

Friends of Seattle

- Endorsement Questionnaire -

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GENERAL

Friends of Seattle's Mission

- How does your candidacy support Friends of Seattle's values, goals, and mission?¹ The values and goals that Friends of Seattle articulates are my values and goals. My work on the City Council has been consistently driven by the urgency of developing a truly sustainable city that is vibrant, diverse, prosperous and environmentally responsible. My track record in moving forward the parks levy, the zero waste and local food action initiatives, legislation for compact communities, and transportation choices matches the efforts of Friends of Seattle, and I have demonstrated competence in getting things done to put those values and goals into practice.

Qualifications

- Please describe any professional accomplishments that demonstrate your effectiveness as an elected official (if you are an incumbent) or would demonstrate your effectiveness as an elected official (if you have not yet held office).
- Spearheaded adoption of the Zero Waste Strategy, committing Seattle to a long-term reduction in the amount of garbage landfilled through new and innovative waste reduction, recycling, and product stewardship strategies, including a ban on Styrofoam and expanded food waste recycling.
- Secured approval of a new drainage rate design that allocates costs based on actual impacts to the drainage system and emphasizes the benefits of natural drainage, with credits for homeowners who implement natural drainage measures and exemptions for open space and agricultural properties.
- Played a key role in developing and securing Council and voter approval for the Parks for All Levy, committing \$140 million to new parks and open spaces for Seattle neighborhoods.
- Secured funding for community use of surplus schools in the Phinney, University, Fauntleroy, and Crown Hill neighborhoods.
- Initiated a plan to implement the Linden Avenue Main Street, the key priority of the Bitter Lake Neighborhood Plan, and persuaded the Council to provide funds.
- Secured passage of legislation limiting the size of megahouses to protect neighborhood character.
- Wrote the Arterial Traffic Calming Resolution that lays out procedures for neighborhoods to work with SDOT on reducing pedestrian-auto conflicts on arterial streets.
- Protected the Georgetown neighborhood from construction of a planned transfer station.

¹ <http://www.friendsofseattle.org>

- Strengthened protection of our urban forest, including a resolution on protecting groves of trees, an interim ordinance limiting arbitrary tree removal, and work for a comprehensive tree protection and restoration strategy.
- Successfully won the adoption of amendments to the Critical Areas Ordinance to facilitate daylighting streams, expand protection for stream corridors, and reduce pesticide use.
- Led a successful fight to get Site T-117, a superfund site in South Park, cleaned to a level where it could support residential development, opposing the City/Port staff proposal for a lower level of cleanup.
- Initiated a Council work program on measures to combat climate change, including steps to prepare the City for adaptation to the impacts of the changing climate.
- Initiated, wrote and secured passage of a resolution on the Alaskan Way Viaduct that became the basis for City and State agreement on a design for the areas outside the Central Waterfront, and for moving ahead with repairing and replacing those portions of Alaskan Way and the Viaduct, along with renovating and redesigning the Spokane Street Viaduct.
- As a member of the Sound Transit Board, worked to move Sound Transit II to success in the fall vote and to get light rail to Northgate and Redmond.
- Moved SR 520 and Sound Transit planning forward while including neighborhood priorities.
- Worked with the Mayor, Council, and voters to pass the Bridging the Gap levy for funding street maintenance and pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements; this levy was based on my earlier work as Chair of the Transportation Committee.
- Led the Council work to approve a mixed-use neighborhood in the Dravus/Interbay area by rezoning the area in support of community interests while including provisions for affordable housing.
- Worked to protect Georgetown and the City's economic future during the process of developing new land use policies for industrial lands.
- Implemented the Northgate agreement between community and development interests that I facilitated creating in 2003. The agreement creates new development on the Northgate South Parking Lot, daylights Thornton Creek, provides a new Community Center and Library, and realizes our growth management goals for the Northgate Urban Center.
- Won passage of the Local Food Action Initiative to begin the work to create a more sustainable and secure food system for Seattle by supporting farmer's markets, developing new p-patches, building connections between urban consumers and rural producers, and working to reduce hunger.
- Secured funding for expanded human services programs in Seattle's budgets, including \$1 million for food banks and home food delivery in the 2009-2010 budget process.
- Won approval of additional funding for domestic violence programs, including legal assistance for domestic violence victims; received an award in recognition of this work from the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
- Persuaded the Council to add half a million dollars to the 2008 budget to fund city-supported human service agencies to develop Continuity of Business Plans for emergency preparedness.

