

Answers from Debora Juarez

Q2: For which position are you running?

Seattle City Council District 5

Q3: What do you know about the unmet basic human needs in your district? (150 word limit)

While North Seattle has experienced a rapid rise in the cost of living over the last couple years, it remains relatively affordable compared to other parts of the city. As a result, North Seattle has experienced a rise in the number of low income populations and homeless individuals who choose to make their home here. While the North End has some fantastic service providers (such as North Helpline) the expansion of these services has not kept pace with the growth in the population of folks with need. As a member of the Seattle City Council I will prioritize city support of proven, cost-effective provision of services in the North End.

Q4: How has race affected your life? (250 word limit)

Asking me how race has affected my life is a little bit like asking a fish how water has affected its life. As an enrolled member of the Blackfeet Nation and a first-generation Mexican-American, my heritage forms the basis of my identity and has shaped who I am today. I grew up on the Puyallup Indian Reservation in Tacoma before attending law school, after which I commenced a decades-long career serving my community as a legal advocate. Even when it became clear to me that many of the places my career has taken me were not made for women of color, I continue to remain extremely proud of my cultural background and traditions.

Q5: What strategies do you see as the most promising to create and preserve affordable housing in Seattle? What steps would you take to make those things happen? (150 word limit)

I propose the city take an "all of the above" approach to creating and maintaining a sufficient supply of affordable housing (projected to be at least 20,000 additional units over the next 20 years). The following are specific proposals I believe will form the basis of a policy package which will allow us to best resolve the affordability crisis: -One for one replacement of existing affordable units in any new development - Asking Olympia to remove the state ban on rent control, so Seattle can explore a 21st-century rent stabilization policy specific to our city's needs -Require developers to include affordable units in their projects or else pay for the construction of these units elsewhere through a linkage fee -Provide aggressive, targeted incentives to increase the housing supply in transit-rich areas of the city -Use the City's bonding capacity to build quality affordable housing, especially for low-income and very low-income folks

Q6: Describe how you would represent your district to ensure there is equal access to the emergency food system. What policies and investments would you support so that Seattle residents have access to equal access to adequate, culturally-appropriate, healthy food? (150 word limit)

As a long-time volunteer in the emergency food system, I am all too aware of the fact the system is constantly facing tight budgets and lacks adequate support from the city. I support new city efforts to partner with the private sector and non-profits to fund expanded access to culturally-appropriate, healthy food in areas with the greatest need for these services. I also support programs which provide incentives to businesses (usually small and locally-owned) which offer fresh produce and other "real" foods to folks in neighborhoods which otherwise would qualify as "food deserts".

Q7: What do you see as government's role in preventing and responding to domestic violence, sexual assault, and commercial sexual exploitation? (200 word limit)

As a former public defender and King County Superior Court Judge I am very familiar with the plight of those suffering from domestic abuse, sexual assault, and commercial sexual exploitation. This experience has given me the perspective needed to address this serious problems with effective policy solutions. First, the city should take a leading role in encouraging survivors of domestic violence and abuse to report their experiences. As many of these folks live in communities with a skeptical view of the Seattle Police

Department, the city should provide other options for people to get connected to any help they need. At the same time the Seattle Police Department under Chief Kathleen O'Toole needs to make meaningful changes to win back the trust of these communities. One way SPD can do this is through the expansion of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program city-wide. LEAD has been proven to work both through academic research conducted by the University of Washington. As a public defender and judge I was an early proponent of diversion courts, and I continue to believe this approach offers a real solution to the problems of addiction and sexual exploitation.

Q8: The number of people experiencing homelessness in Seattle and King County is increasing and local, county, state, and federal resources must increase in order for us to help and house people. Homelessness and insufficient affordable housing cannot be solved at the neighborhood level. As Seattle shifts to District representation on the City Council, how will you ensure that your role on City Council supports a robust city-wide response to homelessness? (150 word limit)

In addition to the affordable housing measures I have proposed above, I strongly support a "city-wide" approach to tackling the problem of homelessness. The majority of extremely low-income housing built in the city in recent years has been located in either the far north or south of the city. Continuing this approach will lead to the outcome of concentrated poverty in certain neighborhoods of the city. As concentrated poverty has a demonstrated negative impact on socioeconomic mobility and quality of life, the City should take care to ensure new affordable housing supply is built in every part of the city, in mixed-income developments near transit and places of work when possible.

Q9: The population of Seattle is growing at one of the fastest rates of any city in the country, bringing more families. How can the city build capacity to serve the early learning and child care needs for the growing number of children? (150 word limit)

Quality early-childhood education has been shown to be one of the most cost-effective ways of improving educational outcomes and overall quality of life. Additionally, early-childhood education offers promise as a means to address Seattle's startling racial and socioeconomic disparities in educational outcomes. Therefore, I propose Seattle expands the pilot pre-k program passed by voters in 2014 to make quality pre-k education available to every child in the city.

Q10: What are your ideas for how the city can insure a built environment that supports people who are older and or living with disabilities? (150 word limit)

Older folks and those living with disabilities face many of the same challenges as everyone else, and therefore they often seek similar policy outcomes. However, these folks do sometimes require specific accommodations. One example of this dynamic is the example of affordable housing. As seniors are often reliant on fixed incomes, they oftentimes are some of the first folks economically displaced in a housing crisis. To solve this problem, I propose the city includes affordable housing specifically designed and reserved for seniors in our housing plans. Transportation policy is another area where the needs of seniors and those living with disabilities are congruent with those of the general public. One of the reasons I have been such a fierce advocate for a second light-rail station in my district is that it will essentially double the amount of access people with disabilities and the elderly will have to efficient public transit.