



Saunatina Sanchez Urbanist Questionnaire 2024

Seattle City Council, Position 8

What strategy to increase public safety will be your focus?

Increasing the funding and accessibility for our top-of-class LEAD and CARE programs is a start in moving towards a system that prioritizes rehabilitation rather than punishment. Reducing desperation reduces crime, which is why I'm a strong supporter of universal basic income and stabilizing housing with sanitation services like 24/7/365 bathrooms in parks. Investing in our communities is an investment in public safety, and when people feel they're being cared for by their community, they're more likely to want to take care of the land and other people. Our focus on public safety has to start with caring for the public with robust human services for everyone.

The 2018 police officers guild contract stripped out police accountability measures passed the previous year. The 2020-23 contract just ratified also walks back accountability. What would need to be in the next police contract to earn your vote?

Police shouldn't be separate from other city departments in terms of HR policies and transparency in how employees function in their roles. A high priority for me is to get rid of the 180-day clock altogether. This arbitrary deadline is designed to protect problem officers and prevents OPA from fulfilling its obligation. Police officers are public servants, so their contracts shouldn't prevent legislation like the 2017 Accountability Ordinance from being implemented. I would also like to see language about SPD doing audits of its programs that would determine if a particular function, like parking enforcement, should be in the police department. Services like PE could work better for Seattleites by focusing on how we can prevent infractions by reporting to SDOT how we can redesign the built environment so those actions aren't possible.



How do you intend to tackle Seattle's large general fund deficit, which could reach a half billion dollars by 2025?

My approach to raising progressive revenue is that we should not raise taxes lightly and that we clearly must do so to address the housing crisis and keep city services functioning. A lot of our budget is currently being spent on systems, like encampment evictions, that we could put toward more robust sanitation and support services. When we realign our budget to focus on human services, it's more clear how much revenue we need to raise to make our city function. Focusing on taxing businesses is my first inclination, and I think capital gains taxes, estate taxes, inheritance taxes, and vacancy taxes are options we need to look at. I look to the Report on Progressive Revenue Taskforce on Housing and Homelessness to inform my thoughts on budgeting. I want to ensure that these revenue sources are progressive even within the context of progressive revenue—I don't want to punish smaller businesses or retirees who own a single home.

Would you vote to approve completing the streetcar network via the Center City extension and work with the mayor to prioritize funding and building it?

Yes! I ride the streetcar and love how it connects neighborhoods to each other. I think we should invest way more in intercity transit with neighborhood circulator networks that connect to long-range transit options. I think we should also focus more on our east-west connections and prioritize projects that make it easier to get from, for example, Ballard to Northgate. I think a lot of people in our city are still waiting for the Interurban.

Under what circumstances would you support pedestrianizing streets that are currently open to cars?

There are not a lot of circumstances in which I'd oppose pedestrianizing streets. I want to listen to communities that have been asking to transition away from car infrastructure and support those



efforts first so as to demonstrate how great pedestrianization can be for people walking, rolling, and driving. We urbanists know that when we design for the lowest physical ability level, we're designing a street for everyone. I think it's a function of local government to inform people who aren't aware of differences like streets and roads and engage with residents about the needs they have in their neighborhood as opposed to asking for their personal ideal environment.

What is your preferred growth strategy from the draft Comprehensive Plan and why? What amendments would you make to the mayor's plan?

We need to get serious about creating space in our city for more homes to be built and so I support floor area, height, and density bonuses for affordable and social housing development. Every neighborhood deserves a mix of housing and commercial options so we need to legalize missing middle housing to allow at least six floors and corner stores in all residential areas within walking distance of frequent transit.