



# 2019 Seattle City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer this questionnaire, which was developed by the Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy (CASE). Please note, answers will be shared with CASE members and we reserve the right to publish any information provided in this questionnaire.

Your responses to the following questions will be used as part of the screening process to determine which candidates are interviewed as part of our endorsement process.

***Responses will be accepted on a rolling basis but are due no later than Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup> by 5:00p.m.***

To submit your completed questionnaire, or if you have any questions, please contact Michael McIntyre at [Michael@casecampaigns.com](mailto:Michael@casecampaigns.com)

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## **About the Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy**

The Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy (CASE) is a political organization representing diverse local business interests. Sponsored by the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, CASE is committed to creating an affordable, livable, and safe city for all Seattleites to thrive.

CASE endorses candidates who demonstrate a strong commitment to improving the quality of life and economic opportunities for all Seattleites. CASE is focused on four core issues:

### **Good Governance:**

**Trust:** Seattle deserves a City Council we can trust to put our city on the right track, not one that has failed to make meaningful progress on many of the critical issues we face.

**Accountability & Transparency:** Seattle deserves a City Council that is accountable to all of us and acts transparently. We need to know whether our city's resources are being used wisely.

**Solutions:** Seattle deserves a City Council that stays focused on issues facing our city and our neighborhoods - and offers ideas that work. We need leaders who will take a balanced approach and work collaboratively with local leaders, not fight them.

### **Homelessness:**

**Big Picture Thinking:** Seattle deserves a City Council that will advance long-term systemic reforms to address homelessness in our city, which continues to rise while the U.S. average remains almost flat. We need to do better to help our homeless neighbors.

**Best Practices:** Seattle deserves a City Council that provides resources to effective programs and groups and holds contractors accountable for meeting performance standards.

**Regional Approach:** We need prompt implementation of thoughtful, regional solutions with clear leadership and accountability to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time.

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## Affordability:

**Housing for All Income Levels:** Seattle deserves a City Council that recognizes the importance of building housing for people and families of all incomes. We have a diverse population and broad-based economy, and we all do better when more people can afford to live close to jobs and transit.

**Local Businesses & Jobs:** Seattle deserves a City Council that is focused on the success of all our neighbors, especially those getting left behind as our city experiences incredible prosperity. We need leaders who will help grow local businesses and expand family-wage jobs.

## Transportation:

**Congestion & Livability:** Seattle deserves a City Council that prioritizes improving transit, reducing traffic congestion, and helping people and goods move around the city faster. We need leaders who continuously strive to make Seattle one of the best places in the nation to live and work.

### BASIC INFORMATION

<b>Candidate Name:</b> Heidi Wills	<b>City Council District:</b> 6
<b>Party Affiliation:</b> Democrat	<b>Phone Number:</b> 206-265-3040
<b>Email Address:</b> campaign@heidiwills.com	<b>Facebook:</b> Heidi Wills for City Council
<b>Website:</b> heidiwills.com	<b>Twitter:</b> @HeidiforCouncil

### CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

<b>Political Consultants:</b> Emma Tupper with Moxie Media
<b>Campaign Manager:</b> Alex Wenman
<b>Fundraiser:</b> Raven McShane
<b>Money Raised to Date:</b> \$72,713
<b>Are you participating in the Democracy Voucher Program?</b> Yes
<b>Total Democracy Vouchers Collected:</b> approximately \$30,000
<b>Money Raised Outside of Your District Vs. Within Your District:</b> Of the \$54,752 tracked by the city, \$41,121 has been raised outside of D6 and \$13,631 has been raised within D6
<b>Fundraising Target for Primary Election:</b> \$75,000
<b>Fundraising Target for General Election:</b> \$75,000
<b>Total Doors Knocked On:</b> 6,200
<b>Please list all endorsements you have received:</b> Seattle Hospitality for Progress; Sierra Club; Humane Voters of WA; 46 <sup>th</sup> District Democrats; <b>Hilary Franz</b> , WA State Commissioner for Public Lands; <b>John Wilson</b> , King County Assessor; <b>Peter Steinbrueck</b> , Port Commissioner; <b>Ron Sims</b> , Former King County Executive; <b>Gary Locke</b> , Former WA State Governor; <b>Greg Nickels and Charles Royer</b> , Former Seattle Mayors; <b>Cynthia Sullivan and Larry Phillips</b> , Former King County Councilmembers; <b>Jan Drago, Margaret Pageler, Richard Conlin, Judy Nicastro, and Tom Rasmussen</b> , Former

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Seattle City Councilmembers; **Paige Miller**, Former Port Commissioner; **Steve Sundquist and Peter Maier**, Former Seattle School Board Members; **Javier Valdez**, 46th State Rep. and **Beth Doglio**, 22<sup>nd</sup> State Rep.

