



## **Michelle Evans Urbanist Questionnaire 2025**

### Woodinville City Council Position 1

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

I'm running for office to ensure that Woodinville grows thoughtfully, inclusively, and sustainably—and to prove that even a small city can take bold, effective action on affordability, infrastructure, and economic vitality.

Too often, our region hears promises without follow-through. I ran on making housing attainable, and now, it's happening. As of May 15, 2025, the first affordable homes in over two decades will open at Eastrail Flats. Thanks to our housing strategy, these units include options at 50% of Area Median Income—putting a one-bedroom at \$1,271, nearly \$1,000 less than market rate. This is the direct result of intentional planning, policy work, and a City Council willing to lead.

But affordable housing is just the beginning. My second priority is infrastructure that matches our growth: expanding access to parks and trails, advocating for regional transit, and introducing solutions like Lime scooters to improve last-mile connections. These investments enhance livability and reduce car dependency.

Third, I'm focused on a resilient, local economy. With over half of Woodinville's city budget funded by sales tax, supporting local businesses is essential. I'm committed to policies that sustain our wine, tourism, and small business sectors so we can thrive as a community—not just survive.

If re-elected, I'll continue to deliver results. Urbanist values aren't theoretical to me—they're the principles I use to govern.

**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?**

To support families of all incomes, I've led efforts to rezone areas for diverse housing types—including family-sized rentals, duplexes, and townhomes—especially near transit and services. We must also utilize underused land and expand partnerships with nonprofit and private developers to deliver affordable, workforce, and supportive housing.

I support public health-aligned services like CORE Connect and the Therapeutic Response Unit, as well as Woodinville's partnership with NUHSA to increase access to emergency shelter and transitional housing.

Community input is vital, but facts and fairness must lead. I engage early, explain clearly, and stay grounded in the values of inclusion and sustainability. While I listen to concerns, I don't let misinformation or NIMBY resistance derail state-mandated housing goals or community well-being. With transparency and leadership, we can create housing that works for all.

**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—I support progressive revenue tools that ensure those benefiting most from our economy contribute their fair share. Local governments are under increasing pressure from state and federal disinvestment, especially under Trump-era policies that shift burdens to cities without providing support.

To fund priorities like affordable housing, infrastructure, and mental health response programs, I support a capital gains tax at the state level, as well as the income tax proposal for the top 1% earners, closing regressive loopholes, and enabling cities to raise funds through mechanisms like impact fees, business taxes tied to scale, and hotel/motel taxes—particularly in areas with strong tourism economies like Woodinville.



Our city also needs greater flexibility from the state to pilot creative funding tools. While I always pursue efficiencies, I won't gut essential services. Cutting programs like CORE Connect or affordable housing would be shortsighted and harmful. Smart investment now prevents far greater costs later.

**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?**

The most effective local strategy is to expand the supply of affordable and workforce housing through targeted incentives and strategic land use. In Woodinville, I've championed the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) program to encourage below-market rents in new developments, and I support ongoing partnerships with ARCH to preserve and grow affordable housing options across the region.

We're also investigating how underused public land—such as city-owned parcels or underbuilt lots—can be transformed into community-serving housing. Public land should serve public good, especially when market forces are pricing out workers, seniors, and young families.

Implementation requires political will, cross-sector collaboration, and transparency. I bring data, clarity, and community engagement to the table—and push back when obstructionists try to stall progress. We can't solve a housing crisis with outdated zoning or fear-based politics. We need proactive, proven tools, and I'm committed to delivering them.

**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?**



Everyone deserves to feel safe walking, biking, or rolling through their community. That's why I've prioritized updating Woodinville's Transportation Plan to put safety, equity, and multimodal access at the center of how we move through our city.

We've focused heavily on designing safer routes to schools, parks, and trails—ensuring kids and families can navigate our city without relying solely on cars. Our updated plan includes improved pedestrian crossings, traffic calming, bike infrastructure, and connections to regional transit.

Street safety isn't just about infrastructure—it's about access and equity. When we build streets for everyone, we build a stronger, more connected community. My approach includes listening to residents, using data to prioritize high-risk areas, and ensuring that every transportation investment reflects our values: safety, sustainability, and inclusion.

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

Public safety means more than just policing—it means building a community where people are connected, supported, and safe in every sense. Over the next five years, I'll continue to prioritize a holistic, prevention-focused approach rooted in mental health, housing stability, and restorative practices.

I led the creation of Woodinville's Safe Streets and Stronger Community Connections framework, which emphasizes proactive safety strategies over punitive responses. That includes expanding health and human services grants, which are already funding shelter beds and direct aid for our unhoused neighbors.

I also support restorative justice programs that help communities heal while reducing repeat offenses. And I'll continue backing programs like the Therapeutic Response Unit and CORE Connect to ensure trained professionals—not just law enforcement—respond to behavioral health crises.

Actualizing this vision means stable funding, ongoing regional partnerships, and political leadership that prioritizes people, not fear. Public safety is strongest when the whole community has a stake in it—and that's the kind of Woodinville I'm working for.



