



Magnolia Chamber of Commerce City Council Questionnaire

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1. Coordination with District 6/7 Counterpart

The Magnolia peninsula was recently split into two Council districts. How specifically do you plan to work with your counterpart in District 6/7 to ensure coordination of efforts and adequate, cohesive representation of Magnolia's business community and residents? This includes but is not limited to the Magnolia peninsula's transportation access, the power grid and aging electrical infrastructure, growth, its impact on transportation in and out of the Magnolia peninsula, zoning and developments in Interbay, and emergency response access.

Answer:

All Districts in the city have adjoining boundaries with neighboring Districts. There is need for all councilmembers to work together for the greater good of the city. All city Districts have similar issues and needs with respect to infrastructure. That said, I want to acknowledge the redistricting and assure Magnolia residents that I will do my best to collaborate with the District 7 councilmember.

There is a natural need to cooperate on an array of issues, prominent among them access to and from the peninsula via the bridges that cross the Interbay rail yard and industrial area. I believe the Magnolia Bridge should be replaced, but I also understand that finding the funding is complicated. Federal infrastructure funds may not be available because of an unfavorable cost-to-daily trips ratio. The sheer size of the project cost (estimated at \$400 million +) means that creative financing may be required, which could include a mix of state funds, SDOT funds, and perhaps a local improvement district. Getting a replacement done will not be easy, but it should be done.

In the meantime, the Armory Way overpass should be built so that Magnolia does not have only the Dravus and Emerson bridges (or the Commodore underpass) if the Magnolia Bridge should fail. My understanding is that Armory Way would score better for federal infrastructure assistance because of the lower overall cost. The Armory Way overpass can be built without significant disruption to current traffic flows, and having a modern bridge constructed to current

seismic standards will improve emergency response access. No one can say for sure which bridges will survive the predicted offshore Juan de Fuca earthquake of 8.5+, but one more alternative is prudent, particularly given the damage the Magnolia Bridge sustained in the Nisqually earthquake.

In addition to our bridges and roads, the infrastructure to support a dense living environment is already stressed. The state legislature has recently mandated increased density in single-family neighborhoods, without a corresponding plan for the infrastructure necessary to accommodate all that growth. If Seattle becomes denser, tripling or quadrupling its population, I believe the state is going to have to help fund the related infrastructure. As our population increases, so should our ability to influence the state legislature to help pay for the cost of its density policy.

2. Representation for Magnolia

Reflecting on the redistricting process and what you know about the constituents in the district, how will you represent the interests of Magnolia? Where will you seek constituent input, and how accessible will you be to constituents' concerns and issues?

Answer:

My campaign is a grass-roots campaign. Of the six campaign team members most heavily involved in my campaign, three live in the District 6 portion of Magnolia. In addition to being campaign team members, they are personal friends, so I find myself in Magnolia regularly.

I was not involved in the redistricting process, but I understand that it was a divisive process for Magnolia residents. In addition to consulting with my Magnolia-based campaign team members, I'll seek input regularly from the Chamber and the Community Council. I would also welcome ideas and advice from leaders of groups organized around advocating for specific issues important to Magnolia. As we come out of the COVID era, I can certainly envision in-person town halls once again, as well as using community centers as an informal setting to meet with constituents.

3. Coordination with the Mayor's office, departments, and commissions

What do you expect your role to be with the mayor's office and related administrative departments and commissions to help increase the competitiveness of small businesses, such as fiscal policy, public safety, land use regulations, business incentives, and barriers to timely permitting, as examples?

Answer:

I believe we are going to have a challenging time with fiscal policy for the foreseeable future, and my background as a financial statement auditor before becoming a lawyer will help with assessing budget priorities. We have two obvious needs for money: rebuilding our defunded police department; and addressing homelessness and affordable housing. Either one of these priorities alone is a challenge. Addressing them simultaneously will require a clear-eyed view of what is and is not possible.

I believe that Mayor Harrell is the right mayor for our city, and I intend to collaborate and coordinate closely with him. I believe we share a commitment to public safety to make Seattle a welcoming place that is open for business. I believe the single most important thing we can do for small business now is to bring back a culture that does not view shoplifting and theft as reasonable approaches to satisfying personal needs. I know how silly that sounds because it

should be a given. But we need a reset on that point, and it will take time and money to rebuild the police department that will be necessary to enforce it. I wish I could tell you I have a silver bullet to solve that problem, but the damage done to our police department by the multiple defund votes was severe. We cannot recover from that with a snap of the fingers.

