



Library podcast

Seattle City Council Debate, Positions 8 & 9

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[00:00:37] Good evening everyone. I'm Sam. I am with the Friends of the Seattle Public Library Board and we are honored tonight to be. Sharing this sponsorship of this debate with the City Club. And I hope you all enjoy it. Thank you all for coming. And now it's my pleasure to. Welcome and present

[00:01:02] Diane Douglas from City Club.

[00:01:12] Thanks Sam. We love doing work in collaboration with The Seattle Public Library. It's like a second home. So thank you so much for that partnership. Over many years. Good evening and welcome everyone.

[00:01:25] On behalf of Seattle City Club we're thrilled that you're here to find out more about the candidates and have the opportunity to ask your questions too. For those of you who are new to city club we are a trusted place for civic conversation inspiration and action. Our programs strengthen the civic health of our region and we thank you again for joining us. I'd like to thank our partner for tonight's debate. In addition to the library. Q13 Fox News four live streaming the program and making it available to many more people. And our sponsor the Boeing Company who supports all of our political events and debates in Seattle. And now a little bit about the rules of tonight's debate. The response time for each question will be a minute per candidate unless otherwise stated by our moderator. Some questions will require a respect with a rapid response or a short answer. Each candidate has one challenge card. To use during the debate and he or she can use the challenge card to respond to someone's statement or ask a deeper question with 45 seconds to respond to a previous statement. And in that instance the opponent will have 45 seconds to respond to the challenge.

[00:02:45] There are no formal rebuttals but candidates may take some of some of their allotted time. To answer in rebuttal if they so choose. Candidates will refrain from asking each other questions but we invite your questions to the candidates so if you have a question and a couple of people have

already submitted questions you'll find a slip of paper on your chair. Please write down your questions pass them to the side of the aisle and we'll have city club and library staff coming by to pick up your questions. Our moderator will use as many audience questions as possible please designate a specific person. If you have a question in mind for one of our candidates and if you don't the moderator will assign it to someone specific. And finally except for the beginning and end of the debate. I'll ask you to hold your applause and any other audible expression of regret support or anything else until the end of the program. And now please join me in welcoming our moderator. Q 13 Fox News's C.R. Douglas to the podium

[00:04:04] A few years ago as you'll recall the citizens of Seattle voted to convert the council to a district based system but it was not a universal move the voters did preserve two positions of the nine that were meant to be at large representing the whole city. Now the theory was that the council needed to be more representative of neighborhoods but residents still wanted to positions whose perspective was Seattle as it as as a complete city.

[00:04:34] Positions that were answerable to all voters and the seats really are the big picture side of Seattle's hybrid council arrangements. Those positions of course are the ones with feature tonight positions 8 and 9 and the candidates seeking those positions are here. Theresa May escaped to my immediate right is a labor leader. She faces John Grant the former head of the tenants union there running in position 8. And over here the Rene Gonzalez is the incumbent in position 9 and she faces small business owner Pat Murakami. So let's give them all a round of applause

[00:05:15] So let's jump right in with opening statements. Each candidate will have a minute because we don't want just pat answers like opening statements tend to be. We're going to ask them to use their minutes to do something dare we say a little more interesting what personal life experience makes you the right person to fill the at large seat you're running against and I'm going to start with John Grant and go down there right road here you know I think for for myself the most powerful experience that I had was being the executive director of the Tenants Union of Washington state.

[00:05:54] This was work that was grounded in community working with low income folks who were facing displacement from the economic boom that our city is experiencing in. I worked with families who were facing homelessness families that were facing eviction and we organized and built power so that folks did not feel alone and disempowered. And through that work we have saved the homes of thousands of families throughout Seattle and throughout Washington state. And I think that experience of being there in the communities standing shoulder to shoulder with folks who are who are just on the brink and pulling them out of that that situation and building power so that we can actually create systemic change. That was one of the most formative experiences of my life. And that's the experience that I hope to bring the city council the experience of. Building that kind of community and building that kind of togetherness that we can create a better city for everyone.

[00:06:52] It's okay if I sit here. Okay great. Good evening. Thank you so much. Thank you to the sponsors and to the Seattle Public Library. I'm honored to have the endorsement of the workers right here in our Seattle Public Library System and my now husband his first job was any public library. So

thank you public servants for the public service you provide. This is an example of the type of coalitions that I've built throughout my career. I have the endorsement of public servants all of the unions and small businesses throughout Seattle. I have the endorsement of public health advocates kids advocates senior advocates because they've seen me in action fighting for things that will help improve our lives like health coverage for every child regardless of your citizenship status. That's what I worked on at the Children's Alliance. I helped expand Medicaid throughout our state while at the State Labor Council where I currently work and for five years we worked to help pass the minimum wage and sick leave initiative. I helped to draft that you all helped to pass it on the ballot. I have endorsements from folks that I know who I just mentioned and every single progressive Democratic organization throughout our city because they've seen me in action. What makes me different is that I'm a renter. I am a woman. I am a worker in our city and I think I can represent our entire city.

[00:08:01] Well OK.

[00:08:04] Lorena GONZALEZ What life experience makes you the right person for this job.

[00:08:10] As a son. Yes. OK. Thank you so much. Pleasure to be here with all of you. You know when I think about the issues that are really facing and challenging the city the very serious issues around our affordability crisis and our homelessness

[00:08:26] I think it's important for us to to acknowledge that those things are fueled by many things but in particular the issues around income inequality and cycles of poverty. And of course. Institutionalized racism. And I think that for me what I bring to the city council is that as somebody who grew up as a migrant farm worker in central Washington state having earned my first paycheck at the age of eight somebody who had to work three jobs to put myself through college and someone who understands what it means to. Have to work really hard to pay the rent every month

[00:09:00] I I I understand the struggle to continue to live in the city that you love and to continue to see yourself in the city that you love and if you as an important lived experience and filter to bring to every single policy that comes before the City Council pepper coming.

[00:09:18] Well one of the experiences that prepares me to be in this position and be a city leader is having to deal with the city itself. So in 2006 then Mayor Nickels tried to declare all of Southeast Seattle blighted. That was from I 90 to the city limits from the lake to I five. And he was doing that because he wanted to try to force immigrant property owners along our two quarters of Rainier. Excuse me I have allergy problems. Excuse me. He tried to force immigrant property owners along Rainier and M.L. King to sell their properties at a discount to his developer friends. This took a great effort. We had no funding this was all volunteer work but we stood up to the city so I learned a lot about the different city departments and I learned how to make change I formed a group called m com many cultures one message and we prevailed. Our community was not put given the blight designation our property owners got to keep their properties. And I'm very proud of that work.

[00:10:19] Ok. Let's dive right into housing affordability which is top of mind for most voters in this election there is that now famous deal that the city struck with a bunch of stakeholders called the grand bargain. And just to remind you that requires that new housing construction reserved somewhere between 2 and 11 percent of the units built for low income individuals or families. Now the percentage differs based on the location in town now. John Grant let me start this with you. It was the first ever inclusionary zoning mandate that Seattle has ever adopted. You have said that it's way too generous to developers that the two to eleven percent ought to be way higher. You've said 25 percent of new new units are to be mandated as affordable some cities have tried it.

[00:11:08] There are arguments that has backfired in some places. SAN FRANCISCO Some people say that it's just made all the other units more affordable so in aggregate things have become worse. Why is this a good idea.

[00:11:24] So I I love this question. Now I've only got a minute so I'll just say this. If you look at the what San Francisco did they started that 25 percent and then developers pushed back and they got to 18 percent in the city of Seattle. We went to developers and asked how much are you willing to pay towards affordability. And we got two percent for downtown and South Lake Union.

[00:11:48] I don't doubt you but two percent is pretty close to zero now. I would say San Francisco got the better deal. And the idea that these affordability requirements rise rents those are talking points advanced by special interest groups like the developers themselves. Now this is a big difference between my opponent myself I think the grand bargain didn't go far enough and I think that if we are going to push the envelope we should try to set that requirement as high as possible and I think we can get to 25 percent. Now we have seen other cities do it. My opponent doesn't support that doesn't increase a higher affordability mandate or she says she does she won't say how much it is. And I think that if we're going to push the envelope we have to demand for more.

