



McGinn Transition Questions

Prepared by Great City

Executive Summary of Comments Received
November 23, 2009

QUESTION 1

Team Composition: There was difference in opinion on makeup of the transition team. Many people advised the new administration to maintain the “**spirit of the campaign**”. Another theme was to encourage **diversity** within the Mayor’s office. This was voiced both in terms ensuring ethnic/cultural diversity with groups who have traditionally been underrepresented in the political process as well bringing in people with **different points of view** who can challenge the team’s thinking. There were also comments about changing the culture of the Mayor’s office especially the top-down heavy handed management style that defined it over the past eight years. The issue of leveraging public, private and non-profit partnerships was also important. Finally, several people mentioned the potential in **reinvigorating/reinventing the City’s website**.

Neighborhoods: Great City received lots of comments encouraging increased neighborhood participation with a few cautionary notes that the neighborhood district councils are obsolete and not representative of the city as a whole.

QUESTION 2

Public Trust: There were many comments on the need for **transparency, accountability and accessibility** to the public. This might be achieved by meeting regularly with the public, making the city’s website open and accessible and creative ways to share information that move beyond the neighborhood councils. **Humility** was another popular theme; several comments suggested that the public finds elected officials more trust worthy when they publically discuss mistakes they have made and cautioned against coming off as too ideologically driven. Another popular topic was legibility – Mike and the administration should be **upfront about their goals, objectives and decision-making processes** when working with the public. Finally people suggested that the administration can build public trust by getting projects finished early out of the gate. To do this they should chose “achievable” or manageable projects that can be completed relatively quickly. This is especially true given the administration’s limited experience working within the city bureaucracy and the current constraint on the City’s the budget due to the down economy.

QUESTION 3

There were a lot of different ideas and suggestions brought up. Many echoed themes which dominated the campaign. The most common themes were:

Transportation: The main focus of these comments was the viaduct replacement (with both sides of the issues represented in the answers) and improving transit (including expanding light rail). Transit service—both the new west side light rail, BRT and traditional bus service—was also a popular topic.

Biking and walking were mentioned less than the previous two, but were important to many respondents.

Economy: Unsurprisingly, the economy was a dominant theme in many people's answers. Some voiced support for job programs, especially programs that provide green jobs for disadvantaged communities. Some seemed concerned that the economy's impact on the City's budget would limit Mike's ability to implement bold, forward-thinking programs while; others suggested the administration take a cautious approach to launching new programs that may seem frivolous in a down economy.

Climate Change: Many people listed climate change as the greatest challenge facing Seattle. These answers tended to suggest bold, policy goals such as pledging to make the city carbon-neutral within 10-20 years. In a similar vein a lot of people called for the administration to pursue an urbanist agenda which is not surprising since this form went out to both Great City's and the People's Waterfront Coalition's networks.

Public Safety: Several people cited public safety as a major issue facing the city. Among the issues that were raised were youth violence, the rise of gangs and the importance in choosing the right police chief for Seattle. A few people were upset over Mike's position on gun control.

Political Culture: Finally, a notable number of the responses spoke to the culture of government: These answers covered topics like mending relationships with regional and state governments; frustration with the Seattle Process; and the pro's and con's of Mike's perceived management style (some encouraging him to stay true to his ideals while others encouraging to give Nickels/Mallahan people and Downtown businesses folks a seat at the table). A few suggested breaking from Nickels' Machiavellian approach and working more collaboratively with City Council. Other responses discussed the challenges of affecting change in a bureaucratic culture.

Other Issues: While the above themes cover a lot of the answers to question three, there were many other issues raised. The below list is not exhaustive, but should give an idea of the diversity of responses Great City received. All of the answers we received are included in the attached spreadsheet.

- Homelessness and lack of affordable housing
- Aging infrastructure
- Schools
- How to overcome the perception that Mike is driven by ideology and doesn't listen to those who disagree with him?
- Braking down "silo" culture of city departments
- *Duwamish tribe issues:* help them get federal status, improve city's effort to protect endangered species, accelerate clean up efforts of Duwamish
- Supporting the Arts in a down economy
- Supporting Kids in the city