

# Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) 2008 City Council Candidates Forum

## Questionnaire Responses – Place 3

Question	Kris Bailey	Max Nofziger	Randi Shade	Kathie Tovo
What neighborhood do you live in?	Scenic Brook in Oak Hill	Travis Heights	Clarksville. I've owned my home since 2001 and was a renter in the neighborhood for 8 years before buying my current home. I have lived in this neighborhood for more than 15 years.	Heritage
Do you belong to your neighborhood or homeowner's association?	No	No	Yes, CCDC and OWANA.	Yes
Have you participated in neighborhood planning? If so, how?	No	Yes...as an activist and a city council member	Not so much with OWANA and planning, but I've been very active with parks projects, fundraising, tree planting, and home repair for Clarksville CDC.	I joined the Bouldin Creek N.A. after the planning process had been completed – in fact, I joined because I was concerned about a proposed zoning change in the neighborhood plan. I subsequently became a member and officer in the BCNA, including serving as its president, and I joined the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Planning Team. I have also served as Vice President of ANC.
<b>I. Planning and Growth Management</b>				
1. The assumptions in Austin's comprehensive planning effort, Imagine Austin, predict that the city's population will double by 2050. Do you believe that forecast is inevitable? What problems does that forecast present?	I believe that as long as the Austin City Council continues to incentivize and subsidize growth that this is true. That presents a LOT of problems that the Council is not currently addressing. The current infrastructure in Austin is being neglected in favor of building for the future. This will create large problems down the line. The Council should be focused on upgrading the existing infrastructure now, and building for growth as it happens. A good example is spending massive amounts of money on a new water treatment plant (WPT4) instead of repairing the leaking water mains around the town now (a real problem TODAY).	The current planning effort should be called "Imagine Dallas". No, that number is not inevitable. The major problem is that it is enormously expensive for current residents.	I hesitate to say that that the growth curve forecast is inevitable, but given that Austin's population has roughly doubled every twenty years since the founding of the City and given the fact that virtually every region in the southwest part of our country is expected to continue to experience population growth for the foreseeable future, I am motivated to plan for growth as carefully as possible.	The population figure represents a 30-year middle case projection by the City of Austin demographer. But while trends have been toward steady growth, no one can completely predict the future – so I don't believe that forecast is inevitable. But I do think that the population will likely increase and that there are legitimate concerns about how much and in what way population growth can be accommodated. Austin needs to manage its growth to minimize impacts on its current residents, sustain our natural resources, and plan for future infrastructure needs.

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<p>2. Do you believe that the preferred growth scenario as proposed by city staff provides sufficient data to verify whether growth will pay for the infrastructure it requires? What will you do to ensure that growth pays for itself?</p>	<p>Raising impact fees (the cost that a new development weighs on a community for the additional services it will require) will go a long way towards slowing growth and allowing the city to grow in a more sustainable manner.</p>	<p>No...it is an urban myth that growth pays for itself, promoted by the hyper-growth industry</p>	<p>I don't think any amount of data will give us that level of guarantee. The best we can do is to make predictions based on the data that we have. We have had an unprecedented amount of both community and professional input in crafting Imagine Austin thus far. It's time to move forward, armed with the data we have, but willing to be flexible as the principles of the plan become the plan itself. My record will continue to reflect support for growth strategies that maximize the tax base and minimize low density sprawl where roads and utilities must be stretched over long distances to serve fewer people. By in large, the current preferred scenario reflects that intent. Certainly, there will be many adjustments as the plan is fleshed out and eventually implemented.</p>	<p>The Preferred Growth Scenario is a work in progress and was not created with data in all areas, including whether future growth would cover infrastructure costs. The Planning Commission proposed that the working group process include some case area studies to better future infrastructure need issues. Because of these outstanding concerns, as a member of the Planning Commission I voted to forward the preferred growth scenario to the working groups without endorsement. I supported that motion and spoke in favor of the position at the Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan subcommittee meeting.</p>
<p>3. Do you believe that adopted neighborhood plans should be incorporated verbatim into the new comprehensive plan, giving equal weight to the text and the future land use map (FLUM) of the neighborhood plan? In cases where the new comprehensive plan conflicts with existing neighborhood plans, would you require that changes be subject to the neighborhood plan amendment process?</p>	<p>I believe that more weight should be given to a neighborhood who has agreed how they want their area to be. I do not believe that the Austin City Council should be able to build the city as they please without regard to what the residence of the affected areas want.</p>	<p>Yes, and yes</p>	<p>No, I do not think the Comprehensive Planning Process was ever intended to drill down to the level of detail we see in a Future Land Use Map. The Council may consider the Comprehensive Plan as it weighs deliberations on a zoning change or a FLUM change, but it is my expectation that the FLUM and a neighborhood plan in its entirety will remain relevant and that neighborhood plan amendments will be processed as they are now.</p>	<p>I respect the work that has gone into producing neighborhood plans, and I support a neighborhood's right to create a vision of the community in which they want to live. Neighborhood Plans should definitely be incorporated into the new Comprehensive Plan with weight given to the FLUM and the text. The Neighborhood Plan amendment process should address conflicts that arise between the plans.</p>
<p>4. How would you ensure that the Imagine Austin plan is implemented?</p>	<p>I believe that the Imagine Austin plan is ineffective and am not trying to implement it. Things such as the East Riverside Corridor plan are very aggressive and expensive. In a recession, big expensive planning is not always the best idea. Sometimes slowing growth is better.</p>	<p>I'm not sure that I would try to implement it..there are parts of it that are absurd.</p>	<p>The first step of course, will to see that that a plan is drafted and eventually adopted. At that point, I would expect that the Comprehensive Plan would become a guiding document informing land use and transportation decisions as they come before Council. My sense is that there is a fairly high level of frustration among many of the citizens</p>	<p>Implementation of the Plan is ultimately up to the community, the Council, and the City staff. One major difference with Imagine Austin is that far-seeing community members added a City Charter amendment in 1985 that requires that the Plan be followed. Ensuring that annual reviews occur and that the five-year major reviews are</p>

