

Homelessness on First Hill

First Hill has hundreds of shelter beds, housing for formerly homeless individuals (with more under-construction at the 1400 Madison project), and various services that support homeless individuals.

- What are your plans to ensure that there are adequate shelter beds and housing options available to those who are unhoused?
- What is your plan to ensure that other neighborhoods throughout the city provide the services that First Hill already does?
- How will you plan to provide adequate counseling to help unhoused people transition into housing?

My Plan would be to create permanent transitional housing facilities on existing public right-of-way properties made obsolete by Sound Transit and other public works (Lake Washington Ship Canal Storm Water Detention Project in Ballard/Wallingford, etc). We need to create permanent facilities at useful public property locations such as the pending obsolete King County Metro transfer station at Northgate with the link light rail station now opening. Here we could utilize modular rapid shop fabricated sustainable living innovations or similar that would be constructed into a permanent vertical multi-level facilities that are long-term assets for the public and community. This allows a rehabilitation facility focused at Northgate (and others at similarly valuable public property locations) that will be permanently owned by the City/County to support the homeless with a goal oriented rehabilitation toward a realistic 18 to 24 month transition housing necessary to heal from root causes. We would build a life-long plan with on-site professional support for addiction and mental needs as well as job training and career counseling including classroom time through the adjacent North Seattle College now just across the Northgate Pedestrian Bridge. Importantly this gives homeless in need, a real plan with permanent type transitional housing (not tiny sheds), a realistic time to transition, pride in themselves for a path forward, and value to the community. We would also enforce existing laws and work to engage with homeless aiding them in utilizing available services, such as the hundreds FHIA referenced on First Hill. Finally, we must work to change the services making clear its values and plan thereby individuals are aided and confident without feeling captured and incarcerated.

Affordable Housing

Thousands of people commute to and from First Hill on any given day and workforce housing is needed to reduce traffic and commutes.

- What is your plan to increase workforce housing in First Hill and other downtown neighborhoods?

Create less regulation, reduced taxes, and reduce rental costs. Landlords are a business, often a small business, and provide an essential service for our community. They need the flexibility to successfully and individually operate their businesses to the best of their ability. Our City's regulations are not applicable to the generic typical situations, especially the recent moratorium on evictions and resulting potential for exploitation creating added costs and unnecessary impacts to landlords that are in turn passed as costs to tenants. Rescue Plan funding can and should be used to provide direct support to tenants so that a moratorium on evictions is not warranted. I also believe that our continued push and aid to Sound Transit for progress and connectivity will create value where tenants have greater freedom to choose and use their financial position to locate near other connected transit centers that provide them the best housing for their situation while working on First Hill.

Post-COVID 19 Recovery

Over the past year, multiple small businesses, many of them owned and operated by People of Color, have experienced break-ins, assaults, thefts, and arson.

- What is your Road to Recovery for First Hill?
- How do you plan to support small businesses that have seen increases in crime?

Small business throughout the City and especially on First Hill were greatly impacted by COVID. Some reduction in business was from telecommuting and change in area business synergies from other closed facilities. Other direct impacts were from reduced individual usage due to local crime and loss of public safety. Many local business were very ingenious such as book stores creating new ways to engage customers during COVID lock downs and food services with enhanced delivery and take-out. The people of First Hill enjoy their local neighborhood businesses and we have already seen a significant resurgence and excellent practices by those businesses to help patrons return and maintain safety including added outdoor dining and walk-up windows. However, to continue the supported recovery for local business and allow patrons to feel safe, we need to enforce our laws and support the police as a major component of recovery. I agree that the police are called to all individual and community crisis and that additional community response professionals are needed to assist police with homeless, families, and to help promote public order, community engagement, and de-escalation. I would not defund the police and instead will use my role on the council to help restore goodwill between the communities and the police, but first and foremost between the City Council and the Seattle Police Department. I will work to help the police return to a constructive neighborhood engagement and outreach. We would promote neighborhood assignments so that the police are well known within the community allowing for collaborative relationships with its citizens that promote dialogue and prevent escalations. We would also work to give the police positive times in the neighborhood through off duty service rotations that protect them from burnout of always being on-call responding to emergencies. With the present City Council's leadership of adversarial direction toward our police and the current Council 8's work in particular to defund them and force resignation of Chief Best, our police are responding to emergencies without support or the opportunity to receive constructive dialogue with Council. I will work to replace that situation with a positive collaborative working relation between the Council and Seattle Police.

First Hill Open Space and the Public Realm Action Plan

Our neighborhood is vastly underserved with access to open space. That is why our organization, alongside SDOT, the Parks Department, and SDCI created the First Hill Public Realm Action Plan (PRAP) in 2015 to address the lack of open spaces due to inadequate availability of land and high land values.

- Will you commit, before the August 3rd Primary to go on a FHIA guided tour to learn how the PRAP has benefitted the neighborhood thus far?
- Will you pledge to support First Hill through the continuation of policies that encourage private developers to implement the PRAP? Do you have any policy ideas that can overcome the challenges associated with new park development in First Hill?

I welcome the opportunity for a FHIA guided tour of the First Hill Public Realm Action Plan (PRAP) program before August 3rd. Our campaign is very new, just now working to consider this program and the community's issues, and frankly speaking is not yet very knowledgeable. I pledge to improve my familiarity with and understanding of the specifics for First Hill's open space issues and PRAP in particular.