4. Public Safety

How do you assess our current situation on public safety in neighborhoods and business districts in Magnolia? What actions would you take to enhance public safety, and how would you work with and support the Seattle Police and Fire Departments, community organizations, and other stakeholders to reach these goals?

Answer:

I believe rebuilding the police department is of paramount importance. Without public safety and a shared expectation that you must pay for the things you want, our business districts are at risk. Our neighborhoods suffer as well from car prowls, catalytic converter theft and break-ins. I will be a strong vote in favor of completing the work of rebuilding our police department so that it can once again enforce norms against theft and shoplifting.

One step I do advocate, and I believe it will help to enhance public safety on a city-wide basis, is to change our approach to homeless encampments. I want to be clear that I am not suggesting that all people experiencing homelessness engage in criminal conduct. But the environment of the large unregulated encampment attracts those—including housed individuals who live elsewhere—who take advantage of the situation and prey on the homeless and surrounding areas.

For this reason, I propose that, until we have adequate shelter for all, we have an organized plan of urban campgrounds, where people experiencing homelessness can live. Each campground would have no more than 20 sites, so that they are human in scale. They should have platforms for tents, portable toilets, garbage dumpsters and privacy-screened fencing. Because not all people experiencing homelessness have the same issues, I propose three levels of urban campgrounds:

- sober (no alcohol or drugs);
- intermediate (cannabis and alcohol allowed); and
- permissive (hard drugs allowed within the campground).

I arrived at my conclusion about permissive campgrounds for two main reasons: (1) it is a harm reduction measure to hopefully keep more people alive until they decide they want help; and (2) camp residents should have the same degree of privacy that a housed person would have if they took drugs behind their closed door.

By dismantling large unregulated encampments, it is my hope that we will save lives and improve safety for people experiencing homelessness—as well as our communities in general—resulting in better communities for everyone.

5. Access to Public Funding

The next ten years present unprecedented opportunities to access federal funds through the Inflation Reduction Act, the American Rescue Plan, and other programs. How will you coordinate with the Office of Intergovernmental Relations or other departments to enable Magnolia's businesses and residents to benefit from access to these funds for affordable capital

(subsidies/grants, loans, guarantees) and infrastructure, including climate-friendly retrofits and development?

Answer:

I believe we should always seek to leverage federal dollars dedicated to improvements we need to make, whether as a city or private enterprise. If we dedicate city resources to developing outreach to federal program managers (and, if programs are jointly administered, their state counterparts), we will see substantial returns for our community from that investment in outreach. By identifying key criteria and documentation needed to qualify for federal funds, our city can help our businesses and residents to compete for these funds.

I will use communication resources available to my office to share information about these programs and their requirements so that District 6 constituents can participate in them and put federal dollars to work in District 6.

6. Looking Ahead

We experience and hear consistent concerns about aging infrastructure across Seattle, such as bridges, potholes, electrical wiring, and drainage systems. How will you work with others to put Seattle on a better path to upgrade these areas before these essential items become urgent or even emergencies?

Answer:

The issue of aging infrastructure becomes more acute each year, particularly as state policy now seems dedicated to substantially increasing Seattle's population density. Infrastructure—built almost a century ago in many instances—needs to be replaced and expanded. We will need to look at the full array of potential funding sources to accomplish this sustained investment in infrastructure: federal, state and local. Where we can access federal or state resources we should. And as our population grows due to accommodating density, we should use that additional political clout to ensure adequate infrastructure resources continue to be directed to Seattle from the federal and state levels. We will also have to pay for it in our utility bills and likely through additional levies for road work. Where possible we should coordinate the sequencing of infrastructure improvements. For example, don't replace a pothole-filled road with a new heavy-duty concrete street only to tear it up three years later to replace a water main. We will be at this business of infrastructure upgrades for years. We must plan it efficiently so that our tax dollars stretch as much as possible.

7. Imagine it is halfway through your term in office. What three things will you be most proud to point to as evidence of your representation of Magnolia's interests?

Answer:

Substantial progress in increasing the number of commissioned police officers;
Substantial progress in dismantling large unregulated homeless encampments; and
Secured funding for the Armory Way overpass.