**Rob Saka’s responses to the questions from the King County Council – Committee of the Whole**

**1) What are your views on the powers of the branches of King County government as set forth in the charter? Would you make adjustments or suggest changes and if so, what changes do you believe may be warranted?**

I believe the powers of the branches of King County government as set forth in the Charter are generally fine as is. The existing Charter seems to provide an effective framework for distributed powers among the branches of government, including separate but coequal legislative and executive branches. Moreover, the Charter appears to contain appropriate checks and balances that are well established – all of which are consistent with the laws of the State of Washington as I understand it. As a result, I do not anticipate that changes to the powers of the branches of government in the Charter would be warranted.

However, if granted the chance to serve on the Charter Review Commission (“CRC”), I would first seek input from a diverse group of stakeholders such as members of the public in King County and other community members. In seeking this input, I would try to understand if they believe any changes to the powers of the branches are needed, and if so, why and to what extent. Similarly, I would try to understand the arguments for and against any proposed change, along with any potential consequences of such change. I would carefully listen to the concerns of all King County citizens. Through it all, I would work with my fellow members of the CRC to seek guidance from the County Council and County Executive as needed. I would also strive to ensure that the Charter review process is highly collaborative and transparent in a manner that is consistent with the purpose, goals and mission of the CRC. If changes to the powers of the branches of government are actually warranted, I would work with my fellow members of the CRC to make appropriate recommendations to the Council at the end of the review period, thereby enabling the decision-makers to act.

**2) Considering our region’s population growth and the regional response that will increasingly be necessary to respond to associated challenges, what changes, including additional powers or changes in state law (if necessary), would you suggest to help the county address what it will likely face in the next 25-50 years?**

I am reluctant at this time to offer any specific suggestions to help the County address the challenges it will likely face in the next 25-50 years without first listening to the concerns of the community as described in #1 above. I believe the concerns of the community, together with their perception of the severity of the problem, will necessarily inform the scope of any proposed remediation.

Broadly, however, there is clearly work to be done to ensure that the County adequately addresses the challenges facing the region. For instance, my experience as a technology lawyer in the region has helped highlight the need to ensure that all individuals in the County have equitable access to STEM education and careers. I have worked tirelessly in the community over the last few years to address the disparities in tech, serving on nonprofit boards like the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle and the Loren Miller Bar Association (a civil rights advocacy group). However, ensuring equitable access to opportunities in tech fields in the region is not the only issue that needs to be addressed. Other challenges that should be fully analyzed include complex issues like affordable housing, homelessness, education, transportation, and infrastructure, along with examining how to achieve broader economic prosperity in King County that truly benefits all its residents.

If granted the opportunity to serve on the Commission, I would leverage these prior experiences – along with my experience as a former Intelligence Officer in the U.S. Air Force Reserves – to help identify the best possible solutions after listening to the community. As a member of the CRC, I would work hard to help address these challenges while also making sure our most vulnerable and/or underserved populations are protected (e.g., elderly, veterans, communities of color, LGBTQ community, homeless individuals, immigrants and refugees, etc.).

**3) Please list any actual or perceived potential conflicts of interest you may have associated with this appointment or its underlying duties. How do you intend to address these conflicts?**

To my knowledge, I have no actual or perceived conflicts of interest associated with this appointment or its underlying duties. If an actual or potential conflict of interest arises in the course of my duties, I would recuse myself from consideration of the relevant issue and state the grounds for such recusal. I would also follow applicable law and guidance on the matter.