

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES – AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

JOINT GENERAL/SPECIAL ELECTION, MAY 14, 2011

1. What training and experience qualify you for this office? (50-word limit)

I graduated from UT where I served as student body president, and earned an MBA from Harvard Business School. I spent four years working in the Governor's Office where I launched and ran AmeriCorps statewide. I later founded and sold an Internet company and led the Austin Entrepreneurs Foundation.

2. What are your priorities for addressing Austin's traffic problems? (75-word limit)

We need a mixture of transportation modalities. I supported the 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 Council and support the Strategic Mobility Planning effort underway, especially as it relates to mass transit, Park and Rides, HOV express lanes, and flex-time commute.

3. Since Austin Energy annually transfers a portion of its revenue to the City of Austin's general fund, how do you propose to balance Austin Energy's financial solvency with the city's growing revenue needs? (75-word limit)

The City must reduce dependence on Austin Energy transfer funds the same way it reduced its dependence on sales tax revenue over the course of the recent recession. We must instill better budget discipline across all City operations, including Austin Energy. The current cost of service study will raise awareness about the changing business model for utilities, too. Energy efficiency saves money for bill payers and the utility alike but also necessitates new rate design.

4. Austin currently has six council members and the mayor elected under a citywide, or "at-large" system. Do you support or oppose a change from the at-large system to single-member districts or another council configuration? Please explain. (75-word limit)

Any change should be by local vote, not imposed by the Legislature. While far from perfect, in the current system I never take a vote without thinking of the entire community versus thinking about one geographic area over another. Before making any changes Austinites must understand the implications of a city government with the majority of council members accountable to only 10 – 15% of the population and therefore NOT accountable to the other 85-90%.

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- 5. Given the city's budget constraints, what city services, programs, and tax incentives would you reduce? (75-word limit)**

This is a revenue and expense question. On the expense side, I will prioritize core city services – those services and programs that directly relate to safe, clean neighborhoods and reliable, affordable utilities. Except in response to unexpected emergencies, I would instill greater budget discipline by preventing new initiatives from creeping into the budget outside of the annual budget process. On the revenue side, I will support reasonable development that increases the City's tax base.