## ISSUE Questions

### Homelessness

Most Seattle voters rank homelessness as their number one issue and believe the current City Council has not offered workable solutions despite increased funding.

Q1: What are your top two strategies for addressing homelessness?

**In the short-term, the city can no longer condone people sleeping in tents in our parks and open spaces. This is unsafe and unhygienic. Until we have enough shelter beds, I favor modular housing and/or FEMA-style emergency tents with running water and toilet facilities, private lockers for personal storage, and case workers to assist people on their continuum towards self-sufficiency.**

**In the long-term, we need more permanent supportive housing with wrap-around services. Seattle can't solve homelessness in a silo. We must collaborate with state and regional jurisdictions because homelessness doesn't end at our city borders and because our city doesn't have the funding capacity to solve it, especially with regards to needed mental health services.**

Q2: Do you believe that achieving these objectives will require additional financial resources?

**There needs to be more transparency and accountability on how current funds are being spent and what taxpayers are getting for their dollars. What's working and what's not? Why would more funds be needed and what would they go toward? Our system now is too fragmented and there is duplicative services. In order to be financially and programmatically successful, we must coordinate services.**

Q3: What are the most critical things that must change in order to implement your strategy?

**This is an urgent public health issue and the status quo of people sleeping in tents is not a strategy. It's a failure which merits stronger urgency to solve. Because of the 9<sup>th</sup> District Court Ruling and because of common sense and decency, people need somewhere to sleep that has hygiene facilities. It is not compassionate to allow people to continue to live in such deplorable conditions. We need to decide as a community what to do about people who are refusing services. It's hard on our residents, our business community and our first responders, and it's a waste of public resources. I believe we need to treat this situation like the crisis it is with FEMA-style tents until we have more permanent solutions.**

**Seattle should look to best practices in other communities around the country. There are good examples of other cities managing homelessness better than we are. San Antonio's Haven for Hope is one such example.**

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We need to meet our region's growing mobility needs, allowing employees to get to work and efficient transportation of goods. Traffic, congestion and public transportation are also top issues for Seattleites. Considering the approval of the 9-year, \$930 million Move Seattle Levy:

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Q1: How would you pursue budget transparency and accountability for these funds, and what are your metrics of success?

**The council needs to track how the department is allocating funds for projects as approved by the voters. What's on track and what's not, and if not, why not? I think there needs to be more transparency and accountability on how current funds are being spent and what taxpayers are getting for their dollars. The council needs to provide adequate oversight of city departments. This is one of the key responsibilities of the council.**

Q2: What are the top transportation needs in your district and how would you address them?

**All residents benefit by a reliable and affordable public transit service to compliment safe, walkable neighborhoods and thoroughfares. Ensuring safe walkable communities is of particular importance in D6 where neighborhoods north of 85<sup>th</sup> don't have sidewalks and where existing sidewalks are in serious disrepair. We need more crosswalks on busy arterials and remarking of current crosswalks. In 2017, Seattle had 11 pedestrian deaths and 56 serious injuries. 8% of commuters walk to work and for downtown residents, it's 13%. In Ballard, 31% surveyed in 2016 said they walked to their destination and 6% biked. Dense communities with safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure will use it. I will be an advocate for safe pedestrian facilities and for more public transit for my district.**

## Housing

Seattle must have more affordable housing to address critical workforce needs. The passage of Mandatory Housing Affordability is a first step in addressing this pressing issue.

Q1: Now that MHA has passed, what would be your top legislative priority be for creating more affordable housing options in your district?

