



## 2019 City Council District 7 Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you your interest in seeking public office and for taking the time to fill out the Downtown Seattle Association Candidate Questionnaire. For years, the Downtown Seattle Association has engaged candidates running for public office regarding their priorities and thoughts on key issues that are important to downtown stakeholders and our 1,700 corporate, nonprofit and residential members. As a candidate, you will be evaluated on your responses to the questions below. Once you have completed and returned the questionnaire along with your resume, you will be invited to participate in an in-person interview--the final component of the evaluation. Your responses to the questions below will be summarized as part of a candidate scorecard that will be posted online and distributed to all DSA members.

### DSA Background:

Established in 1958, the Downtown Seattle Association (DSA) is a nonprofit membership organization whose mission is to create a healthy, vibrant downtown. DSA advocates on behalf of business, nonprofit, arts and residential interests to create a downtown where everyone can live, work, shop and play.

DSA envisions downtown as everybody's neighborhood – a global and growing 24/7 center for business, residents and visitors that is vibrant, welcoming, clean and safe. Downtown's collection of 12 neighborhoods should be easy to get to and through, providing an accessible regional center of culture, commerce and innovation. With Commute Seattle and the Metropolitan Improvement District, DSA manages programs that directly impact how people get to and experience downtown.

### Questions:

1. Looking at the current City Council, on what issues would you say it has been particularly effective and, in your opinion, where has it been less effective? Why?

There are not many issues I would say that the current City Council has been particularly effective at solving. I feel that the lack of progress and implementation of successful policies and practices can be attributed to lack of creativity, inability to compromise, lack of full understanding of these issues, and the explosion of private contracts which obstruct the public's ability to trace where their tax money is going.

While most would refer to Seattle's biggest problem as a 'homelessness crisis', I cannot adopt this terminology because it implies that this issue is only about housing. While housing is an important variable in this equation, I can say with absolute certainty it is not the only contributing factor. There are many variable and to solve the problem, we need to target and address all variables at the same time, at the same place.

Homelessness has become so conflated with housing, that I believe it has confused the public into thinking there is a shortage of housing in Seattle. After the City realized that creating more housing only made the problem worse, the city adopted the phrase 'affordable housing' and it became an 'affordable housing crisis'. However, the developers don't have to pay the same property taxes as other owners in the area. Other owners in the area saw their property taxes skyrocket. This ensured that the City would have an increase in funds retained from property taxes that would compensate for what the developers don't have to pay.

Obviously, this solution failed because it only addressed the housing variable to combat increased growth, density, and 'homelessness'. First came the minimum wage increase. Then Seattle paid the highest wage, but was too expensive to live in. Now most people commute. They work here, but can't afford to live here. Then came the bus lanes and the bike lanes. Down went the viaduct. The City didn't know what to do with it, so they decided to fill the Battery Tunnels. Now, they want this streetcar along with a mobile RV to help make shooting up heroine safe. The City came up with all these very strange 'solutions' but didn't keep in mind the big picture or consider the impact these changes would have on the system and our City as a whole.

As far as the 'homelessness crisis' goes, I will refer to the issue as the Urban Camping Crisis as I feel that is really what it is. It is also a much broader, less divisive term that makes it clear that this is not a one-size does not fit all issue and therefore should not be treated as such.

2. More than 52,000 daily transit riders from across all seven City Council districts use Third Avenue daily to get to and from their

jobs in downtown Seattle. While Third Avenue acts as a front door to our downtown, it's also the epicenter of the Seattle's largest outdoor drug market. A recent report commissioned by DSA and neighborhood district partners has outlined a large amount of criminal activity across the city, including property crime, assaults and robberies, is being perpetrated by a small number of prolific offenders who cycle through the criminal justice system. Have you read the report? If elected to the Seattle City Council, what policies might you pursue to curb property crime and address these issues in downtown in order to make our streets safer for all? How might you work with your elected colleagues to enact these policies?

I have definitely read the report. In October of 2017 I was attacked by a violent repeat offender. I never got some of their names because the police only named two in their report. An independent witness stepped in, pulled the men off me, and chased them down. I remember thinking there is no way the police will ever catch these men. Then, I found they did. I was extremely relieved. The men were stopped by several officers while urinating in the middle of the sidewalk with an open bottle of Tequila in their pocket. (all on video)

They admitted to attacking the independent witness and myself, yet the police chose to release them before even coming to the scene where I was waiting in an ambulance. They did not run a background check on anyone. They did not follow proper protocol or SPD policies either. They misclassified the case on their GO database as nothing a disturbance—a practice I now know they do frequently. The only injury mentioned in the report was how one of the men broke a nail.

