



Magnolia Chamber of Commerce City Council Questionnaire

Seattle City Council Candidate Name: Isabelle Kerner

Seattle City Council District: Seattle City Council District 7

Contact information: Isabelle Kerner
(206) 271-1560
www.kernerforcouncil.com
Isabelle@KernerForCouncil.com
Kerner for Council
PO Box 257 PMB 09096
Olympia, WA 98507

Hello City Council Candidates: To provide a valuable service to our members and the Magnolia community, the Magnolia Chamber of Commerce seeks information about your candidacy for the Seattle City Council. Your concise answers to the following questions will allow the Chamber membership and other engaged community members to make an informed judgment about your candidacy. As a reminder, the Magnolia Chamber does not endorse candidates, provide financial assistance, or provide campaign support other than sharing information. Your answers will be posted on our website, discovermagnolia.org, unedited and publicly available to website visitors.

Table of Contents

1. Coordination with District 6/7 Counterpart..... 2

2. Representation for Magnolia..... 3

3. Coordination with the Mayor’s office, departments, and commissions..... 3

4. Public Safety..... 4

5. Access to Public Funding 5

6. Looking Ahead..... 6

7. Imagine it is halfway through your term in office..... 7

1. Coordination with District 6/7 Counterpart

The Magnolia peninsula was recently split into two Council districts. How specifically do you plan to work with your counterpart in District 6/7 to ensure coordination of efforts and adequate, cohesive representation of Magnolia’s business community and residents? This includes but is not limited to the Magnolia peninsula’s transportation access, the power grid and aging electrical infrastructure, growth, its impact on transportation in and out of the Magnolia peninsula, zoning and developments in Interbay, and emergency response access.

I am well aware of the recent re-districting of District 7 and District 6. I would work with the District 6 Candidate — whether it was the incumbent or someone else, to ensure that the issues facing Magnolia as a whole are addressed.

While half of Magnolia is in District 7, the last time I ran in 2019 there was a lot of promises to rebuild the Magnolia bridge—which as we know at the end of its lifespan.

At the same time, there was talk and plans about Fort Lawton—but I am not sure what has been going on with that and there are some Magnolia Residents feel very strongly and preserving it as a historical site as opposed to turning it into another affordable - supportive housing center with a date of ‘TBD’ the last time I checked.

So my approach would be more of a ‘*meet me halfway*’ approach, be open to negotiation. and compromise. Aside from just representing District 7, I was born and raised in Seattle.

I care about Seattle as a City and there is nothing that would stop me from working with members of other districts or Leaders of other Departments to ensure representation of the City of a Seattle as a whole is represented. Every voice counts just like every vote counts.

In order to work it truly needs to be a Team Effort. This will mean a lot of collaboration from other Members on the Council as well as the Executive Office and other City Departments.

At the same time, we need to ensure all elected officials are held personally and professionally accountable to the promises they make to their Constituents during campaigns when they then fail to deliver any results during their tenure.

2. Representation for Magnolia

Reflecting on the redistricting process and what you know about the constituents in the district, **how will you represent the interests of Magnolia? Where will you seek constituent input, and how accessible will you be to constituents' concerns and issues?**

It is absolutely critical to involve residents in the government's decision-making process -- especially at the local level. There are a lot of ways to do this.

In regard to representation of Magnolia, I know that for District 7 — the Magnolia Bridge is still an issue that needs to be addressed and was heavily discussed in 2019. Nothing has been done. I also know that there are issues with emergency services, traffic, and access. I am a pretty accessible person. As I mentioned 4 years ago, my phone number is and has been public and I do actually answer or call back.

I would allow for a poll online tracked by voter ID or Democracy Voucher Participant number I would allow for phone calls as my number is and has been public. I would handle issues by restoring basic principles.

It makes sense to me to increase access and ability for people to weigh in on certain issues that are not able to attend the forums in person or via Zoom by having a poll that is linked or related to 'Democracy Voucher Participant Number' and/or 'Voter ID' to streamline the process of concerns and issues for those that are unable to attend in person these events so that I am truly representing the public and constituents.

My votes should reflect the people and my sole commitment is to the people that work, live, and own businesses in Seattle both as a District—and as a City as a whole.

3. Coordination with the Mayor's office, departments, and commissions

What do you expect your role to be with the mayor's office and related administrative departments and commissions to help increase the competitiveness of small businesses, such as fiscal policy, public safety, land use regulations, business incentives, and barriers to timely permitting, as examples?

