



Sam Hem Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Everett City Council Position 1

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

1. Affordable Housing & Responsible Growth – Ensure Everett grows in a way that benefits all residents by expanding affordable housing, enforcing labor standards, and supporting housing options for working families.
2. Public Safety & Community Investment – Advocate for a comprehensive approach to safety that includes emergency services, mental health support, and youth programs.
3. Job Creation & Economic Opportunity – Strengthen workforce development, prioritize local hiring, and ensure city contracts support union labor and family-wage jobs.

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?

As a labor leader, I understand the link between stable housing and strong communities. I will support zoning reforms and public investments to increase multi-family and missing-middle housing. Community outreach must be transparent, inclusive, and proactive. While I will listen to concerns, I will prioritize equitable development that reflects Everett's housing goals and prevents displacement. I've



seen firsthand how labor-backed developments can succeed when there's a shared commitment to community and economic justice.

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 implementing progressive business taxes, real estate excise taxes for high-end developments, and closing tax loopholes that benefit the few at the expense of the many. Rather than cutting services that working people rely on, I would advocate for equitable revenue solutions to ensure Everett meets its infrastructure, housing, and safety needs.

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?

Adopting strong Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) and expanding public housing are key strategies. PLAs ensure fair wages, prevent delays, and keep money in the local economy. I would also promote zoning that encourages affordable housing near transit. My experience advocating for standardized PLA language across Washington positions me to lead these efforts effectively.

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?

We need a Vision Zero strategy that includes safer crosswalks, speed calming infrastructure, better lighting, and protected bike lanes. I support increased



investment in traffic safety, particularly in underserved neighborhoods. I would collaborate with transit, public works, and community groups to identify high-risk corridors and prioritize solutions that protect pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike.

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

I believe in a balanced approach—investing in first responders while expanding alternatives like behavioral health response teams. Public safety also means addressing root causes: poverty, addiction, and lack of opportunity. I would champion collaboration between police, mental health professionals, and community groups, and ensure accountability and transparency across departments.

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

Throughout my career, I've built coalitions between labor, elected officials, and community organizations to win policy changes. As councilmember, I will host town halls in every neighborhood, establish regular labor and neighborhood roundtables, and ensure that city decisions reflect input from Everett's diverse communities—not just those with the loudest voices.

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

Transition to a fully electrified city fleet, incentivize green construction, and invest in public transit infrastructure. I'll push for climate policies that create union jobs while reducing emissions—such as building retrofits, solar projects, and clean energy transition pathways for trades workers.



What is your financial sustainability plan for the city?

Support progressive revenue options, align city investments with long-term growth goals, and strengthen local economic development through union jobs and infrastructure investment. I would conduct a thorough review of city contracts to maximize local labor participation and ensure we aren't outsourcing public dollars at the expense of our workforce or our budget.

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?

1. Prioritize walkable, transit-oriented development.
2. Expand sidewalks, protected bike lanes, and ADA-compliant infrastructure.
3. Increase Everett Transit funding and improve frequency on major routes.

I'll work closely with transportation planners and advocate for state and federal grants. My leadership on infrastructure projects and coalition-building experience will help ensure broad support and strategic execution.

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

No. Sweeps are ineffective, often displacing people without addressing the root causes of homelessness. I support a housing-first model that includes transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, and comprehensive wraparound services—including access to rehabilitation programs for those struggling with



addiction. To effectively address the addiction crisis, we must invest in evidence-based treatment, harm reduction strategies, and long-term recovery services. I will advocate for policies that treat our unhoused neighbors with dignity, prioritize public health, and offer real pathways to stability, safety, and recovery.

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

The plan must more clearly prioritize affordable housing, green infrastructure, and equitable access to resources across neighborhoods. I'd push to codify stronger labor standards in development projects, add accountability benchmarks for climate action, and ensure economic equity is embedded in all growth policies.