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			<p>who serve on the citizen’s task force regardless of age, ethnicity, or gender. Members do not always feel heard. I am not on the Council’s Transportation and Comprehensive Planning Subcommittee, but I am following the process and approved the task force membership, as well as the process and framework thus far. Visioning activities are very difficult, and can be far too amorphous for most people to get their arms around. While the first phases of the process have been important, it is the development of the actual plan that gives us the best opportunity to ensure that not only is there broad community representation on each of the working group teams charged with writing the various sections of the comprehensive plan. It will also be important to incorporate recommendations from the work of so many other recent task forces and community groups into the relevant sections of the comprehensive plan (ie., Hispanic Quality of Life, African American Quality of Life, Children and Families, Affordable Housing, Public Safety, Water Front, Live Music, Strategic Mobility, Envision Central Texas, Open Space, Animal Welfare, Central Health, Arts, etc.). Once the plan is developed it will also be important to evaluate the plan’s effectiveness and make adjustments as needed. Evaluating the plan on an ongoing basis will ensure that City staff implements the plan as intended and will also enable the Council to continue to work with stakeholders to ensure the plan is revised and/or modified as needed, so that the plan meets the community’s needs over the long term.</p>	<p>funded and staffed will help ensure that the Comprehensive Plan will mature with the community. An implementation process will be developed as part of the Plan document and is the first opportunity to ensure community participation during periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan.</p>

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<p>1. As the city faces reduced revenues and increased budget demands, what measures can the city take to maintain the quality of services and our community values? What would you cut and what would you refuse to cut? If staff reductions are required, how would you determine which employees, departments, or executives are affected?</p>	<p>I have been very vocal about how much money the City is spending on police services that accomplish nothing and do not make our community safer. While we are solving 5-10% of our burglaries, we arrested 3219 for marijuana possession. This costs millions of dollars each year. The City should move towards a policy of “lowest priority of enforcement” for victimless crimes and we should re-allocate that money towards necessary services being neglected (additional firefighters, traffic congestion, lowering taxes).</p>	<p>a) Reduce spending now...spending is out of control  b) Cut consultants, save parks, libraries, environmental programs  c) Conduct a department-by-department reviews, as we did when we needed to cut the budget in 1987-1989</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>II. Budget</b></p> <p>I have always felt the City’s highest spending priorities should be achieving and maintaining clean, safe neighborhoods citywide, and providing reliable, affordable utilities to all citizens. If the City can get those things right, the other challenges we face as a community are much easier to meet. We have many wonderful City programs and services that our community depends upon, and I have supported increasing outreach efforts to bring community voices into the budget process to help us better navigate some of the incredibly difficult decisions we’ve had to make. While we can never hear from everyone in the community, it has been extremely helpful to hear from thousands of citizens who have participated in these efforts through Budget Town Hall Meetings, electronic surveys, customer satisfaction surveys, employee surveys, and other input opportunities especially those that engage people who do not typically participate at City Hall. It is impossible to answer which employees I would be willing to lay off without knowing the circumstances in a particular budget year, but I have and will continue to take into account our City Manager’s recommendations and community input in approaching all decisions. In addition, I have and will continue to explore every possible option for public-private partnerships that enable the tax dollar to go further. Examples I’ve been directly involved with launching during my first term include: the Waller Creek Conservancy, Future Forest Fund, Youth Sports, Flipped On Christmas, and the</p>	<p>I consider the city budget the principal policy document of the Council. Rather than identify specific cuts at this time, my approach will be to create and maintain a high quality of life for all of Austin’s citizens—especially those who have been left out from the benefits of the city in years past. Any staff reductions must be examined for fiscal impact, service delivery, community preference, and the impact to the employees themselves.</p>