I did a background check on the individuals listed. One of them has more violent assaults than I can even list on a few pages. Despite having multiple DUI's, these repeat offenders drive a black BMW and are drug suppliers (this is discovered from an urban camper who is familiar with the individuals). Within two months of this assault, the same repeat offender was arrested twice for assault and another time for DUI/Hit and Run. None of the men are in jail. They go in, they come right back out.

There is a notion amongst the public that we need more police officers. I can tell you directly from my experience that the SPD is one of the most elusive departments of this City. It does not matter how many police officers we have if these officers see themselves as above the law and operate under an Office of Professional Accountability

(OPA) that does not have the ability to oversee them. In every OPA interview, there is an SPD guild member sitting in and listening to make sure every officer has the same story if there is a complaint. I think that is one of the reasons that so many good officers are leaving.

There is another part to this. The police respond and write the report. That is step one. Then, the report goes to the City Attorney's office and the City Attorney decides which cases to prosecute. It is more profitable for them to prosecute cases that come with high fines, tickets, and other charges than it is to prosecute violent crimes, drug-related crimes, or property crimes. The City Attorney's office also created a drug-diversion program which has essentially made it impossible for judges to sentence and penalize violent offenders. Judges must go off what the District Attorney says and the District Attorney goes on what the SPD report says. If we do not have good police officers that actually protect us, it will not matter how many we have.

I would work with my colleagues to address this issue by ensuring we are all committed to leading Seattle by ensuring all departments are on the same page. Departments must all be more transparent. They need to operate more collaboratively and less independently. Every department needs to be on the same page. Departments and officials must compromise when its necessary, but more importantly departments must stand united and committed to resolving the problems we all clearly see.

All public officials need to take responsibility when they make a mistake. We all make mistakes. For some reason the City would rather waste everyone's time and money pointing fingers to evade responsibility than just admit they made a mistake or their plan failed. We learn through failing only when we acknowledge it.

The City Council needs to put our political affiliations aside until we create a plan we are all supportive of that will work. This will be difficult if we elect more bureaucrats into City Council. They are great at talking, but they just don't get anything done. We need team of A players who are really talented and solution-oriented in a variety of ways. I think that if we elect a team of A players who truly represent the diversity amongst this City, we will have no problem working with each other because many of us have never had that chance before.

3. Homelessness continues to be the top issue facing Seattle, yet we have made little progress toward housing our homeless population. In your estimation, what is the City's role in addressing this crisis?

## Where would you spend your energy, leadership and resources to have the greatest impact?

As mentioned, I'm calling it an Urban Camping Crisis. Here is why:

I have been visiting every one of these camps I can find alone. As it turns out, I'm not a huge threat to them. They trust me. I don't give them any money, food, or water and they know that. They also know I am running for City Council which is why so many of them trust me. No one else running is talking to them or trying to understand the problem from their perspective. They know it best. The reason I go down to these camps against the advice of others is because I know that they need to be part of the solution in order for it to work in the long term. The urban campers are not all the same. They have different backgrounds, interests, talents, stories, and many of them are heavily addicted to meth and heroine. Addicted or not, the majority of them are incredibly intelligent. What you see on the streets is half what is actually going on. Some can unlock any electronic device. Some know how hack the power grid. Some can hack the water supply. Some of the camps have booby traps. You have to know what to look for. The traps are not meant for the common citizen but for the other campers who steal from them. Not all the camp groups get along.

I have also been to a few of Seattle's emergency overnight shelters. I had to pretend to be 'homeless' and my urban camping friends told me exactly what I needed to say just to get in for 5 minutes and see for myself what it looked like on the inside. I can say that the conditions of some of these shelters are hardly less horrific than the camps we see every day. You also have to line up, bring all your things, and then get out first thing the next morning. It's exhausting and not all of them are motivated, hopeful, or inspired.

Here is the plan.

