SHSC 2019 online candidate survey questions

What is your name?
Lisa Herbold

1. For which position are you running?
Seattle City Council District 1

2. What do you know about the unmet basic human needs in the district you would represent?
There are a variety of unmet needs. Much of the need is concentrated in the Delridge neighborhoods and South Park.
There is a lack of access to grocery stores and healthy food. Affordable housing is a challenge as are the associated housing costs of increasing utility rates.
There are several Title 1 schools: Denny International Middle School, Highland Park, Roxhill, Sanislo, West Seattle Elementary, that benefit from the targeted investments of our Families and Education levy.

3. What has afforded you the privilege and power to run for office, and how will it impact your role in this position?
Though I grew up in a low income family that received aid from a variety of social service programs. Nevertheless, I recognize my white privilege and all that it afforded me growing up.
My first real job at 13 was as a janitor at our Town Hall, through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, a jobs program for low-income youth started by President Carter. I experienced first-hand at an early age how government can make a difference in people’s lives. I’ve sought to help others have similar opportunities.
A supportive community of friends who were my roommates made my housing affordable, so that I, as a single parent, could afford to meet the needs of my child. I know how much that affordable housing can provide a stable platform, which is one reason why it’s been a leading focus of mine.

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?
Listening to community voices is a critical part of my work—communities know what they need, and can tell you if you ask, and listen.
Being in regular contact with the community is important, being in the community and having an open door, and letting people know they can get in touch with you anytime is a foundation of how I govern. Creating institutional structures to give community an ongoing seat at the table to both create policy,
implement policy, and evaluate policy is paramount. South Park, for example, is majority non-white, with 40% speaking a language other than English at home, with a median household income less than half the City average.

I’ve held one out of every three of my in-district office hours in South Park, and one-third in Delridge; this has allowed me to hear of numerous constituent issues I’ve been able to address, from road repairs to public safety issues.

A good example of my efforts to elevate the voices of people of color is the South Park Public Safety Initiative, where the crime rate is well above the national average. In response to numerous ongoing complaints regarding public safety in South Park, I advocated with the Chief of Police for additional patrols, which she added, increasing police presence.

While helpful in the short run, I also co-sponsored the creation of the South Park Public Safety Committee in search of longer-term solutions. So we asked the community what they wanted, and what they saw as the public safety priorities. The first priority was a bilingual South Park Public Safety Advocate, which I included in the budget package I developed as Chair of the Budget Committee, and subsequently sponsored in the following year. Having an ongoing, dedicated staff person bilingual in English and Spanish who focuses on South Park makes is easier for the community.

Alley lighting behind Cloverdale was a very high community priority; my office worked with City Light to ensure this happened.

The report also included pedestrian safety projects we funded (mentioned earlier), and I successfully advocated for their recommendation to extend late-night hours at community centers. Recently, the community expressed concern about pedestrian safety re: freight trucks turning from 14th Avenue South onto Cloverdale, so we’re working with them on that, and in touch with the community about speed control and traffic calming on Cloverdale.

Sometimes acting quickly to community requests is also important. Recently I received a request from a South Park community member to assist with translation for a telephone scam that was targeting utility customers, and assisted with getting City Light to translate materials quickly into Spanish, Somali and Vietnamese.

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?
Human Services Department currently provides more than $12.6 million annually to Public Health in Seattle & King County. King County, through an interlocal agreement, supports programs, with City funds, to address health inequities, including access to preventative care, primary care, specialty care, urgent care, mental health services, and substance abuse disorder services. State legislation allowing the state to regulate some health care prices will help Seattle’s dollars go further.

We can also continue to provide funding for capital improvements in our partner community health care facilities.

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?