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			<p>Pecan Street Project. It is also important to look for ways to stretch current budget expenses and look for ways to drive costs down in other areas of the budget. For example, I led an effort to re-bid the City's social services contracts for the first time in more than 15 years to prioritize basic needs and successfully advocated for increased parks maintenance citywide.</p>	
<p>2. What are your criteria to support any proposed electric and water rate increases?</p>	<p>I do not support raising water rates or electric rates. I do not think the city should use the power companies as a form of taxation.</p>	<p>Don't spend money on large unnecessary projects like light rail, WTPIV, and the biomass plant ( chip burner )</p>	<p>As we work to encourage water and energy conservation, we face the same challenges as all utilities operating with a business model based on consumption rather than conservation. The challenges associated with migrating to a new business model are different for the water utility which faces incredibly high infrastructure costs versus the electric utility for which energy costs are the primary driver. For both of our utilities there is a high level of regulation, citizen debate, cost of service studies to keep in mind, but the most important considerations are planning ahead for reasonable, gradual rate increases that maintain the system's financial stability and necessary asset upkeep while delivering reliable and high quality drinking water and energy.</p>	<p>They must be absolutely necessary to protect the long-term viability of the utility system, the rates must be spread equitably with as little impact to ratepayers as possible, and they must be done in through an open public process.</p>
<p>3. Do the city's public safety contracts put an undue burden on the city budget? What do you think are the most important factors in the upcoming police "Meet and Confer" process?</p>	<p>End wasting police time on victimless crimes.</p>	<p>yes b) available funds, recent pay raise history</p>	<p>Public safety is critical to our community's health and well being. It ranks at the top of the list of most important services in every citizen survey we do. People don't use 911 every day, but on the day they do, the expectation is that it works and works well. Public safety professions are specialized and it is important for the City to hire well, develop talent, support training and equipment needs, and hold those doing the work accountable. I work hard with all three of the public safety</p>	<p>Yes, Austin's public safety budget makes up more than 65 percent of the general fund. The continuing growth of public safety budget is limiting the ability of the city to deliver other services that are important to maintaining a high quality of life. Escalating public safety contracts are financially unsustainable and must be addressed for the long-term health of the city.</p>

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			employee associations and do my best to ensure their needs are met, so that in turn, our community's public safety needs are met. In the next Meet and Confer process it is my hope that there be an increased focus on the promotions process to ensure the best of the best are promoted rather than letting seniority and exam score drive decisions.	
4. Despite the poor economy and the current deficits for federal, state, and local budgets, the city is proceeding with several large capital improvement projects, such as Water Treatment Plant 4, extensive new underground wastewater lines, and Waller Creek Tunnel Project. Do you think the City Council is being fiscally responsible, and what you would do to control the costs of these capital improvement projects?	No, there is no fiscal responsibility. The WPT4 is a disaster of an idea and horribly expensive. Why build new lines while at the same time neglecting the old ones that are falling apart and are still needed? We should be focusing money on maintaining our existing infrastructure. The Waller Creek Project ended up costing 5 times the originally projected amount. This should never have happened.	The City of Austin is utterly irresponsible in its spending, and should shelve all unnecessary projects, including and especially the downtown trolley I have plans for much more affordable, effective alternatives	Yes. I believe each of these projects to be sensible and have weighed-in frequently on ways to better control costs and/or leverage other sources of funding to support progress.	I believe that some members of the City Council have lost track of the needs of average Austinites, and it's time for a new direction at City Hall.
<b>III. Economic Development</b>				
1. Will you vote against subsidies to large employers? Will you require a total cost-benefit analysis before voting on any subsidies or loans to any businesses?	I will not vote for subsidies.	It depends on what they produce b) yes	I look at economic development agreements on a case by case basis and decide on my vote based on the merits of the project. A cost-benefit analysis is required before the Council votes on an agreement. In 2009, I co-sponsored a resolution requiring a stakeholder process for choosing, and then implementing, a new economic development analysis tool that was adopted to ensure the community and the Council had as much information as possible before making these important decisions. This resolution also required more time for backup information to be available to the public and added time for public discussion. I have been and will continue to be a strong advocate for using independent auditors to ensure that job creation,	Consideration of subsidies to private sector businesses requires thorough community benefit analysis. The City should provide subsidies for private business only in rare cases when community benefits substantially outweigh costs—and when the business being subsidized meets city's goals/priorities. Decisions regarding major subsidies for private businesses should also take place with full public discussion and debate.

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			salaries, and/or any other performance requirements are met before any Citygranted economic benefit is awarded.	
2. Should the City of Austin subsidize small businesses, especially those involved in music and entertainment? What forms of support do you think are appropriate for local businesses?	I think we need to leave small businesses alone. I do not think the city should be passing out money to anyone, and at the same time needs to provide a friendly environment for business to thrive in (leave them alone).	Generally, no...music businesses, since they contribute so much to our image and vitality, under some circumstances; retail, as in the Domain and Second St.,. NO!! b) provide basic city services effectively, affordably...reduce city spending to lower fees, taxes	I believe in the work of our Economic Growth and Redevelopment and Small and Minority Business Resources Departments. Small, local businesses make up more than 80% of the employee base in our community, and I have been very active in supporting the success of small businesses in Austin as a former small business owner myself and as a member of the Council's Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprise and Small Business Committee. I have seen first-hand how challenging and rewarding it can be for small local businesses to work in, with and for the City. Music and entertainment make up just part of one industry, but their success is critical to making Austin Austin. I wouldn't discriminate against any business based on its industry. I would look at the cost-benefit analysis discussed in the previous question to determine which businesses the City chooses for economic development agreements.	Support for small businesses can take many forms. I support the City Small and Minority Business Department and its programs. The City Small and Minority Business Department already provides numerous benefits, which some might regard as subsidies. Other incentives are delivered with transportation improvements or other infrastructure changes. The City should hold periodic public discussions to discuss whether programs and services meet the community priorities and goals.
3. Should the City of Austin be financially involved in developing an 800+ room hotel to promote the convention business?	No.	NO!!!	I support the concept of another Austin Convention Hotel, but without knowing the particulars of a proposal, I can't speak to the City's financial involvement.	Any City involvement in a convention hotel should require a thorough community benefit analysis. See question III.1.
<b>IV. Transportation</b>				
1. Do you support improved bus service, better bike lanes, more sidewalks, and other pedestrian improvements? Please comment on the policies or projects that you think would best address Austin's transportation needs.	I believe that traffic should be the priority.	a) yes b) make Austin the Electric Vehicle Capital of the World	Yes I do and my record demonstrates that support. I want to explore ways the City could do more to help Cap Metro in its mission for better bus service. I have frequently voted for better sidewalks, supported the City's Master Bicycle Plan, supported the expansions of the Lady Bird Lake trail and negotiated for the very highest level of pass through, and	Austin desperately needs more sidewalks and safe routes to schools—and groups like Sustainable Neighborhoods have documented compelling evidence about the need. Along with more sidewalks, we need enhanced and improved bus service and bike lanes, including protected ones; more traffic calming and family-friendly enhancements; and additional education