[00:12:28] Ok. Treat escape let's get you on this let me just prompt you by saying I have heard you say that you think 25 is unrealistic and that it's too high. Tell us why and what your range would be right.

[00:12:40] So as as you mentioned San Francisco passed an initiative calling for 25 percent. And guess what happened building in C in San Francisco stalled for a year and a half. They did not get affordable housing created in that time period. So zero percent of zero percent doesn't equal affordable housing. What we need is actually to move forward with the requirements in place push for as high as we possibly can in each of those up zone and then recognize as I've said before that 11 percent alone is not enough. We have to layer it with additional ideas. That's why I'm calling for us to do things on publicly owned land to create affordable housing we need now work with Community Land Trusts create affordable housing options. Think about co housing co co-ownership models limited equity options so that hopefully families like the one I want to start one day can actually buy I'm a renter. I would be able to actually afford a place in our city if we create enough affordable housing for workforce and low income folks throughout our city.

[00:13:40] But just a brief follow up how much above eleven do you think you can go before you start having unintended bad consequences.

[00:13:48] That's exactly the reason that I think it's a mathematical formula that we have to push for an each community. There is no one single number and if somebody tells you that there is they haven't done the math it's not going to pencil out. It's a political slogan so I'll just. Oh sorry.

[00:14:00] Let me get you on this. Padma Kami I've heard you say 30 percent

[00:14:05] Oh you have challenged I'm sorry. Yes yes. You've got 45 seconds and then she has 45 seconds responding.

[00:14:11] This is so important. This is the future of our city what we are seeing economic displacement in every community. And if we're going to address that then we need growth to pay for growth. We need developers to build affordable housing and 2 percent is not enough 11 percent.

[00:14:25] I don't know. I mean that's that is not a lot of affordability when we could be pushing the envelope here. You'll notice my opponent I mean she she is talking out of the sides of her mouth about where she stands on this issue. That's a warning sign for you. You know when I sat in that negotiation table I was the one person to abstain on that vote. I'd stay through a 10 month process and I voted my conscience. Now you know that that's what the kind of leadership that you can expect from me at city hall because we have to demand a higher affordability mandate.

[00:14:52] Otherwise we are going to see people being displaced from the city generations of people pushed out and we know we can do better than that wonderful.

[00:15:00] So let me give you an example Africa town created an affordability requirement of 30 percent. They did this by both looking at the FHA requirements and layering it working with the community and pushing for more affordable housing options. So they worked with the community to make sure their voice was there. That's what it looks like when development is done through your own community voice. When you set the conditions and you work with those who are actually wanted to create the housing child care centers community centers that we need I don't speak out both sides of my mouth. That's why I did not get the Seattle Times endorsement and the stranger. I won't compromise on what I say just because of the audience there. You will get honesty. You will get truth with me. And I think right now it's more important than ever to have integrity that is what I have done in the past that is what I will continue to do as you're Seattle city council person OK.

[00:15:46] We started with some nice energy a challenge right there. OK. Pat Murakami This is such an important issue that I'm just going to throw it to you folks. Also I've heard you say 30 percent above and beyond even what John Grant is saying ought to be the mandate for new housing that goes to low income individuals.

[00:16:05] Well we have a homelessness crisis. We're never going to solve it unless we get enough affordable housing built. And as Teresa just said it can be done when the developers work with community. Our problem is we let developers get away with murder in this city. The 2 percent in Lake Union and university district was approved by the incumbent. I would not approve that. In addition they can buy their way out with crumbs. They can pay about seven percent of what an in lieu fee is in Boston or San Francisco. So we have to demand more of the developers and make sure development serves our neighborhoods serves our communities and serves our city's needs. Right now the structure is structured such that we serve developers and we need to completely flip that because we are the taxpayers and we should be the ones dictating what happens in our city.

[00:16:59] But just a quick follow up. What about the argument that 30 percent is high and it would hurt affordability.

[00:17:05] Well we have many developers that got away with 2 percent. If they do a 30 on their next structure that's an average of 16. That's completely doable.

[00:17:13] Okay. LORENA GONZALEZ You voted for holla which is what this grand bargain really is called to the eleven percent mandate.

[00:17:21] A lot of people say it's not enough. Where are you. Why did you vote for that.

[00:17:27] So what I voted for was for the mandatory housing affordability program in particular neighborhoods so far so the first neighborhood that we have done is the University District and then the second neighborhood is downtown South Lake Union. And we've also looked at the mandatory housing affordability program in the Chinatown international district. Now I don't know about any of you but when I look at downtown which is that the number that I think a lot of folks point to that is 2 percent. The reality is is that the residents is that they are building in South Lake Union and downtown are never going to be affordable to working people

[00:18:08] Where we need to be focusing our strategies around affordability and infusing neighborhoods with affordability is in communities that we know are experiencing incredible amount of displacement and gentrification like places like the Chinatown International District like places out in the central districts. And I think it's really important for us to recognize that that's that's the challenge that's going to lie before the city council when we look at the city wide up zones.

[00:18:33] Just briefly if you put a higher mandate though in South Lake Union would you get more of those units. I mean why why is it just obvious that they won't build affordable units in South Lake Union if you mandated.

[00:18:44] Well because I think it doesn't pencil out. The land is incredibly expensive in South Lake Union and downtown land is the biggest contributor to to creating expensive unaffordable homes.

[00:18:56] So it just just the of the mandate is too high. They just won't do anything.

[00:19:00] I think if the mandate is the mandate is too high it doesn't pencil out to allow developers to both acquire the land and build affordable housing at the rate that we need in order to be able to meet the need. And the reality is is that the increases that were being proposed and in some cases only would produce up to an additional of 10 units.

[00:19:23] Ok. Where are those on. JOHN GRANT We got a couple of questions here about whether it's time to increase property taxes. I'm sorry. Whether it's time to increase corporate taxes in some way tax corporations more Barber from the lake. Talks about that as an opportunity to help fight the affordability crunch. Catherine from the Central District asks if you support a tax on large businesses to create more low income housing. I have heard you say you do describe briefly what your plan is to tax corporations for affordable housing. And why. Would that be fair to corporations. I mean some say if you tax them anymore you would just hurt workers. They made us lay off people would you have that unintended consequence.

[00:20:11] No because I'm not a Republican and I don't believe that here. Here's the deal. We have a city that is just booming right now. And this economic engine is our opportunity. It is our leverage as a city to ask more from the private sector. We have over 4000 people who sleep outside unsheltered. I put forward a proposal that would raise taxes on the largest corporations while at the same time giving two thirds of small businesses a tax break. Now that means that we could give a tax relief and actually build. 5000 units of deeply affordable housing for the homeless. That would effectively end unsheltered homelessness. My opponent once again says that this is an unworkable strategy that it won't work. It's not going to be fast enough. But here's the deal we can't keep nibbling around the edges of homelessness. How many politicians have come in front of you and said Wow we really need to do something about housing. But I'll tell you this if somebody is running for office and they're not going to tell you how they're actually going to pay for affordable housing they're selling you a false bill of goods. This proposal would bring in 160 million dollars a year. We could do something big with that in this city. You know we know that we can do big things and that's what I'm proposing.

[00:21:15] Teresa Mesquita What is your plan for raising corporate taxes to help the affordability crunch. Do you support that kind of idea.

[00:21:24] Yeah I thought maybe one of your questions for my opponent was going to be and what's the timeline because that's the big difference that we have. I've never said that I don't support more people paying in. Especially since we have the most regressive tax system in the entire country in our state. And we have some of the wealthiest people in our region. I absolutely believe that people and especially corporations need to be paying their fair share. The problem that I have is that does not equal dollars in hand immediately. What I have called for in terms of getting dollars immediately in hand to create affordable housing which was your question is to actually bond against existing housing levy dollars which means we don't have to pass another levy we can bond against those dollars right now get money in hand we can bond against the future MH dollars the penalties that Lorena Gonzalez is talking about get money in hand. We can also think about it escrow how we get

additional dollars in hand for luxury sales. That's how we get money in hand. Now those are progressive revenue options that create progress here.

