

2009 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Thomas	(Tom)	Carr

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

Seattle City Attorney

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

18 Years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

18 Years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Tom Carr for City Attorney

Address: 5358 SW Admiral Way

City/State/Zip: Seattle WA 98116

Campaign Phone: 206-354-9966

Campaign Fax: None

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Campaign Website: Tomcarrforcityattorney.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Seattle City Attorney	Elected	2002-present	Elected City Attorney/General Counsel for Seattle/Chief Prosecutor
Public Records Act Exemptions Accountability Committee (AKA The Sunshine Committee)	Appointed	2007-present	Chair
American Alcohol Beverage Control Association, Public Health Advisory Board	Appointed	2007-present	Member
King County Committee to End Homelessness, Interagency Council	Appointed	2005-present	Member
Washington State Liquor Control Board, Three-Tier Review Task	Appointed	2006	Member

Force			
Elevated Transportation Company Board	Appointed	1997-2001	Chair 4/1999 – 4/2001
King County Metro Southwest Citizen's Sounding Board	Appointed	1997-1998	Member
King County Metro Citizen's Advisory Board for Six Year Plan	Appointed	1995	Member

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run
Washington State Representative, 34th Legislative District	1994

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
- **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
- **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
- **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?

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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

The Seattle City Attorney plays a pivotal role in our civic life. In my eight years of service as City Attorney, I have been a leader in a wide range of areas. As the chief prosecutor for Seattle, I have brought a compassion and understanding of the challenges faced by our defendant population to our criminal justice system. I am engaged in several important initiatives that will benefit our community and which I would like to bring to conclusion. These include: (1) building a Family Justice Center in Seattle. This would create a safe and comprehensive place for domestic violence victims to get their help and end the current situation under which victims are required to go from agency to agency to seek help. (2) Create a misdemeanor treatment court in Seattle. This program would be modeled on the very effective drug court model and would provide assistance to the drug or alcohol addicted defendants in Seattle's court system. (3) Expand the City's alternatives to incarceration. During my two terms, we have successfully created alternatives to incarceration to include pre-trial day reporting, electronic home monitoring and effective community service in lieu of jail. I have been a proponent of a post-conviction day reporting program such as that run by the County. For over five years, we have attempted to obtain access to those services for Seattle defendants. This effort should come to fruition in the next year. My experience and collaborative style has helped me accomplish much as City Attorney. I am seeking another term, because there is still much to be done and I am uniquely qualified to meet these challenges. It is critically important that the City Attorney, who acts as the Chief Prosecutor for the City of Seattle, actually have experience as a prosecutor. I began in NYC working against the Mob as an Assistant US Attorney, and have served as a prosecutor in Seattle for 8 years. I don't merely delegate to my outstanding employees, I handle cases in the courtroom. Doing so has built relationships, respect, and trust with my employees; but also with Defense Attorneys, Judges, Police Officers, victims, and offenders. Being in the courtroom helps me find new efficiencies, form new ideas, and share my passion for alternatives to incarceration while saving tax dollars. This job requires prosecutorial experience, and I am proud to have earned that experience firsthand. In addition to being a prosecutor, the City Attorney is the general counsel for the City of Seattle. During my eight years, I have worked hard to keep politics out of our legal advice. The people of the City of Seattle elect the Mayor and City Counsel to make the policy decisions for our city. My job is to provide them legal advice that they can trust to do their job. It is crucial that the City Attorney not viewed as steering policy decisions through his legal advice. My 25 years of active practice as a lawyer, counseling clients and handling litigation qualifies me to do this important work.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.
- **Honesty.** Trust is crucial to the work of the City Attorney. Clients and constituents must trust that the City Attorney is working in their interest. I have worked hard to build that trust through candor in all of my work.
 - **Collaboration.** The City Attorney has no budget authority and no authority over the executive agencies, no authority over the City Council and no authority over the Municipal Court. Everything that I have accomplished has been by working collaboratively with these very different agencies over the years. As a result, people come to me to provide leadership in areas where they know that I have the skills to bring the right partners together. Examples include the North Precinct Auto Theft Project in which my office worked with the police to provide the catalyst for a 60% reduction in auto theft; (2) the Seattle Community Court, where I was one of the leaders who brought together a wide range of community, business and government interests to create the first Community Court in Washington; (3) the Tent City 3 agreement through which I ended years of dispute with the organizers of a roaming homeless encampment; and (4) the Sonics litigation, where I was the lead negotiator, but also worked to keep the Mayor and Council fully informed and obtained unanimous agreement among all nine council members and the Mayor for a creative resolution to a difficult problem.
 - **Compassion.** Seattle prosecutes only misdemeanors. As a result a large percentage of our defendant population is drug addicted, alcoholic or mentally ill. A good prosecutor needs to understand this and treat these individuals with compassion while still protecting public safety. A good example is women charged with prostitution. Many people consider prostitution call it a “victimless” crime. That ignores the women, who are the true victims. They are often drug or alcohol addicted and recovering from prior sexual abuse. Involvement in prostitution is often the final step in a life of victimization. In 2002, I helped create the Sex Industry Victim’s fund, which uses money paid by johns to help woman get out of the prostitution life. Having worked in the Seattle Municipal Community Court and at the jail arraignment calendar, I have seen people who with a hand could change their lives. I have worked hard to bring this compassionate approach to the criminal justice system.
 - **Management experience.** After eight years of managing a complex organization, I have the skills necessary to work with the Mayor and Council on an effective budget, hire and retain outstanding attorneys and staff; maintain morale through difficult budget times and accomplish the office’s goals on a razor thin budget. Before coming to this office, I was the chair of the Elevated Transportation Company, which later became the Seattle Popular Monorail Authority. I organized the first company, managed a significant budget and hired the first staff. In my professional life, I was a partner in a small law firm, where I had to help meet a payroll and manage a small business.
3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

