



Seattle Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire on Housing and Homelessness, Summer 2017

Prepared By: [Solid Ground](#) and [Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness](#), in partnership with [Housing Development Consortium](#) and [Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness](#)

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.

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.



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Candidate's Name: Jason Roberts

Campaign Address: PO Box 80242 Seattle WA

Campaign Phone: 206 931 0775

Campaign Email Address: info@roberts4mayor2017.com

Campaign Website: www.roberts4mayor2017.com

Candidate Photo: Attached or Permission to use photo from website

There are seven 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. 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.

Housing affordability is defined by the area median income. The AMI is calculated by HUD based on census data. Our regional wage disparity has inflated the AMI to proportions that do not reflect what the average worker earns, hence unrealistic and unaffordable pricing models exist in our housing market. I would like to work with HUD and our state legislators to factor the AMI based on what the average worker earns, not the sum average of all earned wages in the region. Currently the AMI is near 80k per year, I believe a more accurate number would be around 40 to 50k.



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.

For HALA and the MHA to be truly effective at creating affordable housing, the requirements must be significantly higher. Currently developers are only required to provide 7% of their units at 60% of the AMI. That number should be at least 25%. Also, the fee per square foot to bypass providing affordable units must be higher than \$20 per square foot. I also believe that the ultimate decision in whether to up-zone a neighborhood should include a vote from the community that lives there.

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.

I believe that neighborhoods and communities should have a vote as to whether their neighborhoods are up-zoned. Currently HALA is failing to provide significant amounts of affordable housing yet succeeding at displacing communities and gentrifying neighborhoods. I do not believe that affordability is a supply and demand issue, more housing has not equated to lower costs. It is my opinion that once the market shifts, development will slow; preserving the profits of developers.





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 voted for the housing levy. I think we need to look further than preserving low income housing. Seattle is becoming unaffordable for most incomes. We need to strike at the heart of the issue which is housing costs. As long as affordability is determined by a flawed AMI, rents will rise. This will likely take intervention at the state level by legalizing some form of rent control or stabilization.

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.

Seattle has been very progressive for the rights of tenants. Currently the mayor is working on legislation to stop discrimination in rental applications by ending criminal background checks. I have mixed feelings about some of the recent changes, though I generally approve. I think we need to be thinking big picture and look at ways to stabilize rents.



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.

Homelessness is not a crime. Our focus should be on increased affordability, drug treatment programs, medical and social services, and job training rather than ineffectual and punitive legislation.

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.

The systemic failure of our social services is directly linked to the growing disparity in our local economy and the growing numbers of people that rely on these services. This is compounded with a culture of social inequity that disproportionately marginalizes people of color. We must first acknowledge that there is a problem here. The solution is as multifaceted as the problem, the short answer is we need to do better in every way. We must improve in our public schools, in our access to college, in providing opportunities, in our legal systems, in our police force, in our social workers, and in all ways we treat each other as humans. Social equity is bigger than a 150 word essay, it's going to take a paradigm shift in all of our behaviors.





Candidate Signature for verification (electronic is ok):

Date: _____

- **END OF QUESTIONNAIRE** -

Distributed on behalf of partners Solid Ground, Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness, Housing Development Consortium and Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness, by SU's Project on Family Homelessness, Institute of Public Service, Seattle University/CASY 204W, P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA, 98122-1090.

Please return to: hinrichc@seattleu.edu by Thursday, July 12, 2017, 5 p.m. Thank you for participating.

Illustration of Seattle skyline by Mandy Rusch, SU '17.