[00:22:22] Just to be clear though you're bonding against existing revenues.

[00:22:26] You're not calling for a new source of revenue on corporations to help with this not to as the immediate solution and the reason is we have a housing crisis now and I think that that proposal I've laid out gives us dollars in hand while we have an economic boom and the most cranes in the entire country. We should be creating housing right now.

[00:22:45] Ok. Lorena Gonzalez let me move to homelessness obviously a related issue.

[00:22:50] Harry from Beacon Hill who is in the audience assess how come after a decade and countless dollars and much study has the homeless problem gotten so out of hand what measures would you take to solve this.

[00:23:03] And let me just add a little bit to this because there are some numbers here. It's about 63 million dollars that the city spends every year on homeless services. Some argue that the reason it's not getting better is because we don't hold service providers to account that we're wasting some of the money in the process.

[00:23:22] Do you favor changing that and changing the way we distribute homeless money to make it more accountable.

[00:23:31] Well we already are doing that and I think it's important for us for the community to understand that we have begun to shift along with King County and United Way what it is we want to see in return for the investment of limited resources into this particular area. And I think I think in my conversations with service providers they are in agreement that there should be some level of. Of. Accountability metrics. It is an environment they're used to dealing with. I think we're where we run into problems is where we are setting those performance measures and we want to be really careful that through this new competitive bidding process for the last 30 million dollars of the 63 million that we invest in homelessness that we are being realistic and working with our service providers to make sure that the performance measures that we are. Asking them to meet are realistic and not setting us up for failure so that five years from now where we have the same narrative of not making an impact in this particular area.

[00:24:37] Ok. Padma Kami why are we getting more for our money and our sheds micro housing something that comes up really affordable solutions.

[00:24:45] Is that part of an answer for you.

[00:24:48] Well on the last question I'd just like to say that the developers candidate can demand more from our developers. There's there's no way that the developers can afford 10 percent in these high end areas.

[00:25:00] They we've given them many bennies including no setbacks and no parking date. They're making plenty of money. But with regard to homelessness we're funding 141 nonprofits. We are one of the few states that doesn't require people to identify themselves when they get services. So we don't know if Bob's been seen by 20 agencies or by no agencies. So we need a citizens oversight committee to audit the effectiveness of of all all of our nonprofits. In terms of dealing with the homelessness. I want you to think about one hundred and forty one six figure salaries and all the overhead that goes with it that could provide housing vouchers for a lot of people to live very comfortably. So I think we we really need to redirect how we're spending our money and fund the effective nonprofit.

[00:25:46] Ten seconds sheds or micro units micro units are better than sheds but I even have a problem with micro units.

[00:25:55] Okay let's ask Jonathan Grant to get in on this. We have a question from Molina. What is your approach to balance compassionate governing with Seattle's public health issues surrounding homelessness and let me just add a little bit to this.

[00:26:09] Would you sweep more unauthorized encampments or just continue to kind of show some permissiveness.

[00:26:18] So I think one of the things that we've seen in this campaign is that the city has a completely backwards approach to homelessness and we need to stop the sweeps. They're inhumane they're backwards. They set people back. I think that when we look at solutions we have to look towards homeless people themselves. The folks that I have talked to at Tent City three at Camp Second Chance at Georgetown Nicholls ville. These are folks that are willing to actually you know create a self-governing solution to make sure that the neighborhoods are safe. The neighborhoods are clean and that more importantly people get shelter. I think that we need to have more high barrier and low barrier shelters because different populations need different needs. And right now the city is just pushing people from one corner to another. It's not doing anything. We can't push the homeless to the sea right. We can't sweep them out of the city. We need to actually have a comprehensive approach that both Mary is a very aggressive affordable housing policy to build the units but also address the immediate survival needs of people who are homeless or people who are in shelter and that means having more sanctions Shelter Shelter encampments tracing the skater.

[00:27:25] Where are you at on on sweeps and whether we have should should do them or not.

[00:27:30] Right an end to the broader question they were asking about what does our community need. I have a public health background. I've worked at the Department of Health Children's Alliance Community Health Plan of Washington. I have looked at everything that is happening in our city

through a public health lens the lack of affordable housing for middle income middle income and low income folks as a public health crisis.

[00:27:49] The number of folks living on our street is a public health crisis. What folks need is housing and they need health services so the community that is working directly with the unsheltered population say we need more permanent supportive housing coupled with Mental Health Services case management services so that folks can get on their feet. Many times people get a door or they get a room and they keep their bag packed. They sleep by the door. Those are the stories that I've heard. We actually need compassionate services within those permanent supportive housing. And the reality is we also need more low barrier facilities so that people can come as they are. We in this state have an issue in our city that is bigger than our borders. Our state is forty seventh in the nation in terms of mental health funding. We have a crisis and let's couple mental health counseling with.

[00:28:34] What about the suites just 10 seconds sweep through inhumane.

[00:28:38] We need to make sure that folks are respected on the street but I want more sanctioned encampments. I also want to make sure that more folks know about the low barrier facilities and that we get people on the path to public safety Pat Murakami.

[00:28:50] You had said you were inspired at one point you have said this on the campaign trail because of your work in Southeast Seattle you've talked about a little tonight and the Crime Prevention Council. But you had sit sat on for several years. What should the city do.

[00:29:07] To enhance the public safety of neighborhoods. Is it more cops.

[00:29:11] Is it different policing where you are.

[00:29:14] Well we we do need more police. We're at only about 65 percent of the police force. We should have for a city of our size. The problem is our officers need to reflect the faces and the gender identities of the people in our community and we don't have that mix right now. So we need to make a concerted effort to recruit officers that fill that missing link that need. We there are communities in the north and they wait 14 minutes for a on 9 1 1 response time. What if somebody is has somebody in their home. They have a weapon that is unacceptable. We just I also want to be clear that more officers to me does not mean more arrests and more criminal cases. To me it's preventative work it's engaging with kids in schools it's talking to the community on on foot beats or bike patrols and it's about preventative work.

[00:30:16] And briefly where do you get money for more officers.

[00:30:20] Well I'd love to take a look at our city budget. Our budget has gone up by a billion dollars per year since Murray took office. The city doesn't look any better for it. I know we've got the money there.

[00:30:30] Ok. Lorena Gonzalez on public safety. There's a lot of talk now of course of the consent decree and whether Seattle is or isn't in compliance with that.

[00:30:40] We're six years into this. It started with a controversial shooting of a minority citizen just a couple months ago where the controversial shooting of a minority citizen. Some would say nothing has changed and yet the mayor and others want to have us be deemed in compliance with the consent decree are we. And what more needs to be done. So I think it's important for us to distinguish between

[00:31:09] Do we think that we are in full and effective compliance and what that means relative to is the work of reform done. And those are two different questions. And so on the first point all that we are doing is and by the way this is the community police commission the city of Seattle the Department of Justice all aligned saying that the city of Seattle is ready to bring in-house ongoing police reform work. And I think it's important for us to begin that process in order to ensure that we can essentially do it without training wheels on the inside. We have I have shepherded through police accountability reform legislation that I worked very closely with the Community Police Commission on advancing. I and those those those different measures are what is what. What is our challenge in terms of testing to see how can we implement those police accountability reforms and ensure that we minimise the amount of unconstitutional policing hopefully get it to zero. But when it does occur will the system hold those officers accountable.

[00:32:15] Ok. On Public Safety Theresa Mesquita the SPDC officers and managers they have been working without a contract for several years now three or four years I think you have a background in labor. Who do you blame for this multi-year impasse.

[00:32:30] And how would you break it if you're elected.