I am going to describe it the same way I would plan any project. Seattle is the canvas. Here are the materials:

1. 550-650 Shipping Containers
2. 23-27 plots of Vacant/Underutilized city-owned land (parcels mostly located where the urban campers and shipping containers already are (i.e. industrial district, side of i-5 and i-90, etc.).
3. Kiosks
4. Urban campers
5. On-Site Managers (qualified and experienced to diagnose, prescribe and treat mental/health addiction disorders too)

6. 65 Desk Top Computers
7. 23-27 Printers
8. 40,000 thousand sheets of paper
9. Support and collaboration from businesses of all sizes in all industries

All of the Urban Campers will be off the streets in the first 6 months of 2020 and be placed in secure, modified shipping containers. These containers will be arranged like LEGO's and serve as transitional housing for 3-8 months depending on which 'set' they best fit with and the circumstances. This is not permanent housing. This is a Grace Period Project that gives every individual access to temporary housing so they can shower and securely store their belongings. This is also not jail or an institution. It is not self-governed, there will be site managers at each of the sets trained to address the needs of the individuals and families who **temporarily** reside there. These sets would be spread out across Seattle. Each 'set' would directly correlate with the issues these individuals are facing.

In other words, you would have the drug-addicted and mentally ill in some sets, families and/or individuals who have just fallen through the cracks and do not have serious substance abuse and/or mental health issues in a different 'set'. Women and children fleeing domestic violence are placed in another 'set'.

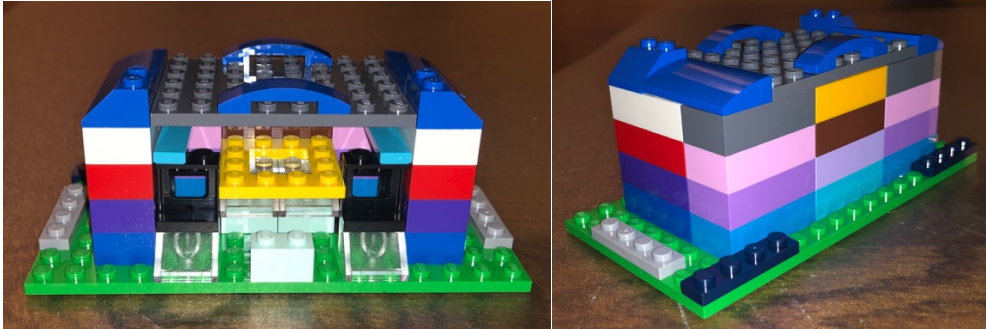
There would also be a program that would give these individuals the opportunity to save money by helping to clean up the mess that urban camping has created. In other words, individuals would use their access card to deposit trash, used needles, etc., into a large ATM like Kiosk. These funds would serve as a retirement fund that is not for retirement, but instead serves as an FSA-like fund for housing. Cash cannot be taken out this fund. This would clean up the mess, get individuals off the streets, provide them with an opportunity to save money and work with Washington State programs like the Apprenticeship Program to concurrently pair these individuals with businesses struggling to meet the increased demand for skilled workers.

This way, the campers stop camping, they exit the program with a job that aligns with their own talents, passions and interests. Additionally, we would also partner and trade with large tech companies like Microsoft and Amazon to set up the technological infrastructure in return for avoiding any type of future head tax. They could do it a lot faster than Seattle.

In sum, these shipping container sets are basically college or trade school for urban campers. They might have to live in a box with a roommate they could choose and sign up to shower, but that's how it was when I went to college. They will also have to follow some rules. Trust me when I say they want and need this opportunity. I have spent a lot of time talking to them. They are on board. This is how we save Seattle. If it works, which I am confident it will, it will also be profitable. If we get to the end point, we

won't need them anymore and we can load them up and sell them to another city. We have to set the example here first.

Here is the LEGO model prototype for one example 'set'!



4. Seattle's lack of housing options that are affordable to our low and moderate income employees is an important issue for DSA and its members. In the wake of MHA passing at Council, what kinds of new policies would you pursue to help expand the availability of affordable housing in Seattle? How might current zoning fit into your thinking? Who would you imagine working with to enact these policies?

I would work with my colleagues to enact a policy that restores the zoning regulations and the decisions about them back to the people. The City can control the height limits and regulate safety, but they should not have the power to police what people can or cannot build in their own backyard. This decision should be left to neighborhood and community councils. We have an Urban Camping Crisis so I don't really understand why there is so much emphasis on zoning. People are camping on the sidewalk. I don't that is zoned for camping but it is happening anyway.

