



Seattle City Council Candidate Questionnaire on Housing and Homelessness, September 2019

Prepared By: [Resolution to End Homelessness](#), [Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness](#) and
[Tech 4 Housing](#),
in partnership with [Housing Development Consortium](#) and [Solid Ground](#)

Candidate's Name: Dan Strauss

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Candidate Photo: Attached or Permission to use photo from website

There are six questions. You may choose to skip a question; if so, please indicate that you choose not to answer. Please limit your answers to 150 words each (about 1,000 characters, including spaces).

Question 1. Beyond making current programs more efficient, do you think we need to increase funding for housing for people experiencing homelessness? If so, where would you raise the revenue?

Yes, we need to increase funding. We need new revenue to be from progressive sources and flip the upside-down tax code on the state level. We need to look closely at proposals such as the vacancy tax and adjusting the B&O tax to create new revenue and place less of the burden on small businesses. I would like to see the recommendations from the Third Door Coalition. I will also look at fully utilizing our bonding capacity, support the Fare Share proposal, and will lead efforts to coordinate with our regional partners and ensure they are contributing to the solution.



Question 2. What are your thoughts on the City's current implementation of encampment removals? In what ways would you improve the policies?

What we need is a place for everyone to come inside and be safe. The current shelter options are not sufficient; we need to provide everyone experiencing homelessness four walls and a door they can lock with access to services. All people deserve to feel safe in their communities. I support the goals of the policies adopted by the City Council years ago which prioritize removal of unsanctioned encampments near playgrounds or blocking public right of way. I support the central theme of those updates: we should not force people to move and dispose of their belongings when we do not offer them anywhere else to go.

I will work with colleagues, community organizations, and faith-based organizations to ensure we are providing a safe alternative when we are moving people and we are focusing on root causes to prevent people from moving from homes to tents in the first place.

Question 3. The City and State have introduced several new tenant protections in recent years. Do you think more work is needed to protect tenants and combat displacement? If so, what changes would you like to see?

Yes, more work is needed. If elected, I will want to work with stakeholders, tenants, and small landlords to identify a suite of policies which could be readily implemented to ensure we are preventing evictions – both judicial and economic – and doing so in a sustainable fashion. I believe, instead of piecemeal approaches, we should implement an overhaul of landlord-tenant law in Seattle.

Some examples of policies which I would want to be considered include a portable screening acceptance requirement, requirement for lease renewals at set time intervals (such as 12 months) to avoid month-to-month maneuvering by some landlords, and reigning in of excessive fees and insurance requirements of tenants which make it more difficult for families to find affordable, stable homes in Seattle.



Question 4. Homelessness and housing insecurity disproportionately affect people of color, LGBTQ communities, people with disabilities and other marginalized communities. What would you do to address these disparities?

Councilmember Mosqueda has already begun some important work in this area, incorporating local preference in disposition policies and the Housing Levy Administration & Financial Plan and Funding Policies. I will work with her and community groups to build on these successes, providing greater opportunity for self-determination in communities most at risk of displacement across Seattle.

Further, I will strongly advocate for clear guidelines to the Executive to implement affirmative action in Seattle for contracts to help rebuild wealth in communities most disparately impacted by I-200. As reported in Crosscut, our region saw a dramatic decrease in these contracts, driving away the ability to build wealth in historically marginalized communities, or for the city to hire frontline workers which reflect the communities we serve.

Question 5. How would you adjust Seattle's land use and zoning laws? In particular, what changes, if any, would you want to see in neighborhoods currently zoned exclusively for single-family housing and in multi-family neighborhoods where we're making significant investments in transit?

I will re-legalize duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes in single-family neighborhoods across our city. Such structures were legal throughout the city until the 1950s, when residential zones throughout the city were down-zoned for lower density. In District 6, we're already familiar with moderate density: many blocks have duplexes, triplexes, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) which pre-date the 1950s ban.

Around transit hubs, we need to include affordable housing in all station subarea plans and in multifamily neighborhoods near transit. Great public transit can be a tremendous opportunity creator for people with lower income, especially if they can afford to live close enough to the opportunities and access which transit provides.



Question 6. We know that it is cheaper to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place than it is to support them to exit homelessness. What is your vision for homelessness prevention initiatives and services in our community?

Programs like the Ballard Food Bank and West Seattle Helpline offer excellent services for homelessness prevention, most notably emergency financial assistance for rent and utilities. A recent study of people falling into homelessness in Seattle found one-half of them owed one month's rent or less. A one-time cash infusion from organizations like these can help keep people in their homes, which helps the family, helps the community, and is more cost-effective.

Candidate Signature for verification (electronic is ok):

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Strauss".

Date: 10/3/2018

- END OF QUESTIONNAIRE -

Please return to: hinrichc@seattleu.edu, cc [laceym@seattleu.edu](mailto:lacey@seattleu.edu), by 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 4, 2019. Thank you for participating.

Distributed to all 2019 Seattle City Council general election candidates on behalf of partners Resolution to End Homelessness, Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness, Tech 4 Housing, Housing Development Consortium and Solid Ground, by SU's Project on Family Homelessness, Institute of Public Service, Seattle University/CASY 210, P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA, 98122-1090, on Sept. 4, 2019.



Housing Voter logo by Anneke Karreman, SU '20.