

King County Democrats 2009 General Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name	Michael McGinn
Position sought	Mayor of Seattle
Residence Legislative, County Council and Congressional district	46 LD 7 th CD Council Position
Are you a Democrat? Are you known as a Democrat?	Yes and Yes.
Campaign Information	
Campaign Name	McGinn for Mayor
Web page	www.mcgininformayor.com
Campaign Email address	info@mcgininformayor.com
Manager	
Campaign mailing address	PO Box 70643, Seattle, WA 98127
Campaign phone number	206 979-1461
Campaign FAX	none

Candidate Background: Community service, education, employment and other relevant experience.

Describe your qualifications, education, employment, community and civic activity, Union affiliation and other relevant experience.

I am a husband, a father, a neighbor, a lawyer, and a community organizer who cares deeply about Seattle's future and who has worked to make Seattle a better place. I am one of six children, raised by educators: my mother was a school principal and my father was our school district's director of community services. My wife Peggy and I live with our children, Jack, Miyo and Cian (and our dog Midge) in our Greenwood bungalow home.

In 2006 I co-founded Great City, a nonprofit organizations that brings together neighbors, environmentalists and business leaders to make Seattle a model of economic and environmental sustainability. During my time as Executive Director, one of our great early successes was coordinating the Green Legacy Coalition--a group of community councils, nonprofit organizations and local businesses--to defy the conventional wisdom and urge the City Council to make investments in our parks and green spaces. I then served as the co-chair for the 2008 Seattle Parks for All campaign, the citizen-powered movement that got the Parks and Green Spaces Levy passed.

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Before starting Great City, I was a partner at the law firm of Stokes Lawrence, where I worked for over a decade. I represented local individuals and businesses in a variety of legal matters. I was fortunate to work for a firm that respected my commitment to the community and allowed me to become a citizen activist.

I have been an active leader in the Sierra Club's Cascade Chapter for over a decade. I have served as the chair of the state chapter, as well as the chair of its Political Committee. In 2007, I co-lead the NoRTID campaign to stop a measure which would have burdened Seattle citizens with historically unprecedented taxes, while funding 180 miles of suburban highways around Seattle. In 2008, I joined the Sierra Club in helping to pass the Sound Transit measure to expand light rail.

In addition to my work in environmental issues, I believe in serving my local community by being active in my neighborhood. As President of the Greenwood Community Council, I worked on a long term project with business owners, property owners, residents and city staff to develop a vision for mixed use redevelopment of the neighborhood business district. We worked to get funding from the city and homeowners to build low cost alternative sidewalks in Greenwood and worked with Sustainable Seattle and City Repair Seattle on streetscape improvements. I also served on the Northwest District Council and worked with adjoining neighborhoods.

Although my roots are in the neighborhoods, I understand how government works and knows how to get things done. Before law school, I was a legislative aide to Jim Weaver, Democratic Congressman for Eugene, Oregon. I then served as President of the University of Washington's Graduate and Professional Student Senate, where I led campaigns to provide better housing and health benefits for students.

Over the past decade, I have served on citizens committees at the state and local level to address transportation, global warming, stormwater, clean air, and zoning codes. Within the Sierra Club, I have served on its national Political Committee, Voter Education Campaign Committee, "Cool Cities" committee, and on the nominating committee for the National Board.

I received my Bachelor's degree in Economics from Williams College in 1982, and I am proud graduate of the University of Washington School of Law.

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What ratings and endorsements have you received?	
Legislative District Democrats	Endorsement process in progress
Union Endorsement	Endorsement process in progress
Municipal League	Endorsement process in progress
SEAMEC	Endorsement process in progress
Other Endorsements	Endorsement process in progress

Which groups do you plan to ask for an endorsement?