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			<p>interconnectivity on projects in front of the City Council during my tenure as a Council Member.</p> <p>I have deep concerns about how we are going to move an increasing population in and out of downtown, as well as how we can better address the traffic challenges on our major roads and highways. Improving connectivity and increasing our transportation system's capacity will support economic development and reinvestment while also supporting our community's goals for the environment and public health and safety. There is no one silver bullet, however, and the City is one player among many in this region. We need a mixture of transportation modalities. I supported the recent transportation bond proposal for that reason, but also to ensure we had projects in the pipeline until a more comprehensive approach could be offered. I have been pleased to see the creation of a Transportation Department during my tenure on the Council and support the Strategic Mobility Planning effort currently underway. It is my hope that this effort be better coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan going forward.</p>	<p>programs aimed at creating a more walkable community. The Families and Children Task Force report, which I helped draft, provides a useful blueprint for changes in this area.</p>
<p>2. Do you support the urban rail system proposed by Mayor Leffingwell?</p>	<p>No, it is costly and not being utilized. We should be improving roads and adding lanes to the roads now to handle a higher amount of traffic. This is not the right time for urban rail.</p>	<p>NO! It is a huge waste of money</p>	<p>While I can foresee a time when an urban rail system could make sense for our region, I have not yet seen a detailed route proposal or a business and operations plan ready for a ballot. I have been concerned that ridership on the Red Line has been below estimates and that Cap Metro has been subsidizing that line by cutting other services. If there isn't a plan to demonstrate that rail can pay for itself and that people will ride it, I won't be in a position to support the proposal.</p>	<p>I believe an effective public transportation system that could include urban rail will become a necessity as our community grows. I also think that a public transportation system is a major factor in helping people live more affordably in cities. It is difficult to comment of the Mayor Legffingwell's early rail proposal until more details concerning route, funding sources, and managing entity become available.</p>

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			The short answer: I support developing a clear business plan for rail and then letting voters decide.	
3. The city presently requires developers to provide a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) only for very large projects (more than 2000 car trips per day). TIAs have no expiration date, and the analysis does not include adjacent neighborhoods. What would you do to ensure that the City Council and land use commissions receive traffic analyses that accurately reflect the impact of a proposed project?	This is not a question that can be easily answered. We should not provide an environment where we encourage growth as we do now. This will make growth more easily manageable.	lead an effort to lower the threshold to 200 vehicle trips/day, and include adjacent neighborhoods	I am open to exploring ways to better address the concerns above, but would not support placing TIA burdens on small projects that are owned by, or that house small businesses.	The current TIA requirement is not sufficient. As our city becomes more dense, we do need more accurate TIAs and not just for very large projects, but also for medium-sized ones as well. It is also time for a re-evaluation and revision of the requirements and procedures related to TIAs so that they more accurately reflect actual traffic conditions.
<b>V. Zoning</b>				
1. Describe a contested land use case or other neighborhood issue where you supported the neighborhood position at a City Council meeting or other hearing.	I have never represented a contested case at a City Council hearing. I have debated in the State House race on how I believe that HOA's should have the final say in zoning for the areas they control.	I was on the dias, leading the opposition to Jim Bob Moffet's PUD in the all-night council meeting in June, 1990	I have supported neighborhood positions on numerous zoning cases and cosponsored an ordinance giving neighborhood planning teams standing in the appeals process. I recently voted to support a neighborhood appeal of an NCCD case on Ave. B in Hyde Park, and have frequently supported neighbors in opposition to CS-1 zoning in their neighborhoods. I have a strong record for supporting valid petitions, including on West Avenue during my very first months on the Council. I voted against a highly contentious up-zoning case near Casis elementary school during the West Austin Neighborhood planning process and supported the neighborhood's desires for the shopping center nearby, too. And, my office was active in ensuring that a recently proposed development on Davis Street come into compliance with current regulations.	I have had extensive experience as a citizen volunteer representing neighborhood positions at City Council and other hearings, and I often voted in support of neighborhood positions as a Planning Commissioner. To name just a few: I voted against the staff recommendation and in support of the Hyde Park Neighborhood Association's position to rezone the Bradford-Nohra House as historic; I also supported the West Austin Neighborhood Group at the subcommittee and Commission levels in their efforts to include language about the Brackenridge Tract in the Neighborhood Plan.

