

## 2015 Seattle City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer this questionnaire, which was developed by members of the Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy (CASE). Please note, answers will be shared with CASE members but will not be publicly distributed.

Your responses to the following questions will be used as part of a screening process to determine which candidates the CASE candidate evaluation committee will interview.

**Responses are due by Friday, April 10.**

To submit your completed questionnaire, or if you have any questions, please contact Markham McIntyre, Executive Director of CASE, at 206-389-7313 or [markhamm@seattlechamber.com](mailto:markhamm@seattlechamber.com).

### About the Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy

The Civic Alliance for a Sound Economy (CASE) is a political action committee sponsored by the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. CASE is the strongest political voice for businesses, large and small, in the Seattle metropolitan region. We represent employers and organizations from every industry sector in the region.

CASE supports local candidates and issues that help create a healthy economy, competitive business climate, high quality of life, and progressive future for the Seattle metropolitan area.

<b>BASIC INFORMATION</b>
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Candidate Name: Tim Burgess

City Council

Position: At-Large Position 8

Party Affiliation: Democrat, non-partisan race

Phone Number: (206) 682 - 7328

E-mail Address: [info@electtimburgess.com](mailto:info@electtimburgess.com)

Web Site: [www.ElectTimBurgess.com](http://www.ElectTimBurgess.com)

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Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Elect-Tim-Burgess>

**ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS**

*\*This is for background information and internal use only. It is confidential and will not be published.*

- 1) Please list your political consultant(s), campaign manager, and fundraiser.

Consultant: Christian Sinderman and Sandeep Kaushik

Fundraiser: Kevin Geiger/Jay Petterson

- 2) Please list all endorsements you have received.

**Progressive Leaders Supporting My Re-Election:** Mayor **Ed Murray**, Former Mayors **Norm Rice** and **Charles Royer**, City Councilmembers **Sally Bagshaw**, **Sally Clark**, **Bruce Harrell**, **Tom Rasmussen**, County Executive **Dow Constantine**, Former County Executive **Ron Sims**, County Councilmembers **Rod Dembowski**, **Larry Gossett**, **Joe McDermott**, Attorney General **Bob Ferguson**, State Treasurer **Jim McIntire**, State Senators **David Frockt**, **Pramila Jayapal**, **Jeanne Kohl-Welles**, **Jamie Pedersen**, State Representatives **Reuven Carlyle**, **Eileen Cody**, **Jessyn Farrell**, **Joe Fitzgibbon**, **Eric Pettigrew**, **Brady Walkinshaw** and many more.

I am actively seeking the endorsement and support of all progressive organizations, unions, environmental groups, and small-businesses that supported my last two campaigns for City Council.

You can view an updated list of my endorsements on my campaign website: [www.ElectTimBurgess.com](http://www.ElectTimBurgess.com).

- 3) Please list how much money you have raised to date, and your fundraising targets for the primary and general elections.

Through March 31, we have raised \$115,500 and I am committed to raising the funds necessary to run a successful campaign.

- 4) Please describe how you would use the CASE endorsement.

An endorsement from CASE would be displayed on my voter contact materials: handouts, direct mail, campaign website and others. I would describe your support as winning the endorsement of Seattle's progressive neighborhood and downtown business leadership.

<b>GENERAL QUESTIONS</b>
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- 1) What are the top three issues in your district you think the City Council should address? Please describe how you would address these issues.

**Transportation.** Making sure we have an integrated network of transportation options to effectively move people and freight in the greater Puget Sound region. As a Council member and as a member of the governing board of the Puget Sound Regional Council, I have a direct role in making sure these systems are completed. Large projects, such as SR520, SR99, and I-405 must be completed in order to have a fully integrated network.

**Public Education.** We have serious issues in Seattle with the effectiveness of our public schools; many school do very well, others not well at all. Our biggest challenge in public education is taking what we know works for students and applying it at scale across the district. I am directly involved in these issues and have led the Council's efforts to create a renewed and enhanced Families and Education Levy and led the push for high-quality, voluntary and affordable preschool for our youngest learners that received overwhelming voter support last November.

**Economic Growth.** A thriving business sector leads to more jobs, greater economic growth, and enhanced opportunity for everyone. One of the ways city government can stimulate this growth is through wise land use decisions, reducing restrictions on density as much as possible, and promoting Seattle as a great place to launch a business. This is a wonderful city for business!

- 2) What is the top challenge for the City as a whole? How would you, as a City councilmember, help solve this challenge?

We must resist the temptation to turn inward and resist growth; such a mindset leads to parochial, anti-density thinking. Remember our rejection of light rail in the late 1960s, the Commons Park, downtown height limits? A thriving city is one that is growing wisely and encouraging the type of economic diversity we are experiencing.

