



**HILL**  
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

**FIRST**

### **First Hill Improvement Association Questionnaire for Seattle Mayoral Candidates**

First Hill has roughly 14,000 residents and over 30,000 employees, bounded by Union Street to the north, Broadway to the east, Main Street to the south, and IS to the west.

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#### **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?

Just as we can build emergency treatment facilities in stadiums for the COVID pandemic, we can build emergency treatment facilities to manage our addiction and mental health crisis and deal with the backlog of treatment caused by years of failed reactions. We need to help addicted or mentally ill homeless people by opening permanent self-contained residential treatment facilities specifically for our Seattle homeless residents that provide medical, psychiatric, and addiction treatment, as well as housing, personal growth, education, work, and eventually independence. Residential treatment facilities for medical problems, eating disorders, psychiatric illnesses and drug use all require a controlled environment to be effective, and this is true for managing our homeless population as well.

If we want to take care of the problems of homelessness, treatment of addiction and mental illness, and providing the services so people flourish in their lives, we have to pay for them. I support both RCW 82.14.530 and RCW 82.14.460 If we do not do the right thing and invest in our people, we will all pay anyway. Our city council leader's reactions to our homeless problem continue to create more homelessness, not less. Each day that we wait escalates our problem. We need to end the poor and middle class shouldering the costs. The Jump Start Tax is a good example of proportionate funding.

- What is your plan to ensure that other neighborhoods throughout the city provide the services that First Hill already does?

We must look to diverse solutions for diverse problems faced by our community members and our city. First Hill has access to healthcare that other neighborhoods do not, and has a model that works for First Hill, which may work in other neighborhoods, but we cannot take a one size fits all approach. The Department of Neighborhoods has the history and processes to help communities to support existing solutions and develop approaches that meet the needs and fit the circumstances of each neighborhood. First Hill should not be expected to shoulder a disproportionate share of the homeless and addiction problem that is a city wide crisis

- How will you plan to provide adequate counseling to help unhoused people transition into housing?

Under my leadership, the City of Seattle will provide real residential treatment solutions – not just treatment plans- for those who have nowhere else to go. Any person who presents an immediate danger to themselves or others or who is gravely disabled can and should be legally involuntarily detained for treatment for their own safety and the safety of all of us. We must and will have treatment beds if we are to solve this problem.

Those with addiction who do not present an immediate danger to themselves or others are free to refuse treatment. Just because a person refuses drug treatment does not mean we have to enable it. When we follow our moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe place that has real limits with restrictions on who comes and goes and what is brought in and out, we remove the default right to live in public spaces. Those who choose their addiction over public safety will now be held accountable for their actions just like we would for ourselves and anyone else. We must stop enabling criminal activity.

## 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?

We must have affordable housing for all people who live or work in our city who need it. The government needs to do its job of providing affordable housing, and not expect private business to step in because of our city's lack of vision or ability to care for our people. We need to stop looking to the market to solve the problems that the market is not designed to solve. It does not serve anybody's interest to put Amazon or Microsoft in the role of mayor, city council, urban planning, zoning and housing authority. The city government needs to take responsibility and action to protect, provide and preserve affordable housing. We can do this with a public-private partnership, ensuring the outcomes are monitored and process regulated, and all held accountable.

Under my leadership, the city of Seattle will develop a public private partnership similar to our public utilities, that will be responsible for providing affordable housing for people who work in our city. Our city needs a public works project of affordable housing available to those who work in our city and make less than 70% of the median household income. Under my leadership, the City of Seattle will build pre-designed and pre-permitted mid-rise units situated all around the city. Residents would live close to their jobs to limit traffic, travel, and our carbon foot-print. These units would provide construction jobs for people who live here as well.

If we want more affordable housing we need to build it, not tear it down, and we need to reward those who provide affordable housing, not punish them. We must first fix the zoning laws and ordinances so that all of us except some developers experience as broken, or we will end up with an even bigger broken morass. We must eradicate the dysfunction and corruption of our current zoning laws and affordable housing programs, such as the Seattle Low Income Zoning and HALA programs, and fix them so that current programs and policies result in the outcomes of green and livable affordable housing for those who need it. Regulating rent must be fair to renters and to local landlords living and providing housing in our city, or we will lose housing for everyone. It is the role of the city government to protect current affordable housing and to develop more affordable housing when no options exist, such as by increasing scattered site housing for low income Seattleites through the Seattle Housing Authority (<https://www.seattlehousing.org/properties/scattered-sites>). I favor a public-partnership similar to the public utilities to realize affordable housing for all who need it.

