

Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC) 2009 City Council Candidates Forum

Questionnaire Responses – Place 6

Question	Sheryl Cole	Sam Osemene
What neighborhood do you live in?	Wilshire Woods/Cherrywood	Gracywoods
Do you belong to your neighborhood or homeowner's association?	Yes	I would like to join.
Have you participated in neighborhood planning? If so, how?	I did not participate in my own neighborhood planning, but learned a lot about the process while voting on the Oak Hill neighborhood plan.	I have attended meetings.
Planning		
1. Comprehensive Planning. Have you ever read Austin's existing comprehensive plan? If so, have you ever used it to guide your decision making? The current City Council has directed that a new comprehensive planning process be initiated. Do you support moving forward with that effort? What specific mechanisms would you put into place to ensure that we won't ignore the new plan for 30 years as with the previous plan?	I will admit that I have not read the Austin Tomorrow Plan, but have read excerpts of certain portions. When making decisions, I frequently look at the goals of the Envision Central Teas Plan. I support moving forward with a new Comprehensive Plan and perhaps would ask staff to evaluate if a zoning or land use decision was compatible with the Comprehensive Plan just like we ask if it meets the goals of the neighborhood plans.	I would prefer sticking with the plan that has been adopted . But knowing how the City Council conducts business and the potential of future growth, I support improving the old plan and adding a clause that says the new plan will be in effect for 30 years. I will also add another caveat that says before the new plan is changed , it has to be on the ballot and approved by the people.
2. Growth Management. Over the decades, Austin has used growth models that predicted a doubling of the population every 10 years, every 20 years, in 30 years, and by 2050. Which of these forecasts do you think we should use in the new Comprehensive Plan, or do you have a better way to think about growth? How many people do you think Austin and the current ETJ can sustain? Please give a number. Will you push to include the carrying capacities of our natural resources and a realistic analysis of our infrastructure needs and how we will pay for them in the comprehensive plan?	I have been using the growth model that has Austin doubling in population size every 20 years and believe that after the 2010 census we can evaluate whether this truly captures our growth. Although I would support discussing an urban growth boundary or other mechanisms that might try to limit growth, I recognize that our ETJ will continue to grow east and that we need to look at how we can extend service and support a growing population. However, I believe it is my responsibility as an elected official to plan for the growth scenario and not be actively trying to prohibit or limit future population density.	I think the best plan is to use the 10 year plan because it will give us the opportunity to adjust and manage growth. We need to factor in the carrying capacities of our resources in order to sustain growth. We cannot depend on the same resources to sustain population increase. A 10 year plan will help us adjust and make good use of our limited resources.
3. Citizen Participation. Do you believe a City Council appointed citizens' task force or advisory committee would be beneficial in comprehensive planning? If so, would you involve a task force during the development stage to work with the consultant, at the implementation stage, or both? If not, what steps would you take to ensure community participation?	I am open to the idea of a citizens' advisory community as long as it was truly representative of the diversity of Austin. I could see this task force as part of the development stage and at the implementation stage, but I would ask both our Neighborhood Planning staff and out consultant to make recommendations to ensure community participation before committing to the task force.	I strongly believe in public participation in public policy decisions. I will support a citizen's task force in helping us develop a comprehensive plan for the future. The task force must be involved in every stage of the comprehensive planning.

