

OWANA

Election Event

September 4, 2018

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| Question | Mayor Steve Adler |
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| <p>Election - What is the most important thing to be aware of in this election?</p> | <p>Our city is doing well in so many ways, but has serious challenges that need proactive and deliberate action of a scale that meets those challenges. The 10-1 Council and I have a record of accomplishment on which we can be judged -- we passed the city's largest mobility bond in its history, we have increased spending in the city's affordable housing trust fund by more than 500%, we have launched the region's first workforce plan that will move 10,000 from near poverty into middle skill jobs, we have 7000 units of affordable housing on the ground or in the works, and we have passed the most progressive social justice and worker protections in the state. This election is about whether or not we are going to continue acting on our greatest challenges and moving forward.</p> |
| <p>Neighbors - How can OWANA neighbors get involved to help the city?</p> | <p>By being involved in their neighborhood association, neighbors are already taking a great first step and making a contribution that stands on its own. For those motivated to do more, those neighbors that are able should get involved in the front line of city policy -- our boards and commissions. The city is in need of dedicated volunteers that will bring new ideas and new viewpoints to the policy table. Beyond this, participation in public comment at Council meetings, visiting with Council Members, and emailing all help inform and teach the policy makers.</p> |
| <p>Neighborhood - What should the city be doing to help this neighborhood?</p> | <p>Like all neighborhoods, the city should be listening carefully to the wants and needs of neighbors in OWANA. Infrastructure is critical, as the neighborhood is one of the older in the city. That includes surface infrastructure but also that beneath the surface. Providing core city services like trash pickup and public safety are important and should be done well. Additionally, the neighborhood should be the recipient of resource support for the historic pool and participation in the implementation of the park master plan. The city needs to support this neighborhood and the entire city by evaluating the CodeNEXT process and product in order to relaunch an effort that, this time, will have the trust of the community and bring people to the table to work together. Finally, the city helps this neighborhood and the whole city, by leading among cities in the State and the nation on important issues like immigration, LGBTQ matters and climate change mitigation.</p> |
| <p>Sidewalks - We have some good sidewalks, but many need maintenance and it would be great to get more. Often sidewalks required in connection with construction don't get built and it is hard to find out why. What would you do to improve sidewalks in our neighborhood?</p> | <p>This November, there will be a mobility bond with millions for sidewalk maintenance. The money will be used in accordance with the Sidewalk Master Plan that helps prioritize this work. The 2016 bond contained tens of millions for sidewalks and safe routes to school. That bond included money for traffic calming, pedestrian beacons, and other technology that can help make streets and sidewalks safer for all those that use them. Additionally, with the Council's designation of quarter penny funding, neighborhoods can make a direct appeal to their Council Member to designate a project to receive resources.</p> |

