

## 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
<b>Brad</b>		<b>Larssen</b>

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

**Kirkland City Council, Position 3**

3. Are you the incumbent?       Yes       No

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

**30 years**

5. How long have you resided in King County?

**31 years**

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

#### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Friends of Brad Larssen

Address: P.O. Box 335

City/State/Zip: Kirkland, WA 98083

Campaign Phone: 206-963-2815

Campaign Fax: tbd

Campaign E-mail: Bradlarssen@verizon.net

Campaign Website: www.bradlarssen.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)

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

Office Title	Year of Run
<b>King County Councilmember, District 6</b>	<b>2007</b>

## 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.)

My reason for seeking this position is a deeply held commitment to government that serves the whole community. Because of my decades of experience in grass roots politics and many years of service as a community, labor, and political organizer, many citizens and civic and community leaders have encouraged me to seek this office. Many are disturbed about large amounts of outside developer and special interest groups money spent in area local elections, including Kirkland, in recent years. I share these concerns.

I believe in open transparent government and believe that citizen input should be sought, encouraged, listened to, and carefully considered in making decisions that affect their lives and community. I have a long record of standing up for open meetings, due process, adequate public and membership input, and reasonable notice of important meetings, hearings, and agendas. I have no vested interests and no ties to developers. I am and will remain in a position to evaluate all public input fairly and impartially.

I have a long record of advocating for working families and ordinary taxpayers throughout this area. I have made dozens of trips to Olympia in the past decade supporting bills that help ordinary citizens, and opposing bills that favor special interests at the expense of ordinary citizens and working families. I have a lot of credibility and contacts throughout the region through work on a number of different issues. This experience and these contacts will be helpful in working out solutions to regional problems that affect Kirkland and neighboring communities.

I will work hard to protect Kirkland's unique quality of life and to support widely held community values, including our concern for the environment and for our distinctive neighborhoods. I do not want to see narrowly focused interests get the upper hand in Kirkland. There is a legitimate need for responsible development consistent with community codes, standards, and character. The public interest is always priority number one.

I have considerable experience serving on executive boards, councils, numerous committees, and coalitions. I have served on these boards and committees with a wide variety of people with varying backgrounds and interests. I have many years experience representing people, as an officer, trustee, organizer, and delegate. I have been elected dozens of times to offices and positions of trust in non-profit labor and political organizations. This depth of experience will allow me to be effective from the very start.

I have a deep understanding of budgets, timelines, and accountability. As a trustee, I reviewed budgets monthly and annually. As a delegate, I reviewed budgets exceeding \$20 million annually. I believe that at his time of fiscal hardship for local governments it will be a valuable asset for a new Council member to have budget experience as well as community, political and committee experience.

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

I was raised with a strong sense of Integrity, Honesty, Dependability, and Hard Work. Staying true to these values learned at an early age has proved invaluable in earning the credibility and trust necessary to lead effectively, build coalitions, represent fairly, and mobilize volunteers. Mobilizing unpaid volunteers to take any action for public or community benefit is one of the hardest jobs on earth. It can only be sustained when you have a reputation for telling people the truth, doing the right thing, and leading by example.

I have stood up for and fought for working families, community standards, and ordinary citizens again and again for many years. This involvement led to increased political participation and involvement in coalitions with numerous community, labor, progressive, and grass roots organizations. This has led to personal and professional relationships and contacts with involved and active citizens and many public officials throughout Kirkland and neighboring communities. This lengthy experience and these broad relationships with community leaders and public officials will be a valuable asset in being an effective City Councilmember. This will also help in working together with neighboring communities to solve regional problems.

It all started and all goes back to staying true to basic core values and principles, one issue at a time.

These core traits and values will be of great value as a City Councilmember. My effectiveness and my support in positions past and present has been grounded on earned trust and credibility, combined with fairness and objectivity. My broad experience on executive boards, committees, and coalitions has given me the ability to work with people of various backgrounds and interests.

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.

In 2003 several bills were rushed through the state legislature under enormous pressure and the threat that certain new airplane assembly would be moved out of state unless all these bills were immediately passed. This was all done in a Special Session of the Legislature, in which normal rules of public hearings with adequate advance notice and lengthy deliberation were suspended. All of these bills were rushed through in a period of very few days. One of these bills made severe cuts to unemployment insurance benefits for many thousands of families. Many affected families stood to lose up to half of their weekly income. We needed large public protests at the State Capitol every day for a week. It looked impossible. A very few of us got hundreds of people to Olympia literally overnight, and sustained this level of support day

after day, with no time to arrange transportation. We got frequent daily press and media coverage. Generating large daily rallies overnight created such widespread press coverage and public exposure of this issue that we were able get a bill passed within two years returning the unemployment insurance benefits to roughly the same levels as before. This shows that in a crisis I can respond to an emergency with quick decisive action, mobilize support and volunteers, and work hard to make a difference in public policy decisions.

