

## Dear Council Vacancy Review Committee:

On behalf of several of the City of Seattle's Commissions—including the Human Rights Commission, Women's Commission, LGBTQ+ Commission, and Disability Commission—we are writing to express our interest in co-developing and hosting a public forum as part of the appointment process to fill the vacant City Council District 5 seat. As advisory bodies grounded in community leadership and public accountability, we are eager to support this process in a way that centers equity, transparency, and civic engagement.

## Our Capacity and Relevant Experience

The Commissions have a strong track record of facilitating public engagement, elevating underrepresented voices, and hosting accessible community forums. Many of our members have experience moderating discussions, coordinating translation and interpretation services, and building broad coalitions across the city. In alignment with our charge to advise city bodies, we are well positioned to organize and co-host the forum ensuring the process reflects the needs and concerns of District 5 residents.

Some examples of recent community forums include: Hybrid Renters Forum, hosted in April 2025 by the Renter's Commission, LGBTQ Commission, & Women's Commission, as well as the annual Human Rights Day event, hosted by the Human Rights Commission, and the annual Pride Flag Raising event hosted by the LGBTQ Commission.

## Recommendations for Forum Structure

- **Format:** Virtual event hosted via Zoom to ensure broad accessibility and public participation
- **Moderation:** Designated commissioners will facilitate. There will be time for both candidate statements and structured Q&A.
- **Interpretation:** Live captioning, ASL, and language interpretation provided based on community needs.
- **Community Engagement:** Questions sourced in advance from District 5 residents, Commissions, and community organizations

## Proposed Questions for Candidates

### Connection to District 5

- What is your relationship to District 5 and its communities?
- How will you remain connected to neighborhoods in District 5 outside of your own?
- What do you view as the most critical issues facing District 5 residents and workers?

### Representation and Equity

- How do you define equitable representation, and how would you prioritize that in this role?
- What voices do you believe need more representation in our city politics? How do you hope to amplify them?

## **Governing with Equity and Justice**

- How do you understand the role of the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) Ordinance in City policy and budgeting?
- How would you apply an equity lens to your legislative priorities if appointed?

## **Housing and Displacement**

- What are your specific plans to address housing affordability and prevent displacement in District 5—particularly for Black, Indigenous, and immigrant communities?
- What do you view as your role in solving Seattle's public emergency on homelessness?
- Given that renters make up over 77% (**American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates**) of your district, what specific strategies will you use to engage them in shaping policies that affect housing, affordability, and tenant rights?

## **Community Safety**

- What does a safe community look like to you?
- What do you view as the biggest threat(s) to community safety?
- How would you invest in public safety alternatives that are community-led and trauma-informed?

## **Federal Impacts on Local Policy**

- What do you see as the role of local government in responding to federal legislation or actions that affect Seattle residents (e.g., trans-youth, immigration, reproductive rights, climate policy)?

## **Accountability and Public Engagement**

- What commitments will you make to be accessible and accountable to District 5 residents, especially those who have been historically excluded from civic processes?
- How will you work with volunteer city commissions and boards to advise you and your office?
- How will you honor the ethics code set in place that previous councils and elected officials have been accountable to?

## **Accessibility Considerations**

- Live ASL interpretation and CART captioning
- Language interpretation available upon request (including Spanish, Vietnamese, Somali, and Amharic)
- Zoom registration with clear instructions and a phone-in option
- Tech support available during the event to assist participants

We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this important democratic process and are committed to ensuring that the forum reflects the voices and values of the communities most impacted by City Council decisions. We welcome the opportunity to coordinate next steps and move this process forward together.

**Warmly,**

**Commission Co-chairs**

**Seattle Disability Commission**

**Seattle Human Rights Commission**

**Seattle LGBTQ Commission**

**Seattle Women's Commission**