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<p>4. Neighborhood Plans. Have you ever read a neighborhood plan? Will you commit to respect neighborhood plans and vote against zoning changes that are opposed by neighborhood plan contact teams and that conflict with the goals of adopted neighborhood plans?</p>	<p>I spent a lot of time on the Oak Hill Neighborhood Plan and understand the goals and vision that a large part of this area agreed to in their neighborhood plan. I have tried to make thoughtful and balanced land use decisions and I believe that my votes on the Oak Hill Future Land Use Map demonstrates this. I will continue to support the goals of the neighborhood plan and balance them with the private property rights granted to citizens.</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>5. Plan Integration. Do you believe that neighborhood plans lay a foundation for the comprehensive plan or will the comprehensive plan lead to modifications/adjustments to existing neighborhood plans?</p>	<p>I believe that both things may need to happen, but I want to make sure that we do not start the Comprehensive Planning with preconceptions of how the plan will turn out and instead allow our consultant team to reach out to the broadest swath of our community. We need to start from our Interim Update and take the planning in a direction that includes areas of the city that may not have been addressed in the Austin Tomorrow Plan.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Plans must lay a foundation for comprehensive plan. I think one of the reasons we have conflicts in the city is because City Council does not listen to the wishes of neighborhood associations. I will work and partner with neighborhood associations in developing a master plan for the city. I will bring the common sense approach of Laura Morrison, the energy of Randi Shade, the humility of Mike Martinez and the maturity and steadiness of Lee Leffingwell to the City Hall.</p>
<p>Zoning/Development Issues Planning</p>		
<p>6. Neighborhood Support. If you have served on the City Council or the Planning Commission please identify a few cases where you understood neighborhood versus development concerns and supported the neighborhood position. If not, please provide examples of any neighborhood issues you have supported at City Council or Planning Commission.</p>	<p>I have made countless decisions to support the neighborhood in zoning decisions in my first term including supporting the VMU application in the UNO/Judges Hill Neighborhood, the SRO housing proposed for Manor Road, the and the residents of Beckett Estates in Oak Hill to name a few cases.</p>	<p>I supported the Allendale Neighborhood Association when the City Council sold their interests to Wal-Mart. Council Members made decisions behind closed doors with their lobbyists at the expense of the neighborhood association. My opponent in this election, Council Member Cole sided with Wal-Mart against the interest of the people.</p>
<p>7. Waterfront Overlay Protection. Do you agree with the Waterfront Overlay Task Force (WOTF) findings that it is important to reestablish the waterfront overlay protections from the 1986 code that were removed in the 1999 plain English rewrite? Will you push to codify and vote to reinstate the maximum height limits from the 1986 code such that they supersede any other provisions of the Land Development Code (including Planned Unit Development (PUD) Districts, Planned Development Area (PDA) Combining Districts and Commercial Design Standards)? Will you oppose current rezoning requests if they violate the intent of the 1986 ordinance?</p>	<p>I am one of the sponsors of the Waterfront Overlay Task Force and appreciate the work they have done. As an active issue that will come before me this year, I am still formulating my position and want to hear the recommendations of the Planning Commission. I do support the goals that are stated in the current task force report and hope to find a solution that allows some remedy to Council for additional height.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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<p>8. Valid Petitions. If you have served on the City Council or Planning Commission, please give examples of when you voted against a valid petition of the community and your rationale for doing so. Please describe any other circumstances where you would not support a valid petition. If you have not served on City Council or Planning Commission please describe under what circumstances you would not support a valid petition of the community and give a specific example.</p>	<p>I had to vote against a valid petition on a zoning case on Exposition Boulevard as I felt that it was in the best interest of the City to zone for higher density single family at this location. My goal is to ask each part of the city to take some part of the density so we can meet the demand for central city housing.</p>	<p>I will always support a valid petition of the community. Leadership entails listening to the wishes of the people. It will be irresponsible to ignore and vote against a legitimate petition of the community</p>
<p>9. Compatibility Standards. The following questions have to do with compatibility standards that address preserving/protecting the integrity, character and residential fabric of existing established neighborhoods.</p>		
