

2010 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Diana		Toledo

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

King County Council, District 8

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes No

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

9 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

38 years

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Friends of Diana Toledo

Address: 4701 SW Admiral Way, #39

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98116

Campaign Phone: 206-333-8118

Campaign Fax: _____

Campaign E-mail: Info@VoteToledo.com

Campaign Website: WWW.VoteToledo.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

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

Although, I have not held a public office or been appointed to a board, I have ample experience working in the King County political arena for nearly 15 years, while overseeing and developing various County regulatory programs. I have served on boards and other various advisory groups that study issues that are used to help develop legislation and public policy (examples below).

Public Office/Boards	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Wheelchair Accessible Taxicab Advisory Group	Staff	2005 - 2009	Staff for King County/Subject matter expert
City of Seattle Taxicab Advisory Group	Staff	1999 - 2009	King County Representative
Taxicab Regional Work Group (Port of Seattle, City of Seattle, King County)	Staff	2002 - 2004	Staff for King County

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

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?

-
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.)

As a dedicated, hard working King County public servant, I have spent the last 15 years of my life serving the people of King County. Overseeing various regulatory licensing functions and animal control programs, I have earned a reputation in the community as being responsive to customer needs, understanding complex legal issues and bringing people together to find solutions to difficult problems. I am running for King County Council because I believe with my inside experience, knowledge and determination I can bring real reform.

I have worked tirelessly from the inside trying to enact real change; as a whistleblower I spoke out against gross waste of our tax dollars and mismanagement in local government. I believe the community is tired of wasteful spending, growing taxes and abuse in our local government. I have spoken to hundreds of people in our district who have told me that they have given up on politics, because they don't feel their vote counts. Tragically, they don't believe they can make a difference. I want to prove to them that one person **can** make a difference. There are nine non-partisan council member positions in King County government and one new political "outsider" with inside experience and the courage to speak the truth can and **will** make a difference.

Local Government in our region is in a perpetual crisis mode, because they refuse to be proactive in dealing with problems. Lawsuits that have cost the taxpayers millions of dollars to defend could have been avoided if they would have just listened to its citizens and knowledgeable front-line staff. Instead we see how our local government seems to avoid the problems until a crisis occurs and then reacts. This constant state of being reactive vs. proactive is irresponsible and unsustainable. We need to hold the individuals accountable for failed management; instead they are offered promotions and moved around the County to other jobs where they are not qualified. Now is the time to enact real reform and real change and bring accountability to a failing system.

I was born and raised in Seattle, although I have enjoyed traveling throughout the world, as an exchange student in Japan, backpacking around the U.S. and Europe, and visiting my father's hometown in the Philippines; I know there is no greater place on earth than the Pacific Northwest. My husband and I chose to raise our family in West Seattle and bought our first home nine years ago in a safe West Seattle neighborhood. Even in our "safe" neighborhood, we have been victimized by graffiti and racial discrimination. I would fight to ensure that public safety continues to be a priority and that we keep our Sheriff's Office Deputies working to protect our streets. I would also continue to

support and promote at-risk youth outreach programs and education as a deterrent to crime, and will build and support these programs in a financially responsible way through innovative public-private partnerships.

I am running for the vacant county council seat because after 15 years of implementing and interpreting laws in various King County programs, I believe I have the necessary skills and proven ability to analyze complex issues, recognize various stakeholder needs and bring parties together to find common sense solutions. I believe that my opponents are career politicians that are simply looking to climb the rung on their political ladder. They seem out of touch with the diverse communities represented in our district. I believe wealthy, career politicians backed by big money and influence care more about their political careers and preserving the status quo than listening to the outcries of our communities devastated by the recession and a local government that too often seems to ignore their needs. I have extensive experience researching and understanding complex regulatory issues, listening and understanding people of diverse backgrounds, and a track record of proven performance (see resume).

I believe as a County Councilmember I would speak out for those whose voices are not being heard; I would listen to our community, and I would propose sound public policy that isn't influenced by special interests or political favors. I would fight against the "status-quo" which has taken us to where we are today and I would demand real reform. I believe every voice should count and be heard and I am living proof that one person **CAN** and **WILL** make a difference. That is why I am running; for the people of my community, the customers of King County government (including the animals), frustrated county employees and the taxpaying citizens who demand and deserve real reform now.

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

I was encouraged to run for this position by those who have worked closely with me because of my recognized leadership traits and track record of performance over 15 years working for King County managing various licensing programs and implementing and interpreting County laws and regulations. Those who I have worked with or represented have described my integrity, experience and leadership abilities as a perfect fit for bringing positive change to the County Council.

Through the years I have been encouraged by others to run for King County Council as someone who is not afraid to speak out against injustices and works hard to find solutions to serious problems that others seem to avoid. I truly enjoy working with people, listening to their problems, taking the time necessary to research and understand the issues and then working hard to find responsible solutions.

I have a track record to support the characteristics and qualities that are important for an effective leadership position in our local government, including Courage, Compassion, Dedication, Drive, Integrity and Experience.