Representing Seattle

Seattle is the most populous city in Washington and is the state's economic engine. At the same time, Seattle cannot address many of its problems without working with King County, regional entities (Sound Transit and the PSRC), and the state government. Yet many observers believe that Seattle's interests are represented inadequately at those levels. For example, the Muni League has criticized the 40-20-40 rule for allocating new Metro transit funding.² Further, transit advocates note that the state's current tax system disadvantages transit.³ And the Legislature refused to allocate federal stimulus dollars for road projects in Seattle.⁴

- As an elected official representing Seattle, how would you work with King County, regional governmental entities, the state legislature, and the governor to ensure their

² <http://www.munileague.org/about-us/press-releases/Metro%20Report.pdf>

³ <http://seattletransitblog.com/2009/04/19/the-gas-tax-and-the-state-constitution/>

⁴ <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123578330128898253.html>

budgets and policies address Seattle's needs? I will continue to build my relationships with key actors in all of those entities to seek common ground for the future. I have excellent relationships with most King County and suburban city leaders, and have successfully worked with them on numerous issues. To build a more positive relationship with the legislature, Seattle must be willing to engage in finding common goals and in creating win-win opportunities – too often Seattle is seen as asking for too much without acknowledging and supporting the needs of other parties.

City Council Committees

- [Only City Council Candidates] If you are elected, which issues would you like included in your portfolio as a committee chair? I am intrigued by and involved with a wide variety of issues, and I can successfully Chair any Committee. I have a lot of priorities that I would like to continue with in my current Environment, Emergency Management, and Utilities – if I had a second choice, I would probably name Land Use as the field where there is a lot of opportunity to move the sustainability agenda forward.

ISSUES

Waste Reduction

Rather than build an expensive new transfer in Georgetown to handle the growing volume of trash generated in Seattle, the City of Seattle adopted a “Zero Waste Strategy” centered on reducing waste.⁵ As part of that strategy, the City Council adopted a 20-cent “green fee” for disposable shopping bags.⁶

- Do you support the green fee? Why or why not? Yes. It is a modest step towards reducing the pollution from the proliferation of disposable bags, accurately reflects the cost of these bags to the environment and the City, and is a tested model that has demonstrated its success in other countries. If we can't take the modest step of curbing our use of a disposable product that has clear environmental problems and an easy alternative, how will we take the tougher steps of reducing automobile use and living in more compact, environmentally responsible communities?

Alaskan Way Viaduct

Governor Gregoire signed a bill ordering the Washington State Department of Transportation to design a bored tunnel to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct.⁷ This bill contains language allocating cost overruns to Seattle citizens, although some question whether the language has legal significance. Notwithstanding that provision, the City of Seattle committed \$930 million and the Port of Seattle \$300 million to finance the tunnel.⁸ Although the exact tax consequences of these commitments are not totally clear, it is safe to assume that the Port's contribution would result in higher property taxes for Seattle property owners, and the City's pledge would be

⁵ <http://www.seattle.gov/council/newsdetail.asp?ID=7530&Dept=28>

⁶ <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/newsdetail.asp?ID=8695&dept=40>

⁷ <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=5768>

⁸ <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/newsdetail.asp?ID=9257&dept=40>

funded with increases in property taxes, City Light utility rates, and possibly other taxes and fees.

- Do you support the plan to replace the Alaskan Way Viaduct with a bored tunnel? Why or why not? Yes, this plan has been adopted by the state and allows us to proceed with restoring the waterfront and creating future transportation connections. I personally believe that the streets and transit option could work, and if costs escalate unacceptably for the tunnel or if the design proves to be unworkable as engineering continues, that would be the remaining option to consider. However, at some point a decision has to be made, and further delay without extremely good reasons is not an acceptable course of action.
- If you support the tunnel, what would you do to address the cost-overruns issue? SR 99 is a state highway and the state must bear the responsibility for any cost overruns. I do not believe that the legislative language is lawful, and I also think that the legislature may very well repeal it as the implications for other areas of the state that have projects to consider become clearer. It should be noted that the funds proposed by the Mayor to be dedicated to the project are not specifically for the tunnel, but for the costs of utility relocation, of creating the Alaskan Way surface road, and of the waterfront park, among other things. My level of enthusiasm for these expenditures varies with the nature of the expenditure. For example, drainage system relocation will be combined with significant drainage improvements that will contribute to the health of Elliott Bay and Puget Sound, and would be worth doing even if there was not a Viaduct project. Some of the expenses for park and street improvements will benefit the City as a whole, but will have particularly large benefits for adjacent property owners, and we should consider whether a Local Improvement District might be a way to recapture some of that value.
- If you oppose the tunnel, what would you do to prevent its implementation? N/A

