Dear Candidate,

Thank you very much for responding to this questionnaire!

We are a non-partisan partnership of housing and homelessness providers and advocacy organizations with a combined substantial presence in Seattle. We will use your responses as part of an online Voters’ Guide on Housing and Homelessness, which we’ll publish to coincide with ballots arriving in mailboxes in mid- to late July.

Because we all are from 501(c)(3) organizations, we are unable to make endorsements; but we will share the questionnaire results with thousands of people interested in housing and homelessness.

Please complete and email this form in Word or PDF format to Catherine Hinrichsen, Seattle University, at hinrichc@seattleu.edu by 5 p.m. Thursday, July 12, if you would like to be included in the Voters’ Guide.

- If you send it as a pdf, please ensure your links are live.
- Please either attach a photo or indicate you give us permission to use a photo from your campaign website.

Please direct any questions to Catherine. Thank you!

In addition, please save the date: We will invite the candidates who advance to the general election to a Seattle Mayoral Candidate Forum on Housing and Homelessness¹, Tuesday evening, Sept. 12 (tentative) at Seattle University. More details will come after the primary.

Questions begin on the next page.

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¹ We decided to cancel the forum previously scheduled for July 12 after counsel advised us we would need to invite all 21 candidates, per IRS regulations for 501(c)(3) organizations. We determined that a discussion with up to 21 candidates would not be productive. We are distributing this questionnaire instead.
Question 1. King County and the City of Seattle have recognized that the crises of affordability and homelessness are complex, regional issues that require regional solutions, exacerbated by the threat of potential drastic HUD funding cuts. If elected, how would you work with other regional leaders and the state and federal governments to identify, enact and implement innovative, forward-thinking solutions to decrease homelessness and increase affordability?

Please answer here, limit 150 words.

My first step would be to meet with the organizations already in place to hear first-hand what ideas they have for assisting the disadvantaged rapidly and equitably. Then I would make every attempt to reach rapid agreement with the mayors of surrounding communities to pool our resources and minimize overhead as we attempt to work together to create a faster moving system of assisting the homeless find short and long-term shelter. I strongly believe we have to work with the shelters already in place and assist them in providing the services needed. Increasing counselors who can interview individuals and rapidly assign a course of action for each one could help to move everyone through the systems more quickly. Keeping our staffs lean through combining overheads will help us to insure that more money goes directly to solving the homelessness issues rather than to bloated bureaucracies.
Question 2. What is your position on the policies contained in the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA)? What do you agree with? Disagree?

Please answer here, limit 150 words.

There are parts of the HALA agenda that make good sense and others that I disagree with. Essentially, I feel that we need to assist the homeless without radically altering the fabric of existing neighborhoods or violating the rights of current home-owners. I believe requiring a certain number of low-income housing units within newly-constructed buildings in select neighborhoods is a good first step, but that each neighborhood needs to be considered individually, not via a general plan or strategy like HALA. Additionally, I don’t believe that given Seattle’s current growth pace, adding a few low-income units will have any immediate impact on the homeless crisis. Unfortunately, I see the concepts of HALA as a fine long-term approach but certainly not a panacea for the current issues. In light of that, I feel temporary subsidies for full-value housing may be the only course of action that will net rapid results.

Question 3. How would you balance the disagreement and anger expressed by some neighborhood residents towards increased density and affordable homes in specific areas of the city, with our unprecedented growth and need for increased housing options that must be shared equitably across the city?

Please answer here, limit 150 words.

As I stated in Question 2, I believe we will have to more selective about where affordable housing is located, respecting the rights of residents who clearly have a vested interest in the future of their neighborhoods. One of the causes of rising housing costs is the constant demand by the state and cities for more taxes, particularly property taxes. So while one hand works to alleviate the homeless problem, the other hand is making it worse. We may have to find more creative solutions such as property tax exemptions, subsidizing landlords participating in lower cost housing programs, or developing unincorporated areas outside the city. Seattle’s growth pace will eventually slow down but market forces will always drive prices and trying to alter the laws of supply and demand is not going to be a winning battle. The city needs to come to grips with that and plan accordingly.
**Question 4.** Did you vote for the Seattle Housing Levy in 2016? Why or why not? What kind of funding mechanism do you believe is best to generate money for housing and homelessness services?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

*I don’t discuss my personal votes so I will pass on this question.*

**Question 5.** Given that half the residents of Seattle are renters, what tenant protections -- above and beyond what the city has already done -- would you push to enact to ensure that potential tenants are being treated equitably?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

*I do not believe in rent control. Every effort to control rents in the US has failed. Market forces will always dictate, to some degree, what the average cost of rental units are. My orientation is to work on not only minimizing property tax increases but finding ways (such as not extending taxes that reach their sunset date) to decrease the tax amount. I also am not in favor of telling small business (or landlords) how to run their business or manage their property. On the other hand, after having run multiple small businesses myself for forty years, I believe I will be able to connect with landlords and reach mutual agreement on a set of fair and equitable procedures that they agree to employ – and on a set of reasonable penalties for failing to do so. I would also be open to establishing programs which assist low-income residents financially, increasing the odds that landlords collect their rent and stay focused on treating people fairly.*

**Question 6.** Virtually every city in Washington has responded to the growing homelessness crisis by criminalizing behaviors such as sitting, lying or sleeping in public. If elected, (a) will you work to repeal and/or mitigate the impacts of ordinances that criminalize homelessness in Seattle, and (b) will you oppose attempts to introduce such ordinances?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

*I would pledge to uphold the laws as they are written and to change those that unfairly treat disadvantaged people. The homeless are not criminals and should not be treated as such, but I do believe that common courtesy, respect for authority and other people’s property, is a two-way street and it will be easier for everyone if we act accordingly.*

**Question 7.** The recent tragic killing of Charleena Lyles highlights the issues of police accountability and the intersecting systems of care in our community whose failures led to her death, including housing, mental health, child welfare, justice and more. How would you address the failure of these systems to work together?
Please answer here, limit 150 words.

Charleena Lyles death was a deep tragedy that affected many in the community. The police shooting, however, was only the last act in that play. Many people and agencies failed Charleena along the way leading to the ending that occurred. Our biggest failure is to be putting the police in the position of having to save the day after everyone else has failed. DSHS, family, friends, mental health agencies could have done a better job so that the police encounter never would have happened. Hindsight is 20-20 as we know, and we can’t expect any of our support systems to catch everyone or to solve every problem. But we do have to do a better job at every step of the way. The police must be accountable, but it is my view that they are diligently making that effort and blaming these events solely on them is giving a free pass to everyone else – and that is not right either.

**Candidate Signature** for verification (electronic is ok):  Gary Brose

Date: ____7-06-17________

- **END OF QUESTIONNAIRE** –