

A Socialist Program for Seattle's 2021 Elections

Whereas 2021 will be an important year in Seattle politics with four city elections (Mayoral, two city-wide city council positions, and City Attorney). This presents an opportunity for socialists to popularize left-wing policies, and to build DSA and social movements;

Whereas there is currently a favorable political climate for socialist and left-wing candidates as a result of a swing to the left in urban centers across the US driven most recently by the movement for Black lives, Covid-19, and economic crisis;

Whereas socialists aim to create a different culture of electoral politics where we democratically work out our own political program and strategy, and on that basis recruit our own candidates who we think are best suited to represent us;

Whereas when we are unable to run our own socialist candidates we sometimes face the question of how to relate to left-wing (but not socialist) candidates;

Therefore be it resolved Seattle DSA adopts the following initial program that we urge left-wing and socialist candidates to run on in the 2021 Seattle elections. We ask the Local Council, Electoral Committee, District Groups, and interested Working Groups to discuss this initial program in preparation for further discussion at our January chapter meeting where the program can be further developed, amended, etc. This program is not a litmus test for endorsing or not endorsing candidates, but helps DSA to evaluate the political strengths and weaknesses of different candidates. We may choose to endorse candidates who fall short of some of our recommendations if we decide the strengths of their campaign outweigh these weaknesses.

1. We need a fundamental break from business-as-usual. We need a radical change in Seattle politics based on the interests of the multiracial working class and that fights racism, patriarchy, and inequality.
2. Our efforts will not succeed with a purely electoral strategy. We need elected officials who prioritize using their platform to actively build and give voice to social movements. We also expect DSA members who run to actively use their campaign platform to promote democratic socialism and build DSA.
3. We need representatives who will stand for fundamental change in practice, not just rhetorically. The most impactful aspect of City government is how it spends its budget. Left-wing representatives should not vote for any business as usual City budget, and instead fight for a fundamentally different budget based on economic, racial, and gender justice.

4. Tax the rich, big corporations, and big real estate developers to make Seattle affordable for all.
5. Stand in solidarity with workers. All workers deserve the right to a union, and candidates should fight for workers' right to organize. Candidates should exhaust all possibilities to improve workers' wages, benefits, and rights in the workplace. And candidates should use data they collect not only to win elections, but to mobilize supporters to picket lines and strike actions.
6. Fight Structural Racism
 - a. Defund the police by at least 50%.
 - b. End the school-to-prison pipeline. Fully fund wraparound social services for students, especially low-income and BIPOC students.
 - c. Pursue Reparations for Seattle's Black and Indigenous communities under the leadership of those communities.
7. Covid-19 Relief
 - a. PPE for all workers whose work risks Covid infection, paid for by employers.
 - b. Hazard pay for all workers whose work risks Covid infection.
 - c. Universal, high quality, safe childcare free at the point of use.
 - d. Municipal Broadband to provide high speed internet for all.
8. End Homelessness. End the sweeps. Fund shelters and social services for all those experiencing homelessness. The City must provide housing to all unhoused people. It's unacceptable that commercial and residential properties are left empty while people live and die on the streets during a pandemic.
9. Affordable Housing for All. The capitalist market has failed to provide affordable housing for working people. Instead we need rent control and to build publicly owned social housing. For a start we need to build 50,000 high quality homes, publicly owned and maintained, over the next 10 years. A top priority of such a housing program would be to counter gentrification and redlining to support people who have been displaced by these racist practices.
10. For a Green New Deal. Fundamental changes are needed to tackle the crisis of climate change. Seattle must massively expand bus and light rail service to create a world-class public transit system, including 24-hour free mass transit.
11. Fight Patriarchy:
 - a. Domestic abuse is on the rise as a result of the Covid pandemic. We need emergency housing and social services for impacted women and gender non-conforming people.
 - b. End the gender pay gap. Seattle should pass model legislation and enforcement mechanisms to combat sexual harassment at work. Seattle should also support

policies to improve the wages and working conditions of care workers, who are disproportionately women and BIPOC. We need transformative care policies that allocate resources to recognize, reduce, and redistribute unpaid care work.

- c. Decriminalize sex work and commit to improving the health and safety of people who work in the sex trade.
12. Left-wing candidates must be 100% on the side of working people and marginalized communities. A fundamental precondition for that is refusing any donations from corporations and big landlords. Personal contributions from small business owners are welcome, but candidates should base their campaigns on working class support.