



Lindsay Wills Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Tacoma City Council, Position 6

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

Budget- Council relies on the City Manager to inform them on how the City operates. I question why the City has so many Directors and Managers who get paid over \$200,000 per year yet it takes over 6 months to get a building permit, or over a year for Council meeting minutes to get posted. My goal is to improve how departments function, which will in turn save money and allow us to fund projects that the community needs. Transparency- It's so difficult to know and understand what's going on at City Hall. It appears that there are many behind-the-scenes conversations that occur that the public does not have access to. I will be a Council Member that shares the details of these conversations with the public. I will have weekly breakdowns on what happened at Study Session and Council Meetings. Permits- Many candidates are running on affordable housing. I am getting even more granular and focusing on the permitting process. Affordable housing cannot be built without permits, and we need to encourage developers and homeowners alike to build by creating a simple and streamlined permitting process.

How will you boost housing options, particularly for families of all incomes to live where they work? How will you engage the public for new shelters, transitional housing, emergency housing, permanent supportive housing? How do you weigh community objections with the housing goals for your jurisdiction, while encouraging engagement from neighbors?



I spoke in support at one of the public hearings for Home in Tacoma, which changed zoning throughout the City to allow for more types of housing. I think Home in Tacoma will bring a lot more housing to the City. I will use my experience working in Permits to work with City staff so we can improve turnaround times for housing permits. The City recently introduced pre-approved ADU plans and I will promote this option on social media and through emails. I think the most important thing is to provide information frequently and promptly. Change can be scary for homeowners who are used to their neighborhood looking a certain way. I will be available to be a sounding board for concerns, while also giving real-life examples of how more housing will only benefit our community.

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?

Tax the rich. I would make cuts to non-essential programs and put a freeze on hiring positions that receive salaries of more than \$150k/year. I would explore employee compensation packages. The City Manager currently receives \$30,000 in contributions to a 457(b) account, in addition to a salary of over \$300,000. I would cut that 457(b) benefit. City employees also pay \$100 per month for family health insurance. Since the City has thousands of employees, increasing the employee cost to \$110 per month would be a great saving to the City, while still providing benefits that are much more affordable than the private sector.

What do you think is the most important strategy your jurisdiction can pursue to limit cost increases and make the region affordable to live in? How would you go about implementing that strategy?



I think the most important strategy is to get the budget in check by reigning in employee compensation and reducing travel for Council (among other things). I would focus on strategies that can reduce costs for residents; no utility rate increases, lowering threshold requirements for small business grants, and expanding the City's guaranteed income (GRIT) program.

Traffic deaths are rising across Washington state, with pedestrians composing an increasing share statewide. What is your approach to making our streets safer for all users?

My approach is to secure funding for safer streets by making cuts to non-essential programs and reducing compensation packages for highly paid employees. I will encourage people to get around town using other means besides a vehicle. I take public transit regularly and can help people figure out how to get where they need to on the bus or Runner. I have experience writing grants and will work with City staff to identify grants that we can apply for. I will advocate for funding for bike lanes, crosswalks, and traffic calming devices. I was at a Town Hall last year where a retired veteran asked why the City won't hire volunteers to help with speed enforcement; many laughed at his question but I think it's a great idea. There are folks in the community who have the time and the desire to be out on streets like Portland Ave with a radar gun. Even if they aren't able to write tickets, just their continued presence would send a message that Tacoma cares about speeding. I know that I cannot speed in Fircrest or I will likely get pulled over - we need to have that reputation in Tacoma.

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



One part of my vision is to get involved with the schools and frequently talk to our youth about violence. I also plan on doing ride-alongs with TPD to understand what they are doing and figure out how we can build trust within the community.

Personally, I have never called the police when something is going on near my house because I don't have faith that they will respond or take me seriously. I know many feel the same way, so I hope that with some investigating and hands-on work with TPD, I can communicate to the public how they are operating and restore some of that faith.

How have federal funding cuts impacted your jurisdiction and how do you plan to address those impacts?

Federal cuts have mainly impacted Tacoma Public Schools and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. While separate from the City's budget, I can still address those impacts by providing loud, vocal support and by recommending policies that will get funding back to these agencies. As a Council Member, it would be my responsibility to support Tacomans who are affected by these cuts in any way possible.

Do you support camping bans or sweeps? If elected, how would you adapt or change current law/policies to protect and support our neighbors?

I do not support camping bans or sweeps. They are inhumane. The City currently has a camping ban and I would work to repeal it while on Council.



In what ways could your city's comprehensive plan go further, and what would you push for to improve it during your tenure?

Honestly, Tacoma's comprehensive plan is pretty robust. I would initially focus on implementing the Economic Development goals because that is where I have the most experience. I think comprehensive plans are great & necessary, but as a government employee it's in my nature to want to begin the work and not just plan for it.