<p>a. Will you commit to support the existing zoning compatibility standards that provide buffers between commercial and residential properties? Under what circumstances, if any, do you think compatibility standards should be waived?</p>	<p>I commit to support existing compatibility standards and was responsible for reinstating them in our TOD areas so we could work on achieving more affordable housing. I believe they should be waived in cases like the TOD areas where we will receive community benefit for the increased height.</p>	<p>I will always support the compatibility standard that protects our neighborhoods. I will go future to propose a homestead exemption for our historic neighborhoods. We are seeing the consequences of gentrification thanks to Council Member Cole and lobbyist. We are becoming refugees in our own city. It is unfortunate that these lobbyists are the ones writing our city codes and environmental laws. Our elected officials have betrayed us and sold us out to the highest bidders. How much can we tolerate before we say, enough is enough.</p>
<p>b. Will you commit to maintain existing regulations established by the Residential Design and Compatibility Standards and vote against any effort to weaken or reduce their effectiveness?</p>	<p>I understand the importance of design standards and commit to maintaining their effectiveness.</p>	<p>Absolutely.</p>
<p>c. Will you vote against an up-zoning from residential to commercial when a neighborhood opposes the up-zoning or there is a Restrictive Covenant that would be violated by the up-zoning? Describe any circumstances under which you believe such up-zonings are appropriate. What if the residential property is adjacent to a shallow commercial lot on a Core Transit Corridor?</p>	<p>Working on the Brentwood and Allendale VMU cases showed where this might be a problem and I believe that I supported the neighborhood on most of the shallow lot locations. However, I do believe that along our Core Transit Corridors we need to do our best to promote density and work towards creating more pedestrian oriented development. These cases are very challenging, but I believe that the market will help dictate the most desirable locations for commercial zoning.</p>	<p>Absolutely. I will always listen to neighborhood associations on zoning issues.</p>

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<p>d. Will you uphold all the current compromise restrictions and standards set forth in the Vertical Mixed Use (VMU) ordinance? These include no increased height over base zoning, compliance with compatibility standards, affordability as set forth by neighborhood associations' recommendations, and availability of expedited residential permit parking? If not, please explain. Do you believe that these standards should apply to properties opted-in after the initial VMU process? Would you ever support using Central Urban Redevelopment (CURE) for VMU projects to allow excess height over limits in the base district and, if so, under what circumstances?</p>	<p>I hope to continue to uphold the current standards and restrictions set forth in the VMU ordinance and I believe that these standards should apply to projects opted-in after the initial VMU process. I rarely support the use of CURE outside the Downtown area, but know that there are certain locations including West Campus and East on MLK that the CURE has been requested. I would consider adding CURE if I felt that it might benefit the city in terms of urban renewal or affordable housing.</p>	<p>I will always uphold compromise restrictions and standards set forth in the Vertical Mixed Used Ordinance. I will not support using the CURE for VMU projects to allow excess height over limits in the base districts.</p>
<p>e. Will you commit to help develop and adopt Neighborhood-Side Design Standards to ensure compatibility between residential neighborhoods and adjacent Core Transit Corridors?</p>	<p>This issue has come up in the Heritage Neighborhood and when there is a consensus by stakeholders, I would agree to adopt them.</p>	<p>Absolutely.</p>
<p>f. City Council has recently amended the noise ordinance to provide a permitting process that allows for public input and potential restrictions on venues to ensure compatibility with nearby residences. Included with these revisions is a one year review to determine if the new process is effective. If it proves not to be effective are you willing to support structured restrictions on decibel levels and hours for live music venues within 600' of residences? Will you commit to keeping any newly designated entertainment districts away from established residential neighborhoods?</p>	<p>I support the neighborhood's desire to keep new entertainment areas from established residential areas and will look at solutions to balance the neighborhood's goals of quality of life with the noise ordinance if it proves that the current revisions are not effective.</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>10. Code Compliance. Will you commit to vote against rezoning to bring code violations into compliance if the rezoning is opposed by the neighborhood and nearby neighbors?</p>	<p>In most cases I believe I can commit to vote against rezoning to bring code violations into compliance especially if the rezoning case was for CS-1 zoning.</p>	<p>Absolutely</p>

