



Zev Cook Urbanist Questionnaire 2025

Tacoma City Council, Position 5

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

Raise the minimum wage, tax the rich, and build permanently affordable social housing.

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?

Similarly to policy I helped support in Seattle I believe we need to create a social housing developer to start to build permanently affordable options that will keep families living in the communities where they work. Primarily resulting from the housing affordability crisis, the city failed on its response to homelessness. Since passing a municipal camping ban the city has wasted millions on encampment sweeps, buying boulders, and renting fences. These tactics are wasteful, harmful, and clearly have not done anything to solve homelessness in the city while pushing populations deeper into residential neighborhoods. This crisis won't go away overnight but I believe that we can start to address the problem by investing in data backed housing first programs and permanent supportive housing with wrap around services. As a candidate I hold a background in community organizing and will work hard to engage the community around these strategies. With housing insecurity



being such a deeply felt issue in addition to putting in the necessary effort on engagement, I believe we can start to build community consensus around policies that will help to uplift the entire 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?

I support a progressive payroll tax on incomes starting at \$200k as well as expansions to the capitol gains 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?

Beyond my core platform points, which are aimed at working towards lasting affordability, I believe we can also address price increases by making our buses fast and free, as well as opening city-owned grocery stores. These stores would use city property and would not have to pay rent, taxes, or make a profit, allowing these savings to be passed on to the community to help make groceries affordable for working families and wipe out food deserts.

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 to create more dense and walkable neighborhoods while adding additional bike and bus lanes.

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

In the last four years the city has spent nearly \$3 million to get rid of 4 TPD officers, and is set to waste millions more on shotspotter technology that has been a proven failure in other cities. We need to raise accountability standards to prevent waste and invest in a root cause strategy. In the last month alone we've lost 3 kids to gang violence. We need to fund training and para positions to make sure our kids have the support they need. We should also fully fund Tacoma's fire department and non-police crisis response team.

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

Just this month our city lost 300 shelter beds to federal cuts. We can start to close these gaps by instituting progressive taxation at the local level.

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

The camping ban has been harmful wasteful and ineffective. I would work to repeal it.



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

The planning commission estimates that our city will need to add an additional 5,000 units a year to meet projected demand. Recent zoning reform is projected to account for only 700–800 of these units, and there is no serious plan to address affordability in the 30–80% AMI range. We need to work towards meeting these gaps by expanding renter protections and making strong public investments in social housing development.