**We need more housing of all shapes and sizes to welcome more people into our neighborhoods. Ideal places to live are walkable, close to transit, near schools and jobs and parks and places to eat, play and shop. We must integrate more housing types into our single-family zones such as duplexes, triplexes and rowhouses to address the real need for housing for people of all incomes. I realize that this will take considerable effort because I sense significant polarization on this issue. Real listening and conversations with people who care about the context and character of their neighborhoods will help. Districting of the city council will necessitate this kind of empowerment of the residents in our community. I am prepared to facilitate meaningful conversations about how we incorporate more housing types into the existing fabric of our neighborhoods.**

## Growth and Competitiveness

Seattle is a geographically constrained city experiencing unprecedented growth. We need City Councilmembers who can

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plan for the needs and challenges that come with that growth, including how the city can physically accommodate large increases in people and jobs.

Q1: How and where should our city direct new growth?

**Our land use policies must reinforce our transit-oriented development priorities which means adding density to our urban centers and villages while maintaining our public assets including parks and open spaces.**

Q2: As more neighboring cities develop the housing, transit, and commercial infrastructure needed to support larger employment bases, how will you as a Councilmember encourage employers of all sizes to locate, stay, and grow in Seattle?

**The council needs to be a constructive partner in how it works with our business community. It is one of the reasons why I am running. As a small business owner, I want a city council that values businesses as an integral part of the fabric of our city. Our businesses are sources of more than valued products and services, but also innovation, creativity and solutions to today's problems. I understand the importance of businesses as job providers and as an important part of our tax base. I am hearing too often of business owners looking to relocate outside of Seattle. Tom Douglas is a constituent in my district. He is fed up with the city council and moving part of his business to Bellevue. This needs to be a wake-up call to our current city council and to the incoming council. If elected, I'd like to convene a conversation on this topic. How competitive is Seattle compared with other cities in attracting and supporting businesses?**

**If we had local government leaders who recognize the value of having cutting-edge businesses located in our region, and a willingness to work with those companies in a constructive way, that synergy could be game changing on a whole host of issues. If elected, I'd look forward to being a part of a collaborative and constructive working relationship with the business community.**

## **Public Safety**

Every Seattleite deserves to be safe in their neighborhoods. However, many Seattleites feel less safe in their neighborhoods than they did just two years ago.

Q1: Please describe the top public safety concern in your district.

**Public safety is a top concern in my district. Between 2016 and 2018, property crime in south Ballard experienced a 24% increase. Fremont? Even worse. Property crime is up an astronomical 57% from 2016-2018. These statistics mirror what I have been hearing as a candidate. Crime is a top issue as I go door-to-door talking with neighbors about what's important to them.**

Q2: How would you better allocate resources to address this issue?

**It needs to be prioritized in the city's budget. Public safety is more than a core function of city government, it is a charter service. Many people and small business owners in District 6 want more of a police presence. The "Pre-summer Emphasis Program" is a step in the right direction in providing a greater police presence in two neighborhoods in my district, Fremont and Ballard, to fix streetlights, remove graffiti, trim trees and make our small business districts and neighborhoods safer.**

**We have a relatively small police force compared to other cities. In fact, New York City has twice as many police officers per capita as we do. And as it is, our department has a significant number of vacancies which is stretching our**

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department too thin. It is counterproductive to have anti-police rhetoric coming from our city council. Our city leaders need to support our police officers. If an officer makes a wrong call with use of force or racial bias, there's a system in place to deal with it. But outside of that, how about assuming our police officers are striving to do their best in their challenging and demanding jobs?

We also need to discuss the importance of prosecuting repeat offenders. It's demoralizing to officers that they put their lives on the line to make arrests of bad characters and the cases don't go anywhere. Misdemeanors matter as an accurate accounting of a person's criminal history.

The city should create a "high impact offender unit" in the City Attorney's Office. This special unit would handle cases against "high impact offenders" as defined by the seriousness and number of prior offenses. Prioritizing these cases will increase the likelihood of conviction and act as a deterrence of both the offender and others.

Seattle should create a "Drug Court" like King County's Superior Court. There is a "Mental Health Court" but not a drug court even though there is a likelihood that there are more addicted than mentally ill defendants. The criminal justice system should be a source for providing intervention and treatment resources to prolific shoplifters, vehicle prowlers and others who are feeding their drug use disorder by causing harm to our neighborhoods and business districts.

## Government Accountability

We know that most Seattle voters do not trust the current City Council. They want a Council that is transparent, accountable and delivers results.

Q1: What would you do to restore trust and accountability?

