

SHSC 2019 online candidate survey questions

What is your name?

Shaun Scott

1. For which position are you running?

Seattle City Council District 4

2. What do you know about the unmet basic human needs in the district you would represent?

District 4 is home to the greatest income inequality in Seattle between it's richest per capita neighborhood, Laurelhurst, and the University District. Many students are at or below the poverty line and are forced to choose between purchasing food or text books, all the while rapid gentrification and skyrocketing cost of living in Northeast Seattle has displaced countless people, many to the point of being unhoused. With this understanding, I want to work to create a livable and equitable Seattle for all-- we are all better off when the needs of society's most vulnerable are being met. I am running on a platform of trying to bring as much dense, affordable and public housing to Seattle as possible, stopping the cruel and ineffective homeless sweeps, bringing free mass transit to all. We must also protect and advance the rights of all workers, not just those in formalized unions, such as freelancers, and through the decriminalization of sex work.

3. What has afforded you the privilege and power to run for office, and how will it impact your role in this position?

As a working class Black millennial it has often been a lack of privilege that has characterized my interactions with powerful institutions in this city. I was born in Queens, NY to Jamaican immigrant parents and spent the first decade of my life living in public housing. Since then I have been a proud Seattle resident for the last 26 years. These lived experiences color the exhaustion and frustration I have felt in watching our elected officials put profit over people, power over accountability to the people. Being so fed up with this pattern of behavior compelled me into public life, becoming a Black Lives Matter activist in 2015. I have since been involved in activism and local politics, notably as a member of Seattle Democratic Socialists of America, and as Rep Pramila Jayapal's field organizer in her 2017 re-election campaign. With this, I am dedicated to fighting for all of our right to the city. My running for office carries the intention of representing the city's most marginalized, building power among renters, workers, students, immigrants and PoC communities. However, this all being said, I also acknowledge the privilege I have as a man running for office, and understand that societal expectations of people who are characterized as masculine often are privileged with the perception of confidence and certainty, whereas my non-male counterparts are not afforded that privilege and therefore get questioned, talked over, and so forth. My campaign team is made up of mostly womxn and I certainly take heed to their feedback to ensure that I am seeing the full picture when it comes to issues that address lived experiences or structural oppressions I do not hold/experience.

4. What experience do you have in listening to and amplifying community voices? In what ways do you base your policies and priorities on the needs of those who will be most impacted by them?

I've worked as an advocacy journalist and filmmaker covering issues related to affordable housing, climate justice, and race and gender equity in publications such as City Arts Magazine, The Guardian, and Jacobin. In 2016, I was in charge of the outreach process for the Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs' multi-million dollar renovation of King Street Station. As an activist, organizer, and filmmaker for the last decade, I've shown up for the issues impacting the most vulnerable and targeted Seattleites. At a time when backroom deal-making and corporate contributions hold change in city hall, we need candidates who bring an organizing background, and who know what it means to hold power accountable. As a councilperson, I will prioritize

making Seattle work for the people who make it work. This means ensuring all workers, especially women, LGBTQIA+ folks, immigrants, and communities of color have access to jobs with dignity and everything the city has to offer. Our platform will materially address this by creating dense affordable housing, supporting access to free public transit, and calling upon corporations and developers to pay their fair share.

5. The cost of health care increases every year. Recent federal policy changes have threatened the long-term sustainability of Medicaid — such as attempts to reduce funding or turn the program into a block grant — and have aimed to undermine the viability of private health insurance markets — such as eliminating the individual insurance mandate from the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or not defending the ACA in court. Given so many barriers being placed at the federal level, how would you work to improve health care access at the local level to ensure stronger and more vibrant communities?

Healthcare is a human right. To me, supporting single-payer healthcare goes beyond eliminating financial burdens to accessing healthcare, it is also a commitment to bettering access to healthcare institutions and necessary services. This carries over into providing the best quality care for all residents. I am committed to supporting clinic access, health care reform, community education, and ongoing/increased funding for accessible healthcare providers on the municipal level.

6. Federal policies over the last few years have created a climate of fear for immigrant and refugee communities across the country. Even Washington State, long a welcoming environment, is no stranger to these challenges, as the recent Department of Licensing scandal showed. This climate of fear impacts immigrants and refugees of all statuses, and new research shows this fear is driving immigrants away from health and human services programs they are legally eligible to participate in. What would you do to leverage local systems and

resources to bring immigrant and refugee communities back out of the shadows?