1999, as a Delegate in the Regional Council of Carpenters, I took on an issue that was a problem affecting our retirees. Our retirees were allowed to work only 39 hours a month in the industry. To exceed this limit meant severe permanent cuts to their monthly benefits. I found that a few other retirement plans allowed their retirees to work up to an annual limit of 480 hours. This allowed them to actually get a job and keep it for long enough to generate a little income. I could not get action or interest in such a proposal from people in high position. So I informed and generated support among rank and file Delegates, the majority of whom were working carpenters, not paid staff. I brought the motion to the floor of the Regional Council Delegate meeting, explained the situation, and had supporters to speak in favor of this motion. Certain people opposed it. Several attempts were made to rule it out of order. But we stood firm and the motion passed. The plan was soon changed, to benefit our retirees. In addition, a retiree could now work long enough to qualify for paid medical benefits for several months. This shows that I can see a need for action that many others had not seen; that I have a concern for public welfare and am willing to work hard for those citizens who are not in a position to effectively lobby for themselves; and that I am persistent in getting good things done without being sidetracked.

In 1999 I took a position as a full-time organizer. I discovered quickly that it would be a great benefit to learn Spanish, so that I could communicate with that large portion of the workforce that does not speak English, or speak it well. I took two quarters of Spanish at my own expense in evening classes after work. I gained the ability to communicate directly with a large part of the workforce that most others could not communicate with. This shows a willingness to go above and beyond the routine job description, and to put in the extra effort to do a job well.

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 attended Democratic precinct caucuses in my neighborhood since 1988, and have been elected Delegate many times to District caucuses and State conventions. I have chaired precinct caucuses and area caucuses in 2004 and 2008. I have been the elected Democratic Precinct Committee Officer (PCO) in my neighborhood for several years, was appointed twice before that, and once appointed acting PCO in the neighboring precinct. I have long been active in the 45<sup>th</sup> District Democrats and am serving in my 5<sup>th</sup> term as a Vice-Chair (1999-2004, 2006-present). This District roughly includes all of Kirkland north of Downtown. My political involvement and activities have given me the opportunity to work with City Councilmembers and legislators from here and throughout King County and Western Washington. I have been active in Legislative Action Committees, Endorsement Committees, and executive boards (1999-2004, 2006-present). I have made dozens of trips to Olympia in the past decade advocating for working families and ordinary citizens.

I served several years on the executive board of Carpenters Union Local 1797 (1998-2007), as officer and as trustee. I served four terms as Delegate to the Regional Council. (1997-2004). I served on many committees: political, volunteer organizing, and by-laws. I chaired the political committee (2002-2006). Regional Council By-Laws Committee (1999-2004). Delegate to the Seattle and Vicinity Building Trades (2002-2005). Full-time Organizer for the Regional Council (1999-2005). I worked with a broad range of labor and community and grass-roots organizations and coalitions, advocating for working families, funding for schools and transportation, apprenticeship vocational training and other issues.

I have experience serving on executive boards, committees, and councils; experience chairing committees; and experience working with local, regional, and state public officials. I understand budgets, timelines, and accountability.

I have been a homeowner and resident of the Juanita neighborhood for 30 years.

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

The City Council has the responsibility, as the elected representatives of the people, to make public policy on all policy issues regarding the operation of the city, including all city departments and all public services, including public safety.

The Council has the responsibility to set policies regarding the budget.

The Council has the responsibility to listen to the citizens, and neighborhood and community groups, and to provide adequate opportunities for public input on all matters affecting public policy.

The Council has the responsibility to conduct the public business in an open and transparent manner.

The Council has the responsibility to represent Kirkland on regional committees.

The Council has the responsibility to monitor Comprehensive Plan compliance.

The Council has the responsibility to provide leadership, both long term and short term, on public policy and goals.

The Council has the responsibility to participate in community planning, working with boards and commissions and input from neighborhood groups and citizens.

These responsibilities are all important. Of key importance is to always remember that as elected representatives, the Council is responsible to the people, the citizens of Kirkland.