1. **Work on Homelessness.** Right out of the gate, in 2002, I was faced with whether the City should appeal a decision regarding Tent City 3, which had been engaged in a long-term dispute with the City. Under my leadership, the City entered into a consent decree with Share/Wheel, Tent City's sponsors, to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment for the encampment. Tent City has operated without issue for almost 8 years under this agreement, which was used as the model for King County's encampment ordinance. I have also served for the last five years as a member of the Interagency Council of the Committee to End Homelessness. As a prosecutor, I see daily the challenges faced by our homeless citizens. I bring a unique perspective to the effort to end homelessness in Seattle. (for example see my guest editorial entitled **Fight Crime, Addiction with Housing**, Seattle Times, February 15, 2007. I also served on the steering committee that created Co—Stars, a unique program that provides housing and wrap around services for ex-offenders. This program is funded in part through jail savings realized through the Seattle Community Court Program.

2. **Innovations in Criminal Justice.** Seattle's defendant population provides unique challenges and opportunities to a prosecutor. Chemically dependent, alcohol addicted and/or mentally ill offenders fill the system with minor crimes. I have been part of an effort that has moved a significant number of these defendants out of jail and into programs where they can get help. In 2005, I was one of the founders of Seattle's first Community Court. This Court, which is modeled after a program in New York City's Times Square, gives offenders an opportunity to give back to the community in which they committed their crimes, by working with community members on meaningful projects. As an alternative to the de-socializing environment of jail, this program brings offenders back into society by re-introducing them to their community. Community Court participants are also required to make social service contacts based upon their identified needs. Started with only a \$45,000 grant from the Downtown Seattle Association (I handled the calendar myself for the first 18 months, because I did not have staff to do it) the program was recognized last year by the United States Department of Justice as one of three "mentor" sites nationwide where practitioners can learn how to replicate our success. I have also expanded our community prosecution effort from a small one person pilot when I started to a comprehensive community based problem-solving program. This program, which we call our "Precinct Liaison" program places attorneys in the community to work to address problems through community participation before they rise to the level of crimes. Last year my efforts were honored by the National District Attorneys Association's prestigious Iceberg Award. Recognizing as early as 2002, that we faced a jail crisis, I took this opportunity to build alternatives to incarceration into our system. Working with the Municipal Court we created a "day reporting" program for offenders who would have been held in custody prior to trial due to a history of failures to appear. Offenders are required to report daily to the Court and receive a reminder of their court date. I have also expanded the use of electronic home monitoring as both an alternative to pretrial detention and as a sentence. I have reorganized and re-energized the Court's 30 year old diversion program for first time offenders, including a screening for social service needs as well as better coordination and control. As a result this program doubled in size in one year. Combined with documented jail reductions from the Community Court all of these programs have been in large part responsible for a reduction in Seattle's average daily jail population from 409 in 2001, to 254 last year. These programs not only save jail beds for those whom we need to lock up, but are more humane and effective means of working with our offenders.