- Demonstrated COURAGE to “blow the whistle” and speak out against mismanagement and wrong doing in local government, even when it was against my own personal best interest.**
- Demonstrated COMPASSION in making fair and often times difficult licensing decisions that impacted public safety, jobs and economic situations; often making sacrifices from my personal life to help frustrated customers lost in the beaurocracy of county government.**
- DRIVEN to keep asking the important questions regarding the integrity of our programs, constantly striving to improve customer service, create better efficiency, and make positive changes in each and every county service I was entrusted with; and DEDICATION to stay focused and do the job right regardless of the circumstances or resources available.**
- Demonstrated high level of INTEGRITY while serving the public at King County Animal Care and Control and in managing licensing programs, recognized by public officials, directors, co-workers, and public and private animal welfare organizations and members as a public servant with remarkable integrity.**
- I have 15 years EXPERIENCE in King County working my way up from the bottom, working hard to learn and understand the broad County system in order to better serve you. I have received recognition and awards for implementing, developing and managing various programs; building them from the ground up. I have worked collaboratively with all three branches of government to achieve these goals and have assisted council members and executive staff to enact responsible new legislation and have the experience and ability that is needed.**

I believe I possess the characteristics and traits that make me the right fit for the Council position because I bring both hands-on real life experience in the day to day functions of King County operations, programs, and budgets; as well as proven leadership ability, communication skills, commitment, and personal integrity. I have been active in the community, always stood up for the rights of others and am a hard working, dedicated leader who loves to serve people.

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 am proud to be the first member of my family to have the opportunity to go to college. My father was born in the Philippines and joined the US Navy to earn his citizenship. I was raised in a blue collar family that faced serious financial struggles at times, but always extended our home and what we had to others in need. I began volunteering at food banks from an early age carrying bags of food in assisted-living facilities. While at the University of Washington earning my business degree with a pre-law curriculum. I worked a summer job selling King County pet licenses door to door and educating the public on animal related issues. This is where I first developed my passion for public service and for advocating for responsible pet ownership. I ran door to door, engaging every customer I met with a friendly attitude and a true desire to serve and was consistently recognized as the top sales producer. Recognizing my pay check came from tax payers I worked hard to hold myself accountable and provide excellent customer service.

Since that time over 15 years ago, I have managed various regulatory programs with that same zeal for public service; recognizing tax payers fund our programs and not forgetting who I worked for. As my division merged with King County Elections and later un-merged, and management turnover continued, the front line staff and I were left with little support and sustained difficult cuts over the last decade. We were faced with serious customer service problems. Although frustrated at times by the lack of support I refused to leave King County employment even when other opportunities arose. Instead working tirelessly, I continued to develop a reputation of integrity, dedication, and excellence in customer service by working hard to create solutions and respond to customer needs; tackling problems others seem to avoid to improve accountability, customer service, efficiency and greater effectiveness.

Accomplishment #2

In late 2006, in response to Council action and complaints from animal welfare groups, I was asked to oversee King County Animal Control's animal cruelty investigations. I was told by the interim manager that there were no real problems with the investigations; it was the council overreacting to animal welfare advocates exaggerated concerns. However, this was far from the truth as I eventually found that most of the officers were not trained or equipped to conduct actual investigations. The shelter was facing gross mismanagement and the leadership continued to cover up the mistakes instead of fixing them. Struggling to work with failed leadership and no additional resources, through hard work and perseverance, I was able to align strategic partnerships to accomplish unprecedented results. Through hands on management and direct investigations I reformed the animal cruelty program as I took virtually no cases of animal cruelty being prosecuted to over a dozen cases the first year. At one point there were over 50 open cases of potential animal cruelty in an environment where management was reporting that there was not an animal cruelty problem in King County. While I worked long hours and weekends, I am most proud of the strained relationships I repaired during this time period amongst the various departments and agencies and positive relationships I created working with the Sheriff's Office, Prosecuting Attorney's office, Animal Control agencies and Animal Welfare Organizations. By 2009 when I left for maternity leave, I had been directly responsible for the first case in Washington State history to result in the perpetrator receiving a year of prison time for atrocious crimes involving horse cruelty and death. My work in bringing accountability in this area continues to be one of my proudest accomplishments.

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 come from a very large and diverse family that has helped shaped who I am today. We are a “tight-knit” family, evidenced by the fact that five of our families have moved to our West Seattle neighborhood so we can raise our children together. Family and friends are very important to me. I have been exposed to many different opinions and view points as members of my family come from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

We get together regularly and have 80-90 people come through our home as we celebrate our children’s birthdays with an “open-house” style backyard BBQ. Everyone knows, the “more the merrier” philosophy and RSVP’s are never required. One gentleman who was brought to our party was nearly in tears as he reminisced about his family back home in South Africa and the village get-togethers. Our family members are from diverse ethnic backgrounds such as Filipino, Chinese, African American, Caucasian and others. Like any family, we have family members that have had seen personal crisis and we come together to support each other. Those who know me know that we bring anyone in need into our “family”, helping with childcare in a pinch, giving someone a ride, or just being there for each other.

I believe it’s important to mention my real life experience that has shaped who I am and helped developed skills necessary for this office to understand and listen to real people facing real problems in our diverse community.

**King County public servant, Regulatory Licensing Programs and Animal Control 1994 – 2010
University of Washington – Bachelor’s of Arts, Business Admin. Finance Concentration/ Pre-law curriculum (Political Science) 1990- 1994
Nathan Hale High School Honors Program 1986-1990, Varsity Volley Ball and Softball Captain, President of Exchange Club, President of International Club,
West Seattle Christian – Volunteer, VBS/Greeter/Youth Group 2007-10**

I have volunteered and will continue to participate and volunteer at various community activities such as the West Seattle Art Walk, West Fest, Lafayette Elementary School, Roots of Empathy Program, Pacific Science Center, local hospitals, missions and food banks. Through the years we have donated to and helped support many different local agencies such as the YMCA Partners with Youth program, YWCA, and numerous non-profit organizations and for over a decade have continued to sponsor multiple children in Africa and other poverty stricken countries. Our families make sure we support our local farmers market, Reduce, Re-use and Recycle, attend local community events and activities and are proud to support our local businesses.