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 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 Homelessness, 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?

As a City, we must explore working with King County to create a regional consolidation of homelessness services under one roof. This approach would reduce administrative overhead and better coordinate service delivery. We need increased drug and mental health treatment option, low barrier shelters and a system to measure outcomes for providers. With a regional approach, we also could seek Countywide funding, to address the problem of homelessness.

We need to create more housing options in this city. I will look to leverage City and regional tools and partnerships to help meet this need including seeking property tax exemptions for low-income homeowners and for landlords providing affordable housing.
In addition, I will help lead efforts to fight any cuts in federal funding. We must rally our state and local leaders to ensure Congress rejects proposed cuts by the Trump administration.

**Question 2.** What is your position on the policies contained in the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA)? What do you agree with? Disagree?

I support the implementation of the HALA recommendations and will focus on the “highest impact recommendations” first. The cornerstone of HALA is the Mandatory Housing Affordability requirement (MHA). Achieving 20,000 new units of low-income housing over the next 10 years – the goal of HALA – requires the participation of the private housing development community. This program’s value was confirmed as projects that vested prior to the MHA program began requesting to opt into it. We must maximize the number of people eligible for these options and make sure both low-income and middle class housing exists in all parts of our city. We should remember that the “L” in “HALA” is “Livability”. Our overall approach must be holistic with our goal livability; neighborhoods and urban villages must have affordable housing, excellent public schools, green space and parks, and thriving small businesses all within easy walking distance to transit.

**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?

We must have more equitable development. But we cannot have effective or equitable policies without broad, meaningful, and sustained community input. How we make decisions is very important, and often can be the difference between a policy that is accepted and becomes part of the fabric of our city – or one that is rejected. We know that every part of our city will grow and become more dense. As this occurs, we need to ensure it includes both affordable and middle class homes. Density comes in many forms: from upzones to townhouses to multi-family to backyard cottages and mother-in-laws.

We also must ensure benefits of development flow equitably in the city. Some of neighborhoods have borne the burden unfairly. When planning, those most impacted in our communities must be invited to ask questions, voice their concerns, and share their wisdom.
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.*

Yes, I did vote for the Seattle Housing Levy in 2016 as well as the previous levies. Affordable housing is one of the biggest challenges facing Seattle and the approach of the 2016 levy – producing and preserving affordable housing, assisting low-income homeowners and providing emergency rental assistance – is a critical part of the solution.

We also have to explore both public housing investments and greater public-private partnerships to address the critical need for low income housing.

I support the Mandatory Housing Affordability program. There is no way we can achieve 20,000 new units of low-income housing over the next 10 years without the participation of the private housing development community.

We need to make sure we are funding the policies that yield the best outcomes. I will make sure that all taxpayer funds are spent effectively and efficiently, especially when it comes to housing and homelessness services.

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.*

First and foremost, we must ensure that renters are at the table when we discuss housing policy and issues of growth and density. We must bring more of their voices into City Hall. I support a stronger, direct voice like the new Renter’s Commission that was formed. We also must have policies to ensure that we enforce discrimination laws and that we break down the barriers that prevent people who have experienced homelessness and or who have criminal records from obtaining housing.

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?

Yes, I absolutely and unequivocally reject policies that criminalize homelessness. Housing is a human right, and I believe in housing first. We must not infringe upon people's civil rights, and must do all that we can to avoid worsening the trauma of those experiencing homelessness. The best way to do this is to provide them, as quickly as possible, with the services they need based on their individual situation. The strategies we need to pursue must be focused on mental health and substance abuse treatment, low-barrier shelters, and ultimately long-term housing. People experiencing homelessness are our neighbors and are disproportionately people of color, those who identify as LGBTQ (especially among the youth population), and have a history of domestic violence abuse or experience with foster care. We must approach this issue with compassion, and help get people off the streets and into safe housing, not criminalize them.

**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?

The recent shooting of Charleena Lyles is a tragic reminder that police reform is never done; progress requires constant and urgent evaluation of what we can do better. We failed Ms. Lyles before the police got to her door. We must better align our systems – health care, mental health, children and family services, courts and housing – to help people in a holistic fashion.

As US Attorney, I led efforts to begin police reform in Seattle and as mayor, I will continue implementing reforms - particularly in the areas of de-escalation and crisis intervention. Under these reforms, progress has been made. But we also know that community trust can be earned or lost with every officer interaction. We must keep pushing and evaluating if policies, training and oversight are working in practice and to make sure the community has a voice in that process.
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.