

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
Rick		Forschler

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

SeaTac City Council Position 2

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

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

Thirty-five years in the community (before SeaTac was incorporated)

5. How long have you resided in King County?

Fifty-five years

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: **Campaign to Elect Rick Forschler**

Address: **13529 Military Road South**

City/State/Zip: **SeaTac WA 98168**

Campaign Phone: **206-419-5170**

Campaign Fax: **206-246-2676**

Campaign E-mail: **ccp2seatac@forschler.org**

Campaign Website: **http://www.forschler.org/campaign/**

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)
Member, SeaTac Planning Commission	Appointed	May 07 - present	Committee Chair (6 months)
Member, SeaTac Human Services Committee	Appointed	Jan 05 - present	Committee Chair (3 years)
Commissioner, Valley View Sewer District, Position 3	Elected	Jan 04 - present	Board Chair (5 years)

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

Office Title	Year of Run
(none)	

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.)

Over the past few years, since becoming involved with SeaTac, I observed the public has not always been adequately informed of proposed changes, nor given sufficient opportunities to express their opinions and give feedback to the City prior to decisions being made. I am running to improve information given to the public and to provide better methods for gathering their feedback. Also, I plan to make sure an Ombudsman position is established in the City to ensure fair outcomes of those cases where disagreements exist.

I strongly support RCW 42.30.010, which emphasizes the people need to be informed, so they can retain control over their government.

"The legislature finds and declares that all public commissions, boards, councils, committees, subcommittees, departments, divisions, offices, and all other public agencies of this state and subdivisions thereof exist to aid in the conduct of the people's business. It is the intent of this chapter that their actions be taken openly and that their deliberations be conducted openly.

The people of this state do not yield their sovereignty to the agencies which serve them. The people, in delegating authority, do not give their public servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know. The people insist on remaining informed so that they may retain control over the instruments they have created."

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

I have been involved in the community for more than 20 years and I continue to be very involved today. (See section 4 below.) Serving in these positions has prepared me with the type of knowledge necessary for a position on the City Council. Topics such as land use planning, zoning, human services, and management of critical infrastructure apply directly to these same topics addressed by the City Council. Additionally, many years of Information Technology at Boeing applies to all disciplines, since the ability to understand data and structured processes is vital toward meeting challenging issues.

I am detail oriented and I usually dig deeply into issues to find the root causes of problems. This means that I often do not trust everything I hear, but I want substantiating evidence. I liken this to my experience as a computer programmer, finding bugs in code. Often, the most obvious symptoms are not the best ones to diagnose a problem. I like to thoroughly study an issue, understand the requirements and goals, analyze all the symptoms, and then consider the best alternative for addressing the issue.

Six years ago I successfully conducted a campaign for Commissioner of the Valley View Sewer District. (Named Val Vue at that time.) It was a contested election, which required me to candidly address issues with many members of the community as I went door to door. After one year in office the other two commissioners elected me the Board Chair. People who know me evidently see leadership ability, because every committee or board on which I have served has elected me to serve as the chair. I believe this fact speaks more about my character than anything else I could put in writing. They trust me as a person who gives my opinion, while respecting everyone's right to do likewise, but also as someone who can get things done.

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.

Before I was elected as Commissioner of the Sewer District (I was chair of their Citizen's advisory Committee at the time) I proposed a system for helping low-income residents within the Sewer District to pay their bills. It is funded entirely by voluntary donations, so it does not place a burden on the other rate-payers. This program has now been successfully helping pay sewer bills for about seven years, avoiding late penalties and costly legal procedures when people can not pay their bills.

Also before I was elected as a Commissioner I discovered both the Sewer District and Water District were planning to build new buildings, so I suggested they could build a common shared-use building instead. This became a campaign issue in 2003 and after I was elected we continued to work toward a common building. We are now in a shared use building and we saved approximately \$1,000,000 for the rate-payers of both districts.

While serving on the SeaTac Planning Commission we were asked to give our opinion on Tree Retention. The Planning Commission listened to citizens and developers and we realized the existing policies of the City were achieving the opposite of what was intended—literally causing people to remove their trees, rather than retain them. Our recommendation was to eliminate these negative portions of the existing code. The City staff and some members of the City Council opposed us, because this was in opposition to the staff recommendation. I personally spend hundreds of hours interviewing the public and researching for the best solution, all the while being opposed by people who didn't want to hear they were wrong. Ultimately, the citizens prevailed, but it was a lengthy and difficult task. (This was the issue that convinced me to run for City Council.)

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 more than 20 years of various community service and leadership experience. My current positions include:

Chair, SeaTac Planning Commission—I've been on the SeaTac Planning Commission for about two and one-half years and I've been the Chair about six months. The Commission deals primarily with land issues, comprehensive planning, and zoning. These skills will translate directly to the City Council position.

Chair, SeaTac Human Services Committee—I've been on this committee for five years and I was elected Chair about three years ago. The committee prioritizes and recommends support for Human Service agencies operating within SeaTac. Familiarity with this topic will also translate directly to City Council activities.

Chair, Valley View Sewer District—I was elected as a commissioner in 2003 and I've been the Board Chair for five years of the six year term of office. I became a Certified Commissioner two years ago through WASWD training. This position has given me a good understanding of water and sewer infrastructure as well as the Critical Areas Ordinance and the Growth Management Act.

Chair, WASWD Technology Committee—I've been the Chair of the Technology Committee for the Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts (WASWD) for about five years. Through this committee I'm currently leading a state-level project to enable wireless communication and shared IT services for critical infrastructure to survive disasters.

Co-Chair, Highway 99 Action Committee—I've been the Co-Chair of this committee for about three years. It is a non-profit organization of residents and businesses dedicated to improving the safety, appearance, and quality of life on the Tukwila International Boulevard portion of Highway 99. (The name of this committee was recently changed to Tukwila International Boulevard Action Committee.)

Internet Programmer, Boeing Company—After 30 years at Boeing, I'm retiring in June to work full time on Community Service. My time at Boeing was largely spent on Information Technology. The most recent large project was the web site and database used by Boeing customers (airlines) to file Warranty Claims.

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

Members of the City Council are responsible to the citizens who elect them for protection of their rights and to ensure the law is followed. Protection of individual rights is defined by the Washington State Constitution as the reason governments are formed, and it the most important duty of all public servants. All other purposes of government are derived from that single duty. The challenge is balancing what at times appear to be conflicting expectations of equal parties, all of whom have rights that need to be protected. The City Council needs to create ordinances to meet the needs of all these members of the public, not just special interests, who may be the most vocal or the best funded. This requires good two-way communication with members of the public. The ordinances of the City need to be reasonable, in order to be respected and to be appropriately enforced.