Question	Sheryl Cole	Sam Osemene
<p>11. Traffic Impact Analysis. The city presently requires developers to provide a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) describing the impact of their proposed project. Often their consultants have failed to consider traffic at special events or have purposefully taken traffic counts at off-peak times. In addition, the scope of TIAs is very limited and does not consider the impact on the broader area including adjacent neighborhoods. Would you commit to improving this process such that TIAs accurately reflect impact and how would you go about doing so?</p>	<p>I recognize that traffic and congestion are increasing in our central neighborhoods and I believe that in addition to re-evaluating our TIA policy, I believe that we need to take a serious look at urban transit solution and other modes of transportation.</p>	<p>Absolutely. I will partner with neighborhood associations on this issue in finding a comprehensive plan that will work .</p>
Community Values		
<p>12. Affordable Housing. In its February 2007 report, the Affordable Housing Incentives Task Force listed the principle of geographic dispersion as its #1 priority. Do you believe in the core value of equitable distribution of affordable housing throughout the city, rather than the practice of concentrating it in lower-income neighborhoods? If so, given that the city is statutorily prohibited from mandating inclusionary zoning, 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?</p>	<p>Geographic dispersion is my chief priority for affordable housing, as I do not want to see urban slum areas. In my first term, I worked with a market rate developer and COA staff to create the first affordable housing using bond dollars in a market rate development in Austin. In order to get geographic dispersion I believe that we have to work with our market rate developers and create partnerships. We have to be willing to make compromises in order to make this work, but I believe that it is critical if we want an equitable distribution.</p>	<p>Absolutely. There are many elderly, poor and needy people in different parts of the city. Geographic dispersion will make housing affordable to these different groups. I will partner with the private sector due to limited funds for affordable housing.</p>
<p>13. Property Tax Impacts. Presently the city does not consider the tax impact on properties near a proposed project. In some cases, allowing major up-zonings that increase land values have a ripple effect on nearby properties. Housing that is affordable to medium and low-income families can be heavily taxed which forces these families to move. Would you support the development of an assessment tool which would enable the City of Austin to evaluate and maintain historical data on the impact on nearby property values of proposed up-zonings, code changes and large scale developments?</p>	<p>I understand the effects of gentrification and what might be perceived as “up-zoning,” but I have to look at how this keeps our general fund from growing in our urban core areas as we are facing financial shortfalls before signing on to the creation of this kind of tool. We need the property tax value of our city to increase if we are to maintain even the most basic of city services.</p>	<p>Absolutely .</p>

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<p>14. Local Business Support. Will you vote to pay further subsidies to Simon Properties? Please explain the extent to which you would pay further subsidies versus focusing city resources on support for locally-owned businesses.</p>	<p>I cannot vote to stop payment on existing contracts we may have with Simon properties, but I support not entering in additional subsidy deals for retail projects. The City’s Small Business Development Program offers many programs to support our locally owned businesses, including one that I initiated, www.ExploreLocalAustin.org, a website that highlights small business areas.</p>	<p>I will not vote to pay Simon Properties a dime. I worked with Brian Rogers and Linda Curtis on Prop-2 to stop giving subsidies to companies from China and India at the expense of local businesses. Council Member Cole was against us. This was the only time she worked tirelessly as a Council Member to get something done. She partnered with Mayor Will Wynn to defeat a noble goal. Council Member Cole has consistently sided with big businesses . She works against those she supposed to represent. She has used the same calm manner to work against neighborhood associations in this city. Past behavior is the single best predictor of future behavior.</p>
<p>15. Historic Preservation. Presently, several neighborhoods are attempting to get a local historic designation through volunteer efforts and fundraising, but the Local Historic District application process is proving to be prohibitively expensive and time-consuming. Both the Heritage Society and the Landmark Commission have recommended that the city’s historic district ordinance be revised to curtail the ownership and occupancy history requirements and to lower the owner sign-on requirement from 60% to 51% of the acreage. These changes would bring Austin more in line with Fort Worth, Dallas, San Antonio and all Austin’s peer cities nationally. Would you vote in favor of these changes?</p>	<p>We have already initiated this change and have also asked to take out City owned property in the equation. Currently we are in the code amendment process and we believe it will be presented to the Planning Commission very soon.</p>	<p>Absolutely. I have been arguing for the protection of our old historic neighborhoods. Council Members are reluctant to do the right thing because they want to open every part of this city to developers and lobbyists that finance their campaign.</p>
