



Mark Mullet Urbanist Questionnaire 2024

Washington Governor

What are your policy priorities regarding the climate and decarbonization, and how does the Climate Commitment Act fit into that?

I voted for the Climate Commitment Act and believe strongly that Washington State should be a leader on climate. As the Capital Budget Chair, I have been at the forefront of new capital investments to address the urgency of climate change. I will prioritize new electric charging stations, promote alternative sources of energy to get us less dependent on fossil fuels (this includes nuclear), promote incentives around residential solar, promote weatherization and continue to support the WWRP to preserve parks and open spaces. As the first Tesla owner in Washington (purchased in 2008), and the first legislator to drive an electric car to and from Olympia (a car powered by solar panels on my house), I have taken personal steps to help fight climate change.

How do you plan to leverage the governorship to reduce homelessness in the state and increase housing affordability?

The top message of my campaign is affordability. We do not make Washington an affordable state without addressing housing affordability. We need to expand partnerships between state, businesses, local governments and nonprofits to rapidly expand our housing supply. The state should be making critical investments in local governments to reduce the permitting backlog and get housing construction moving much faster. I'm a huge believer in the Ezra Klein mentality that we need a "liberalism that builds". Blue states are making it too difficult to build the things we need to build. I want to be the first blue state that gets this balance right.



**Would you sign into law a bill implementing or allowing for rent stabilization?
Why or why not?**

I am open to finding ways that bring down the cost of rent for working families. As the Senate representative on the Washington State Investment Board I have a unique perspective on this issue. We have \$32 billion invested in real estate and I sit on the committee that makes those investments. I have seen first hand how investors shift their money to other regions of the country when jurisdictions pass rent stabilization bills. We can't afford to deter one single dollar of private capital if we want to build the units necessary to get housing inflation back under control. I will never sign a bill that will lead to fewer housing units getting built in our state, our solution is simple: we need to build more homes of a variety of sizes for our state to be affordable.

**Do you plan to work to expand state taxes during your time in office and if so,
where would you begin?**

We have doubled the state budget in the last decade. I don't believe we need to raise taxes, we need to find ways to make government work smarter. We have to break our silo mentality when it comes to budgeting. The transportation budget is in desperate need of investment. The operating budget has grown from \$34 billion to \$72 billion during my brief time in the Senate. It is time to share that operating budget growth with our transportation budget so we can add money for infrastructure to communities that agree to accept more housing density.

**How do you view the issue of preempting local control to allow construction of
uses that have often gone unpermitted, including denser housing and
emergency and transitional housing?**

I would be open to looking at ways to do this if necessary. I would prefer working in partnerships with local government. I'm a huge believer in the power of the carrot (not the stick) when it



comes to working with cities and counties. Going back to the above change in our silo budgeting mentality, we should be sharing extra state dollars with cities and counties that are being thoughtful about increasing housing density.

Do you think Washington can build its way out of traffic congestion? If so, what does that look like to you in your role as Governor, and what steps would you take to reduce traffic congestion? If not, why not?

We have to do everything. We have to continue to expand road capacity, while also investing in transit, while also improving bike and sidewalk access in communities with density. I love transit oriented development. We should be utilizing new transportation tools like electric bikes to expand the radius around transit stops that get extra housing density. If you have bike lanes for a mile around transit that are easy to access it could give you a much wider radius for extra density.

What policies do you plan to implement to ensure better mental health treatment availability in our communities? Please elaborate on your views of community-based treatment centers and coercive or carceral treatment, and what options you would seek to prioritize. Second, what funding mechanism would you use to build out mental health services in our communities?

As the chair of our state capital budget I have played the leading role in investing in tribal behavioral health facilities. These are open to all residents of our state, and they get reimbursed at rates set by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which are often five times higher than Medicaid rates. This enables us to expand mental health and substance abuse treatment access without creating new taxes.



What is your vision for expanded rail in between Portland and Vancouver and how will you help Washington achieve it through federal funding and budget writing? *

I would love to see this happen. Having lived and worked in both London and New York I know the positive impact you can have on both the economy and the environment when you make smart investments in rail. We need a route from Seattle to Portland that makes it quicker than driving or flying, something we have the technology to achieve. Drawing down federal funds is the best way to achieve this to minimize impacts to Washington taxpayers.