



## Seattle Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire on Housing and Homelessness, Summer 2017

Prepared By: [Solid Ground](#) and [Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness](#), in partnership with [Housing Development Consortium](#) and [Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness](#)

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 complete and email this form in Word or PDF format to Catherine Hinrichsen, Seattle University, at [hinrichc@seattleu.edu](mailto:hinrichc@seattleu.edu) by **5 p.m. Thursday, July 13**, if you would like to be included in the Voters' Guide.

- If you send it as a pdf, please ensure your links are live.
- Please either attach a photo or indicate you give us permission to use a photo from your campaign website.

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<sup>1</sup>, 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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<sup>1</sup> 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.



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Prepared By: [Solid Ground](#) and [Seattle University's Project on Family Homelessness](#), in partnership with [Housing Development Consortium](#) and [Seattle-King County Coalition on Homelessness](#)

**Candidate's Name:** Jessyn Farrell

**Campaign Address:** PO Box 27113 Seattle, WA 98165

**Campaign Phone:** 206-856-1669

**Campaign Email Address:** info@jessynformayor.com

**Campaign Website:** jessynformayor.com

**Candidate Photo:** • Attached or • Permission to use photo from website

**There are seven questions. You may choose to skip a question; if so, please indicate that you choose not to answer. Please limit your answers to 150 words each (about 1,000 characters, including spaces).**

**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?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

I've been a state legislator and have worked at the executive level in a county transit authority, so I understand how to work with multiple levels of government. I have developed relationships in Olympia as well as in Seattle and King County that will allow me to take the lead in formulating and implementing regional solutions. In the 2016 legislative authorization of Sound Transit, I secured landmark requirements for affordable housing near light rail. This will be a crucial tool in solving the problem long term. Ultimately, we need to pull together as a region to focus on increasing the supply of affordable housing through all available means, and I'm the candidate with the skills to do that.



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

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

Every day we're generating only about 30-40% of the housing supply needed in Seattle to match the demand of newcomers to our City. To keep our City affordable and inclusive, we need the right set of policies that ensure that our housing supply keeps up with demand. We should be building on HALA by taking additional steps: appropriate up-zones, reducing setbacks, streamlined design-review processes, permissive DADU and ADU policies, and transit-oriented development, among others. I have been a leader in the legislature on expanding mass transportation and affordable housing in tandem. I sponsored and shepherded into law ground-breaking legislation to provide low-income housing near transit stations. There are major urban centers we can learn from where exclusionary housing policies that manipulate incentives, like those in San Francisco, have not artificially ballooned demand and created an irreversibly unaffordable urban center.

**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?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

Part of what is important is being clear from the beginning, saying to every audience, that every single neighborhood will have to accommodate growth in some way. My vision is to build a strategic plan for the city that allows us to hold ourselves accountable, and then creating programs within every single neighborhood. By setting a target of \$1 billion in affordable housing and allocating affordability targets across the entire city, we can then use that in flexible ways, like creating neighborhood-based plans that use an array of affordability tools, rental vouchers so that people who are living in current housing can stay there, more accessory dwelling units, or more traditional density projects. This will give neighborhoods the flexibility to choose how they accommodate density without letting any neighborhood off the hook.



**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 voted for the Housing Levy. It's a crucial piece of the City's ability to tackle affordability. I think that going forward, we should be looking to sources of revenue that move our tax system away from the reliance on regressive sales and property taxes, and toward a more progressive system. That's why I support the City's proposed income tax on high earners.

**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.*

The new requirement that qualifying applications be considered in order is a good start. We also need to address the difficulty that those who have felony records or previous evictions have in finding housing. I believe tenants deserve more rights, such as earlier notices of rent hikes. A crucial part of the plan is a robust commitment by the City to building public housing that will compete with private housing and drive down prices, as well as incentives, affordability targets, and other measures I mentioned above to increase affordable housing and change the dynamic between renters and landlords. Above all, we need better representation of renters in City decision-making, which starts with the proposed Renters' Commission.

**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?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*



Yes, I would--we should not approach homelessness punitively. We need to be taking emergency measures to mitigate the effects of homelessness on the unhoused rather than punishing them. First, we should have sanctioned encampments in areas where services are available. Second, we should use secure short-term housing, or tiny homes. And third, we should inventory the shelter space that the city can access. Surplus buildings that the County, City, and other public and private entities have could serve as shelters. Ultimately, the greatest impact we can have on the lives of our homeless residents is focusing on ample long-term affordable housing.

**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?

*Please answer here, limit 150 words.*

Institutionalized racial biases must end in our city. While the recent legislation passed by the City Council to continue federally mandated reforms is a sign of progress, we still have a long way to go. We need to expand and support crisis teams that integrate mental health professionals and social workers with specially trained officers. Community members with mental health issues should not be presented with police tactics alone. These teams should be part of a new push to integrate services across City government. In addition, we need to strengthen diversion programs, like mental health court, that provide treatment rather than just punishment through the criminal justice system.



**Candidate Signature** for verification (electronic is ok):

Jessyn Farrell

**Date:** \_\_\_\_7/12/17\_\_\_\_

- **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](mailto:hinrichc@seattleu.edu) by Thursday, July 12, 2017, 5 p.m. Thank you for participating.

*Illustration of Seattle skyline by Mandy Rusch, SU '17.*