Democratic organizations, environmental groups, unions, transportation advocates, media outlets, and a variety of other progressive organizations and community groups

Please answer the following questions*		Yes	No	Qualified
1	Do you support the King County Democratic Platform?	X		
2	Do you support the right of workers (excluding military) to bargain and strike?	X		
3	Do you support affirmative action?	X		
4	Do you support freedom of choice in contraception, abortion and sterilization?	X		
5	Do you support public funding for abortions for poor women?	X		
6	Do you support school vouchers? Do you support charter schools?			X
7	Do you support the Davis-Bacon Act?	X		
8	Do you support equal rights for women?	X		
9	Do you support major changes in the way we live to help stop global warming?	X		
10	Do you support the restoration of voting rights to persons convicted of a felony who have served their sentence?	X		

Please answer the following questions *		Yes*	No
1	Have you ever failed to pay any taxes or court ordered judgments?		X
2	Have you ever been found in violation of a Public Disclosure Commission, Federal Election Commission or Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission regulation?		X
3	Have you ever been convicted of a felony?		X

- If you answered “Yes” or “Qualified” please explain your answer.

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I am open to looking at publicly regulated charter schools in Seattle as a way to generate new ideas and better educational results.

Are you a member of another political party? If so, which ones? Have you ever supported or given money to a candidate from another party in a partisan race? If so, whom?

No.

Are you a member of your local Democratic District Party? Have you contributed financially to any Democratic Organization? Have you been a Precinct Committee Officer? When/Where?

I am a member of the 46th LD. I have not been a PCO. On behalf of the Sierra Club, I have walked precincts for Democratic candidates in swing districts around Seattle. I have also overseen multiple Independent Expenditure Campaigns designed to obtain and build upon environmental majorities in the state legislature.

What are the main messages of your campaign? What is your campaign plan? How many doors have you knocked on to date, pieces of mail planned, budgeting, staffing? What is the fundraising goal for your campaign? How much have you raised to date? Why will you win?

We have a great team with an effective grassroots campaign strategy to make multiple voter contacts with primary voters. Our outreach will be in person, earned media, social media and phone calling. Much like the successful 2007 NoRTID and 2008 Seattle Parks for All campaigns, volunteers will be critical to the campaign's outreach efforts, and will be the heart and soul of the campaign. We are working with Mercury and Constituent Dynamics to make smart investments on voter contact. I would be happy to discuss my fundraising goal in an endorsement interview. We have raised approximately \$32,000 to to date, and are on track to meet our goal for the primary.

We have an effective message to convey about the need to make good investments in our future (schools, transit and economic development) and avoid the bad investment into the Alaska Way Tunnel project.

The combination of message, messengers and outreach strategy means that we will be one of the two candidates in the primary and win the general election.

What are the single most pressing issues facing your jurisdiction? What actions would you take if elected?

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Seattle's future is at risk. The national and local economies are undergoing substantial, permanent, painful changes. Our school system is broken. More than 20% of our high-school students fail to graduate, and violence has claimed our young people's lives and made neighborhoods less safe. Working people can't afford to live here, and jobs are disappearing. Our buses are overcrowded, but no one has a plan for improving local transit.

For too long, City leaders have refused to take responsibility for the most pressing issues facing Seattle. "That's the state's problem," they insist. "Only the county is responsible for transit," they claim. "Talk to the school board," they plead. But I'm not running to be Mayor of That's Not My Department. Seattle needs an advocate who will fight at every level for Seattle's citizens.

As Mayor of Seattle, I will:

- Commit the city to turning around our schools, including direct accountability and city control of the district if no progress in two years
- Build out next-generation fiber optic networking to every home and business in the city
- Eliminate overcrowded buses and bring reliable local transit to Seattle

If you are a candidate in a contested primary race, what record of performance, ability, experience, personal qualities, and positions on issues distinguish you from your opponent(s)? If you do not receive the nomination, is there any reason you could not support your Democratic opponent in the general election? Please explain.

I am the only candidate in the race with long experience working within communities to build coalitions for change. This includes work with the Sierra Club, in my neighborhood of Greenwood, and at my non-profit Great City. In each of these roles, I have had a demonstrated record of success that has meant real improvements to communities, our quality of life and our future.