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<p>2. In cases where a neighborhood opposes up-zoning to convert residential use to a commercial use, and where adequate commercially zoned property is already available, will you commit to vote against such up-zoning?</p>	<p>I believe the people in the area should decide how their areas should look. As a council member I will support an environment friendly to allowing business to succeed. Depending on the situation I might not be able to agree to this. For somebody opening a coffee shop on the outskirts of a neighborhood I may not be willing to shut down the coffee shop.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>I will not pre-commit to voting for or against a zoning case. The situation described in this question, however, would have to come with compelling, clear, and broad community benefits for me to support an up-zoning, and neighborhood support or opposition would weigh heavily in my deliberation.</p>	<p>In most cases, I would support the neighborhood position, but I would need to carefully evaluate the proposal.</p>
<p>3. Do you agree with the recent City Council vote to approve a Planned Unit Development (PUD) at 801 Barton Springs Road, within the Waterfront Overlay, despite the staff and Planning Commission recommendations against the PUD? Will you support the reinstatement of a clear method for increasing development entitlements commensurate with community benefits, as outlined in the 1986 city code?</p>	<p>Yes, I would have allowed the building to be built. At the same time, I feel the developer owes compensation to any homeowner whose view may have been blocked as a result of the new building with the amount being decided in some type of private arbitration/mediation.</p>	<p>No b) yes</p>	<p>I stand by my support of the PUD in question, and do not support returning to the land use code of 1986. I would rather support moving forward with a vision for the lake area that can be embraced by all of Austin, and I am eager to receive and review the recommendations of the Water Front Overlay Advisory Board.</p>	<p>I do not agree with the Council's decision, and I was part of the unanimous decision at PC to support the staff recommendation that the PUD zoning be denied. As a BCNA officer, I represented the association in opposing an earlier iteration of this project. I support the Waterfront Overlay and the community values it embodies. And yes, I do support reinstatement of method for increasing entitlements, etc.</p>
<p>4. Do you support the existing compatibility standards that provide buffers between commercial and residential properties? Under what circumstances, if any, do you think compatibility standards should be waived? How could compatibility be improved?</p>	<p>I firmly believe in property rights. I support businesses right to build on their property, but respect the fact that it could damage the value of a home next to it. I believe that this is something that should be referred to mediation between the business owner and the homeowner.</p>	<p>yes b) none c) require better fences, landscaping...use common sense</p>	<p>I support zoning that protects home owners from being encroached upon by commercial uses. When applicants come before the Council with a zoning case – even a PUD – that seeks a waiver to an existing compatibility boundary, I consider the burden of proof to be high and to be on the applicant requesting the change. Each case is unique, and each case often pits competing community values against each other. When making decisions I consider the impact of proximity to residential property, and I also consider the use in question as it relates to other values at play such as neighborhood integrity and vitality, job creation, tax base, and affordability. I also think about the overall reasonableness of</p>	<p>Yes, I support compatibility standards. However, I might support a waiver in some cases if the community benefits are clear and if the neighborhood might support the waiver. One avenue to explore with regard to changing compatibility are neighborhood-side design standards for commercial projects that abut single-family residences.</p>

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			the proposed use of the site in question. Compatibility matters. It does not dominate my every land use decision, although it is very much on my mind as I weigh each case.	
<b>VI. Community Values</b>				
1. Do you believe that affordable housing should be distributed throughout the city? What steps would you take to assure the best return on investment for the limited public funds available for affordable housing while also accomplishing the priority of fair and equitable geographic distribution?	I will not be voting to expand affordable housing programs.	yes b) use common sense and fairness	I support the City's affordable housing initiatives and, like the ANC, I am a proponent for geographically diverse affordable housing options especially those suited for families with children. I have co-sponsored Council Resolutions to prioritize housing for the lowest income citizens in our community (those who make below 30% of the Median Family Income); to endorse the Permanent Supportive Housing strategy; and to move forward with creating a Leadership Council with members outside of city government to examine and recommend financing strategies for achieving our goal of creating 350 permanent supportive housing units throughout our community. Aside from supporting the City's affordable housing efforts, I have helped secure private, state and federal funding to support affordable housing initiatives in many parts of the City, and I was a strong proponent of the City's GoRepair! program and would like to expand it. The GoRepair! program been a fantastic way to extend the reach of the Urban League, American Youthworks, AAIM (now called iACT), Meals on Wheels, and other organizations dedicated to helping people stay in their homes by offering critical upgrades, weatherization, roof repair and maintenance, and other repair work that helps low-income homeowners. These efforts help keep people in their homes while also helping neighborhoods become	Making it possible for more Austinites to have safe and affordable housing will be a key priority for me on Council. Austin has a critical need for affordable housing. According to the City's Comprehensive Market Study, a study completed before the current recession, housing costs have risen by 85 percent in the last 10 years and 39,000 renters cannot afford to pay rent and utilities. I support HousingWorks's goal of providing "all kinds of housing for all kinds of people in all parts of town." Just a few of the many policies that would help include greater use of city land for housing, support for nonprofit housing developers, and improving the development process for affordable projects. I also pledge to support additional money for affordable housing in the proposed 2012 bonds. An important final note: addressing a community-wide problem such as affordable housing requires a community-wide solution involving schools, transportation, jobs, and more. We need a real commitment to the problem, and I intend to do that as a member of the City Council.