I would have no problem working with the Mayor's Office but looking at the City's flow chart—which has had some changes since 2019; there needs to be a much better way to address permits. When looking at the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC)—there are so many laws and rules we don't or won't even enforce.

It is my understanding that the purpose of permitting and zoning was meant to ensure buildings were up to code. But in my opinion, the permitting process has become so bureaucratic that it might make more sense to streamline certain

projects by getting input from Neighborhoods and working directly with the Seattle Fire Department (SFD).

I support small and local businesses throughout our region. A lot of these businesses have unfortunately had to shut down. I think increasing the competition of small businesses needs to start with bringing them back.

From what I have heard, at least in Downtown, the businesses open are sort of acting as a *'monopoly'* due to the fact that there are just so many closed businesses there are not a ton of options.

I think the incentives the Council could provide in regard to business incentives are endless. I have done a lot of research on this. For the area of Magnolia, I think one issue is that we do have pretty significant interest groups that cater to *'tourists'* and *'tourism'*.

In my 27 years of lived experience, Downtown did not used to be like this. Businesses located in the Downtown corridor didn't just rely on tourism. While they may have also benefited from the *'Tourist Season'* — they also relied on people that lived in the Downtown area all year long.

In 2019, 4 years ago when I first ran for election for Seattle City Council in District 7, there were already businesses closing due to crime, tax increases (LID), now even more. And this was before the pandemic.

4. Public Safety

How do you assess our current situation on public safety in neighborhoods and business districts in Magnolia? What actions would you take to enhance public safety, and how would you work with and support the Seattle Police and Fire Departments, community organizations, and other stakeholders to reach these goals?

The City of Seattle as I currently see it doesn't care at all about public safety. And I am not talking about SPD or SFD. I am saying that the current people that are on the City Council and either resigning or are running for re-election are more motivated by money, power, and influence than anyone's safety. I was a bit shocked to learn SFD now wears bullet proof vests. That itself shows the state of the City of Seattle.

I already take a different approach. It's called compassion and caring about people. Establishing rapport. Building trust. Simple respect and understanding. What we have now from some specific current Council Members is either stupidity, enabling, or public corruption -- perhaps a combination of one or all three.

At the same time, I don't think that any particular policy is going to help the Seattle Police Department (SPD). I would like to see some type of liaison between the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) and SPD.

The City of Seattle has a lot of policies in the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) and those policies only work if there is a way to enforce them. Right now I think it needs to be a group effort that also involves public-private partnerships while also inspiring the next generation to join SPD or SFD instead of gangs.

I think that Seattle at this point is just at a really critical level that in 2019 I thought was the bottom. I also believe that our public safety providers are doing their best, but that '*politics*' should play a much lower role in '*chain of command*' than it currently does.

In other words, I don't think Seattle can just 'write its way out of the history book' with —policies our Elected Officials have now created in the last four years. I mean sirens, gunshots, people that appear dead after being revived by SFD, it just gets to you. It starts to affect everyone in some way or another. It is really sad.

One policy I would support is an independent investigation to ensure there is no public corruption at any level. No kickback contracts. None of that. Being a Leader is not the same as being a '*Fundraiser*' and that seems to be all our current City Council incumbents running for re-election care about.

5. Access to Public Funding

The next ten years present unprecedented opportunities to access federal funds through the Inflation Reduction Act, the American Rescue Plan, and other programs. **How will you coordinate with the Office of Intergovernmental Relations or other departments to enable Magnolia's businesses and residents to benefit from access to these funds for affordable capital (subsidies/grants, loans, guarantees) and infrastructure, including climate-friendly retrofits and development?**

From what I have heard—while there are a lot of available opportunities for Grants and Federal Funding, I believe there is a lot of money lost in just the distribution process. So even with a \$200 million dollar grant from the Federal Government, the processing and delivering of such grants can end up being as low as \$2 million dollars by the time it has reached the local businesses.

I also think there needs to be more clear understanding of these opportunities which are unfortunately hard to navigate, underutilized, and just the application process itself is so time-consuming it does not shock me that some businesses give up after getting rejected from 1-5 grants.

These applications take a lot of time. And personally, we need to have some policy in place to reduce '*conflicts of interest*'.