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| <p>Housing - Many families want to live in this neighborhood, but lately prices are too much for most people. We want more families to live here to keep Mathews full and the neighborhood vibrant. What should we do to enable more people to live here?</p> | <p>We need more housing options and choices, primarily along corridors and centers, and we need to use effectively the limited tools available to us (like bonuses) to obtain units that are restricted, affordable, family friendly housing. We need to work together with other Texas cities to get the legislature and state leadership to reform school finance so that we can arrest the part of the cumulative property tax increases we are most feeling (overwhelmingly the largest increases are in school property taxes). We need to continue the recent increased funding in tenant support and assistance.</p> |
| <p>Parks - We've applied for grants to build shade structures in our neighborhood park, but have repeatedly been denied. These applications are time consuming. The sun is trying to kill us. Can you help us get some shade?</p> | <p>I'd like to work on this with the neighborhood. The 10-1 Council is most keenly focused on supporting parks in areas that are most underserved. But we need programs that reward and encourage local neighborhood initiative and contribution. I hope we move toward greater use of small area planning so as to increase context sensitivity and as part of this process, I hope we encourage prioritization of locally identified needs.</p> |
| <p>CodeNext - What should happen next? How would you use the work that was done on CodeNext, Imagine Austin, and neighborhood plans? How would you balance preservation of older neighborhoods with pressure for growth? Do you support adding more density to single family (SF) zoned lots as a way to add housing inventory?</p> | <p>Our city still needs an updating and revision of our land development code. First, we need an honest evaluation of what went right and wrong in the CodeNEXT process so that we can learn from what we've done and so that we can assess what work product should be carried forward in what ways. Then we need a process that will engender trust – the only way any process can move forward. I don't want to prejudge the lessons learned, but generally still believe that any future resolution will require a fair and deliberate balancing of competing interests, a greater focus on the goals we're trying to achieve before we start focusing on the determining the tools and methods to achieve them. We will need a process that allows for greater context sensitivity. I do not support a blanket rule that adds more density to SF lots, but can see a resolution that allows for some SF to take on more density, considering elements such as adjacency to corridors/centers, street width and sidewalks present, neighborhood plans and FLUMs, etc.</p> |
| <p>STRs - Do you support the city's existing regulations of short term rentals? Should the law or the enforcement be changed?</p> | <p>I believe that investor owned, short term rentals in areas zoned for single family housing should be severely limited and phased out because I believe their use is often inconsistent with that zoning. Homes owned by their residents should still be able to occasionally rent their homes for extra income under limited conditions.</p> |
| <p>Parking - Streets are crowded and it can be difficult to navigate and find parking, but on-site parking requirements make development more expensive. How should the city balance parking requirements?</p> | <p>This is a difficult question without a "one size fits all" solution and is one of the best examples of the need for location specific context sensitivity. Neighborhood input is important, as is being clear-eyed and realistic about parking. Where appropriate, I believe parking requirements should be reduced. However, on streets where there is already inadequate parking, making the problem worse doesn't help anyone. We need to consider variables such as street width, sidewalks present and possible, proximity to transit stations, connectivity, etc. We must be both creative and sensitive about parking.</p> |
| <p>Budget - What parts of Austin's budget are the most</p> | <p>I'm proud to be part of the current Council that is doing its</p> |

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| overfunded? What are the most underfunded? | first budget based on a year-long strategic planning exercise that set priorities, indicators, strategies and metrics to align council goals, staff performance, and budget priorities. This Council has shifted money from public safety enforcement to prevention of public safety challenges. Almost all parts of the budget are underfunding because community needs are so great. |
| State - The state lege and governor overruled Austin last session on so much and threatened more. What do you think we should do to anticipate this happening? | We can expect the lege to go after Austin (and increasingly other cities) in the next session trying to take away our ability to have our own power company (Austin Energy) or to remain in control of it, trying to pass the bathroom bill, and trying to preempt and take away earned sick leave, fair chance hiring, and even our attempts to increase affordable housing using existing tools. Our team, the Council and I have been successful in helping to stop this threat over the last two sessions by building personal relationships with legislators, creating coalitions of cities and interest and stakeholder groups, by being smart, crafting the best possible arguments and strategies, and with continual prayer. |
| Funding - Would you consider TIF financing so that future taxes on new development, for example the AISD headquarters, could be leveraged for improvements such as to parks and sidewalks in Old West Austin? | Yes. |