Seattle is 18% foreign born. Immigrants are a key element of our community, and always have been. After the election of Donald Trump, in late 2016 I sponsored legislation “reaffirming Seattle’s values of inclusion, respect, and justice, and the City’s commitment toward actions to reinforce these values; and calling on President-elect Donald Trump to condemn recent attacks and hate speech that perpetuate religious persecution, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and xenophobia.” I later supported legislation in support of the DACA program, and affirming Seattle as a welcoming city that will not cooperate or assist with any unconstitutional or illegal registration or surveillance programs or any other unconstitutional or illegal laws. I voted to fund legal representation for immigrants facing deportation—persons with legal representation are far more likely to win their cases; lack of representation results in persons with the law on their side being deported, and to support family unity and oppose Trump's cruel and inhumane separation of families at the border. I led the Council in expanding the Ready to Work project into District 1 to support English learners with intensive centralized and neighborhood-based support.

Seattle’s long-standing policy of police officers not enforcing immigration law helps, and helps public safety. If immigrants are afraid to report crimes to the police,

We must do whatever we can to ensure that all are counted in the census.

I worked to ensure that the Seattle Police Department uses Preference Points for second language fluency in its hiring process to ensure that we have a police department that represents the community.

In 2016, I secured funding for the South Park Family Service Center to support health and human services, a leadership program, and an education program.

I also secured Citizenship Program funding for Neighborhood House at High Point

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?

It is important to expand Just Cause protections to include people on fixed-term leases. This loophole is counterintuitive and counterproductive to the main intent of the protection, and given the unavailability of affordable housing in this rental market for people living on low incomes, it can be a driver of homelessness. It also undermines the City’s Tenant Relocation Assistance tool intended to help a person who is low income afford high moving costs. New ownership of a building can get around the Just Cause Eviction protection simply by requiring tenants sign a new term lease—this is a big problem.

Fixing this loophole was identified as a priority in the “Losing Home” report produced by the Housing Justice Project and Seattle Women’s Commission. As a Councilmember, I’ve sponsored Resolution 31861 as a commitment to address the top priorities that were identified, some of which have been resolved at the state level like extending the pay-or-vacate notice and providing judicial discretion in eviction cases. Fixing the term-lease loophole by supporting advocacy at the state level to revise RCW 59.18.220 is a remaining item in this Resolution that I look forward to supporting in the 2020 legislature.

Other components I am working on to protect renters are:

- prohibiting survivors of Domestic Violence to be held responsible for property damage;
- ending arbitrary limitations and evictions of family members and roommates not on a lease but contributing to the affordability of a unit; and
- ensuring that landlords are in compliance with RCW 59.18.310 requiring them to make a reasonable effort to re-rent a unit before charging early-termination fees.

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?

The McKinsey Report showed how inadequately Seattle is investing in our homelessness intervention system. I have reason to believe that people are entering into homelessness at much faster rates, specifically people on working-wage jobs affected by a sudden rent increase or other destabilizing economic situation.
I intend to work to institute the new authority granted by the state to retain a portion of Seattle’s sales tax that goes to grow our bonding capacity to build more affordable housing. In 2019 over $190 million in housing projects (projected to produce around 2300 units) were provided in the Office of Housing’s Intent to Apply application round, but the City may only have capacity to fund about a quarter of those projects. Added bonding authority could generate money to supplement our Housing Levy, incentive zoning, and MHA dollars.

The McKinsey report also directs me to pay attention to how effectively our region is funding our sophisticated nonprofit homeless service provider sector that makes up the majority of our homelessness intervention system. In order to receive Federal dollars with the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act our region is required to participate in the Coordinated Entry system, and to create more effective use of those dollars there needs to be greater alignment between Seattle and King County’s homelessness intervention system. This is a key reason behind developing a coordinated regional entity between Seattle and King County, and I intend to advocate that this system account for assessing metrics that more accurately reflect the barriers and opportunities someone moving through this system faces so that we can provide a more targeted response.

