



Tariq Yusuf Urbanist Questionnaire 2024

Seattle City Council, Position 8

What strategy to increase public safety will be your focus?

Fundamentally, I want to shift the conversation of public safety to public problem solving. The current council has unquestionably increased funding to the Seattle Police Department as a blunt force solution to public safety. We need to expand the solutions to public safety beyond punitive violence and repression; not every issue needs to be addressed by an officer with a firearm. The vast majority of issues can be resolved nonviolently and we need to expand programs that focus on helping those in crisis. I want to conduct a more detailed analysis, in partnership with the Seattle CARE team, to identify ways where we can expand a nonviolent response strategy and determine quick wins that the agency can address.

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?

SPD still has not addressed the ongoing issues of excessive force and violence. The removal of any accountability measures is short-sighted and shows a fundamental disconnect with the concerns of Seattlites. In addressing a new police contract, I plan to thoroughly critique the performance of SPD, their progress towards citizen accountability, and a clear and concise why additional budget should not be allocated to alternative response programs like CARE or other agencies. My public



safety philosophy centers around addressing the root causes of issues in the community; therefore, I am much more interested in investing in preventative programs as opposed to additional funding to police.

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

We won't be able to erase the deficit overnight (or over the one year term for the remainder of the position), however, I believe that we can take a better approach in how we're spending taxpayer dollars and bringing in new revenue sources. In the next year, I would like to spearhead a procurement and contracting reform initiative that ensures that city spending prioritizes diverse small and medium-sized businesses within the city. By redirecting this money back into the community, we can ensure our dollars have a bigger impact on the local community. I would also like to push for expansion of payroll taxes to cover the revenue gap in addition to the Jump Start taxes and implementing recommendations from the Progressive Revenue Taskforce.

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?

Absolutely, I remember fondly riding the Seattle Streetcar before it was decommissioned and it was a fantastic way to move through the city. The more connections we can have throughout the city, the easier it will be to revitalize the downtown core and re-imagine it as a vibrant center of the city. It will also increase accessibility across the downtown corridor by providing a reliable means of moving cross town for mobility impaired individuals who are currently being under-served in the city center.



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

I'd primarily be open to pedestrianization based on current transit accessibility within a region, levels of pedestrian density throughout the day, and alternative street options for drivers proportional to transit accessibility. I'd prefer to focus primarily on areas that have good connectivity by non-car means to validate that pedestrianization won't cause reductions in foot traffic in the region. We have reasonable connectivity in urban centers and I would be interested in starting with those locations first. I also would approve of more experimental uses such as the open streets program that is run in cities like San Francisco.

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

While I appreciate the ambition of parts of the comp plan growth strategy, it lacks a comprehensive picture as to how the city envisions achieving equitable growth. I appreciate having a transitional zoning approach that allows communities to build out, however, the current plan seems to be more a restatement of where we are today versus a vision of what could be. For example, the current draft states that urban neighborhoods could be zoned for corner stores and smaller businesses, however, it is unclear how that transition moves to an urban center or where the city aims to put them. This leads me to have deep concerns over the equity of development in the city; the sparse distribution of urban centers in historically wealthy areas versus areas that currently have a larger low-income population lead to continued practices of isolating poorer and BIPOC communities among historical redlines. If we are to achieve a vision of a fully connected city, I don't see how the current distribution of urban centers gets anywhere close to achieving that and I



would prefer to be prescriptive of specific ideas in partnership with the local communities.