

Washington Hospitality Questions Answers from Breean Beggs

1. I have been a strong backer of the Sportsplex and pushed against the rest of Council in order to put the Downtown Stadium on the ballot. I also led the effort to bring the Lime scooters to Spokane. The next big idea I am supporting is creation of the River District, which will activate tourist and resident engagement from the Sandifur Bridge east past Avista Headquarters at Mission. Less creative but at least as important is to continue my leadership in repairing downtown streets and sidewalks.
2. My immediate goal is to bring more public safety to Downtown Spokane. I would work to bring a police precinct back to the Downtown Core and deploy significantly more police officers Downtown, including on bike and foot patrols. Long term, I would end the homeless problems downtown by building more low income housing and providing 24/7 shelter and services that would treat people's mental illness and substance abuse.
3. I would continue to strive to make regulations easy to find, easy to understand and easy to document compliance. The market is often the best regulator, but I believe regulations are sometimes necessary to create a level playing field for businesses that seek inappropriate shortcuts at the expense of community oriented businesses.
4. Downtown Spokane needs a more visible police presence, including more of the new teams that combine social workers with patrol officers. The entire criminal justice system needs to adopt a Smart Justice approach. This focuses on evidence based interventions that hold each offender accountable with swift and certain consequences combined with customized rehabilitation services. We need to completely revamp how we use the jail so that we can stop the revolving door approach.
5. I would prioritize quality over speed; and incentivize developers who propose development that aligns with multiple goals in the Comprehensive Plan. For example, I have supported expanding the multifamily tax exemption, exemptions for rehabilitating historical commercial structures, and discounts on utility hookup costs for reactivation of buildings in blighted areas. I support a continued customer friendly approach in Building Services so that we empower developers and entrepreneurs instead of obstructing them. I have been a strong supporter of targeted investment areas, including the development of family wage jobs in our three public development authorities.
6. The City doesn't govern labor costs, but it can support the development of new or rehabilitated commercial space in areas desirable to business owners. Increasing this supply, lowers the cost. The City can also improve the transportation network to bring customers to areas where commercial space is less expensive. I support the City's current efforts in this regard which has led to record construction investment and

transportation spending in my three years on the Council. I would also like to consider a program to assist legacy businesses purchasing the buildings where they operate.

7. I am the only downtown business owner on the Council and I would continue to meet with business people from all sectors and hear their concerns and ideas. My advice is to anyone who wants to bridge current gaps is to spend time in respectful conversations rather than dismissing groups with generalizations. By definition, people will have differences, but if we emphasize what specific goals we have in common I believe we can achieve great progress. Most importantly, we need to use data and proven best practices to guide our investments.
8. The most direct solution to homeless is to create more housing. Every level of the current housing market is experiencing scarcity and rapidly rising prices. We have to bring new supply at all price levels to address our growing population. We need to get smarter on creating more workforce and low income housing- which will require better zoning laws and public-private partnerships. Some people assume that the people who have untreated mental illness and/or addictions are committing crime downtown are also homeless. But the vast majority of crime in Spokane is committed by the housed. Nor do the majority of the homeless commit crimes. That said, the solution to those people who commit crimes downtown is to swiftly hold them accountable and also provide evidence based services that will support them in stabilizing their lives. Towards that end, the most important intervention is proven to be stable shelter on a 24/7 basis without preconditions. We have some of that shelter in Spokane, but currently not enough to keep our Downtown feeling safe enough for many people, including those who are unhoused.
9. What the City is doing best is coordinating existing services and maintaining a housing database that keeps track of all people receiving services (the vast majority of whom are from greater Spokane) and potential service providers. We are also innovating on how to better provide services that actually lead to permanent housing rather than just sheltering the same people indefinitely. What we haven't done well but are starting to do is persuade the County and Spokane Valley to join our network with coordination and funding. We also only have about half of the 24/7 shelter beds that we need, though we are just about to purchase a new building in East Spokane for an additional shelter.