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			<p>safer, cleaner and less isolated. There are significant challenges ahead, but at the top of the list is a lack of clarity about which tools are best suited for which types of people the City is hoping to help through its programs. Not all of our community's lowest income residents need on-site support services, but some do. Some people may need on-site support services in conjunction with housing for a short-time, but others may need on-site support services for a life-time. We need to do a better job dividing and conquering. Rather than trying to solve all the housing challenges with a broad, catch-all initiative, I'd prefer we focus our efforts, seeking the necessary resources to support each segment of the population we are trying to serve in the way that makes the most sense for that segment of the population.</p>	
<p>2. Do you support the Citywide Strategic Priority to encourage families with children to live in the urban core? How would you implement it?</p>	<p>No I do not. People should be allowed to live wherever they like.</p>	<p>Yes b) stop wasteful spending to fund worthwhile programs like this</p>	<p>Yes. I live in the Clarksville Neighborhood and appreciate greatly the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of my neighborhood. I appreciate it whether I am attending services at the Sweet Home Baptist Church, attending a meeting at Mathews Elementary School, or just simply enjoying the playground at Mary Baylor Park or a stroll to Nau's Pharmacy for a snack. I would love to see every neighborhood in Austin have such diversity and access to good schools, neighborhood amenities, and the benefits of living close-in, but I also realize that much of the fabric of Clarksville's earlier history was lost when Mopac was extended, wiping out a huge swath of the neighborhood. We all feel a lot of pressure associated with change and gentrification today, but really our City</p>	<p>Absolutely. I have been a consistent advocate for policies and practices to reverse the trend of families moving out of Austin's urban core, and this will be one of my key areas of focus if elected. As a leader on the City's Families and Children Task Force, I helped craft the report's numerous recommendations; I and other advocates have successfully persuaded the Council to move forward on several of these (including adopting the strategic priority noted above). I have continued this work as a Planning Commissioner, working with staff and another citizen volunteer to develop an Educational Impact Statement, and proposing changes to the Imagine Austin Plan Framework to better reflect the city's commitment to planning for families with children. But much work</p>

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			<p>has been transitioning from being a “sleepy college town” to one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country for several decades now. During that time it has been incredibly difficult to balance the benefits of increased property values, economic opportunities and community progress with the challenges of maintaining affordability especially for long-term residents. In order to bring and keep families in the urban core we need to provide the amenities families want such as high quality parks, libraries and a strong public safety system; and we need to do whatever we can to support the school district so families refrain from choosing alternatives to our public schools. We also must be more mindful of how our land use policies impact the variety availability and affordability of family-friendly housing options for renters and homeowners alike.</p>	<p>remains to be done, and the Families and Children Task Force Report will serve as a useful blueprint for the first phase of action.</p>
<p>3. Do you support the equitable distribution of the property tax burden among residential and commercial properties? Will you seek to correct the underassessment of commercial properties by the Travis Central Appraisal District? Will you support a homestead exemption for city taxpayers?</p>	<p>Yes and Yes. I have a problem with homeowners carrying a heavier load of the tax burden proportional to their property values. The taxes should be applied equally.</p>	<p>yes b) yes c) yes</p>	<p>Yes. Yes. I will explore it.</p>	<p>A fair distribution of the property tax burden is essential for maintaining working families in our existing neighborhoods and balancing the tax burden between our residents and businesses. I believe the evidence supports the assertion that commercial properties are undervalued, and I support a review of the TCAD valuations for commercial properties. I also believe a homestead exemption is one of the few tools available to the city to reduce tax impacts, and it should be considered.</p>
<b>VII. Environment</b>				
<p>1. The Master Plan Phase 1 Watershed Report estimates that Austin needs \$800 million in capital funding and an ongoing \$2-5 million</p>	<p>If we stopped putting fluoride in the water supply, that would free up between \$800,000 and \$1 million per year that could be allocated towards</p>	<p>a) stop wasteful spending in order to fund this program, and pass stronger ordinances b) yes</p>	<p>The Master Plan Phase 1 Watershed Report estimates that Austin needs \$800 million in capital funding and an ongoing \$2-5 million per year to address serious</p>	<p>Anyone who has lived in Austin over the years knows that flooding is a major for our area. I believe that water quality and erosion must be addressed all across our</p>

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<p>per year to address serious problems of flooding, erosion, and water quality degradation in 17 watersheds. What would you do to help ensure these waterways are cleaned up, and what changes would you support to limit the degradation of our creeks and lakes? Will you commit to instructing the City Manager to assess the drinking supply watersheds that were deferred to Phase II of the Master Plan?</p>	<p>this.</p>		<p>problems of flooding, erosion, and water quality degradation in 17 watersheds. What would you do to help ensure these waterways are cleaned up, and what changes would you support to limit the degradation of our creeks and lakes? Will you commit to instructing the City Manager to assess the drinking supply watersheds that were deferred to Phase II of the Master Plan?</p> <p>The Master Plan Phase 1 was adopted in the summer of 2001. By the time you add up the current cost of our flood control projects, flood hazard mitigation, stream stabilization, water quality management (devices to treat storm water) and storm drain repair replacement the price is probably closer to a billion dollars. At any given moment, the city's Watershed Protection Program has funding for 4 to 5% of the projects in their pipeline. That's the bad news. The good news is that this City is getting more skilled at asking private development interests to pick-up the tab for some of this water quality work. For example, the South Shore PUD contains detailed notes in the PUD document requiring the restoration and revegetation of a creek bed that is currently little more than a trash funnel into Lady Bird Lake. In addition, this development will be capturing and treating many acres of run-off from the area around it. Is this growth paying for itself? It is certainly paying for that creek repair. The Phase II watersheds have already been reviewed from a water quality protection standpoint. I think the more pressing need is better erosion control, especially as many of these "non-urban" creeks are in our emerging</p>	<p>community, and I pledge to work with community experts and staff to learn the best strategies for restoring and preventing further degradation of our waterways.</p>