As part of our broader economic and social justice platform, we need to place an emphasis on immigrants in the city. I call on making Seattle an actual sanctuary city, insofar as I do not support any city collaboration with DHS or ICE. Furthermore, I would condemn any tech companies that furnish these agencies. In attempting to hold Amazon et al accountable, we should be reprimanding any collaboration between tech corporations and ICE. Additionally, I would use my position on city council to pressure the county to stop deportation flights out of Boeing field. By taking these bold stances on immigration as well as elevating other community organizing groups and organizations that have been doing work for immigrants and refugees, I hope that the public narrative around immigration can be shifted away from one of fear and anger and towards one of justice and peace.

7. Over half Seattleites and over 40% of people in King County are renters. Currently in most of Washington State tenants can be forced to move with only 20 days' notice and even within the city of Seattle, there is no guarantee that a landlord will renew a tenant's lease. [For King County Candidates] As part of the King County Council, will you enact just cause protections to give tenants stability? [For Seattle Candidates] As part of Seattle City Council, will you expand just cause protections for renters with fixed term leases who are up for a lease renewal? [For both] What are your plans and strategies to protect renters?

The number one issue that I hear from the renters, young people, and students who go to the university in my district, is the lack of affordable housing options in the city, and the seeming abdication of local government's responsibility to provide housing as a human right. As a renter myself, I understand the financial strains and insecurity that come with renting. If elected onto Seattle City Council, I would expand just cause protections for renters with fixed-term leases who are up for a lease renewal. Additionally, I have called for commercial rent control on my campaign. As we have the

legal infrastructure to implement it, I believe it would be an important tool in protecting small, usually immigrant-owned, businesses from development and upzoning in the University District.

8. In 2018, the consulting firm McKinsey and Company conducted an extensive analysis of the current crisis response and homeless housing programs in Seattle and King County. They found that our region dramatically under-invests in housing and other system-wide responses, while the numbers of people experiencing homelessness grows. They found that between 2014 and 2017, the number of households accessing homelessness services grew by an average 11 percent a year, while funding grew by an average 2.4 percent a year. The McKinsey analysis estimated an additional investment of between \$360 and \$410 million per year for at least ten years is required to make and maintain progress in solving homelessness. Such added resources would bring our community in line with sister cities and counties addressing homelessness and affordable housing crises. What are three specific revenue options (local, regional, and state) you would use to generate the necessary funds to fill the gap between current local, state, and federal dollars, and the housing and service system investments required to do the job for Seattle and King County residents experiencing homelessness?

Ensuring the most marginalized members of society can afford to live in Seattle is at the heart of my campaign. Current affordable housing programs are not enough, and absolutely do not ensure the survival of those making less than designated median incomes for existing programs. Therefore, decommodifying housing is critical. Too often, the term “affordable housing” has been cheapened through overuse and misuse. I am very intentional in saying that, as a City Councilmember, I will fight for public and supportive housing, which I believe is necessary to adequately and sustainably address our housing crisis. Without this kind of bold investment in public housing, too many will continue to be neglected by our current approach to affordable housing, which relies on

market incentives and fines that developers are able to absorb without much consequence. This immediate need is also why I have called for a fair tax code. We need to be moving away from regressive sales and property taxes and, instead, prioritize progressive revenue streams to fund these public and supportive housing projects. The city's own Progressive Revenue Taskforce on Housing and Homelessness reported last year that we need to be investing hundreds of millions of dollars per year and suggested that these progressive revenue streams can include: taxation of vacant luxury real estate developments, a mansion sale tax, and taxes on large corporations. It's time for Seattle to stop letting luxury developers use our city as a capital sink and then turn around and refuse to build affordable housing. Our city needs compassionate solutions, and that means housing people by actually dedicating the resources needed to make it happen.

9. Seattle and King County are in the midst of a child care crisis because child care is expensive and unaffordable for many working families. At the same time, some child care providers cannot afford to pay workers a living wage and stay in business. What ideas do you have for solutions?

After rent/mortgage and transportation, childcare is one of the biggest costs in households. Reduced child care capacity has been linked to decreasing rates of maternal employment, reduced choice for families seeking child care, and increased reliance on other forms of child care, including a reliance on unlicensed child care, which can sometimes be unsafe for infants, toddlers and young children. In King County, data shows that the median cost for center-based care for infants is 23% of the state's median household income and 15% at family child care programs. I believe that childcare should be universally accessible, affordable, high-quality, thorough (24/7) and have minimum eligibility requirements. My campaign has been producing a policy rollout for universal childcare that will be released within these coming weeks.