## 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?

My road to recovery for First Hill is the same as for all neighborhoods in Seattle. No amount of affordable housing and shelter beds will end tent encampments and the practice of enabling addiction through theft and vandalism. The medical definition of an addicted person is one who will choose to support their addiction over anything else in their lives including their partners, their parents, their children, their job, their reputation, their body, and their housing. If given free housing, they will trade it to support their habit. We must get all tent dwellers out of city parks and off of city streets permanently, completely and all at once. Anything less will continue to grow the problem. To do this we must provide an option for emergency housing and treatment in a controlled environment that does not allow for ongoing drug and alcohol use. Tent dwellers in city parks have demonstrated that they are unable to adequately care for themselves and must be offered treatment and support. Hospitalization is the model we use for intensive treatment programs everywhere, whether for addiction, eating disorders, mental health problems, or medical problems. Just like we would do if we had a surge of COVID cases, we will need to open an emergency treatment hospital within a controlled environment, most likely in one of the stadiums, staffed with medical doctors working with mental health, addiction, social service, and vocational rehabilitation specialists. Tent dwellers will be given the option to come to this treatment center voluntarily, and they can refuse, but they will not be given the option to stay in the parks and those that do will be arrested and the courts will have to determine if they should be involuntarily treated or incarcerated. If they are released and found once again to be living in a public space they will be arrested again. No more living in city parks and public spaces! No more enabling addiction through theft and vandalism.

○ How do you plan to support small businesses that have seen increases in crime?

Police accountability is critical to our success and defunding the police is an irresponsible action that will lead to civil rights abuses by criminals. We must have a robust and rapidly responsive police force that acts lawfully and works directly with our communities to provide real public safety for all.

We must have constitutional community policing. If elected, I will immediately nullify any section of the police union contract that limits accountability and oversight. A new culture of community connection and accountability must replace police brutality and use of excessive force. The old ways must not be tolerated and those who refuse to change must be terminated. As we do in medicine, we will put in place an internal review process that is separate from disciplinary processes so that officers can share and learn from their mistakes

We must have all branches of government including the police accountable to small businesses and all Seattleites. Each police interaction with the public is an opportunity for learning and improvement. Three point satisfaction surveys will be instituted for each and every interaction the public has with the police and the results will be used for process improvements and to hold police leadership accountable to the community in their precincts and to the people in the city.

Police who fail to protect the public through diplomacy and when indicated, use of reasonable force will be disciplined. While police who use excessive force will be disciplined, police need to be allowed to do their job. Acting as the enforcers of our laws of justice, police are authorized to take actions that are unlawful for a normal citizen. The potential for abuse of this power is significant and needs to be balanced by special oversight at all times. Police who continue to use excessive force must be disciplined, removed and if appropriate prosecuted.

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 3<sup>rd</sup> Primary to go on a FHIA guided tour to learn how the PRAP has benefitted the neighborhood thus far?

Yes.

○ 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 support open spaces and sustainable growth in Seattle. Increased density needs to be coupled with increase in public space as well. We need to think deeply about any zoning changes we make to avoid having unintended consequences. As an example of a zoning policy gone wrong, our city leaders say they want more trees, but they pass legislation that encourages building out instead of up, and then react to the fact that trees are being cut down to build more housing, so they pass a law protecting trees of significance that cause the property value to decrease on land that has trees and increases the value of land covered in blacktop. They have unwittingly punished those who plant and care for trees, given a gift to those who cover our city with cement, and have made a system that discourages planting and growing of trees. People who value the resale value of their property will pull up young saplings and stop planting trees. In short, this short sighted legislation doesn't make Seattle greener, it is making our city turn to grey and black. If we want more trees, we need to make different choices and reward people who plant and nurture trees, not punish them.