Finally, I’ve placed a proviso on Navigation Team funding to create an accountability mechanism for how this body is conducting their engagement and encampment removal work with fidelity. This reporting is guided by recommendations from the Auditor, one of which demonstrates that investing in hygiene services like stocked, staffed showers and bathrooms can incentivize people experiencing homelessness to access our services and case management on their own terms, as well as mitigate public health risks. Our enhanced shelters provide this to an extent, but, as the Auditor’s report points out, there are significant gaps, and in this upcoming budget cycle I will advocate that we supplement existing resources like bathrooms and showers in our Seattle Parks for greater access for people experiencing homelessness.

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?

I supported a budget measure to work toward establishing a child care center at City Hall, or another site if not viable at City Hall. I voted to support the Families, Education, and Promise Levy to support child care programs and the families who need them. I’ve also supported funding for child care for homeless families. I also sponsored the creation of a Child Care Mitigation Fund, to address the displacement of before-and-after school child care from Seattle School District buildings. Including updates to allow for additional child care incentives in the forthcoming Incentive Zoning proposal would be a good step.

The development for additional child care facilities requires additional support from the city, including incentives for building childcare services in new commercial buildings.

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?

Gender-based violence is a serious problem, and has effects that aren’t widely considered. For example, domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness. We need more funding for Gender-based Violence support and resources for all survivors. Advocates work on teams with prosecutors to give survivors the best possible assistance and representation in both arrest and non-arrest incidents of gender-based violence.

We must also fund more support of prevention, intervention, systems enhancement, and offender accountability programing. To shift the structural oppression and racism, specifically in criminal justice institutions, our services and programs must be developed and implemented to be survivor-centered.

We must also implement better systems for investigations of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women per HB1713. Finally, I’m leading the effort on the Council to address safety concerns for trans people in City-contracted shelter system per SLI 15-17-A-2-2019.

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?

District 1 is unfortunately home to two food deserts, Delridge and South Park. Therefore I have taken an active role in addressing the needs of these communities to combat the lack of access to culturally appropriate healthy foods.

SLI 30-1-A-2 which asked the Office of Sustainability and the Environment to work with the Office of Economic Development to deliver a report on a. Improving healthy food access in Seattle's food deserts and b. Report on how to achieve the programmatic goals established in the OED and King County Public Health joint pilot project known as Healthy Foods Here.

Further, while I voted against the sweetened drink tax due to the regressive nature of it, I do support the funding being used for programs that address the food gap such as Fresh Bucks and funding for food banks. I also support the recommendations from the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board in that SBT revenue should only be used to expand existing order programs or new programs in accordance with the legislative intent outlined in the ordinance.

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?
After a horrific assault on Capitol Hill, I asked the City Auditor to review hate crimes in Seattle. My legislation to add a hate crime allegation only to charges already being prosecuted (for the underlying crime) does not further criminalize communities of color because the legislation provides no new prosecutions and that the sentence associated with the hate crime allegation is a community service or restorative justice obligation. This is a very different approach recently taken by the State Legislature and supported by the Gender Justice League, the Latino Civic Alliance, American Islamic Relations; Jewish Federation; Asian Counseling and Referral Service; to increase penalties for hate crimes from $10,000 (old law) to $100,000 and add “gender identity or expression” to the list of protected categories.

I support the recommendations of the City Auditor that:

- SPD improve the way hate crime data is documented in their records management system, then create policies and procedures that support these changes.
- SPD explore ways to partner with community organizations that are seeking more support in preventing and responding to hate crimes.
- SPD evaluate and measure the results of their hate crime prevention and response efforts.
- King County Prosecutor’s Office (KCPO) and the Seattle City Attorney’s Office (CAO) make data on prosecuted hate crimes available to the public.

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?

As the Councilmember for District 1, I have a responsibility to focus attention on and represent West Seattle and South Park. The votes I cast affect the city as a whole, so all City Councilmembers also have a responsibility to examine the city as a whole when making decisions.

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. I'm glad Councilmember Mosqueda is bringing this issue forward, and has done so before the Mayor’s proposed budget, so that this important new policy of the City will create the conditions for a proposed budget from the Mayor that includes the automatic inflation adjustment.