I am the only candidate in the race with a vision for Seattle that does not include wasting billions of dollars on the viaduct tunnel.

Seattle Mayor is a non-partisan race, and I expect the top two finishers will be Democrats.

Do you believe the current structure of taxes and/or fees that generate funds in your area are fair? If not, how would you change it?

Our reliance on regressive taxes unfairly punishes lower and middle income families, and small business owners who are trying to contribute to our community. Many Democrats recognize the inequities of our system, but there has been a lack of political will to make any significant changes. We have gotten to the point where our tax system drives our public policy. As we have seen in the last year, our tax system also lacks flexibility, leaving government budgets particularly vulnerable during economic downturns. This results in painful cuts to our important safety net programs.

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A state income tax would certainly address many of the inequities we see today, while maintaining a steadier source of revenue. Businesses should be taxed based on net income, rather than gross receipts, to encourage growth of the small and medium-sized business that are so important for our economy. In addition to shifting away from regressive taxes, we must also work to ensure that local communities see the benefits of the taxes they pay.

King County has a ten year plan to end homelessness. What ideas do you have to increase low income and affordable housing/?

We must work to ensure that Seattle remains accessible to people with low and moderate incomes; this means maintaining a variety of affordable housing options that are spread out throughout the City. I support the renewal of the Housing Levy, but believe we need to continually reevaluate the numbers to make sure we are adequately providing for all income levels. I also believe that we must work with homeless encampments, such as Tent City and Nickelsville, to ensure that even those who cannot afford permanent housing have a safe, reliable place to call home.

The City of Seattle has an important role in ending homelessness, but is ultimately just one of many players. This effort will ultimately require effective coordination with regional, state and federal government, as well as nonprofit organizations and the business community. I have a proven record of successfully bringing together diverse groups to work for change in our community, and will put that experience to use in working to end homelessness and make Seattle an affordable, liveable city.

What role should government play in the healthcare system?

I believe that every person has the right to adequate health care, and I am happy to see movements towards a Universal Health Care System. This issue has gone beyond just being a question of values--it is clear that we must make substantial changes to our system, or our economy will continue to suffer. I support the work that our state and federal representatives are doing to bring about such change.

The City of Seattle can be a leader in this area by providing its workers with quality health coverage, and helping local businesses to do the same. But we must do more than simply providing employees access to affordable insurance. We must develop expand programs that encourage employees to live a healthy lifestyle and take a preventative approach to their health care. Healthy, physically active employees will generate fewer medical bills, and ultimately make it cheaper to cover all employees. Large employers, like the City, must be role models in developing creative approaches to decreasing health care costs.

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Finally, just as we consider the environmental impacts of City projects, we must begin thinking more holistically about the impacts on public health. There is no question that the more physically active we are, the healthier we will be. We must break down the silos of our bureaucracy and demand that every City department think about how they can help citizens be more active.

What is your position on civil rights for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered people? What is your position on equal rights for same-sex couples when it comes to benefits, civil unions, marriage and parental rights?

I fully support any measures that protect the civil rights of the GLBT community, and believe that same-sex couples should have equal rights when it comes to benefits, civil unions, marriage and parental rights.

What creative solutions can you offer to address the problems of the economically disadvantaged?


My platform of investment in schools, a public broadband utility, and great local transit is a program to provide all residents greater opportunity, and the tools to compete in a world economy. Transit connects the economically disadvantage to jobs and saves all of us money.

I also strongly support "green jobs" to, in the words of Van Jones, "give the work that most needs doing, to the people who most need jobs."

I also support a "housing first" policy as a way to provide the stability to those most in need.

These types of investments will not be possible if our City's resources are poured into a the Alaska Way Tunnel.

I have read this questionnaire and understand and approve the content and all provided information.

Printed Name	Michael McGinn	Date
Signature		June 5, 2009