In regard to infrastructure and development, retrofits— I just learned about something called ‘Enterprise Partnerships’ - basically similar to a rent-to-own option for people my age range or in another age range so that they can accumulate and build wealth that home owners do while also benefiting the 'owners' or 'partners' of a property willing to participate in of such a partnership.

I had not heard of this term until I asked a question at the King County Realtor’s forum. I fully support public-private partnerships that are and can be win-win solutions.

I also would love to see more local fairs supported and ‘*pre-funded*’ by the City to get local businesses back to where they were at and to attract a sense of community in Downtown, Magnolia area.

To sum it up, we need to upgrade our infrastructure. We also need better planning before bike lanes and new bus lanes are just put up and implemented. But first, we need to address public safety and public camping and everything that has come with it and led to other negative effects.

6. Looking Ahead

We experience and hear consistent concerns about aging infrastructure across Seattle, such as bridges, potholes, electrical wiring, and drainage systems. **How will you work with others to put Seattle on a better path to upgrade these areas before these essential items become urgent or even emergencies?**

I would propose mandatory earthquake preparedness drills and training. There needs to be immediate emphasizing things like the Magnolia Bridge. I would support CPR training for citizens. I would support extending HAM Radio license as being an extra credit in public schools. We need more emergency volunteers. We also need basic understanding of code compliance and up to date information in the event of a disaster so if something does happen to the power grid, or the electrical systems— people know that in the event of a major emergency, the only way to communicate is by radio.

I support no more bike lanes until there is a plan. I wouldn’t rule out literally making a visual model of the entire city as a prototype on a table before just throwing in these random special interest projects that pop up and sometimes cause even more safety problems and confusion.

I would stop investing in buses until the buses are safe, there are enough drivers, and there are serious consequences for publicly consuming drugs on buses. Now even drivers are becoming ill from secondhand exposure to drugs.

I would support mandating the users and companies that supply these new ‘scooters’ are fined each and every time they are not returned to what should be a drop off location. I also believe we need to reinforce mandatory helmets.

The bike groups might kill me for this but we had bike trails when I was a kid. I rode bikes all the time with my dad and sister. I have no idea when we decided to squeeze all this into arterial roads.

They are for rich people that own 10-15k bikes that often refuse to follow the rules of the road, or wear helmets. The scooters are just for Tourism and can be useful for some if you have proper knowledge of how the City works. A lot of us locals here in Downtown just stay off the main roads because of how hazardous they have become for cars, buses, bikes, pedestrians. A lot of take alleys now instead because ironically—they are safer.

7. Imagine it is halfway through your term in office.

What three things will you be most proud to point to as evidence of your representation of Magnolia’s interests?

- Visible and data driven real results reducing crime, public camping, and cleaner streets.
- Replacing the Magnolia Bridge before it falls down or there is another Earthquake.
- Hiring more Police Officers from all backgrounds and an avenue that actually enforcement of the existing laws because even prosecution does not mean that our County Executive who runs the King County jail will accept people on simple or even gross misdemeanors.
- Actually acting on a solution, one of which I proposed in 2019 and proving that results have taken place.
- Better communication between City Departments.
- Feedback from the public.

I am clearly not your average Candidate. Running my own business and working with various sides of the criminal justice system, along with other cases involving everything from missing people to civil cases, and expert witness work— I am a lot more informed than I was four years ago.

The purpose of this Position is to represent the public. I would even put on the table that if in two years I have not been able to accomplish anything, I would probably have my constituents vote on whether they want me to stay.

I am also a very transparent and honest person. Credibility, accountability, honesty are pillars of the profession I work in as the owner of an Investigation Agency. If elected, and if make a mistake or if a proposed solution turned out to not work out so well, I will be the first to admit it and acknowledge it.

Please respond to this questionnaire by June 22, 2023, by emailing a .pdf file of your replies to Jason Thibeaux, Executive Director, Magnolia Chamber of Commerce, at

Jason@discovermagnolia.org.

In addition, if you have questions or concerns, please call Jason at 206.618.1589 or Ann Goos, Magnolia Chamber Board member and Chair, Community Engagement Committee, at agoos@seanet.com or 206.465.5136.

The questions and your unedited answers will be featured on the Magnolia Chamber of Commerce website and in a newsletter to the more than 450 Chamber members representing businesses and residents of the 6th and 7th City Council districts. So again, if possible, please send your replies in a .pdf document so our members can easily access your campaign's positions.

Thank you for your participation and your candidacy.