.
- Hear community objections – and also ensure that we're getting input from renters and lower-income residents whose voices are often not the loudest. Accommodate when possible, but don't waver from the principle that every neighborhood needs to welcome new neighbors. Work with communities at risk of displacement on policies and programs to ensure that our legacy communities and immigrant communities stay anchored and stable, recognizing that some of Seattle's most diverse neighborhoods have already absorbed a significant amount of development in ways that have often proved



harmful.

Do you support adding progressive revenue sources? Which ones would you support to fund your priorities? Or what cuts would you make to balance budgets facing increasing strain under Trump?

- Yes.
- Capital gains tax — we should have done that last year.
- There may be ways to “turn the dials” on the JumpStart payroll expense tax to raise more revenue, while taking into consideration that Amazon and other corporations may be shifting some jobs to the east side to avoid taxes.
- Seattle could consider restructuring the B&O tax to raise more revenue while also lowering taxes for small businesses.
- Spokane is exploring a land value tax (which would require state authorization) as a more progressive alternative to property tax. Seattle should too.
- Other options I would pursue, and which are described the “Progressive Tax Options for Seattle” report I coauthored with other members of the Transit Riders Union while serving on the Revenue Stabilization Workgroup in 2023:
 - Professional services excise tax
 - Digital ad tax
 - Vacancy tax

What is your approach to improving public safety over the next five years? How will you actualize it?

1. Violence prevention: Remedy the City’s failures on gun violence, in line with audit recommendations. Support proven diversion, job training, and community-based programs that reduce recidivism, with a focus on youth. Invest in public infrastructure that improves safety, including better lighting, improved lines of sight, and bollards to protect pedestrians from the growing phenomenon of vehicle assault.



2. Address drug and disorder hotspots: Focus police investigative resources on violent crime, with street-level enforcement of public order issues mainly concentrated on collaboration with case managers through the evidence-based LEAD framework. Ensure that our response to low-level drug-related and drug-motivated crimes focuses on treatment, shelter, and ongoing supportive services to close the revolving door from jail to homelessness and drug use.

3. Expand alternative crisis response and civilian roles, so police can focus on policing: Create a better dispatch protocol so that the CARE team can respond to crisis calls independently when safe and appropriate. Work toward civilianizing ancillary work, from directing traffic at events to taking down crime reports.

4. Make progress toward policing that is responsive, trustworthy, and accountable: Work toward a non-discriminatory work environment for all SPD employees and negotiate a police contract that makes progress on police accountability.

How do you plan to improve public safety for transit operators and riders, and boost ridership and transit accessibility?

- Improve the built environment for safety, including better lighting and lines of sight at bus stops.
- Work with regional stakeholders to improve police and alternative response times when transit operators need support, and educate riders on what to do in a crisis situation.
- Work with King County, the transit agencies, ATU 587, TRU, etc. on a comprehensive approach to drug use and behavioral health issues on public transit, aiming for a response that emphasizes prevention, diversion, and treatment while keeping everyone safe. Explore making narcan available on public transit vehicles.
- Prioritize transforming our most dangerous corridors, from Aurora to Rainier, into people-centered streets with great public transit, safe neighborhoods, thriving businesses, and tree canopy that will help clean the air and moderate the urban heat island effect. Maximize efficient use of Keep Seattle Moving Levy dollars to build new sidewalks, improve transit infrastructure, and connect our bike network.



Planned upcoming expansions to Sound Transit services will reshape the transportation and connectivity of the region. How would you, as mayor, support this regional effort to expand multi-modal transit? How will you foster a positive relationship between Sound Transit, local businesses, and residents?

Sound Transit has often gotten bogged down in excessive process, and better leadership from the mayor — as mayor and as a Sound Transit board member — can help. The City of Seattle has control over crucial aspects of Sound Transit expansion within its borders, including permitting, right-of-way, and code compliance. As mayor I would work to minimize permitting burdens, leverage existing right-of-way, and expedite delivery. The City can also take the lead and get a start on long-range planning for ST4.

I would not, as current Mayor Bruce Harrell did, use my Sound Transit Board position to waste resources and almost delay the light rail because Amazon wants to move a station three blocks over.

The construction of new lines and stations will inevitably harm the interests of some local businesses and residents. As we work to expedite delivery (which will save money) the agency should be less stingy with compensation to businesses that must relocate or are adversely affected for the duration of the construction.

Goldilocks questions on the neighborhood growth centers in the Mayor's One Seattle housing plan: about right, should be more, or should be less? And why? In what ways could your city's comprehensive plan go further, and what would you push for to improve it during your tenure?

More. If we only plan for housing to match expected population growth, that's a recipe for continued tight housing markets and unaffordable rents, with homeownership remaining out of reach for most.

We should be adding more neighborhood growth centers, expanding the definition of "near transit," granting social housing the same density bonus that other types of affordable housing get, eliminating parking minimums, fix the stacked flats bonus so it actually results in building stacked flats, exempt smaller projects from MHA fees so they will pencil out, etc. etc.