1. Many employers in the downtown and center city neighborhoods—including the City of Seattle—fully or partially cover the cost of ORCA transit passes for their employees. Incentivizing public transit and reducing drive-alone commuting is especially important during the next five years, with the “Seattle Squeeze” creating challenging traffic conditions. However, many employers don’t provide any transit pass subsidy. Anecdotally, higher-paid workers are more likely to receive employer-subsidized passes than lower-wage workers, who are disproportionately women and people of color. Many lower-wage workers earn too much to be eligible for the ORCA LIFT low-income reduced fare program, but not enough to afford housing in Seattle without being severely cost-burdened. For the following questions, please choose either Yes or No. You may explain your answers if you like.

- Do you think employers of a certain size should subsidize employee transit passes? Yes
- Would you support city council action to make this a requirement? Yes
- Do you think the City should cover the costs of transit passes for employees of human service providers that are funded by city contracts? Yes

2. Report after report—notably the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report released in October 2018—tells us we need to cut carbon emissions dramatically NOW. What will you do to put Seattle on the path to decarbonization?
As a supporter of drastically reducing our carbon emissions to meet our goals, I voted for Seattle to continue following the Paris Climate Accord, despite Donald Trump unilaterally withdrawing the United States from this agreement.

We know that the biggest contributor to greenhouse gases in Seattle is transportation, especially from solo drivers in traditional gas-powered vehicles. That’s why I am fighting to ensure that we have better, green public transportation options, as well as more sidewalks to encourage walking. Light Rail must come into Seattle as fast as possible, especially the 130th street station. Many of my constituents would like to reduce their driving and emissions, however they are faced with limited options for public transportation and walking.

For the last three years, I have lobbied the Sound Transit board to open the 130th Street station 7 years earlier. I am also keep up the pressure on the Seattle Department of Transportation and the Office of Community Planning and Development to ensure that the Pedestrian/Bike Bridge over I-5 is built on time, with adequate sidewalks and crosswalks in the Northgate area so that everyone can safely access the Northgate transit hub,

I support the current efforts regarding the Green New Deal in congress. I love the high speed rail network and I would support this coming to Seattle to connect us to other cities without flying on a plane.

3. What is one community, specifically in your district, that you feel is being “left out” as our city grows and changes? What will you do to make sure their voices are heard?

I’m doing everything I can to reach out to everyone in my district.
4. What should the City’s role be in creating a healthy climate for business in Seattle?

The City’s role should start with:
- Addressing income disparity
- Continued support for transparency regarding pay and gender-based discrimination
- Supporting and creating apprenticeship programs
- Continued support for free college tuition and the Seattle Promise program

It’s very important to me to work with businesses, labor unions, and workers to create a healthy climate that serves the needs of employers and employees. The City has the ability to ease some of the biggest issues I hear from the community: the challenge for businesses to comply with new laws and regulations placed on employers, a shortage of educated workers, traffic congestion affecting business, and how lack of affordable housing means that employees are often commuting long distances to get to work, not to mention the impact of homelessness and addiction on businesses, workers, and customers.

5. Seattle has the most regressive tax system of any city in Washington State, which has the most regressive tax system of any state in the US. Do you believe that the City has a responsibility to raise significant new revenue to address the challenges facing our communities? If so, what tax policies would you advocate for at the city level to generate new revenue?

I recognize that our current tax system is unfair to workers and lower income people in Seattle. With the rapid growth here, we have increasingly more socioeconomic and racial inequities. These inequities drive suboptimal outcomes in education, public safety, and the character of our neighborhoods. It is clear that some wealthy people and corporations do not pay their fair share of taxes. It’s time to fix that. I voted for the head tax
and also for a city income tax as a step toward making our tax system more just. I believe the City Council will come back to address our upside-down tax structure in the future and I would like to be there to support it.

6. Seattle is deeply divided on how to address the homelessness crisis. How would you characterize these divisions, and how would you address them?

There is more that unites us than divides us on homelessness—everyone wants to find a solution to the problem, some more compassionate than others. We are an innovative city and there are a myriad of solutions for our biggest challenge. The City Council has new Select Committee on Homelessness and we are beginning to come together to discuss solutions. I am particularly inspired by our new regional response. We know this is a regional issue and need Seattle and King County to work together to improve services. I also believe we can start to address homelessness by focusing on the positive impacts made by small, local non-profits working in our community. As councilmember, I have secured millions of dollars for these groups, including Aurora Commons, God’s Little Acre, North Helpline, and Mother Nation. Mother Nation, for example, is a non-profit that helps Native American women who are homeless and survivors of domestic violence. They are able to care for these women in a more meaningful and culturally-appropriate way than any other non-profit that offers similar services. God’s Little Acre is the only day time hygiene center in the entirety of District 5. It used to only be open in the morning, but with my budget amendment they are now operating all day so that D5 residents can shower, do their laundry, and just be inside. I’d love to see more funding made available for organizations like this in order to better support marginalized and vulnerable communities that are housing insecure.

7. There is widespread agreement that all areas of response to the homelessness crisis need to be stepped up—but in practice, an elected official’s job is often to prioritize. How would you rank the
following in terms of relative priority for increased funding and attention? (1=highest, 4=lowest) You may explain your choice, but if you fail to rank the options, we will not consider your answer.

- Homelessness prevention - 1
- Mental health and drug treatment services - 2
- Low-income housing - 3
- Emergency shelter - 4

8. What lessons do you think should be drawn from the experience of the “head tax” last year?

Legislation needs collaboration between legislators, the community, and stakeholders affected by the changes. It needs time and cooperation to develop. Any progressive tax must be implemented correctly and the Council needs to work to insulate the City (and taxpayers) from the cost and stress of a prolonged lawsuit that could strike it down. That’s why I voted for its repeal in the face of both a lawsuit and a ballot initiative that would have prevented such a tax from ever being passed. There is no doubt that we need to address income inequality, the impact of “big business” has on our city and limited resources, and finding a way toward a solution. We as a city have proven in the past we can tackle tough issues, build consensus, and do the right thing.

Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to working the the Transit Riders Union.