<p>16. Educational Impact Assessment. The city and school district are working to create an educational impact assessment for major developments, redevelopments, and code changes. How would you use this information? Would you vote to rezone a property to allow a major residential development if the schools in the area are at maximum capacity? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Where it is possible, I support working with AISD and other governmental entities to create the most effective government as possible. If the creation of an educational impact assessment will help both the City and AISD to plan for future growth and allow for better policy making, I support it. It could also influence my zoning decision if I knew that there were not adequate resources to meet the demand created by a new development.</p>	<p>I will side with the neighborhood association on this issue. I will not mandate any neighborhood to accept what is detrimental to its existence. When government starts listening to the wishes of the people, instead of the people being forced to listen and accept government wishes, that is progress and leadership.</p>
<p>17. Healthcare District. In March '09, the City’s Community Health Clinics and a large portion of the Human Services Department (if not all), will transfer to a new 501c3 organization run by the Travis County Healthcare District. How will the Mayor/City Council insure that the same or better level of healthcare services are provided by the new organization, if it has no direct reports into City Staff or City Council?</p>	<p>I am confident that we will continue to have a very close relationship with the new entity and will monitor the quality of care being delivered by this partnership. If we need to reevaluate the organization and make modifications, I will ask for these amendments.</p>	<p>I will propose setting up a city oversight committee that will report to the City Council on the success or failure of this consolidation. The renewal of this consolidation must be based on results and meeting the needs of the community.</p>

Question	Sheryl Cole	Sam Osemene
<p>18. Parkland. Providing parks within walking distance is an important community priority, one that has become even more critical as densification results in many residences with little or no yard space and as private open space disappears. The new parkland dedication ordinance provides opportunities to create small neighborhood and urban pocket parks. Do you think parkland dedication fees are adequate and do you think they could be better used to provide pocket parks? The Families and Children’s Task Force recommended working toward new goals for park or green space access in the city: ¼ mile for urban core and ½ mile for other parts of the city. Do you support this recommendation and if so what policies would you put in place to achieve it?</p>	<p>I am working right now with City staff to evaluate our open space requirements and even consider requesting the creation of a new open space requirement for public open space that creates connectivity and community gathering points. We are also looking at the creation of pocket parks with the parkland dedication fee and how we could partner with private developers in the maintenance of these small parks, which can be unduly burdensome to the already stretched Parks Department. I support evaluating the Families and Children’s Task Force recommendations and will bring forward necessary policy directives to create more park and open space.</p>	<p>We can do more than just relying on the parkland dedication fees. We can use some of the money we get from the music festival and special events to support this project. I support this goal and would go further increasing it. I would support a clause in the recommendation stating this goal has to be met and funded from the general revenue fund if possible.</p>
<p>19. Urban Tree Protection. How would you maintain our urban forest/urban tree canopy? Would you commit to increasing fines and penalties for the removal of protected trees to the point that it would no longer be profitable to ignore the ordinance? Would you support a true one-to-one replacement on diameter inches lost when our city arborist allows for mitigation? Would you support extending protection to smaller trees (currently at 19”) for certain species in order to keep more of our mature shade trees?</p>	<p>I would support more efforts to maintain our urban forest and recently voted to protect a mature shade tree in the Heritage Neighborhood recently. I am looking to the community to find ways we can better support our urban tree canopy and will support trying to protect certain species.</p>	<p>We have to enforce the laws . If anyone violate these laws, they should be prosecuted. Yes.</p>