[00:32:32] I think that we need a contract and we need a contract now. We need to make sure that we hold Spargo accountable to come to the table and that we as elected officials make sure that we get a contract immediately. As someone who's worked on contract negotiations in the past. The most important thing we can do is build an accountability requirements transparency in how we're gonna hold our officers accountable and also take responsibility I think as a city to evaluate why more of our black and brown communities continue to have overpolicing and overuse of force. We can put these things in a contract but we can we're trying and it's still four years into this well and we we cannot give a pass this bogs smog has been resistant to coming up with solutions to some of the mandated reforms. We definitely have some momentum behind what council member Gonzalez has passed with the Community Police Commission which by the way many of the CPC members have endorsed me many organizations and individuals who've worked on this for 10 decades sorry four years have supported me and they know that I'm going to hold our police officers accountable and push for a contract that's how we create accountability.

[00:33:38] Ok. Jonathan Grant on on the contract negotiations you've said you think they should be open to the public. Is that part of the problem why do we have the impasse and why would opening contract negotiation with the public help as opposed to just create a lot of grandstanding.

[00:33:54] So just to be perfectly clear I'm not suggesting that we completely open up the negotiation process. What I really want to kind of zero in on is the issue of discipline. We've had a system for a very long time where we had the police policing themselves. And I think that we have to remember that it's the nine city council members that are representing you the public in negotiating that contract with the union. So where where did those nine people stand. How are they voting. How are they compromising those things are unknown. Those are those are done behind closed doors. I think that if we are going to actually demand transparency we can push for stronger reforms because our city council is going to be more accountable. And let's look what happened with the body cameras in their city. The mayor demanded that the body cameras the police unions that that be a part of the contract negotiation. He went to court and now that has to be part of that discussion. Well we have to kind of call their bluff at a certain point. And if we have to go to arbitration that's what we need to do. But we need city council members that are to be firm on this. And my opponent does not support this kind of transparency in the negotiations.

[00:34:58] Ok. Your challenge tourism escaped.

[00:35:00] So I think this is a good example of consistency and having integrity in what we say that is different than what you've been saying for the past 10 months and your position frankly fluctuates depending on where you're talking to. So I will say this. I know that we need a contract now. You do not get a contract when you open up even a part of it to grandstanding because individuals will politicize the process. Politicians well and so will those on the other side of the table. You don't get a contract when you busted open and everybody just dig their heels in you get good compromise and good negotiations when people are in the room and having honest conversations. That is why it is so critical that we get folks in there who are going to stay true to their word straight through to the community and not take a page out of the Freedom Foundation or the Koch Brothers or the right wing when it's convenient depending on the audience. I will be there fighting for justice John.

[00:35:50] John Grant you're 45 seconds.

[00:35:52] So I think it's important to notice that one of the folks that one of the organizations that also are looking for greater transparency is the NAACP. So I mean when we're talking about this let's be honest like there is a lot that we can be doing to improve the negotiations. But this idea that by having transparency it promotes grandstanding. I think that with any kind of governmental system it creates accountability. And I think the question to you is that have we seen any kind of progress like this so far with the city council and with these negotiations. I would argue that we have not and when we are actually going to be pushing for true reforms we have to remember you know like it was not that long ago that the police you know had a situation with Officer whiplash where they arrested an African-American elder for walking down the street with a golf club as a cane in this city fired the police officer for wrongful arrest but then turned around and gave that officer a multi-million one hundred thousand

dollar settlement and also a full pension and reverse the termination. That's a problem and we have to address it OK.

[00:36:53] We await challenges from this side. You have about half an hour left.

[00:36:59] Rapid responses. We're going to give each of you five seconds on a number of questions so this is really you know one two three word answer starting with Peyton going down the line. Who are you supporting for mayor.

[00:37:10] I could work with either candidate Lorena Gonzalez.

[00:37:14] Who are you supporting for mayor I plead the Fifth.

[00:37:20] Who are you supporting.

[00:37:22] Both have been very supportive of me. John Grant Cato Oliver.

[00:37:29] So none of you will go on the record supporting either the two candidates are on the ballot just for the record.

[00:37:34] This is another answer where John has changed his mind.

[00:37:36] Ok John Grant who are you endorsing. Who are you endorsing in this position.

[00:37:42] I'm not making any endorsements right now.

[00:37:44] Teresa Mesquita. No. I have endorsed Lorraine again Lorraine.

[00:37:50] Who are you endorsing in this position.

[00:37:52] I am endorsing Theresa whatsoever.

[00:37:54] And Pat Murakami in that position. I'm

[00:37:56] Not endorsing because I might have to work within them which I'm happy to do.

[00:38:00] What is your proudest endorsement. It's a kind of a fight for endorsements and these positions often. What's your what would you most please of

[00:38:09] Whose endorsement.

[00:38:11] I would say though the Washington State Bernie craps and you can contrast that with the Seattle Times I'm across the political spectrum.

[00:38:18] Okay looking at which What's your proudest endorsement.

[00:38:23] Are you putting me in a tough position because I have a lot of endorsements but I think I would have to go with the King County Labor Council.

[00:38:32] Because we want to continue to be the epicenter of resistance. Attorney General Bob Ferguson.

[00:38:36] John GRAHAM I'm really proud to have the endorsement of review Washington who's a homeless resident in one of the encampments that we worked with to try to stop the suite from happening and unfortunately we were unsuccessful.

[00:38:48] And that's why I'm running.

[00:38:49] Ok. John who is your favorite city council member past or present.

[00:38:55] Oh my God. I mean that's is really easy for me as I was endorsed by former council member five second Nick Licata next week. Theresa mosquitoes

[00:39:03] This is true. Lorena Gonzalez has inspired me to run and I hope she's inspired a lot of you as well.

[00:39:09] Okay Lorena. And you can't see yourself other than yourself.

[00:39:13] Who is your favorite council member past or present. I would never see myself.

[00:39:22] Huh. Do you pass her her future.

[00:39:26] Oh my gosh I feel like I'm going to get in trouble. Does it matter what I say.

[00:39:31] I have a great amount of respect for council member Tim Burgess Patmore coming past is Nick Licata present is Lisa herbal OK the NBA fight.

[00:39:42] What side are you on in terms of the arena Key Arena or Soto for a future NBA facility.

[00:39:49] Soto lowering Occidental and doing a lander overpass Key Arena or soto for a new arena.

[00:40:01] I am interested in seeing the Key Arena negotiations through and when the Soto arena comes before me. I will make a decision Key Arena or Soto

[00:40:11] I want Key Arena to be revenue generating and I also think if the conversation continues and Soto they should not pit one against the other. John Grant

[00:40:20] I think it's important that we don't use public money for any arena and if we have a choice then we then I think we would go with key okay.

[00:40:27] There's a proposal to extend the streetcar along First Avenue the idea of a kind of link up the South Lake Union line with a line that goes down the Pioneer Square. It's controversial. I think it may be about I don't know 50 or 60 million dollars in favor of a First Avenue streetcar line John Grant there's actually a hundred and seventy million dollars and I think it's important to note that streetcars get stuck in traffic just like buses do.

[00:40:48] So I think that it's not a good investment tourism escape.

[00:40:51] I want to I want to take a look at it. I just want to make sure that it's moving our community and as well as those who are tourist but our community in terms of commuters First Avenue streetcar.

[00:41:02] I think it's important for us to continue to create the connections between the Chinatown International District Pioneer Square downtown and South Lake Union and this is a key link to being able to do that for economic development and for moving folks who live in that area around Patmore coming until we've housed the homeless that needs to go on the backburner.

[00:41:22] Okay two more head tax for employees. This is an idea that's been thrown about as a way to generate money. Corporations pay a certain amount for every employee they have.

[00:41:31] Good idea it's kind of coming back up at city hall only after a but an audit of the city budget and it has to be a net operating revenue not gross head tax for employees.

[00:41:42] I am still looking into this and I am excited to see some language in an actual ordinance. Tourism is good.

[00:41:48] I supported it when we all needed money for the Office of Labor Standards and I think that's an important tool and we just have to apply it correctly.

[00:41:56] So I fully support it. This has been something built by the Housing for All coalition and I was proud to be endorsed by the transit riders union which is a key organization to make this happen. We need more money for affordable housing. This is a great way to do it this year and this budget cycle. John Grant the final one

[00:42:11] A grading scale a to f rate the current council Mm hmm.

