

# 2023 City of Spokane Candidate Questionnaire

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**Candidate for:** Spokane City Council District 3

**Name:** Kitty Klitzke

**Professional licenses or other relevant professional experience.**

I have worked for nearly twenty years on environmental, land use and transportation policy in Spokane and served on various related boards and committees.

**Find more information about the campaign:**

[www.voteforkitty.com](http://www.voteforkitty.com)

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## Tell us about your plan for downtown's recovery...

**How will you boost commercial activity downtown?**

I agree and I think we need an interdisciplinary strategy to help the recovery. We need more housing downtown to attract people looking for a work/live/play lifestyle. A good portion of this needs to be affordable to young professionals in entry level positions who contribute to a lively night scene. We need take our parking strategy up a notch and replace surface lots with parking structures, ideally with retail or commercial on the ground floor. And we need to make driving downtown less confusing by reducing the number of one-way streets.

**How will you ensure a vibrant downtown experience for people that live, work and visit?**

I agree. We need to ensure that there are appropriate upstream and treatment options for people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity so that we neither have people unhoused downtown, nor push them into our neighborhoods. We need more resources to respond to medical and mental health issue downtown instead of putting that burden on our police officers. I believe this requires also requires a interdisciplinary approach that is lead by experts, not politicians.

We also need to update the image of downtown ambassadors so they we don't feel like we are in a war zone when we see them downtown. Ballistic jackets send the wrong message to our guests downtown.

We need to ensure that there are affordable and wholesome things for teens to do throughout our city to deter them from behaviors that I hear about throughout the city, not just downtown.

**How will you support new housing development downtown, especially for "missing middle"?**

We need to do everything we can to limit barriers to residential and mixed use development downtown, including removing development regulations that have unintended consequences, planning for improved infrastructure and fixing our tax system so that it does not incentivize vacant lots and buildings but incentivizes development.

**How will you address public safety in downtown Spokane?**

This is a big one and quite complex and will also require an interdisciplinary response. In addition to regional resources that will address the disabilities, mental health and substance use issues that cause and prolong homelessness. We need to do more to address these problems upstream before people lose housing. Which will require regional resources to help people experiencing housing insecurity and more resources to keep teens out of the kind of trouble that can lead to graffiti, vandalism, and eventually becoming unhoused.

The other public safety issue downtown is the behavior of people who are over served at certain bars downtown. We have to improve the culture inside the bars and on the streets through enforcement of our liquor laws and social nudging campaigns.

**What do you believe should be the City's role in addressing homelessness, mental illness and substance use on the streets of downtown Spokane?**

As I mentioned above I think a regional, expert led approach is probably the best approach. I think that it is important that this is justly governed and balanced with the right stakeholders. Some large and small business entities, some government and agency representation, but equal service provider and lived experience representation.

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**Investing in a clean and safe downtown is essential to attracting new businesses as well as workers, visitors, and residents. Given the fragile state of downtown's revitalization, how should the City of Spokane prioritize funding downtown recovery in its budget?**

I think everything discussed in the previous questions is a high priority for the whole city. But we need to balance them with infrastructure and essential public services for the entire city. We need to do the best we can planning solutions so we can attract more state and federal dollars to help address all of these issues and ensure that our enterprise programs are operating at full capacity to generate revenue for our city. We are going to have to make some hard decisions about revenue for essential public services like public safety first responders too and I would like to see us address this in a comprehensive way with accurate and thorough capital facilities planning.

**Is there any additional information you would like to share about your candidacy that you were unable to provide in the above responses?**

I have been very focused on campaigning in my district lately but having been a longtime downtowner there is so much overlap between what people in my district want and what is needed for downtown. I am a lifelong Spokane resident. I still remember the first downtown revitalization effort and the results were nearly miraculous. I am passionate about overcoming the recent years of finger pointing by bringing back our can-do attitude. I don't think it is going to be easy, but Spokane still has a huge volunteer and philanthropic drive. We just need to roll up our sleeves and face our challenges. If we are willing to work hard and have long and difficult discussions across differences in our community, we can recover.

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