We must ensure that downtown and urban centers and villages have sufficient housing options for those who want to live there and ample transportation choices for those who choose to live elsewhere, but still need access to these centers for work, play, shopping, or learning.

- 3) Seattle is the fastest growing City in America. Is this a good thing? What steps can the council take to help effectively plan for continued growth?

Yes. People are moving to Seattle because our city – and region – has many great things to offer. This does produce some challenges as infrastructure development needs to meet demand, but ultimately, this is a good situation. These challenges require pragmatic, progressive, evidence-based solutions. This has been my approach since getting elected and we have many positive results to show for it.

- 4) What is the City's role to support business growth and economic development?

Seattle is economically competitive and we should be vigilant to make sure we remain so. We have been supportive of efforts to preserve aerospace, manufacturing, bioscience, high-tech, and the tourism/hospitality sectors. We can sustain our economic competitiveness by maintaining reasonable tax policies and not imposing job-killing special taxes, such as the so-called "head tax." The street environment is also very important to the overall business environment, especially for the retail environment; this is an area where we can do much better.

I'm also interested in how the city government's economic development efforts can be enhanced. San Francisco has an outstanding China outreach program. Chicago has been very successful with retaining light manufacturing. Sometimes I wonder if our efforts are a form of small ball, fragmented and not strategically focused.

- 5) What would you hope to accomplish in your first year in office? Do you have specific legislation that you plan to introduce? If so, please describe your strategy to get your idea implemented.

I have not identified specific legislation for next year.

- 6) What experiences have you had that you think best prepare you to be a city councilmember?

My nearly eight years on the Council are my best preparation. I am committed to effective local government that is fair, transparent and guided by principles of integrity that will make Seattle residents proud of our city. I enjoy my work and want to keep getting good things done for the people of Seattle.

- 7) Describe how you would assess the impact proposed legislation would have on businesses.

As someone who started and grew a business before I joined the Council, I want to see individuals and businesses achieve success, provide meaningful work to

their employees and produce goods and services that benefit their communities. I have always supported our business community and will continue to do so; I'm an economic growth Democrat. Our businesses will thrive with reasonable tax policies, safe and clean streets, parking policies that encourage consistent access to businesses, and a city government that encourages innovation and an entrepreneurial environment.

- 8) If you have any other relevant information that you think would be useful in our evaluation, please add it below.

Big changes are coming to the City Council: District representation and at least one-third of the members of the City Council will be new in 2016. We need experienced, steady leaders to help navigate through these changes.

<b>ISSUE QUESTIONS</b>
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**1) TRANSPORTATION**

Recently, the Mayor proposed the Move Seattle levy, a \$900 million property tax levy for transportation. This proposal is the beginning of an important conversation about how the City of Seattle funds its transportation infrastructure over the next number of years. Ensuring an efficient, integrated, multi-modal transportation system is a core government function that makes a huge difference in the lives of our employers, employees, residents and visitors.

Levies should help the city expand its ability to make investments. When the original transportation levy, Bridging the Gap, was introduced in 2006, there was concern that levy money would replace money that was already going to transportation.

Unfortunately, that's exactly what happened: 5.25 percent of general fund money used to go to transportation, and now it's 4.25 percent.

**Q: Do you support the Move Seattle levy? Why or why not?**

Yes, however the Council has not yet begun our review of this proposed Levy and it will require extensive analysis as to scope, cost, and what the measureable outcomes will be. The Council will make the final decisions on the scope and size of this Levy, but this Levy is needed as the Bridging the Gap Levy expires this year.

**2) HOUSING**

Seattle's economy continues to rebound after the most recent economic recession. As we welcome new workers and residents to our city, healthy wages and robust employment are driving an increase in demand for housing. It is essential that Seattle continue to produce a supply of housing to meet a growing demand for housing at all income levels.

Multiple studies, including one commissioned by the City of Seattle and one commissioned by the Downtown Seattle Association, have found that current actions and policies are not sufficiently addressing the issue.

**Q: What actions and policies can Seattle implement to increase the supply of affordable housing in the City?**

The Council will receive recommendations from the Mayor on this issue in late May. Possible actions include inclusionary housing, developer impact fees, incentives for building affordable housing, relaxing height restrictions, up-zoning major transportation corridors, and increasing public investment in affordable housing. At my request, the City Attorney formed a working group of lawyers from his office and outside legal counsel to prepare a comprehensive summary of state and local housing laws and regulations that will help the Council tackle these issues.

### **3) PUBLIC SAFETY**

Public safety is of the utmost importance to the business community and neighborhoods throughout Seattle. We believe that residents should be able to live and work in safety and public spaces should be clean, safe, and inviting.

**Q: What is the most important public safety issue in the city and how would you address it?**

The most important and challenging public safety issues include crime and street disorder in some of our neighborhood business districts, including parts of downtown, and persistent, high frequency offenders who cause harm across the city.