10. Survivors of gender-based violence frequently enter the criminal justice system due to their victimization, but criminal justice responses are woefully inadequate and problematic for most survivors for a variety of reasons, especially Black, indigenous, and other survivors of color, refugee and immigrant survivors; and gender non-conforming survivors. What specific solutions will you bring forward for addressing issues of gender-based violence in our city? What mechanisms would you employ to shift the structural oppression and racism, specifically in criminal justice institutions?

Too often, American cities have sought to use the criminal justice system to address the anxieties of women and LGBTQIA+ folx with respect to neighborhood safety, street harassment, and stalking. As relayed in Ava Duvernay's masterful movies *Middle of Nowhere* (2012) and *13th* (2016), these carceral solutions have disproportionately impacted women of color, incarcerating them at even higher rates than their male counterparts, and leaving them to repair families shattered by the police state. For too many women and members of the LGBTQIA+ community the sense of security that a city should bring is not a shared experience. Cities are largely constructed by and for cisgender White men, to the detriment of those who are not. In the same way that Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative is a lens we use to analyze the racial impact of civic decisions in housing and the arts, we could live in a city with a gender fairness bureaus that function like Vienna's City's Women Office. The Seattle Women's Commission (SWC) is a great start, and its scope should be expanded to include oversight on city projects and more decision-making power (as well as ensuring that the commission is made up of people who will represent . Along the same vein, I would step back and support the work that has already been done by many womxn-centered orgs that do important work around reducing gender based violence and listen to what they have to say; such orgs include API Chaya, YWCA, Planned Parenthood and more.

11. Describe how you would represent your constituents to ensure there is a pathway to emergency food services for all who need it. What policies and investments would you support so that residents

across Seattle and King County have equal access to adequate, culturally appropriate, healthy food?

Addressing food insecurity will take the breakdown and abolition of capitalism and our politics of disposability, as well as deconstructing harmful narratives of people being “deserving/undeserving” of care. I believe that food is a human right, and in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Racist zoning laws have created food deserts, leaving immigrant communities of color in the south end, specifically in Delridge and White Center, dependent upon small ethnic grocers that don’t provide great access to fresh whole foods as much as staples/dried goods. Additionally, EBT programs at farmers markets are not as effective as they could be where the markets are expensive and often not accessible to those who need it most because of that cost and the locations that they are in, as well as a lack of culturally relevant foods.

12. According to a 2017 FBI report, nationwide reports of hate crimes increased by 17% from 2016 to 2017; by 32% in Washington State, and 198% in Seattle. Within Washington State, 38% of reported hate crimes were in Seattle. The City Auditor analyzed data that reported hate crimes doubled from 2014 to 2016 and doubled again from 2016 to 2018. 54% of the crimes related to race/ethnicity and 32% sexual orientation. What are your ideas for responding to hate crime in our region without criminalizing communities of color?

I believe that we must pursue restorative justice and build towards a world where nobody is criminalized; in the context of hate crimes, I would call for the reinstatement of the Community Service Officer Program. Unlike the general police force, the CSO program entails sending unarmed officers trained in de-escalation and crisis intervention/prevention into our community to direct folks to services, with the intent of mitigating violent and often deadly interactions among police officers and our neighbors. My campaign is dedicated to dismantling systemic racist police violence and pursuing anti-carceral solutions.

13. As a city, we have moved to district representation. However, the needs of our residents are not necessarily most efficiently and effectively addressed by district. Nonprofit services most often cross multiple districts and people who make use of the services interact with providers throughout the city. How will you work to represent both the needs of your district as well as Seattle as a whole?

Within my district, I have committed to opening a constituent outreach services office upon being elected, as well as holding regular town hall meetings. I hope that by meeting communities where they are at instead of requiring them to commute to downtown to learn more and sit in on council meetings, we are able to more widely disperse information regarding our city's process in an accessible manner. This also includes specific outreach towards communities whose input has been historically not taken into account. However, I know that many of the issues that I plan on addressing within my district are issues that our entire city has come up against, specifically on affordable housing, climate justice, and worker's rights. Throughout my campaign, I have partnered with non-profits and utilized the relationships I've built as an organizer in the city to address the needs of my district and Seattle as a whole-- and this will surely carry over into my term when I am elected.

14. Will you support an automatic annual inflation adjustment tied to the CPI-W for the City's human services contracts so providers can maintain current levels of service as costs of doing business increase? Yes, so long as this inflation adjustment maintains the cost of services for consumers to be able to access these social services.