Transit

The City of Seattle already contributes to local transit. The City put together the financing package to construct the South Lake Union streetcar line, and the City and King County Metro share the ongoing operating costs for that line.⁹ Further, the Bridging the Gap tax package finances some Metro bus service within Seattle, and Bridging the Gap also pays for street improvements designed to expedite bus travel.¹⁰ Note that the City also contributes to Metro for the downtown Free Ride Zone as well.

- If elected, how do you intend to improve the in-city transit system? Regional cooperation and cooperation with King County are the most important ways to improve transit in Seattle. While the 40-40-20 formula is problematic, it is also an indication of how hungry suburban areas are for more and better transit service, and we should keep working to find ways to create opportunities for expanded transit for all. Metro Transit is a very successful and competent entity, and we must not abandon efforts to make it work

⁹ http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stcar_slu_money.htm

¹⁰ http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/btg_transit.htm

well. Our other critical asset is Sound Transit, and making sure that the expansion to the UW, to Northgate and beyond, and across the Lake are effectively completed will be a major task for me in my role as a member of the Sound Transit Board. Those connections will provide great service to Seattle residents. I have also advocated for and supported a study of the possibility of extending light rail to West Seattle, as well as implementation by Metro of the Rapid Ride corridors to West Seattle, Ballard, and Aurora and Rainier Avenues. As you note, the City is a partner with Metro on those lines. Finally, streetcars have worked well in many cities as a middle path between bus and light rail service (Portland is a great example), and the City has funding for a streetcar on First Hill in Sound Transit 2, as well as some funding to replace the Waterfront Streetcar with a north-south system through downtown and into the International District. Neither these nor the South Lake Union line will fully realize their potential until a true network is created and extended to other neighborhoods in need of service. My highest priority for this network would be to link the three funded lines together through downtown, and then to extend the South Lake Union line to Fremont and Ballard. I am also interested in the concept of extending the line to West Seattle and down Jackson Street into the Central District. Achieving those extensions will be dependent on securing external funding and/or persuading property owners to share in the construction costs, as they have for the South Lake Union line.

Bicycle Infrastructure

The City of Seattle has adopted a Bicycle Master Plan, which provides a vision for improving bicycling facilities in Seattle.¹¹

- Do you support the Bicycle Master Plan? [Yes/No only please] Yes
- If you support it, do you have ideas for improving the plan? The key issue with the Bicycle Master Plan is setting priorities – the tendency has been to do the relatively easy projects, rather than tackle the challenging ideas that could create true alternative routes. I really like the Amsterdam/Copenhagen models for complete streets, where bicycles have separated lanes and traffic signals, with curbs that keep cars out of them. Another idea that I would like to see explored would be to take side streets that are parallel to busy arterials and convert a lane to bicycle use only, providing a way to move bicycles through difficult areas such as up the Rainier Valley, where Rainier and MLK are both challenging routes and difficult to convert for their full length (although I really want to see a road diet through Columbia City, as has been recommended by community members).
- If you support it, how do you suggest the City fund the plan? Significant funding was included in Bridging the Gap, and I support extending that levy. I also support continuing to expand the parking tax and dedicating the funds to alternative transportation. If statewide tolling of the freeway system becomes a reality, I would work to get a portion of that revenue directed to improvements in bike/ped infrastructure.