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<p>2. Do you think the penalties in the city's tree protection ordinances are sufficient to deter violations and to preserve our urban forest? If not, what measures would you take to help ensure the preservation of mature trees?</p>	<p>None, this is a waste of money and resources. I love trees but feel that this is a property rights issue.</p>	<p>yes, but we need better enforcement</p>	<p>eastern growth areas. I recently voted, along with the rest of Council, on the adoption of a more comprehensive set of ordinances to protect our urban tree canopy. At present, those guidelines have not yet made it through the rules process, and we have not yet seen the impact of them on our current tree preservation efforts. We worked hard on this ordinance along with many stakeholders and I would like to see the results in action before I start a new round of negotiations. Maintaining our urban tree canopy is not just an aesthetic or even emotional issue, it is also a key strategy for achieving improved overall energy efficiency. Besides the ordinance, I have also been working hard during my term to facilitate private donations that enhance the City's ability not only to plant new trees, but also to maintain them over time.</p>	<p>No, current penalties are insufficient to deter violations. On the Planning Commission I supported the adoption of the new Heritage Tree Ordinance. The Planning Commission also recommended further study with stakeholders and initiated an ordinance to put changes in Code about mitigation and enforcement. We need to disincentivize violations to preserve Austin's urban forest.</p>
<p>3. Do you support the energy and water conservation policies of the City of Austin utilities? How would you change them?</p>	<p>I am not able to adequately answer this question.</p>	<p>yes, and I have for 30 years...strengthen them!</p>	<p>I would change them. I have been waiting for some months now to adopt a new set of water conservation goals: the much anticipated 140 GPD Plan. This plan, once adopted should put us on a path to reduce our water use considerably by the year 2020. In addition, I have urged the Austin Water Utility to be more proactive in engaging the private sector in water saving strategies. We have enormous opportunities and challenges ahead of us in energy policy. Since my election to Council, I have been instrumental in the launch of the Pecan Street Project which is now testing new smart grid technology in homes at Mueller, have worked with my peers on residential energy saving ordinances, have been a strong proponent of the home repair programs</p>	<p>I support City energy and water conservation programs that have saved ratepayers and our businesses millions in avoided costs and reduced environmental impacts. Because the City has very good long-term conservation plans, the issue going forward is how to move the plans off the shelves and into implementation. That will be my focus.</p>

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			<p>to help low-income home owners retrofit their homes to reduce water and energy waste (reducing bills while helping our conservation efforts), and have voted in favor of the new Austin Energy Generation Plan: a plan that places Austin in the top five most aggressive plans in North America. I was also able to help balance the concerns of affordability and job creation with the Generation Plan. This is only the beginning of our energy policy discussions. Austin is fortunate to own its own electric and water utilities and the careful stewardship of the finances and conservation policies associated with these operations will be high priority for me in a second term.</p>	
<p>4. The City Council has approved at least \$350 million for construction of Water Treatment Plant 4, yet the engineering and environmental studies have not been completed. How well do you think the city has vetted this project, and what would you do to ensure that this infrastructure investment is not a financial or environmental disaster?</p>	<p>I would like to end construction on it and re-allocate the money towards maintaining the leaking water mains around the city now. This project was a completely unaffordable mistake.</p>	<p>The city has not handled this well...it is a waste of money. I stopped it in 1987-88, and I will stop it again</p>	<p>After many months of discussion and deliberation with engineers, planning staff and infrastructure professionals, as well as interested citizens, this project has been and continues to be vetted pretty thoroughly. I spent much of 2009 seeking input and even called for a Town Hall specifically to focus on this important decision. More than 500 people were in attendance and proponents and opponents were given the opportunity to present their case. Ultimately, I voted with those in favor of construction of the plant and since then I have tried to focus on doing what I can to ensure the project is built on time and on budget, with great attention to environmental and crew safety, as well as minimal inconvenience to neighbors impacted by construction. Early in the process we bid the project in such a way that the cost of delays and/or over runs would be absorbed by the primary engineering firm hired. We then hired an additional engineering firm to</p>	<p>I would not have voted for WTP4, and I believe the City should have better vetted the environmental and financial impacts of the project. As a Council member, it will be my responsibility to ensure that public funds are used appropriately for major projects.</p>