| Question | Laura Morrison |
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| Election - What is the most important thing to be aware of in this election? | Austin needs a mayor committed to community-based solutions that will maintain the stability of our neighborhoods while identifying appropriate places to accommodate new growth. I will return transparency and collaboration to City Hall, ensuring all Austinites have a voice in effective land use planning and other decisions that affect their lives. |
| Neighbors - How can OWANA neighbors get involved to help the city? | There are many ways to get involved in city issues of interest to you: write to Council Members and commissioners, ask hard questions and speak out at hearings. Be an active participant by submitting your name to serve on a city board or commission and find city volunteer opportunities at libraries, parks and more at http://www.austintexas.gov/volunteer . My own path to City Council (2008-2014) and this mayor's race began with my involvement in OWANA, one of Austin's many great active neighborhood associations. |
| Neighborhood - What should the city be doing to help this neighborhood? | The city must work with the OWANA community to address growing stresses including traffic and parking, and to ensure future land use decisions respect and incorporate the area's Neighborhood Plan. |
| Sidewalks - We have some good sidewalks, but many need maintenance and it would be great to get more. Often sidewalks required in connection with construction don't get built and it is hard to find out why. What would you do to improve sidewalks in our neighborhood? | As mayor, I would reevaluate the sidewalk fee-in-lieu option to ensure it is working as intended and that funds are being spent optimally to serve the area in a timely fashion. This program needs clear criteria and a defined process for deciding where and how to use these funds, and this information should be readily available to residents. Neighborhood Plan Contact Teams should also be involved in sidewalk planning for Neighborhood Plan areas. |
| Housing - Many families want to live in this neighborhood, but lately prices are too much for most people. We want more families to live here to keep Mathews full and the neighborhood vibrant. What should we do to enable more people to live here? | Fortunately, there is capacity for increased development within the proposed land use plan of OWANA's Neighborhood Plan. Residents should work with developers to encourage/incentivize family-friendly housing and to help them understand that families with children are an integral part of the vision for the area. |
| Parks - We've applied for grants to build shade structures in our neighborhood park, but have repeatedly been denied. These applications are time consuming. The sun is trying to kill us. Can you help us get some shade? | As mayor, I will be happy to work with OWANA residents to explore all options for park shade structures. We may also need to evaluate the city grant application requirements to see if streamlining is in order. |
| CodeNext - What should happen next? How would you use the work that was done on CodeNext, Imagine Austin, and neighborhood plans? How would you balance preservation of older neighborhoods with pressure for growth? Do you support adding more density to single family (SF) zoned lots as a way to add housing inventory? | First, we must learn from mistakes of CodeNEXT with a full audit of the process that go so off track. Moving forward, we must divide this effort into manageable pieces for informed consideration - not try to force a 1500-page document through all at once. We must adhere to the actual priorities of Imagine Austin (keeping families in their homes, addressing flooding, etc.). We can move quickly to implement some some universally agreed upon provisions, such as watershed improvements to address flooding and runoff. We can also realize appropriate increases in density by looking to adopted Neighborhood Plans for guidance and by initiating community-based planning. Finally, we must |

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| | ensure that any code changes do not promote the demolition of existing market-affordable housing or the displacement of low-income residents. |
| STRs - Do you support the city's existing regulations of short term rentals? Should the law or the enforcement be changed? | Yes. I voted against commercial short term rentals (STRs) while I was on Council and support the city's current regulations for phasing them out now. However, enforcement of these regulations needs to be substantially improved. There are too many cases of flagrant violations, and even when the Code Department is on scene, they sometimes are powerless to act. |
| Parking - Streets are crowded and it can be difficult to navigate and find parking, but on site parking requirements make development more expensive. How should the city balance parking requirements? | My vision for the city includes a highly functioning public transit system so that cars would scarcely be needed, but clearly that is a long-range effort. As we work toward that goal, I would support an innovative plan to gradually decrease parking requirements on a timeline that aligns with mass transit implementation. |
| Budget - What parts of Austin's budget are the most overfunded? What are the most underfunded? | To my mind, the most overfunded part of the budget is the city's economic development department and related initiatives, and we also need to keep an eye on the expansion of the city's management ranks. The most underfunded items are community services, including mental health and social services, and funding for parks and open spaces. |
| State - The state legislature and governor overruled Austin last session on so much and threatened more. What do you think we should do to anticipate this happening? | We must continue to run our city according to our values even as state elected officials act to erode local control. We must also work closely with the Travis County delegation and other Texas cities at the Capitol to mitigate damage to city actions and policies, especially on issues that are likely to raise legislative opposition. |
| Funding - Would you consider TIF financing so that future taxes on new development, for example the AISD headquarters, could be leveraged for improvements such as to parks and sidewalks in Old West Austin? | There is certainly precedent for this with the recent Waller Creek TIF expansion dedicating roughly \$110M to build a park in that downtown area. I am willing to explore this possibility although, because the tradeoff is depletion of the general fund, TIFs must be used judiciously. We should also reevaluate the parkland dedication fees to ensure they are adequately addressing park needs related to new development. |