City Government		
<p>20. City Legal Accountability. Do you believe it is a problem when city legal acts of its own accord and in opposition to the will of our elected officials? Would you advocate for and vote to put a change to the city charter on the ballot so the City Attorney reports to the City Council instead of the City Manager? If not, what other solution would you propose to remedy these issues?</p>	<p>As an attorney, I believe that the City Attorney must abide by state and federal law while not acting in opposition to the will of elected officials. In my experience as a an attorney with the Texas Municipal League, I have seen situations where the council has become immobile and unable to govern because the City Attorney had to navigate between elected officials with differing points of view.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

Question	Sheryl Cole	Sam Osemene
<p>21. Boards and Commissions. The City Boards and Commissions (B/C) system is one of the most important and easily accessible channels for public input. It is also a mechanism to provide a wealth of expertise to City Council and serves as an important check and balance system on city staff. How do (will) you choose your Boards and Commissions appointees and how do (will) you communicate with and seek input from them? What actions or policy direction would you initiate to allow for timely and meaningful input to the City Council by the B/C system on all decisions within their purview?</p>	<p>I hope to increase diversity with my council appointments and look at their interest and expertise when making the appointment. I rely on the expertise and recommendations of many of my appointments especially with my EUC commissioner, my Solid Waste Advisory Committee appointee, and my Planning Commissioner and am open to suggestion on how to better integrate our citizen advisory groups in our decision-making process.</p>	<p>I will choose Board and Commission members based on their expertise and not their loyalty or campaign contributions to a Council Member. We must put qualified people on these Boards and Commissions if we are going to eliminate nepotism and lack of knowledge on a subject matter.</p>
<p>22. Board of Adjustments. Every month 2/3 of all Board of Adjustment cases are postponed largely because the Board encourages applicants from the dais to withdraw their request and come back with a better justification for their variance. Moreover, some applicants are allowed postponements and reconsiderations with seemingly no limit. These policies create backlogs of variance request cases, added staff workload, and hundreds of wasted hours for resident stakeholders. If you are elected and become a member of the Audit and Finance Council Committee will you commit to modifying the Board bylaws as necessary to ensure reasonable and consistent procedures are followed? What steps will you take to ensure that your appointee is operating without conflicts of interest? How will you ensure that they are considering cases as per Local Government Code (211.009) based on “unnecessary hardships” rather than financial or personal hardship/gain?</p>	<p>As Chair of Audit and Finance, I have asked that this issue is brought forward on the next committee agenda and will make necessary recommendations to the full council for changes.</p>	<p>Yes. I will modify the bylaws. I will not appoint someone to a Board that has conflict of interest. When you appoint someone that has no stake in the outcome of the process, it enhances professionalism, efficiency and sound judgment in decision making. One other way to reduce the backlog is to hire more employees if necessary.</p>
<p>23. City Government Structure. Turnout for last year’s City Council elections was an abysmal 8% of registered voters. Essentially, all City Council members are elected by the same 15,000 voters in the North West quarter of the city to represent the diverse interests of the entire population of 750,000. Are you satisfied with the current Council election system? If not, how would you change it?</p>	<p>I would like to increase voter turnout throughout the City and would look at ways to engage the entire community in City issues. I would like to guarantee minority representation on the City Council and would support a revision of the current system after the 2010 census results.</p>	<p>As a government professor, 8% voter turn-out is not good. We have to find out why people have become apathetic. Voter apathy sometimes is created by the behavior of elected officials. When people feel the system is rigged and does not represent their interest, the result will be the 8% turnout. I proposed moving the City Council election to November. This will increase participation, reduce cost and reduce the influence of lobbyists in the political process. I will support an Amendment to the City's Charter to move the election to November.</p>

Question	Sheryl Cole	Sam Osemene
Budget		
