

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
Dow		Constantine

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

King County Executive

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

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

All my life (47 years)

5. How long have you resided in King County?

All my life

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Friends of Dow Constantine

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City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98116

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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)
King County Council	Elected	2002-Present	Council Chair since Jan 2009
Washington State Senate	Elected	2000-2001	Vice-Chair, Ways & Means and Judiciary Committees
Washington House of Representatives	Elected	1996-1999	Co-Chair, Judiciary Committee

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

Office Title	Year of Run
NA	

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.)

I want to set the foundation for a new prosperity, improving the quality of life in King County for working families. We need real transit and transportation choices, sensible and humane criminal justice, responsible preservation of our environment, and genuine regional leadership. Ultimately, our job as Democrats is to make government work for people, to hold fast to our progressive principles, and not to get hung up on defending parts of the status quo that are no longer working.

At this historic moment, with a new, innovative President in the White House, our county also needs renewal -- to clear away the debris of that which is no longer working, perfect that which is, and build an efficient, effective, 21st-century government. Building on my record as a reformer unafraid to lead on tough issues, I will work across old geographic boundaries to zero in on effective solutions to the problems we face as a region.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

I offer a real record of reform, a focus on regional cooperation, and the vision to lead King County forward. And I have never hesitated to take on the tough issues... and I have the scars to prove it! So I am not intimidated by the problems we face, nor by the campaign we must wage to bring my message of focus and change to voters across King County.

I have also long represented suburban cities, rural areas and Seattle neighborhoods, and will work to unify our county—not rely on worn out political divisions that pit regions of our county against each other for short term political gain. I have a track record of working across geographical boundaries and partisan divides to zero in on effective solutions to the problems we face as a region.

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.

I have helped lead the process that will build over 30 miles of light rail, expanded bus service and new commuter rail that is critical to keeping our regional economy – and the people who live here – moving forward. I also voted for billions in needed road and freeway investments and will continue to support smart investments in our transportation infrastructure as King County Executive.

In the legislature and on the council I have authored important performance measures legislation that has made county government more efficient and transparent. The month I arrived at the council, *Governing* magazine gave King County a grade of “C” in “managing for results”. I found that unacceptable. So I authored legislation requiring every government agency to clearly state its mission and goals, and then establish strong performance measures to manage for results. I used the same problem-solving approach during my years in Olympia, working with Senator Brown to create the Gates Commission to fix our state’s broken tax system— including business and job creation, promotion of home ownership, establishment of a constitutional Rainy Day Fund, tax reduction for working families, and other reforms.

I have led the ongoing fight to stop an international mining company from converting publicly-owned critical shoreline habitat within the Maury Island Aquatic Reserve to industrial uses. After being appointed as a King County Councilmember, I led an effort to assemble public money to purchase the mine property and have continued to monitor the progress of the mine proposal throughout the county permit process. I have also continue to question a county decision to allow a massive contaminated tailings landfill on the property, and blasted the folly of spending millions of dollars to clean up Puget Sound while green lighting further degradation by such projects. I will continue to lead the fight against this project and others like it that threaten the health and well-being of our region.

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.

Raised in West Seattle, I spent childhood summers at my grandparents’ home on Snohomish County’s Port Susan Bay. When the threat of the construction of a major oil port facility on the bay galvanized the community to successful action, I was introduced to the power of grassroots politics and the law – lessons that would guide his future work.

Since then I went on to graduate from West Seattle High School and the University of Washington where I remain an active volunteer committed to ensuring that today’s youth have the same opportunity for an exceptional public education that I had.

An attorney for 19 years, I practiced law and worked on a number of community projects in the early 1990s including helping activist Charlie Chong with efforts to preserve open space.

In the legislature, on the county council, and in my personal volunteering I have continued to commit myself to the issues that are a priority for me to improve the quality of life for all of King County’s residents.

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

King County is the 14th largest county in the United States, with a diverse population of nearly 2 million residents spread across urban, suburban and rural areas. Because of the size and importance of the jurisdiction, the King County Executive is widely considered to be the second most powerful elected official in the state (after the governor), overseeing a government that covers nearly a third of the total population of Washington State.

Specifically, the Executive heads a \$5 billion regional government whose more than 13,000 employees provide crucial services for the County's residents: everything from courts and jails, to protecting public health and making sure our food and water are safe and clean, to sewage treatment and flood control, land use permitting, protecting and managing open space and parks, and running Metro Transit, one of the largest public transit agencies in the country.

And while King County remains a great place to live and raise a family, the challenges we face today are very serious: Our economy is in trouble, and our people are hurting. Yet at a time when people need a helping hand the most, King County government is faced with steeply declining revenues, unmet human service needs, spiraling criminal justice costs, rapidly expanding transit demand with diminishing resources, and a critical need to protect the farms, forests, and clean air, water and food we rely on to support our quality of life.

To meet these challenges, King County must make the difficult decisions necessary to solve the vexing budget problems that have simmered for years. That will require strong, new leadership, a true regional focus, and an emphasis on lasting solutions—not on gimmicks and quick fixes that saddle taxpayers and future generations with even greater problems.

When elected King County Executive I will work to address four critical challenges facing our county:

I will make the county a partner in economic development— putting the focus on strengthening our neighborhoods and suburban communities and on assisting small business.

I will continue to deliver on difficult environmental issues, including protecting sensitive shoreline habitat from destruction, fixing land use regulations to protect people, wildlife and natural systems, and expanding the public investment in forests, farmlands and open space.

I will ensure that King County makes the investments in transportation necessary to keeping our regional economy—and the people who live here—moving forward, just as I have as a Sound Transit Board Member and Transportation Committee Chair.

I will push for the reform our government requires to make its operations efficient and sustainable, to protect workers' security, and to ensure that those who need a helping hand are able to get it.