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| Question | TRAVIS DUNCAN |
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| <p>Election - What is the most important thing to be aware of in this election?</p> | <p>Everything is not as it seems. There is a façade developed around the current and previous council members, comprised of mountains of data, pandering rhetoric, and reckless hypocrisy.</p> <p>We must not fulfill Einstein’s view on insanity, by repeating the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Every politician will create a smokescreen of happy feelings and Ra-Ra commentary about their ‘records’, but we must not be naïve.</p> <p>Steve Adler and Laura Morrison, with combined 10 years on the council, have been too distracted by their net worth to offer the necessary solutions to truly address our MAJOR issues with Housing, Transportation, Health and Energy. They have had their chance, and they have presented no lasting solutions, no vision, only reactionary policy making, division, and an utter lack of accountability.</p> <p>“We lack the tools...I voted against...We almost....We mustn’t be too ambitious...”</p> <p>It’s important you realize I am writing this because I love Austin deeply. I believe in the people of Austin to overcome the political games and do what is right. Our society has lost any sense of compassion or love for our fellow humanity. The system acknowledges everyone as a number, a statistic, a casualty of uncontrollable forces...</p> <p>What would Jesus do? Who would Jesus vote for? Those who favor the profit driven markets and penalty taxes, extraction economy, like Adler and Morrison, OR someone who believes we need to create New systems for All people to Thrive, who wants to care for and empower the homeless, the needy, and the sick? I am the candidate providing solutions.</p> <p>What you must realize is that nothing needs to be taken from you in order for all people to share in abundance. We have the resources, we have the technology, and it’s time we establish some basic human dignity for all people. This is not a seesaw. I believe we can accomplish more through cooperative investment and incentivized participation through regenerative community projects than we can accomplish through taxation and redistribution. We must think smarter and long term.</p> <p>Any good reason to vote for Laura, Steve, or anyone else on the ballot this year, Voting For ME, Travis Duncan, means we can accomplish those Good things faster, more efficiently, with more transparency, accountability, community engagement, and longer lasting outcomes that benefit all and hurt none. This is an obvious choice. Let’s Clean Up Austin</p> <p>This election is about whether the voters are ready to stop fulfilling Einstein’s warning...</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Voter participation is not given enough importance. Our extremely low voter turnout/election participation clearly reflects the neglect of our city leadership, and countrywide. Our government is failing to do it’s foremost job of being elected of and by the people. This must be by ALL people, or it’s meaningless.</p> <p>Why is election day not a national holiday?</p> <p>I express this from a place of love and pure confidence we can turn it around! By 2020, I believe we will reach 100% voter participation in Austin, once we are committed to firmly reestablishing this sacred American right.</p> <p>Whatever it takes: three months of voter education programs, free electricity the first week</p> |

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| | <p>of November, free public transit October-November...Whatever it is, no investment is too small for the return we will receive from this Radical Awakening In Civic Engagement. This is a major Step in how we can Bring Austin Together.</p> <p>Now, for voters who do intend (have the time/space/awareness) to vote, You have an extremely important choice to make. The stakes are as high as they have ever been, which is why we need to take radical steps toward Resiliency, Equity, and Wisdom.</p> <p>We have had enough time to witness the political style of all incumbents or past elected officials. They have not demonstrated the level of creativity nor cooperative consciousness to adequately protect the people and help everyone thrive. Anyone currently or formerly elected has not been a part of any real solutions.</p> <p>I am not pleased do so, but I must tell you something very serious that our leaders have neglected:</p> <p>Our electrical grid is highly vulnerable to Electro Magnetic Pule (EMP) attack. National Security Experts predict the result of such an attack would likely trigger mass famine, chaos, and probably dramatic depopulation. EMP would disable all water supply systems, food production mechanisms, transportation, and vital energy supports for critical infrastructure.</p> <p>Our past and present elected officials have overlooked this completely.</p> <p>Thankfully there is a solution! We must abandon the traditional energy sources and unleash the potential of quantum technology. One in particular is capable of generating mass amounts of electricity, 100% renewably, using astronomically less acreage than any other source, while simultaneously purifying water into an oxygenated structure. It is also less expensive. The best part: completely immune to EMP attack. Fortifying our infrastructure in this way is most urgent thing we can do to uphold our sacred duties to protect the public safety as per the City Charter and Texas Constitution.</p> <p>Make the Capitol of Texas Strong</p> <p>In all areas, with a Whole-System approach, it's time to get smart, get back to the basics, and work together in a way that always serves ALL people, both immediate and multi-generational, for maximum vitality & sovereignty.</p> <p>It's time we have the conversation about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Eliminating Cost of Living and Maximizing Quality of Life + Avoid Risk and Maximize Reward for ALL + Cooperation and Incentivization for Regenerative Investment in the Collective Good |
| <p>Neighbors - How can OWANA neighbors get involved to help the city?</p> | <p>Our plan for Austin will provide a People-Owned Cooperative Network of Community Projects beneficial to the good of all people, and Profit-Sharing Businesses of all varieties. OWANA, as well as all people of Austin, will have the Incentivized Volunteer Opportunities, as well as Regenerative Investment Opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteers, upon committing 3-6 hours per week to any of the broadly ranging Community Projects/Businesses, will receive a consistent incentive (as set by community), profit-sharing from businesses in network, and free products/services produced through the cooperative network. - Investors will receive healthy returns by funding the seed capital needed to catalyze certain projects, while simultaneously these projects providing massive benefit to the greater public. Probable projects may include: the construction of |