<p>24. Budget Cuts. As city revenues shrink, do you believe that city departmental budgets should be cut equally across the board? Why or why not? How would you address increasing needs and demands that are a result of the economic downturn such as rising crime rates, more homeless people on the streets and increased needs for basic health and human services? Would you support cutting salaries of top city executives (or exerting pressure for voluntary cuts when salaries are contractually set) including the Mayor and City Council? What other areas would you cut and what would you refuse to cut?</p>	<p>I do believe that we need make cuts throughout all departments, including even Mayor and Council, but do not advocate for equal cuts as this may prove much more punitive to our social service funding and parks funding than is necessary. I hope to work in a holistic and comprehensive way as the City is fiscally very healthy, but is mandated to keep our general fund balanced by State law.</p>	<p>City budget must not be cut across the board. There are essential services that the poor, the needy and the elderly need and we have the moral obligation to provide these services. I propose cutting the salaries of Council Members first. A few weeks ago, the City Manager asked city employees to sacrifice by working less hours. Leadership by example is needed in this time of hardship. Those at the top must set the example. We must be our brothers and sisters keepers. The issue of homelessness is an important issue for me. The way we treat those at the lowest economic ladder is wrong. I opposed the City Council's idea of banning pan-handling. We have to understand that these men and women did not choose to pan-handle because they are rich. They do it because they are striving to survive. The idea of punishing them because nobody speaks for them is wrong. My father used to tell me “ son, no condition is permanent”. We have to be careful and mindful because it could be you tomorrow.</p>
<p>25. Violent Crime and Public Safety. There is concern that cuts to the public safety budget could leave families in certain neighborhoods where violent crime rates are already much higher than normal, in particular Montopolis and some other east side areas, even more vulnerable to violent crimes. How will you ensure that these neighborhoods will get the public safety resources they need?</p>	<p>Public Safety is the number one priority of the residents of this city, especially in the African American community. It is necessary to keep quality services by looking for ways to be more nimble and more cost effective. We also hope that we can use some stimulus money to enhance our public safety departments.</p>	<p>I strongly believe we need to hire more police officers. The City of Austin has two police officer per 1000 residents while Dallas has three police officers per 1000 residents. We need more officers in those high crime neighborhoods. Another way of reducing crime is to encourage officers to live in the neighborhoods they serve. Community policing is important in combating crime. The majority of Austin Police Officers live outside the city limit. The argument that Austin is expensive for them to live is flawed.</p>
<p>26. Cost of Services. Would you support requiring comprehensive accountings to enable city leaders and the public to understand how the cost of providing a service compares to the fees collected for that service? Do you believe special events should pay for themselves? Please identify other city services or departments where fees could be made commensurate with the cost of services?</p>	<p>In the future, I believe that we need to look a lot harder for public private partnerships to help maintain and operate our parks, create affordable housing, and provide services to the community. I support looking at the cost of serve in relation to the fees collected and adjusting them. In addition, I hope that we will have more special events pay for themselves or even make a contribution back to the City directly like both SXSW and ACL do for our parks.</p>	<p>Yes. I absolutely believe special event for adults must pay for itself. The city must change its policy when it comes to events like SXSW and ACL. The idea that the city does not get a fair share in tickets sold is wrong. I would like a situation where the city gets a percentage of the tickets sold during these events. The idea of paying a fee to use the city facility is not enough. These events sometimes inconvenience those that live in these neighborhoods. There has to be a compensation to the neighborhood associations.</p>

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<p>27. Water Treatment Plant #4. Will you vote to defer the approval of additional contracts for WTP#4 until additional studies have been performed?</p>	<p>I have been amazed at the resourcefulness of Austin residents and the commitment the community has shown to water conservation. Our Austin Water Utility customers have been able to conserve millions of gallons of water in this past year and I want to encourage the City to take on even more stringent conservation efforts. However, the AWU and the City must plan for the future of Austin and our water needs as water becomes more precious. This means I must continue to plan for Water Treatment Plan #4 as I recognize delay will mean an even greater cost of construction or the potential to not have enough water to meet the needs of all our citizens. I would support additional studies if they can help make better decisions.</p>	<p>Yes. The cost of this project is too much. The city cannot afford this project now. We have to do the cost benefit analysis to the community and the environment before we rush to approve it.</p>