[00:42:20] Gosh you know they've actually done a lot of good work this year. I was not very happy with the grand bargain. Obviously I want to say

[00:42:26] You plus to be minus Teresa I think we have incredible challenges in this city and they have taken a lot of these issues head on. I think a minus and we can always do better. Okay.

[00:42:40] You're on the council how do you rate yourself. It's always awkward when you're an incompetent. First time I've been able to say that

[00:42:49] You know I think I think that we are. We have we have listened to community very well and we have really pushed on some very large progressive issues whether you agree with them or not. And I think the fact that I didn't earn the Seattle Times endorsement this year singles to me that we are becoming a much more progressive city council so I would give us a minus

[00:43:14] C minus to a D. Once the city council starts serving the residents of Seattle I would raise that great.

[00:43:20] Okay Peyton you've kind of brought up fiscal discipline. It is something you've campaigned on. You're leery of new taxes it seems.

[00:43:27] What would you cut from the budget.

[00:43:32] Again I haven't studied it. I would take a hard look at it. I mean we have a lot of great programs that need to be funded but I'm sorry. When we fund multiple agencies to do the same thing I think that's where the waste is. It's not about that. We have to focus on the results.

[00:43:48] Okay. Lorena Gonzalez the city council has passed a number of taxes since you've been there the last couple of years. There's that sugary beverage tax there was the income tax. There is this proposal for a head tax that you sound like you're at least gonna consider for someone

[00:44:04] That's worried about taxation. When does this stop.

[00:44:10] Well you know I think I think it's I think it's less about when does it stop.

[00:44:14] And what are we as a city willing to do to reform the overall tax system. And I think it's important for us to continue to acknowledge that as a city we have very limited resources to be able to get the revenue that we need as a city to meet the growing needs of our population and to really tackle some of the more serious issues facing our city and so I think that I am really interested in working with our state delegation next year to look at how we can we can tackle tax reform at the state level and begin that conversation around how we can loosen up the ability for cities like the city of Seattle to. Pass and consider more progressive forms of of taxation so that we're not putting the burden consistently on people who own property or who rent in those properties keeping on the budget idea two recent escape.

[00:45:14] Here's this here's a suggestion you've had which is that you want.

[00:45:19] No family should have to pay more than 10 percent of their income on child care. Many families should pay more than that right now and you want to stop that.

[00:45:28] How do you pay for that so number one that we have such expensive child care in the city right now because we don't have enough child care providers. Folks who are working as child care providers like my mother in law. Many of them earn very low wages. They don't have any retirement security so getting more people into that field is a challenge. I would like us to have a program that creates basically innovation certification zones where we can train and train and prepare child care providers. I'd like us to read zone how child care providers are allowed to exist in our city right now in our state and in our city. You have to have 35 square feet inside per child. Seventy five square foot per child outside. Who's buying a white picket fence these days. Not a lot of new and first time homebuyers who want to start their own child care business so we can do a lot more in terms of the the zoning requirements for homes. And in terms of child care facilities right now they have to have a outdoor place and are right now even if they're next to a park. So I think when we increase the supply when we are smarter about how we zone and create the ability for folks to open child care then we also reduce the cost. And so I think we can both reduce the cost and the city invest in 0 to 5 it saves money in the long term.

[00:46:37] Ok. John Grant on the budget. We learned that the city is paying way more in legal bills and outside counsel than than we had expected or that they had forecast. Why are we paying so much and what can you do to bring that down.

[00:46:52] So I think that we should try to bring as many of those legal costs in-house. But one of the big questions that because right now what's going on is her contracting to very expensive private attorneys. And we have to say we're also losing cases too. Yeah right. So I think judgments. So I think that there's a lot that we can do by bringing those those issues in-house but what I really want to get across to folks is that. We have a city budget it's five billion dollars. We really need to address the fact that. We have one of the most regressive ways of paying for things in this city. We've had levy after Levy after Levy and I kind of want to look at the camera and look at the TV audience and say I'm looking at you and just say

[00:47:26] You are paying too much in property taxes right. We need to actually have progressive revenue sources to pay for everything that the city needs. That means raising taxes on our largest corporations. That means passing impact fees on development so growth can pay for growth. That means passing and employee hours tax like we're talking about doing to build more affordable housing. These are things that we can do but we need political leadership to stand up to the large corporate interests that are running this town to make it happen. I put forward one of the most progressive revenue proposals in for in this race and I really strongly encourage people to check it out at elect John Grant.

[00:48:02] Ok. Loretta Gonzalez this comes from Tom from Havana. Have you heard any or do you have any innovative ideas about improving traffic especially downtown innovative ideas.

[00:48:16] Well I think I mean I think the reality is is that we need to continue to invest in multi modal ways for people to get around in downtown in particular I think we need to have better enforcement of our bus only lane. You know third avenue is for buses only during a particular time. I like to see us consider what it would look like to to just permanently repurpose Third Avenue to absorbing bus traffic all the time and to sort of supplement what we see in the tunnel. And I think that we also need to make sure that we are doing a much better job at protecting our bus service in and improving increasing our bus services because the city let me tell you. Kudos to Seattle. We are very good at using our buses and I continue to be convinced that the more we interconnect our buses with other lines especially east to west the more we will see an increase in ridership and we need to be able to anticipate that through increasing our bus service.

[00:49:17] Padma communist from comes from Kristen Wedgwood. Do you support a safe drug consumption site in Seattle. And where should it be if you do.

[00:49:26] Well I'd like to use fire stations for our and police stations for safe consumption sites. What I want us to put the money in is 24/7 access to Suboxone and other drugs that help people get off of heroin and opiates. I think that's what we need to focus on and everyone of you should do what I'm doing carry a naloxone kit. Be prepared to save someone's life.

[00:49:49] Okay. John Grant you've said many times that you're running to put a community voice on the council. Some would say we've got a lot of community voices on the council. What actually community voice Are you bringing.

[00:50:01] If elected for the last 10 years I've been an organizer in Seattle. I was the head of the tenants union I worked at solid ground and their homelessness and housing department. I have been you know in the trenches with folks trying to do the work that needs to get done so that we can address our homelessness and housing crisis. I think that that experiences is what our city needs. I think we are in a true housing crisis and we're almost into our second repast our second year now of our state of the emergency forum for homelessness. Now we need to take that seriously. I've over 10 years of experience on housing and homelessness policy and I think that's the experience that we need at City Hall to actually do the things that we need to do to have systemic change. That's why these proposals bite my opponent calls them unworkable it's because they're the big ideas that we have to do these things that are hard to do. I mean we have to challenge corporations we have to go up against developers. That's a lot of money that is gonna get thrown at us and we have to make sure that we are holding those institutional powers because those are the interest groups that are rising rents in our city. And that means we need to stand up to them.

[00:51:03] Ok.

[00:51:03] Theresa about Seattle's business climate and whether we should be pushing for that second Amazon headquarters or are we already bursting at the seams.

[00:51:14] So I think that many of our businesses have done really well here in the city of Seattle. Amazon is a good example. We also want to make sure though that Seattle's not just a one company town. We all do well when we have diversity in terms of the number of businesses here and the size of businesses. We don't want to have an economy that cripples when one company goes down. So I'd like to see how we continue to diversify. Small medium and large businesses here create the infrastructure we need to move people around and create the the transit so people can get in and out of our city. I'm calling for us to create affordable housing for the workforce that's needed not just for the coders but for the people who Stocker grocery shelves and put books on the shelves here. That's what it looks like to attract businesses. But I also want our small women and minority owned businesses to be able to get their feet off the ground. I'm calling for capital investments of a three year loan for our smallest business to get off the ground to have a liaison with small businesses and to create things like the Portland avocado and the Food Innovation Districts that allow for individuals to create their own goods and sell them. I wish I had a challenge car for this last question so maybe we can come back and buy one from the other side.

[00:52:20] I'm bidding over here. LORENA GONZALEZ shoes.