Street crime and disorder can be successfully addressed through a highly visible police presence and by establishing acceptable norms of behavior. Open drug trafficking, graffiti and litter, aggressive solicitation—these are all unacceptable signals that crime is tolerated. To create strong neighborhoods throughout the city, we must reduce street crime and disorder.

The following strategies have proven to be effective as part of a continuum of response:

- Cops matter. The presence of uniformed police officers that are engaged and especially attentive to street crime and disorder at so-called hot spots. (The evidence from cities across the country, including Seattle, shows that crime and disorder are concentrated at specific, micro places. Strategies focused on these micro-places can be extremely effective *if* the police receive detailed instructions and expectations from the city's political leadership.)
- Eradication of "signals" that indicate crime and street disorder are tolerated, such as graffiti, litter, burned out streetlights, abandoned buildings and vehicles, street prostitution, narcotics trafficking, public drinking and other quality-of-life offenses.
- Activation of public spaces and parks with entertainment, street food vending, and other activities that cause people, especially women, to gather.
- Multi-agency and coordinated interventions can be very successful at reducing street disorder. When City agencies come together with local residents and businesses to resolve problems the impact can be very positive; these efforts often activate the natural guardians who are already present—residents, business owners and employees—to speak up and help create safer neighborhoods.

The "continuum of response" approach is important here. Many individuals causing problems suffer from mental illness and/or drug and alcohol dependency. Others are profiteers who engage in street crime for personal gain. Still others are chronic and persistent offenders. These groups require different responses, from social services to arrest and prosecution.

#### **4) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

In 2014, residents and business owners in Seattle had eight special property tax levies to fund: transportation, families and education, parks and green space, libraries, low income housing, voter approved bonds, the Pike Place Market, and universal preschool.

This "a la carte" funding of City services is increasing the tax burden on our households and businesses, while masking opportunities for efficient and effective integrated delivery of City services. Furthermore, piecemeal service funding makes it harder to understand and analyze the City's policymaking and budgeting processes.

**Q: How would you improve transparency and accountability in Seattle's budget to help citizens better understand how their money is being spent and whether they are getting the desired outcomes?**

The variety of special levies is a direct result of the state's regressive and antiquated tax system. As you well know, property taxes are limited to a maximum 1% increase per year unless voters approve a higher increase. Some years, city government can't keep pace with inflation because of this limitation. I would hope the business sector would rally around reasonable and sweeping tax reform to cure this problem, including taxes based on income. Dick Conway's recently published policy paper documents Washington State's antiquated and unfair tax system. Dick's paper should be a must read for all business and government leaders.

But, that said, after spending tens of millions of dollars on various initiatives we rarely see evidence of effectiveness. We need more accountability for performance. I have long advocated for an outcome-based budget that rests squarely on proven, best practices, including the setting of specific and measurable outcomes. I'm encouraged that Mayor Murray is heading in this direction and I'm hopeful he will require a significant overhaul in how we prepare our budget.

#### **5) EMPLOYMENT**

The underrepresentation of women in business and leadership roles, and the persistent gender wage gap, is an issue that has gained forceful momentum in popular media, in tech companies, in policy initiatives, and more.

The gender wage gap—the difference between the overall earnings of a man versus a woman for equal work—has deep implications for women, employers, policy makers, and our entire economy. Women in the Seattle metropolitan region are paid 73 cents for every dollar paid to men in the area, making it one of the worst wage gaps in the country.

**Q: What is the best way to improve gender pay equity in Seattle? How would your solution work?**

There should be no difference in compensation for women or men; equal pay for equal work. The City is currently tackling this issue by reviewing differences in pay between women and men that are not caused by tenure, qualifications or

specialty certification. This review will certainly lead to compensation adjustments. The private sector should conduct similar reviews.

**6) EDUCATION**

Education and workforce development are key priorities for the business community because our region's economy depends on people having the knowledge and skills they need to work in its current and future job markets.

**Q: What would you do as a City Councilmember to improve education outcomes for all students?**

Most recently, I led the push for high-quality, voluntary and affordable preschool for our youngest learners that received overwhelming voter support (69.2% approval last November). I worked on this early investment, child-focused policy for nearly two years and believe it will make a profound difference in the lives of Seattle's children and families.

I also support exploring many alternatives to improve our public schools, including public innovation schools. I led the Council's consideration of the renewal of the Families & Education Levy. This measure is keenly focused on education reform through outcome based contracting for services and a strong evaluation orientation.

Finally, I am a supporting member of the Cradle to College Coalition. This broad coalition of organizations and individuals is focused on bringing more accountability, fiscal scrutiny, and outcome-based focus to public education spending in Washington State. This is vital work that is necessary to reverse decades of inequity in public education.