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## Kim criticizes Shade over donors

### Proponents of toll roads, other controversial development projects say Kim tried to get their support this year.

By [Sarah Coppola](#)

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

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Austin City Council Member Jennifer Kim is criticizing a campaign opponent for accepting about \$20,000 in donations from people who support toll roads, the tax subsidies agreement for the upscale Domain shopping center and a Wal-Mart Supercenter planned for Northcross Mall.

However, Kim accepted money from some of those donors in her 2005 campaign, and some of them say Kim also sought their support this year.

The issues Kim is highlighting have been controversial in the May 10 City Council races.

"I think voters need to ask themselves who (Randi Shade) will be accountable to in office when she's receiving money from people like toll road interests," Kim said this week.

Shade notes that more than 700 people with diverse backgrounds and interests have donated to her campaign.

"To cherry-pick 30 people off the list and say that I'm a tool of any one interest is ridiculous," she said. "I am an independent thinker and everyone, whether they did or did not donate, will have equal access" to her and her office, she said.

Former National Guard officer Ken Weiss is also running.

Donors to city races can give no more than \$300 individually or \$600 as a married couple.

Shade accepted money from nine vocal proponents of toll roads, 11 out of 13 principals at Endeavor Real Estate Group and 18 out of 28 partners at Ambrust & Brown. Endeavor helped develop the Domain and negotiate the subsidies package for it. Ambrust & Brown is a law firm that has represented Endeavor and also represented Northcross Wal-Mart developer Lincoln Property Co. in a lawsuit filed by neighborhood groups against the project.

Kim has been a vocal critic of the Wal-Mart. She voted against a toll road plan as a member of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and she supports a citizen-initiated charter amendment that residents will vote on in November that would prevent the city from paying out the Domain subsidies or giving incentives like that to future retail projects.

Shade said she opposes putting 24-hour supercenters next to neighborhoods; the plans for the Northcross Wal-Mart include some late store hours. She said she opposes offering tax incentives to retail businesses but does not support the charter amendment because she said it would have unintended consequences and would be better addressed through an ordinance.

Shade and Kim both oppose tolling existing roads but are open to using tolls to pay for new roads.

Kim's 2005 opponent, Margot Clarke, criticized Kim for accepting donations from prominent toll road supporters that year, including Gary Farmer, Brian Cassidy, Pete Winstead, Don Martin and Paul Bury.

Those men are backing Shade this year and held a fundraiser for her in March. Most of them said Tuesday and Wednesday that Kim sought their support this year.

"It's hypocritical. She asked for our support and when she found out she would not get it, she changed positions and we went from being great guys to being the bad guys," said Farmer, a toll road proponent who leads the Opportunity Austin program for the Chamber of Commerce.

Kim said she had wanted to explain her stance on toll roads and warn those donors that Shade would use their money only to attack her.

David Armbrust of Armbrust & Brown said Kim also asked him to donate to and raise money for her this year before he backed Shade.


All said they are backing Shade for more reasons than Kim's stance on toll roads, the Domain and Wal-Mart. They said Kim does not have a good record of working with her council colleagues to build consensus and get things done.

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