## **What have you done/will you do to increase collaboration at city hall and ensure all residents are included?**

Since taking office in 2022, I've led a transformation in how Woodinville engages with its residents. I co-founded our first Community Engagement Subcommittee, developed a comprehensive Community Engagement Plan, and helped secure funding to hire a full-time outreach coordinator—all with the goal of making government more accessible and inclusive.

We now host monthly listening sessions with residents and local businesses, engage at community events, and provide direct access to staff and elected officials. These efforts ensure we're not just collecting feedback—we're building relationships.

We're also redesigning our city website to improve transparency and make it easier for residents to find the information they need, when they need it. Whether it's housing policy, public meetings, or parks programming, access shouldn't be a barrier to participation.

Inclusion isn't a checkbox—it's a commitment. I believe local government works best when everyone can engage, be heard, and help shape the future of our community. That's the culture I've been building in Woodinville from day one.

## **What actions should the city take to address the climate crisis?**

I'm proud to be advancing Woodinville's first-ever Climate Action Plan—because cities, even small ones, play a critical role in reducing emissions and building resilience.

We're eliminating Roundup from city maintenance and moving toward Bee City certification, signaling our commitment to ecological health. We're working with local experts to create pollinator pathways using primarily native plants—restoring habitats while educating the public.



On mobility, we're expanding sidewalks and our trail system to connect more of Woodinville by foot and bike. We're also piloting Lime scooters and e-bikes to reduce car dependence and provide accessible multimodal options. These investments help cut emissions, improve health, and make our city more livable.

I believe in local action with regional impact. Every step we take—from transportation to pollination—must be rooted in sustainability and equity. That's how we'll meet the climate moment and build a healthier future for all.

### **What is your financial sustainability plan for the city?**

Woodinville's financial health depends on a strong local economy—over 50% of our city budget comes from sales tax. That's why I've dedicated my first term to building direct partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, small businesses, and regional allies like the Port of Seattle.

We've created Woodinville's first-ever Economic Development Plan and hired our first full-time economic development staff member to lead it. This strategic investment will help us grow a resilient, business-friendly environment—particularly for our vibrant small business community.

Supporting business growth means we can maintain essential services without overburdening residents. I'm proud that Woodinville hasn't raised the city's portion of property tax since 2017—years before I was elected—and I've worked to keep it that way. Strong sales tax revenue helps us avoid property tax increases and supports housing affordability.

My financial sustainability plan centers on long-term planning, business support, and avoiding shortsighted cuts. A thriving local economy is the key to stable city services—and to keeping Woodinville affordable and livable for everyone.



**What are your top transportation goals for the city, and how will you get them done? What is your plan to improve walkability, bike safety, and accessibility in your community?**

My top transportation goal is to create a connected, safe, and accessible city where people can move easily—whether on foot, by bike, scooter, transit, or car. That’s why I’ve prioritized updating Woodinville’s Transportation Plan to focus on safety, mobility, and multimodal access.

We’re expanding our sidewalk network, filling critical trail gaps, and upgrading bike infrastructure to connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, and businesses. I’m also leading efforts to pilot Lime scooters and bikes—giving residents and visitors more options for short, car-free trips.

Walkability and bike safety aren’t just transportation issues—they’re equity and climate issues too. I advocate for complete streets, traffic calming in key corridors, and designs that prioritize vulnerable road users, including children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Getting it done means aligning our policies, budget, and partnerships—at the local and regional level. And it means staying focused on outcomes, not just plans. A safe, accessible Woodinville is within reach—and I’m working every day to build it.

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

Being unhoused should never be criminalized—but we also can’t turn a blind eye to unsafe, sprawling encampments. My approach is rooted in compassion and results, not soundbites or stigma.

I don’t believe tent cities are a sustainable or humane solution—for residents, for unhoused individuals, or for public health. That’s why I’ve prioritized investing in health and human services, regional partnerships, and shelter access to address root causes, not just symptoms.



Woodinville now provides direct support for shelter beds and wraparound services through our human services grants, and I continue to support programs like CORE Connect and the Therapeutic Response Unit to meet people where they are, with care—not cuffs.

Policies must be paired with services. Sweeps without housing options just shift people around. But doing nothing fails everyone too. We need balanced, evidence-based approaches that reduce visible homelessness while helping people stabilize and transition into permanent housing.

I'll continue to lead with compassion and accountability—because real safety comes from care, housing, and dignity.

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

Woodinville's Comprehensive Plan is evolving, but it still doesn't go far enough in meeting our state-mandated housing goals or ensuring true affordability and inclusion. I've pushed for more aggressive rezoning near transit and services, and I'll continue advocating for zoning reforms that allow missing middle housing—like duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes—in areas currently limited to single-family use.

These housing types are key to affordability, walkability, and allowing people to live near where they work, yet they're often blocked by outdated zoning. We need to make room for families, seniors, and workers across the income spectrum.

During my next term, I'll also work to better align the Comp Plan with our Housing and Climate Action Plans—embedding equity, access, and sustainability into every land use decision.

And I'll keep leading on community engagement—ensuring renters, working families, and historically excluded voices help shape the plan, not just react to it.





The Comp Plan shouldn't just be a checklist. It should be a blueprint for the inclusive, resilient future we want to build.