

ANC Platform: 2014 Council Elections

1. <u>Promote Affordable Neighborhoods.</u>
a. Support legislation that ends the inequities between residential and commercial & industrial property valuations for property tax purposes, and that authorizes a fixed amount homestead exemption.
b. Increase fairness and transparency in the property tax system by adopting an ordinance requiring disclosure of real estate sales prices.
c. Ensure that all available tools, such as a homestead property tax exemption, are being used to grant tax relief to as many Austinites as possible.
d. Enact policies that eliminate taxpayer subsidies and fee waivers for special event promoters by making for-profit special events bear the full cost of the City resources that they utilize.
e. Strengthen City affordable housing programs in all areas of the City.
f. Increase funding for Travis Central Appraisal District so that it can adequately respond to commercial/industrial property appraisal protests.
2. <u>Preserve Neighborhood Character.</u>
a. In the Land Development Code (LDC) rewrite, preserve compatibility standards, the McMansion Ordinance, setback requirements, and impervious cover limitations.
b. Per page 207 of the Imagine Austin Plan, acknowledge that neighborhood plans were crafted based on the above ordinances and other provisions of the LDC. Ensure that protection of neighborhood character is a top priority of the LDC rewrite by retaining these LDC provisions and the approaches taken in the neighborhood plans.
c. Preserve neighborhood character by ensuring that the neighborhood planning process is neighborhood-driven and not a top-down exercise.
d. Enact policies that limit the location of entertainment districts in or adjacent to residential areas, and reduce the numbers of stealth dorms and commercial short-term rentals, as well as other uses that adversely impact neighborhood character and livability.
e. Adopt city policies and support state legislation that will preserve and adequately fund excellent neighborhood schools.
3. <u>Manage Growth and Invest in Infrastructure and City Services.</u>
a. Maximize use of “impact fees” so growth and developers pay for the new and improved infrastructure that is required for their projects, including transportation infrastructure.
b. Develop thoroughly vetted transportation options that address traffic congestion.
c. Prioritize protection and acquisition of parks, open space, and other “green infrastructure.”
d. Develop and invest in flood- and fire-safety programs and area-specific emergency response plans for areas with known flood and fire risks.
e. Repair City infrastructure.
f. Support nuisance abatement policies to address properties with criminal and code complaints.

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g. Require development to provide for onsite water quality controls and sidewalks by eliminating “fees in lieu.”

4. Prioritize Water Conservation.

a. Prioritize conservation and re-use of water over developing new supplies outside Austin.

b. Require new development to be net-zero for water use.

c. Redesign and diversify Austin Water Utility’s (AWU) business model so it doesn't depend on revenue solely from selling treated water.

d. Require AWU to develop and implement a plan for water-efficient infrastructure citywide.

e. Require decentralization of Austin’s water supply.

5. Protect the Environment.

a. Preserve the SOS Ordinance and support watershed protection, preserve the Heritage Tree Ordinance and support maintenance and renewal of the urban tree canopy, and preserve the Waterfront Overlay, Lake Austin Overlay, and Hill Country Roadway ordinances.

b. Waivers and variances to the SOS, Heritage Tree, Waterfront Overlay, and Lake Austin Overlay, and Hill Country Roadway ordinances should require a super-majority vote of applicable boards, commissions and City Council for approval.

c. Increase Austin Energy’s 2020 goal for renewable energy sources above the present 35%.

6. Change the City’s Focus From Special Interests To Its Citizens.

a. In the LDC rewrite and all City ordinances, protect the rights of property owners, neighborhood associations, and other interested parties to appeal City staff and board decisions on development approvals.

b. Reprioritize the budget to increase funding for parks, libraries, and other underfunded services.

c. Require the Mayor’s “State of the City” address to be held at a city event open to all Austinites.

d. Keep Austin Energy and the Austin Water Utility under the control of the City Council.

e. Moderate city policies that foster runaway growth and focus instead on fostering greater income equity.

f. Focus economic development incentives on Austin-based small and medium sized businesses.

g. Reform City planning and public engagement processes to be citizen-driven and to increase City Council accountability to the public.

h. Strengthen and strictly enforce the lobbyist ordinance.