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			<p>oversee quality control. That said, Council oversight must not slip. At the request of neighbors in the Spicewood Springs area, I asked the Austin Water Utility to stop and look at redesign options for one of the shaft sites serving the plant. As a result of that effort, we were able to repurpose the Spicewood shaft and significantly (by 90%) reduce the amount of rubble laden dump trucks crossing through the neighborhood. I have continued working with these neighbors to develop a MOU with the primary engineering firm to address additional concerns, and have been working with the Transportation and Parks Departments to address other issues of importance. This is an example of how important it is to remain engaged throughout the duration of the project. I will continue to bring that level of scrutiny the project, as well.</p>	
<b>VIII. City Government Structure</b>				
<p>1. Do you feel that the current City Council adequately represents the diverse interests of the entire population of 750,000? What changes to the city charter would you support within the next year to change the way we elect the City Council or otherwise restructure city government?</p>	<p>No it does not, I am in favor of single member districts.</p>	<p>NO! I support single member districts. S. Austin has no representation on the city council</p>	<p>The subject of single member districts is very complicated and speaks to the very essence of how citizens of Austin are represented at City Hall. I expect the Mayor to form a charter review committee soon, and it sounds like ChangeAustin.org has already launched a petition drive to promote discussion on its proposal. I am opposed to the bill proposed by Senator Wentworth that would mandate a change in Austin's form of local representation; I feel strongly that such a change should be a vote of Austin citizens and not the State Legislature. I have more questions than answers regarding the proposals currently being circulated, including Mayor Leffingwell's. Minority populations in Austin do not live</p>	<p>I support single-member districts and believe changing our current system of representation will have significant positive effects. In addition to ensuring more geographic representation on City Council, I also believe such a change would produce more economic diversity among candidates; City Council races have become very costly and time-consuming, and those factors discourage many excellent candidates from pursuing public office. I also believe that single-member districts encourage more civic participation – and encouraging people to take more active roles in local government is a goal I have supported and have worked toward for decades. I understand and share the</p>

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			<p>in concentrated areas, something especially true for the African-American community, so it seems nearly impossible to draw districts that would guarantee African-American representation. Furthermore, if the assumption is that African-Americans and Hispanics would fare better in district races than in city-wide races, then I would be concerned about the perception that in a hybrid system, district seats are less powerful than city-wide seats. We would not want to have a situation where Council Members from minority communities are “downgraded to less powerful seats.” According to the criteria set by the Supreme Court, a legal challenge to fair representation must prove: historical under-representation, a compact population, proof that the minority group votes as a block, and proof that minority candidates are being defeated because white voters vote as a block. Any new system for representation would have pass muster at the Department of Justice, and I am not sure any of the proposals I’ve seen circulating right now would. Most of all, I want to better understand what specific problems the community wants to address with respect to our current system. It seems critical to first vet the options for addressing each of those problems individually before coming to the table with a preconceived proposal. For example, most cities see a spike in local elections after a change from one system to another is made, but then return to low turnout levels. Voter turnout in Austin could increase automatically and sustainably just by shifting city elections to November.</p>	<p>concerns I have heard that a system of singlemember districts could dilute African American representation on Council, and I am interested in learning more about how adopting a structure with eight single-member districts might create an African American “opportunity district.” I will caution against moving forward until our community has had a robust public debate and has adopted a plan that ensures African American representation.</p>

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			<p>Likewise, if the problem to be addressed is the financial burden of running a city-wide race, we need to be cognizant of the fact that running in a district with 150,000+ people is still a very expensive undertaking unless you rely on voter turnout remaining at the currently low levels. Similarly, if the problem to be addressed is geographic accountability then the community needs to actively debate the trade-offs of possibly losing guaranteed African American representation and also becoming a city government more focused on district initiatives than those that are city-wide. We need to play out the scenarios of having a city government with the majority of the Council accountable to only 10 – 15% of the population and therefore NOT accountable to the other 85 – 90%. Our current system is far from perfect, but I never take a vote now without thinking about the community as a whole versus thinking about working for one geographic area over another. Again, I look forward to the discussion and hope for active and engaged debate with local citizens driving the results they hope to achieve.</p>	
<p>2. Do you support the creation of a representative citizens' group to recommend a structure and district boundaries for the election of council members from geographic districts? If the City Council proposes a charter amendment for single-member districts, will you sponsor a simultaneous amendment establishing an independent body to oversee periodic redistricting?</p>	<p>I do believe that the residents of Austin should decide how they elect their representatives.</p>	<p>yes b) yes</p>	<p>Yes. Yes.</p>	<p>Yes, an independent body is an excellent idea.</p>

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<p>3. What would you do to help ensure that Council business is conducted in public view and that you have adequate information prior to making decisions? Will you commit to making your own calendar public?</p>	<p>Absolutely, in addition to that I would like to take Walk In appointments for people that just want to stop by and discuss their issue. I don't like the fact that to meet with a council member now it must be scheduled in advance. Council members need to be more accessible.</p>	<p>I will follow the open meetings law b) yes</p>	<p>Yes. I was the first Council Member to post my calendar online, and did so within the first months of being sworn-in.</p>	<p>I believe strongly in the public's right to be informed about and engaged in decisions of its government, and I will work hard to instill public trust in local government through my own actions (including making public my calendar). I have experience in this area. Members of the Planning Commission are very attentive to rules about open meetings/walking quorums as these extend not just to meetings, but also to email and phone communications. Our training even included a discussion about Facebook and avoiding having too many commissioners as friends. As a commissioner, I always sought out as much information as possible about cases coming before us; I also visited sites and met with interested parties whenever possible. I will continue these practices as a City Council Member. I believe Austinites deserve elected leaders who will make informed decisions that take place in an open, public forum and that take into account public input.</p>