The MHA is not creating more houses. It is creating more apartments. The apartments it is creating are not affordable.

5. Between 2010 to 2018, downtown Seattle added over 85,000 jobs. During this time, we have seen a major shift in how the majority of people get to and around downtown, with percentage of people driving alone to their jobs shrinking to roughly 25%. Still, as the regional transportation and economic hub, downtown street space is at a premium. What steps do we need to take over the next two-to-four years to ensure that people can access downtown and that

## our streets work well for all users?

The first thing we need to do is get these bus lanes under control and start the timing the traffic light. I drive and it is ridiculous to me. We could build pedestrian bridges to speed things up and it would be safer than current crosswalks. Going up Denny, or driving downtown is a nightmare. There has been an explosion of bus and bike lanes. Some of them make sense but some if just not good enough. It seems counter-productive to squeeze all the cars into one lane and have a bus lane that is often empty. Buses are also slow. They are big and some of them are quite aggressive. Some of these buses don't even stay in their lane. Parking costs are astronomical. I have found that it is actually less costly to roll the dice, risk getting a ticket by not paying if you plan on being downtown for more than 3 hours and mitigate the ticket in the event that you do get one.

I think the Monorail is one of the most effective forms of transportation and I think a similar system should be implemented to connect areas with access to the light rail without taking up so much ground space. It just shifts the congestion around. Further, if people working for the City could afford to live in the City, they would have to spend hours commuting. They would also be able to vote for the administration that hires them. This would make the administration more willing to work together and communicate more effectively.

DSA currently manages and activates Westlake and Occidental Square Parks through an agreement with the City, which has allowed us to bring furniture, programming, staffing and security into these parks, as we work to make them welcoming for all. We also manage McGraw Square with some of the same types of activities. What is your view of this type of public/private partnership as the City contemplates major new public space opportunities along the waterfront and above Interstate-5?

There is obviously a large Cruise interest in Seattle. It is also a competitive interest. While tourism is good for Seattle's economy in the sense that it generates sales tax, it is a seasonal industry. Tourists also do not tend to tip very well. They are not the type of customers who are going to return to support local businesses in the long term.

This answer might not be popular but I have noticed a proliferation of these 'urban parks'. I am all for parks, but I very rarely see people in these urban parks that aren't in



the City's highest crime area. I think part of the problem is they don't have any grass. There is something unappealing about a concrete park.

I also do not support the development of Chris Hansen's NBA Arena. Key Arena is already undergoing one of the most innovative renovations in Seattle history and I strongly believe that it will be able to serve as a Hockey Arena and an NBA arena. Seattle Center also provides a very easy and accessible route downtown via the Monorail. If we divide the tourists by diverting the business they bring to two separate sides of downtown, the tourism industry will suffer severely and no economic prosperity will be seen.

Further, at this point I don't think any amount of new cruise terminals or new sports arenas can solve these issues unless the same economic interests financing and backing these 'projects' are willing to temporarily succeed competition amongst each other in order to first solve the Urban Camping Crisis. The reality is that at the rate things are going, a lot of prospective tourists are not going to choose to visit. Unless they are coming to camp that is.

6. Downtown Seattle is the economic center of the region, with large and small businesses employing more than 300,000 people. However, economic success for employers and employees are continuously strained by unpredictable and burdensome regulations and taxes being imposed at the city level. How will you work to ensure that there is more predictability and consideration for employers to support growth in jobs, retail, restaurants and investment in downtown?

We need cut back on the taxes and regulations. The regulations aren't working. The Urban Camping Crisis is just one example. We need to get rid of the sugar tax too. Seattle does not need more money. Seattle needs people who know how to very efficiently manage money by devising and implementing creative, new solutions that actually work. We have plenty of job opportunities, and as surprising as it sounds, some of the urban campers are already qualified. Some need a little intervention. Some need a lot of intervention. Once we solve the Urban Camping Crisis we will add new jobs to our economy, new workers trained for those jobs via partnering with businesses struggling to meet the demand for skilled workers, utilize the Washington State Apprenticeship Program and develop a stronger middle class that engages in consistent long-term consumer spending.

7. In 2015, a city report looked at Seattle's commercial development capacity and determined we could absorb another 115,000 jobs by 2035. Yet, in the last three years alone, we have added over 23,000 jobs, indicating that we are likely to surpass our growth targets much earlier than anticipated. Seattle has limited existing zoning capacity, and inadequate permitting systems in place to accommodate the future demand for commercial development. Where might you look to expand our city's capacity in this regard?