¹¹ <http://www.seattle.gov/Transportation/bikemaster.htm>

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Pedestrian Infrastructure

The City Council is considering whether to adopt a draft Pedestrian Master Plan.¹²

- Do you support the Pedestrian Master Plan? [Yes/No only please] Yes
- If you support it, do you have ideas for improving the plan? I have not reviewed the plan in detail. The key ideas that I am looking for are a strategy for extending the City's sidewalk network, using natural drainage models to reduce the cost of sidewalks where possible; implementation of woonerfs and other extensive traffic calming measures; and coordinated strategies for education and enforcement of pedestrian safety.
- If you support it, how do you suggest the City fund the plan? Again, BTG is the core funding, and the parking tax is the most appropriate way to secure additional funds, while tolling funds would be a great way to support non-motorized transportation.

Land Use and Multifamily Housing

According to U.S. Census data cited in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, about half of Seattle's households live in multifamily housing.¹³ Further, according to the Plan, approximately 40% of Seattle's total land area is set aside for residential use—35% for single-family residences but only 5% for multifamily dwellings.¹⁴ That 5% dedicated to multifamily housing tends to be concentrated in “urban villages” or along arterial streets, which are noisy and dirty. However, “backyard cottages” (also known as “detached accessory dwelling units”) are also allowed in single-family zones in Southeast Seattle.¹⁵

- Would you support legislation to allow backyard cottages to be built in all single-family zones? [Yes/No only please] Yes
- Would you ever support a contract rezone or a broader rezone allowing for more housing to be built on a site? [Yes/No only please] Yes
- If you support the basic concept of rezoning, what criteria would you use in deciding on specific locations where more housing should be built? Within urban villages or urban centers, compatible with neighborhood plans and nearby communities, accessibility to transit connections.
- If you support the concept of rezoning, what criteria would you use in deciding where more housing should be built? See answer to previous question.

¹² http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pedestrian_masterplan/

¹³ http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/cms/groups/pan/@pan/@plan/@proj/documents/Web_Informational/cos_004508.pdf

¹⁴ http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/cms/groups/pan/@pan/@plan/@proj/documents/Web_Informational/cos_004508.pdf

¹⁵ http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Alternative_Housing_Choices/Overview/

Many newly built townhouses in Seattle are architectural atrocities, and site plans tend to be car-dominated. Most townhouse developments are exempt from the City of Seattle's Design Review Program.¹⁶ It is also difficult to find attractive new condos and apartment buildings. To address some of these problems, the City Council is considering a package of revisions to the zoning code.¹⁷

- Do you support the proposed revisions to the multifamily housing zoning code? [Yes/No only please] Generally, yes
- If you support the revisions, do you have ideas for improving the proposed revisions? Will work with the PLUN Committee to craft improvements.

City Governance

- Do you support the "Vote Clean Seattle" plan,¹⁸ which is supported in principle by the City Council,¹⁹ to create a system for publicly funded campaigns in Seattle? [Yes/No only please] Yes

CREATIVE RESPONSE

- If you have additional thoughts on how to improve Seattle's city government or to make Seattle a more livable and sustainable city, please note them here.

In the next four years, I want to:

- Bring Seattle back to economic health, ensure that those who are left out and left behind have the human services they need, support local business and our regional economy, and protect Seattle's environment through holistic and creative solutions to environmental issues. That is the blueprint for a sustainable future for Seattle.
- Continue to implement our neighborhood plans, growth management strategies, and transportation choices that make Seattle a safe place to walk and bicycle.
- Keep our communities safe and healthy, by supporting our parks and libraries, working for better public health, housing, education, and human services, reducing hunger and malnutrition by making access to healthy, locally-produced food easier and more affordable, and ensuring that our police and firefighters have the support they need.
- Continue my regional leadership work, on the Sound Transit Board to get light rail to Northgate and across Lake Washington to the Eastside, to keep moving on the Viaduct and bridge replacements, and for salmon recovery and the health of Puget Sound.
- Restore faith in government by listening and responding to citizens, valuing and supporting our diverse communities, and preserving open, accountable government and a City Council that develops superb public policy to keep Seattle vibrant, functioning, and

¹⁶ http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/planning/design_review_program/Overview/

¹⁷ http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Planning/Multifamily_Code_Update/Overview/

¹⁸ <http://www.voteclanseattle.com/seattle.htm>

¹⁹ <http://www.seattle.gov/council/newsdetail.asp?ID=9481&Dept=28>

resilient. These are the goals of the Special Committee on Open Government which I initiated and chair.