**We need a council that is focused on basic services. These are the ordinary acts of government that matter to the lives of the people in Seattle, from safe neighborhoods to clean parks to transportation infrastructure improvements.**

**While there are many interest groups who press councilmembers to stand for their interests and values, most of the average voters I talk to as I go door-to-door want a city council that will prioritize delivery of core municipal services.**

Q2: Specifically, how would you evaluate spending priorities and measure their effectiveness?

**As mentioned above, the core responsibility of the city council is to provide oversight over city departments, to track spending and to measure each department's effectiveness in meeting its responsibilities and performance objectives.**

## Revenue

Many Seattleites believe that there is a spending problem, not a revenue problem.

Q1: Please list the different sources of revenue for the city of Seattle.

**I would agree that the city doesn't have a revenue problem. It has a spending problem. Outside of the public utilities, for the 2019 general fund, the difference sources of revenue for the city of Seattle are mostly B&O tax at 21%, the retail sales tax at 19%, and the general property tax at 19%. There are many smaller sources of revenue including parking meters at 3%, licensing and permits at 3%, interest income at 1%, admissions tax at 1% and various utility taxes.**

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Q2: Do you believe Seattle has enough revenue to address our most critical issues? If so, please explain which additional tools you would propose.

**Revenue growth is high and I am concerned about city spending. I think there needs to be more transparency and accountability on how current funds are being spent and what taxpayers are getting for their dollars. I am also concerned about increasing property taxes and how this affects people on fixed incomes. It affects homeowners and renters alike.**

## Child Care

Seattle is facing a child care crisis. There are more kids that need care than there are available child care services.

Q1: How would you support increasing access to high-quality, affordable child care for Seattle families?

**I agree that we need more high-quality, affordable childcare facilities. Much like how the city worked with stakeholders to gain more affordable housing units with increases in height through MHA, I'm interested in ways the city can encourage the location of childcare facilities in mixed-use buildings, on the first floor of commercial buildings, and at transit stations.**

## Labor Laws

Labor laws like Washington's Paid Family Leave Law are most effective when they benefit both employees and employers.

Q1: If a new labor law is proposed, how and when would you engage the business community to help inform your position and approach?

**The business community should be engaged before a new labor law is proposed because getting early input from key stakeholders is more fruitful than revising or amending proposed legislation once it has been released for broader public comment or formally introduced for council committee consideration.**

## Business Climate

Seattle's business community is a willing partner and expects its elected officials to lead the public policy conversation around solutions to the pressing problems in our city.

Q1: How would you work with the Seattle business community if you were elected to office?

**The city would be better served by utilizing the expertise of our business community to address our pressing problems. For example, on the issues of public safety and homelessness, at a Fremont Chamber of Commerce meeting, I met a Tableau employee who told me how his company is helping create software to better track the data of services being provided to people experiencing homelessness. Seattle has the third-highest number of people experiencing homelessness. System fragmentation is a critical weakness of ours leading to disconnected services, duplicative functions, and duplicative data collection, making the system difficult to navigate for vulnerable people seeking assistance. Our region needs to consolidate command and control functions into a regional authority to appropriately identify and scale solutions and target resources to emergent needs. Collecting numbers and**

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characteristics of those experiencing homelessness and quantifying the need for services is essential to not only meeting needs, but to identifying effective strategies to address the needs. Tableau is doing that work. Having the opportunity to meet one of the people behind it was inspiring because I could see how our city's tech sector is perfectly poised to be a catalyst to solving some of our region's most vexing challenges. I would be a leader and a convener to engage with the business community around the pressing issues facing our city.

Q2: Specifically, how would you collaborate with our members to address the city's current challenges while balancing the needs of a business community that drives economic opportunity?

**I think the city is on the wrong track in working with and supporting our city's businesses. In fact, it feels to me that current city leaders are antagonist towards businesses which is counterproductive, divisive and harmful to our civic discourse. I know that your mission is to create and ensure a healthy and sustainable business environment and to do this effectively, you need a full partner in your city government which recognizes that businesses are an integral part of our city's healthy economy and vitality. I would be vocal about how businesses are integral to our city in providing jobs and contributing substantially to our city's tax base which fund essential city services. There are currently no city councilmembers who own a business employing over 65 people, as I do. I would bring a missing voice to the council and I would reach out to collaborate with your members on the city's current challenges.**