While we are adding jobs in Seattle, inflation caused by the minimum increase paired with the increase in property taxes as a result of increases in land valuation, many people working these jobs can't actually afford to live in Seattle. Now Amazon is mad over the head tax and they are moving to Bellevue. Hopefully, other companies don't follow. I will not be convinced that we have a housing shortage until I stop seeing 'vacant' and 'for lease' signs everywhere.

Some developers and construction companies who might contract with the City don't even bother going through the permit process. I know this because they come put their easel no parking signs up in the middle of the night without proper permits and then get angry when they can't ticket and tow your car.

If people want to build something in their backyard or their garage, I say just do it. Make sure your neighbors are okay with it. Get permission from your block in writing. This decision should be left to land owners. It shouldn't be a decision made by nine people. As far as I am concerned, there is very little oversight over zoning and regulations anyway. Call it art project if you need to. I don't think there are many regulations on art yet as long as it is on your own property, isn't blocking anyone's view, creating disruptive noise, or hurting anyone. The rate that this City's administration is moving is way too slow to effectively manage the growth on their own. The City needs to restore some of its power back to the people until they can better operate. We need to work with businesses of all sizes and include everyone to make sure there is no displacement.

8. As the City strives to allocate limited resources to manage and activate our complex urban environment, it has increasingly turned to Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) for support. These BIAs build community capacity and give agency and tools to local communities to address their own priorities. What is your view of these groups and their impact?

I am neither for or against them because I don't know a lot about them yet, but I can tell from their structure that they are also interest groups. I don't think that they increase civic engagement because I have never heard of them. The idea behind interest groups is that the interests will compete amongst each other to represent their interests in the same way that voters do when they vote. What I will say, is that all interest groups have an agenda. That's okay. That is the purpose they are supposed to serve. Now that I've looked into a few of them, it seems that they are also lobbyists who write legislation and submit it to the legislators because the legislators don't have to time to write it.

With all policies and solutions, I feel there are three variables most predictive in determining whether a policy or solution will succeed or whether it will fail. Those three variables are:

1. Efficiency
2. Cost-Effectiveness
3. Feasibility

While often overlooked, the third variable on the list, feasibility, is of tremendous importance. We can pass any policy we want, but the reality is that unless the policies we pass align with the values and interests of those impacted by such policies, they won't be effective.

9. Downtown is the anchor of District 7--it's the city's job center and one of the fastest-growing residential neighborhoods in the region. However, downtown still lacks some of the basic assets and infrastructure associated with livable communities, like family-sized housing, parks space and public schools. As a representative of downtown, what would you do on the council to ensure the center city is responsive to the growth we are seeing?

As a representative of downtown, I want these urban parks to have grass. I also think we need to reform our waste system. We need better, brighter, persuasive waste bins. Then we need agree to repeal the sugar tax in return for the compliance with a new policy requiring every package or label printed to have one visible color dot printed on it that directly corresponds with where it should be deposited.

As it turns out, Seattle does not really recycle. Now—I won't lie. I'm not a great recycler or composter. Truth be told, it is very difficult to know what is and is not recyclable, compostable or trash anymore. It is very much like the periodic table of sustainability with more invisible numbers than there are options. It just is not clear. After visiting and

talking with some of the trash, compost, and recycling facilities, it turns out almost of all of it really does go into a landfill.

Further, there are not enough trash or recycling bins. I am not sure who decided to make them all grey, black, blue, or green. I'm sure that at one point someone thought it was a good idea to camouflage waste bins so they 'blend in with nature'. I think it's time for a reform. Even the Urban Campers have figured out that recycling is profitable when executed the correct way (that's why so many scrap metal and camp right next to the recycling facilities).

Our recycling industry is frustrated because China won't accept any of our cardboards or plastics anymore. They are too contaminated. We replace the small bins, provide everyone with new ones in return for free waste collection and pass a very simple policy requiring packaging and label companies to just print one single colored dot on every material. That colored dot corresponds with the section of the receptacle the object must be disposed in. No need to replace the large bins we already have or the trucks that collect them. There's a plan for that too. All it involves is changing the lids on the large bins into a funnel that goes the opposite direction. I did also test to make sure this works for the color-blind as well.

Here are the Campbell's Soup Prototypes!



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