3. **Creating efficiencies in Criminal Justice.** Part of my role as prosecutor has been to make a system that handles as many as 20,000 cases each year run more efficiently. In 2002, I worked to implement a system under which attorneys in my office took responsibility for trial scheduling so that trials could be scheduled when police officers were on-duty as contrasted with the old system, which ignored police schedules completely. I also worked with the court to allow officer witnesses to be "on-call" on the day of trial. Since 90% of all cases plead on day of trial, requiring officers to be physically present, encouraged defendants to delay until the very last minute before entering a plea and cost the city a tremendous sum for police overtime. Implementing these changes allowed this money to be redeployed for overtime directly related to policing efforts. I also became the executive sponsor of the Seattle Justice

Integration System. (SEAJIS). When I took over this project had accomplished nothing and was in danger of being abandoned. Under my leadership, we are in the final stages of completing a project that transformed a paper only system routing police reports to my office complaints from my office to the Court and disposition data from the Court to my office to a completely electronic, paperless system. This new system improves efficiency by eliminated duplicate data entry and instead passes data seamlessly through all three systems.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

I have focused my community efforts on coaching youth sports. Mentoring youth through sports is important to the future of our community. Over the last nine years I have served as head coach or assistant coach for over 20 sports teams for youth ranging in ages from 5 to 14 in baseball, basketball and soccer. I even have been the parent manager for an ice hockey team. The skills that I have developed in organizing and teaching kids -- that is explaining things clearly and simply -- serve me well in managing 90 lawyers. To be a successful coach, one needs to be a caring individual with good communication skills. I have also served on the King County Board for Developmental Disabilities. My wife and I financially support the King County Boys and Girls Club. She has served both on the County Board and now on the Southwest Boys and Girls Club board.

I was born in the Bronx, New York. The six members of my family shared a one-bedroom apartment. My father was an alcoholic who died in an alcohol-related fall. I understand what it is like to live in poverty and to deal with the effects of addiction. I never forget where I came from and how hard life can be for some people. Criminals should be treated with respect, understanding and compassion. Handling Community Court calendars I have seen many people who but for a tragedy or being the victim of another's abuse could be leading happy, productive lives. Getting them back on track is my passion.

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

The City Attorney's job can be broken down into three components.

(1) The City Attorney serves as a department head of a significant independent city law department with 165 employees and a \$20 million budget. I bring substantial management skills to these tasks having had to incur substantial budget cuts over the years while still delivering the highest quality legal services. In addition to budgeting, the City Attorney as an independently elected official handles all personnel matters, including hiring, firing and employee discipline. Striking the appropriate balance while maintaining both employee morale and effectiveness has been a source of great pride to me.

(2) The City Attorney is also the general counsel for the City of Seattle. Historically, there have been City Attorneys who took a more activist stand in civil matters. Doing so can undermine the trust of the clients who need to good legal advice to do their jobs. I believe that the Mayor and Council are elected to make policy decisions and need my office's support to do so. Thus, in the civil arena, I maintain strict neutrality so that the lawyers in my office will be able to give legal advice free from concern that their advice is slanted to promote my policy agenda. The office has eight civil sections divided into subject matter areas. My role is to provide the support and resources for the lawyers working in those areas.

(3) The City Attorney's most important role is as the chief prosecutor protecting public safety. Seattle has elected its City Attorney for over 130 years, in large part to have a single individual to hold responsible for public safety. While some misdemeanors affect the quality of life in Seattle, others, such as domestic violence crimes and driving under the influence are literally a matter of life and death. Approximately once each year since I have been in office, one of our misdemeanor defendants has committed a murder. Working effectively to prevent such violence is the most important role of the City Attorney.