



Sarah Arndt Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Woodinville City Council Position 5

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

My top three priorities for this term are a continuation of the work I've done on increasing multimodal transportation options, adding affordable housing and increasing access to parks and recreation. I have decided to run for re-election because I am proud of the projects and changes that have started, and I want to see this work through rather than be overturned. While we have received funding for transportation and trail infrastructure, and safe routes to school, it is not yet built. Affordable housing became a major city goal in our strategic planning, but we haven't completed the zoning updates to lock it in for the future. We have added to the city's protected greenspace with the largest city park yet, but we are still in the planning stage for park and recreation offerings for our densest downtown neighborhoods and need to secure additional funding to make these projects a reality. Government work is slow, and I want to see the city continue to move forward on the things that will make it livable for everyone for years to come.

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 believe that a combination of inclusionary zoning policies as well as some streamlining of permitting processes and fees for affordable housing will help the city add more diverse options for families of all incomes. While I do firmly believe



that public engagement is an important part of the process of adding STEP housing to communities, I believe that it should start with community education well-before any specific projects are considered. It is important to listen to the community and incorporate STEP housing in ways that make sense locally, but it is crucial that public engagement doesn't become a veto process on good projects.

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?

As a city councilmember, the local options for raising revenue are very limited, but I do support our state representatives pursuing progressive revenue in the light of significant federal cuts to innumerable vital programs. Without more revenue sources, WA state, and all of its jurisdictions will not be able to support our most vulnerable communities or maintain vital infrastructure. These revenue sources must be progressive because we cannot keep taking the most from those of who have the least in our community or simply piling more on to our property tax bill. This could include tax on intangible wealth, large corporations, or even examining a state income tax.

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?

Building costs are very high right now, which adds to the cost of housing. This is because of high costs of land, labor, materials, and of course the cost of permits and delays from city processes. As a city leader there are very few things I can do about



some of these costs, so I believe that in order to help keep the cost of housing as low as possible we need to make the process of building simpler and less expensive by streamlining permitting and removing barriers to allowable development to decrease uncertainty for anyone looking to build a home.

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?

First, I am working to add sidewalks and safe crossings to our school zones and neighborhoods to ensure that pedestrians have safe methods of moving around our town. Second, I support adding Traffic Cameras to school zones to slow vehicles to safer speeds around vulnerable road users. Finally, I support new road improvements that prioritize safe design which we know is very effective in protecting all types of users.

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

I believe that Woodinville has very effective public safety services. We have low numbers of crimes against people, with property crime (particularly retail theft) being one of the most pressing issues in our community. To combat this, we have called together a taskforce of our local police, city staff, and business owners to find ways to systematically address these problems as a community. We have also been able to add core connect services through our city police and fire service. This provides alternative responders, resource access, and some case management for crisis calls and other non-criminal emergencies. However, I think that both the public and our first responders need more training on what Behavioral Health resources exist in our community and how to better utilize them.



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

One of my earliest actions on council was approving a new staff member to work on community engagement and DEI. Since we have filled this position, we have been able to significantly increase our engagement with all parts of our community through participation at community events, newsletters, social media and direct engagement with the community. Next, we are looking to improve the city's website and access to council meeting through improvements to our technology. We have also ensured that community engagement is part of every major project from the beginning. All of this is aimed to make it easier than ever for people to participate and stay informed, so that our city's actions are reflective of our community values.

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

As part of my work on the council during my first term I helped pass Woodinville's first ever climate action plan, which incorporates King County's goals into its framework. This gave the city very specific goals and actions to undertake to meet our greenhouse targets in the next few decades, which we can track for accountability. This work was further incorporated into the recent comprehensive plan updates which included a section on climate, and which specified how our built environment can move toward a more resilient and greener future. This includes adding density through middle housing options, increasing multimodal transportation infrastructure in the Eastrail corridor, and increasing the capacity for our stormwater systems to handle more intense weather systems. While these are excellent goals, it will take continued focus and political will to push through the



specific zoning changes, and infrastructure investments needed to see these items through to completion.

What is your financial sustainability plan for the city?

The City of Woodinville has a balanced budget now, and we have been able to do this because of robust sales tax dollars and the success we have had in bringing grant funding to the community for larger projects, like the Eastrail corridor, that support the region. In order to sustain our budgets, we need to continue to support our wine industry and retail business and ensure that we are actively pursuing partnerships with our government partners to finance the big investments that we need to regional transportation infrastructure.

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 goals for the city are increasing multimodal transportation options, extending the grid roads in our downtown, and increasing transit connections between Woodinville and the rest of the region. The Eastrail corridor offers a major multimodal connection to the region, but we must invest in sidewalks connecting our neighborhoods to our downtown so that more residents can take advantage of this and make the connections to nearby employers and transit. Investments that prioritize moving people rather than moving cars are both more sustainable and more equitable in a community where over a quarter of residents do not drive. Adding additional roads to our downtown will help the city manage our growth and traffic flow through the city.



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, I do not support camping bans or sweeps. North King County has the highest ratio of unsheltered individuals per shelter bed in the county. We need to make investments in emergency shelters to provide people somewhere safe where they can go and not waste our resources pushing them into hiding and punishing them for being homeless.

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

Our city's comprehensive plan provides a very high-level road map for guiding our growth and land use. I think that the work moving forward is in the details of what development can and should look like in the newly rezoned areas of the city. We need to think critically about how to achieve our goals in a way that builds our community and increases livability. We are currently investigating the best policies for achieving mandatory affordability across the city. We also need to do the work to imagine what bike-oriented development along the Eastrail corridor could look like in the city.