[00:52:22] You recently helped establish a one million dollar legal fund for immigrants and refugees. Why is that important and is that enough is that the start of more such programs you expect to push. Yes so I am really proud of this work that I was able to do together with many of our civil legal aid providers and immigrant rights advocates in the community which was to immediately after the or soon after the election of Trump

[00:52:52] Identifying additional revenue that we could dedicate to a new line of business at the city. And that new line of business is is providing free civil legal aid to those who can't afford their own immigration lawyers in deportation proceedings. And I'm incredibly proud of being able to partner with King County to actually create a network to address the regional needs of our undocumented immigrant and refugee population. Who is going to be at risk and does find their selves at risk of a harsher and harsher hard line enforcement principles coming out of. Out of our federal government. We know that the studies tell us that when immigrants have access to a free lawyer they stand a ten and a half times more likely chance of being able to remain in the country so this is a strategy that will work that will protect our communities and that will make sure that they continue to be a part of our community and resilient okay.

[00:53:49] We have a challenge.

[00:53:50] I think this is an example of one of the city council's half baked policies and legislation that's fine to have a legal defense fund but we also need a fund to help the people that we keep it here in Seattle. The successful we cannot have them living in the shadows and under bridges and and part of the homeless population so we need some kind of a fund. So we can give microloans to people to start their own businesses because when you're undocumented you can't get a job as as a regular employee. So the only alternative you have is to start your own business and we need to support the folks that we we defend to keep here okay.

[00:54:29] You get 45 seconds to respond to this.

[00:54:31] Well they can't start a business here if they've been deported so that's why set up the legal defense fund and the network to make sure that they can continue to be here so that they can set up that business and continue to be part of our community. Now something that I'm doing during this budget cycle is advocating for a pilot program around community economic development that would do the following which is invest in technical assistance to be able to connect micro businesses small businesses primarily in our city. Main Street businesses owned by women and people of including immigrants and refugees. To be able to connect those individuals to technical assistance on how to find meet their capital needs. On how to read a loan document and on how to identify a commercial space that isn't going to end up being predatory lending.

[00:55:20] Pamela come on you have a background as a neighborhood leader in Seattle and your and you tout that a lot in your literature and yet you're not running for a district position you're running for an at large seat. Why is your work as a specific neighborhood leader.

[00:55:37] The right perspective for the at large city is a whole view that these positions need Well I have served on citywide councils I was a vice president of the city neighborhood council. Those were the leaders from each of the district councils. I was on the Federation of Community Councils. I've lived throughout the city. I have I own a small I.T. company so I have clients throughout the city in every neck of the woods in every industry. So it does prepare me for this. And normally it would make sense to run for a district seat but I kind of snapped. We had excessive violence in Southeast Seattle. We had two homicides directly across from a park where kids were present. We had multiple times that multiple rounds of shots were fired right when the kids were there in fact one time they were all there getting their photos taken and there was no response from the chair of the Public Safety Committee sitting right here. Seven times we contacted her through email and phone calls until we got to know and I decided enough was enough.

[00:56:41] We need somebody who's gonna take action Lorena Gonzalez. Give us an example of something you failed at and what you learned from it. I was trying to do something I failed at and what would you fail at and what you learned from that. Is

[00:57:03] In my counsel position or something else or do I think of anyone in general. OK. I you know I think that I think that that for me

[00:57:23] The way that I mean I'm failing at something is a tough question for me to ask not because I haven't failed. I have failed at. At many things but I think that it's important too for me to not focus on exactly what the failure is but how I approach potential improvements for myself. And so I think that when I look at the work that I do across the board and I know that I have done something that I could have done better at. For me it's important to root myself in a place where I acknowledge that I have acknowledged that I could do a better job at either serving my clients as a lawyer or doing my job as a

policymaker and part of that for me is just making sure that I'm open to listening into treating people with a great amount of respect even even when we disagree.

[00:58:18] Ok. John Grant one of your proposals is to allows non-citizens rather the right to vote. Describe that a little bit. How does it work and it seems like you would bump right up against federal and state laws. How do you allow citizens the right to vote.

[00:58:33] So there are other citizens rather. Yes there are other cities in the country that actually have established a residential right to vote. And I think that in the city of Seattle we laid the groundwork for that with the democracy voucher program because what the voucher program is not just registered voters that get democracy vouchers.

[00:58:51] It's also residents who can't vote. So we've already effectively created a local voter database. I just think we've got to take that next step and actually give folks the right to vote and enfranchise. This is this and enfranchise them. This is a country founded on the principle that you should not have representation necessary no taxation without representation. And I think that's something that we should push the envelope for right here in Seattle. What better way for the city to lead in the era of the trumpet administration. So these are things that I think that we can fight for. But you know it means taking risks and I think they're worthwhile because I'll tell you right now the most hardworking and valuable members of our community are immigrants and refugees and they deserve to have their voice heard.

[00:59:31] Ok. Teresa at a recent debate you said quote We can't create progress in this city if we're just going to point fingers assign blame and not work well with others. Describe that more. Is that our problem in Seattle.

[00:59:46] I think that it could be an ever increasing problem if we don't elect folks that know how to work well with each other. I have a long track record of working with folks from Casa Latina the firefighters I hear coming up with broad coalitions that both work the halls of Olympia and the halls of City Council passing comprehensive policies. John said earlier we don't have people who are going to push for big ideas pushing for health coverage for all kiddos regardless of your documentation that is a big idea. Making sure that people regardless of where they work have protection in the workplace especially as women and people of color and immigrants is a bold progressive idea. I have delivered on these ideas. Now I think what makes me different and different and the reason that this question is so incredibly important right now is we have stagnation name blaming pounding on tables going on at the federal level. We have a divided House and Senate right now. What we need in the halls of our city hall is people who want to push for progressive change not someone who's going to vow to not work with five of the nine council members. That's not how we get progress done. That's not how we deliver on our progressive values. That's the Seattle that I want to fight for.

[01:00:50] Lorena. LORENA what should the city do to prevent gun deaths especially in Southeast Seattle. Well gun does. Impact the entire city is disproportionate in areas like southeast Seattle and I would also add in southwest Seattle

[01:01:08] Which includes South Park Georgetown and al-Qaida beach. I think we have begun the process of empowering our police department to to literally follow the evidence.

[01:01:24] So there are some efforts going on now and that have happened in the past to be able to really provide our department the regional resources they need to be able to track back trace evidence that leads people to that will lead the police department to illegal guns. So that's more of a law enforcement approach. It's a short term solution. I wish I had the answer to the long term solution. That is something I could legislate. So if if I had my druthers I would I would certainly look at banning certain types of weapons within our community. But I think ultimately for me the longer term solution is getting further upstream investing in our youth in a way that puts them on the right course incur including early education.

[01:02:10] Okay partner economy again. These are some audience questions here. This is for you. You oppose Casa Latina from Brian property in the Rainier Valley because you were worried about the negative effects on the neighborhood.

[01:02:22] This is a social service organization Casa Latina bought the property in Jackson street crime went down in the immediate neighborhood a church a retirement home a school and many single family homes support it. Has your position changed now that Casa Latina has proved that they are an asset.

[01:02:39] The site was inappropriate for what they wanted to do. They wanted to have the day laborers out on the sidewalk not inside and not dispatched by phone and they used that model at Jackson Street. So if they had offered to do it at a different place people would not have opposed. I did not personally oppose it. It was I was representing community members and there were multiple multiple organizations involved in that process challenge chef.

[01:03:10] So I think it's really important to set the record straight on this. I was actually working at Casa Latina as a work study student in law school. When this went down in the Mount Baker community and there's a few people here from Casa Latino who also have a pretty vivid memory of Ms Murakami standing up very loudly in opposition of the sighting in Rainier Avenue and I think it's important for us to recognize that Casa Latina is an incredible asset to the community and the model that currently exists that Jackson is exactly the model that was being proposed for Mt. Baker. And I know that because I ended up being one of the two co-chairs for the capital campaign that helped raise four million dollars to be able to deliver the first of its kind in the nation best in nation day labor center and Education Empowerment Center. In its current site. And I think it was a missed opportunity for the Mount Baker Community that you get your response again.

[01:04:12] It wasn't going to be in that model. They they were insisting that the day laborers be on the street which was a very crowded intersection. And this is a diversion from what this race is about this is something that happened 12 years ago and it's an act of desperation on the part of the city council

member because I in just about every way am more qualified to hold this office. I'll do a better job serving all communities of the city.

[01:04:40] You had your chance. John Grant let me ask you this. Alex from northeast writes Will you charge for profit developers impact fees so that they can help offset the increasing infrastructure crop costs such as schools sidewalks fire stations. We don't do impact fees.

[01:04:55] Now should we.

[01:04:58] So this is a central part of my policy platform to have growth pay for growth. If you want to talk about impact fees I mean look at cities across the region there's over 80 cities across the Puget Sound area that have them. Now do you all remember the Move Seattle levy. It was the largest levy in our city's history almost a billion dollars. Nine hundred and thirty million dollars that you all pay for to fix our roads sidewalks and everything else. Well the reason it was so large was that we didn't have money in the city's coffers to pay for those things because we don't have impact fees which are paid by private developers. We have left hundreds of millions of dollars on the table. We I make a pledge to you that I will pass an impact field legislation in my first year in office because we are seeing the city blow up with growth and we are not asking the private sector to pay its fair share. And that means 10 years from now you might be paying a two billion dollar levy to fix our streets. You know look at what's going on in the north and you know North Seattle has no sidewalks. There is a reason for that. That was actually a part of a plan and that means that getting developers to pay those impact fees so that we can have safe pedestrian routes to sprouts to school and everywhere else in our city.

[01:06:07] What do you. Let's get you and your chance and impact fees where you at.

[01:06:12] I think that there's a lot of similarity here. I mean we have to grow. In terms of our infrastructure as we grow up. So as our city grows up we have to make sure that there's light that there's sidewalks that there's roads that there's sewer systems that the drains are working. Right now we don't have enough revenue in our city. I would report not only because we don't have income impact fees but because we don't have an income tax. And the youth the unanimous vote to make sure that we push for an income tax in our city was the right thing to do. It's the right thing to make sure that we challenge that in court. I also want to make sure that we have things like capital gains tax because folks right here in our region are very wealthy. They're getting wealthier by trading stocks and bonds with the push of a button on their computer. I've been in the halls of Olympia calling for us to right side up our upside down tax system and fix this regressive system that we have in our state. I would like to see us actually have a regional capital gains tax as well. Work with our county counterparts to make sure that we are getting the wealth that is being gleaned when folks trade stocks and bonds online.

[01:07:12] I know we can do that and we can bring in a lot of money in addition.

[01:07:15] It's actually kind of went for everyone so let me give you a chance on the impact fees and are you proposing them. Have you proposed to them.

[01:07:24] I have not proposed them and in fact just a couple days ago we in our budget deliberations heard about work that is coming down the pike here very soon around standing up an impact fee program. So there have been a few council members on the City Council currently who've been leading the way on this and I'm incredibly appreciative and supportive of those efforts as we have the conversation around impact fees. I do think it's important for us to acknowledge that they're not going to be the panacea to resolve all of our infrastructure growth needs. It's another tool to be able to move us towards a direction of finding the revenue that we need to deal with with the very long log of infrastructure needs that we have. But impact fees are just as volatile as being no taxes meaning that they are tied with the economy and the valleys and the peaks of the economy. So impact fees. I think we should advance with impact fees but we also need to make sure that we don't stop there and that we look at other ways to stabilize that funding.

[01:08:27] Pat Murakami impact fees.

[01:08:29] Well I've supported them from day one it's been on my literature and the impact fees pay for schools additional police fire and infrastructure such as improving our and growing ah ah ah sewage system. They're

[01:08:44] Critical. We are the only municipality in the region that doesn't charge them Bellevue charges them Bellevue as requires parking and setbacks and their rents are lower than ours we are doing something very wrong here. We're letting developers get away with murder and you and I are paying the price for it. We're paying additional property taxes which increases rent we are paying higher sales tax because developers aren't paying their fair share and it applies to the new growth that they bring in from their development. So when the economy is down and new people aren't coming in. Impact fees aren't necessary.

[01:09:24] Ok. Teresa let me get you on this is about parks or first core parts question of the day. The superintendent of Seattle Seattle Parks and Recreation is aiming to identify a private nonprofit partner to demolish construct and manage Evans pool up there. Green Lake sounds like privatization. Liz writes How would you stop that plan. Or would you.

[01:09:48] Thank you for the question. As I mentioned before my background is in public health parks and green spaces canopies are part of what makes us healthy in this city. We don't want to just have a job and a home. We need accessible community centers. We need parks that are

[01:10:02] That are thriving where our community goes to have social cohesion. That's good for our mental health as well as the health of our local environment. I still play soccer. On Wednesday night as soon as this campaign is over I will go back to playing soccer on Wednesday with my husband and our team.

[01:10:15] We want parks that are public. I am running for public office to make sure that our public services stay in the public hands. I have said that we need to make sure that our public dollar is

invested in those programs that promote health that promote cohesion that promote safety like our firefighters are constantly calling for and in terms of the Evans School our Evans pool. I want to make sure that that stays in the public's hand. We need to have the public dollar reflect that value. I want to be a champion to make sure that the money follows and that it stays a public asset.

[01:10:43] Ok John let's get you in on this one the Evans full concept and just the larger vision about parks and funding for them.

[01:10:48] We absolutely have to fight the privatization of our public spaces and public lands. And you know it's not just the Evans pool. We're also talking about the Green Lake Community Center. And when we have these conversations it means that you know. We need to actually be proactive on this. My campaign reached out to the community leaders who are leading the effort to save the Evans pool and the Green Lake Committee Council. And we worked with them to put together a policy proposal to try to save those pools and those public assets. That's the kind of organizing and grassroots level work that we need folks that are going to go to the community go to our neighborhoods and talk about what is it about our city that makes it a livable city. When the mayor put together as a hollow committee it was the housing affordability and livability agenda. But I don't know about you but I don't remember where livability really entered the conversation. It was more like the HoC committee which kind of feels like you're getting laughed at. And of course you are because the city is selling off our public assets. It's not just Evan's pool to the Seattle Public Utilities is selling our public lands that are that are wetlands right now to private developers. We have to stop that. We actually have to use and preserve our public assets for the public good.

[01:12:01] Okay. Theresa I'm sorry Lorena Gonzalez let me ask you about a proposal that is being pushed by one of the mayoral candidates. One of the mayoral candidates that you did not that you took the Fifth on tonight Jenny Durkan says it's time for rent vouchers city sponsored rent vouchers to help ease the affordability crunch.

[01:12:21] Is that a good idea.

[01:12:22] Well we already have rent vouchers. It's part of what our housing levy funds. I think maybe what that what her proposal is is to expand the number of rent vouchers that are. Available. It is in.

[01:12:36] It is a way to prevent people from entering into homelessness. So I would agree that we need to continue to focus on making sure that we have those prevention tools in place to prevent people from entering into homelessness and rent vouchers is one of the tools that the city uses to accomplish that outcome.

[01:12:57] Expand the rent voucher program Padma.

[01:12:59] Yes we need to have vouchers for people that are suffering economic stress and maybe a couple months of free rent helps them to get employed and back on their feet and avoid homelessness altogether and families with children should absolutely be giving rent given rent

vouchers so that their children are in a stable environment and hopefully stay in the school that they are currently attending so I'm all in favor of that program.

[01:13:25] Do you do. Let's get you on rent vouchers where we're talking about it.

[01:13:30] Yeah I think that we need more access to vouchers and rental assistance. But the reality is even with those Section 8 vouchers that our city and our region currently uses we don't have enough housing. I talked to a case manager who works at Adeline a women's shelter down in Belle town and she said that this is going to be the first year in 10 years of her experience there where she has helped women try to get housing with Section 8 vouchers that there hasn't been enough housing in the city on a bus line that will take those vouchers. So yes expanded but we got to create more housing. We just have to recognize this is the crisis that it is.

[01:14:07] John GRANT So this might surprise some folks. I think the vouchers are a bad idea. I think that if you can get somebody a Section 8 voucher it's an amazing asset to that person it's almost like homeownership if you're a renter. But vouchers are problematic if you're a tenant and a Section 8 tenant you know this landlords can leak can illegally discriminate against you and it's hard to prove it. They only go up to a certain amount if the market in Seattle is you know rents are going three thousand dollars a month and your voucher doesn't cover that you're out of luck and you lose your voucher. I think the the truth behind the voucher program and in particular this mayoral candidates proposal is that this is a proposal advanced by the Rental Housing Association because it is public money going to private landlords. I think that if we're going to be making public investments I disagree with everyone here I think that what we need to do is have city owned land city owned units because those cannot be sold off and then the city gets to prioritize who gets housing. And how affordable it is. Those are the kinds of investments that make a difference if you're a tenant.

[01:15:12] Ok we've got two more questions we're going to end on. Before we get to closing statements I may give you 30 seconds on each of these final two questions. They're kind of fun Palmer economy I start with you what dream legislation what is your dream legislative package. It's not being considered that you would want passed.

[01:15:30] I want a statewide income tax because right now low income people have an effective tax rate of sixteen point eight percent. That was in 2015 before seven new taxes were introduced that make their effective tax rate even higher. So low income people would pay no income tax it would be graduated higher income people would pay more. And that would be combined with reducing sales and property taxes. It's an effort of multiple municipalities campaigning to the state legislature to change the state constitution we can do it.

[01:16:04] Ok. LORENA GONZALEZ your dream legislation but but for the City Council to say that's fine I serve on it. My

[01:16:15] Gosh I have a long list. My mind is. Bill reform reform. And by that I mean eliminating the requirement of bail so we're not keeping poor people in jail for being poor. The second would be the

second would be a right to counsel for. Four tenants facing eviction who can't afford their own lawyers. And I will stop there.

[01:16:37] Ok.

[01:16:38] Your dream legislative package my dream legislative package would be a universal income for everyone in the city of Seattle. And I know other cities are doing it. Other countries have it figured out in terms of the process. But my interim measure will be to fight for equal pay for women in the workplace. John Grant I don't have a dream I have a plan

[01:17:00] And that plan means fighting for rent control and suing the state of Washington for its illegal ban on regulating rents. And it also means building thousands of deeply affordable city owned affordable housing units by taxing the largest corporations in town. That's how we turn the tide.

[01:17:19] Ok. I realize I should flip these but but I'm gonna to go with this one and then we end with closing statements again 30 seconds starting with you John. This the reason I say I should flip these because this is kind of a negative one. I should have ended on dreams.

[01:17:32] But what's one piece. What is one thing the city council has passed in the last two years that you did not support.

[01:17:44] I mean Hala like what would that be. I think the grand bargain was over it was a real problem and we talked a lot about it. And when you look at the people who are how much time do I have your 30 second 30 seconds. When we look at the decision makers behind that plan it was 28 members on that panel. I was one of them. Half the people represented the interests of private developers. And of course we got a deal that slanted towards that that perspective. Right. We can't keep having Mike my opponent you know accuses me of not being a consensus builder. I don't think we want to build consensus if it means giving away our rights and selling the farm for our say OK. We need to fight.

[01:18:22] What didn't you. Didn't you support that came out of the council the last couple of years.

[01:18:26] I did not support the approach to sweep sweeping our community re traumatizes folks. It's bad for our health it's bad for our public health. We I think we've taken some steps to correct that in the past and we'll continue to do so.

[01:18:38] If I'm on city council it's an easy one for you because you probably voted against you know what you voted against. Why did you vote against it.

[01:18:46] Yeah I know what I voted voted against it but actually.

[01:18:50] And that question made me think of something that I guess but it's certainly a good.

[01:18:56] But I regret and I would. And I would.

[01:18:59] And I you know I'd probably have some pretty good agreement in this room.

[01:19:02] But I think that the thing I wish I would have voted on was pronto the bike share like you wish you would vote against it pronto. Yeah. Yes. Yeah. OK.

[01:19:15] I have to agree with John holla holla was written by and for developers. It benefits people very very wealthy people from other countries from Nevada California. We need legislation that serves the residents of Seattle. Development should be built to serve our neighborhoods. Our neighborhood should not be serving developers.

[01:19:33] Okay we're gonna go with closing statements I'm gonna give each candidate a minute. Let's start with Lorena Gonzalez.

[01:19:39] Thank you so much everybody for being here and for everybody who is watching online. I am running for re-election because I want to build on the work that I've already done for city council.

[01:19:51] That includes championing for a statewide paid family and medical leave policy beginning in 2019. All Seattle working families and all families across the state will begin the process of receiving 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave.

[01:20:06] I'm incredibly proud of that one. Want to continue to champion that kind of work. I'm incredibly proud of the work I've done around advocating for immigrants and refugees in our city to make sure that they are protected from attacks from our federal government and to make sure that they are positioned in the best way possible to succeed in our community. And I am the only person on the city council who has taken on government as a civil rights lawyer both by suing the Seattle Police Department and suing large corporations for malfeasance. And I think that we are at a critical time on police reform and I am the only one who has experience to get us across that finish line and keep doing the hard work. More coming.

[01:20:50] If elected I would be the only person on the city council that has a business background and I think that's something that's sorely missing from our leadership. In addition I really hope that I would have the public safety committee because I think that there are many holes in what's been done over the last two years. I don't think we should be out from under this consent decree as long as any officer leaves the precinct without a non-lethal means of containment on their person. That then we've got a problem and we need more training and continue that. I'm opposed to privatization of our public assets. I know the money is there it's being deferred to another big project. We need to serve the people of this city and I'm well willing ready and able to do just that. Pat Murakami position 9.

[01:21:42] Ok. Tourism escaped.

[01:21:45] Well thank you again for having this forum. Thank you to all of you for tuning in ballads just got mailed out today. So they should be in your inbox in the next two days. I hope that I can earn your vote. I hope that I can earn your trust. I have been fighting to make sure that no one is left out and no one is left behind my entire life from fighting to make sure that seniors had access to health care and retirement security.

[01:22:05] Fighting to make sure that everyone is protected in the workplace and that we can all afford to live in the city that we work and retire. I will make sure to deliver to deliver on our progressive values. I know we have tough problems in our city and I also know that we don't get solutions by just going along to get along. Nor do we get solutions by just pounding on the table and pointing fingers. That is why I have been effective from working in broad coalitions by bringing people together by hearing people by staying true to my principles. That is how we will deliver on our progressive values in Seattle everything from housing and homelessness to creating greater shared prosperity in this city and standing up and protecting the rights of every resident in the city. I want to be your Seattle city council person.

[01:22:47] Thank you so much everybody.

[01:22:53] Thanks so much for sticking around. I think that there is a lot that we can accomplish as a city. You know there. I've got one minute I want to try to cram this story in. But when I was director of the Tenants Union we got a notification from the Seattle Housing Authority that they were gonna raise a family's rents there by 500 percent. Imagine 500 percent more of anything like this table in this room. It's it's astronomical. We built a multiracial coalition across the city of public housing tenants folks from the East African Community immigrants and refugees. And we said no when everyone else said yes this is just going to happen every executive director of every nonprofit every other community leader everyone else said this is just a done deal this rent increase is going to happen and you just don't have a choice everybody you're just going to pay this rent. While I was head of the Tenants Union we said no. And this isn't about banging your fist on the table. This is about Will you fight tooth and nail to do what's right. Will you hold these powerful interests accountable. And what did that coalition do we stop that 500 percent rate increase when everyone else said that we couldn't. That's the kind of grassroots leadership that I want to bring to city hall. I've been here in the community for four years and I think that that's the community voice that we need.

[01:24:05] Okay. Diane's going to close out but let's thank all the candidates. Again keep going it all thanks the author for his great work

[01:24:22] As thank you to each of the candidates.

[01:24:27] Thank you to all of you for coming. We hope we've helped inform your vote tonight. Don't forget to vote by November 7th and have a great night

[01:24:43] This podcast was presented by the Seattle Public Library and Foundation and made possible by your contributions to the Seattle Public Library Foundation. Thanks for listening.