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| | <p>Resident-Owned Housing with short term rental and commercial income; the creation non-toxic and biofield-enhancing advanced materials commercialized into lifestyle products; the creation of apps and media platforms that do not violate privacy or data, decentralized and regenerative to planet-wide users; zero-emission vehicle and energy storage technology, cooperative organic farming...</p> <p>This system is very powerful because it does not Penalize nor Force participation at all. It is a purely voluntary and parallel system. It is unlimited in it's potential, as it is fueled by the human spirit of creativity and working together for a larger purpose. This proposed 'Austin People's Coop System' will generate hundreds of billions in revenue, while simultaneously eliminating our cost of living in key sectors, one by one, since we tackle the immediate and fundamental challenges first: Water, Food, Housing, Healthcare, Energy, Transportation, Education, and Telecommunications.</p> <p>This is what is meant by the term Universal Basic Resources. We are viewing the city as one cooperative business that we all equally own and hold shared stewardship over. In our business (city), we eliminate risks and minimize costs by employing smart technology, automation, and cooperative incentives. It is that simple. This is TRUE Affordability.</p> <p>We have the opportunity to become a city full of Free Entrepreneurs, an Innovative Solutions Hub for the Planet.</p> <p>If this sounds like a fantasy, snap out of your negative attitude. It's time to think what is possible, what we CAN accomplish, what we MUST DO. Please, I ask you to open your heart to a new possibility of strength and Unity consciousnesses. This IS possible, we CAN do what is needed, and it DOES START WITH YOU.</p> <p>What you can do NOW is Vote for me, Travis Duncan, to become the next mayor of Austin. I humbly and graciously ask for you to do this so we can catalyst an international shift in how cities organize. Our role is to show the world how it can be done. How a truly high consciousness society conducts itself.</p> <p>I do believe this international ambassadorship is needed to ensure the survival of our species: I do believe the stakes are that high. It's not time for business as usual, it's time for WISE and TRUE measures, and I am committed to doing what's necessary to ensure the wellbeing of ALL people.</p> <p>We will invite the world to witness what we are offering the species.</p> <p>This campaign is not against anyone, we are no opponent to any of our sisters and brothers. Laura, Steve, and the rest of our candidates in Austin are blessed and deserving people like we all are, and they will still be blessed as engaged members of our community as we lead the way together through service. This is Why we tell the tough truths to them. Respectfully, I am here to offer the first Unity Platform that will lead us into a new paradigm of abundance and vitality for all Beings.</p> <p>---</p> <p>---</p> <p>The other thing you can do NOW is do EVERYTHING in your power to empower voters who are excluded from the process, those who have never voted. Throw money at booths, registration tables, more voter education videos, school visits, give your employees paid time off for voting, increase polling location information-sharing, bus rentals, literally anything that will empower our fellow sisters and brothers to participate in their most fundamental American right. Thank you in advance for your leadership on this matter.</p> |
| <p>Neighborhood - What should the city be doing to help this neighborhood?</p> | <p>Listening is the most crucial thing we need to humble about the culture of public service. As mayor, my first 90-180+ days, 6 days a week, 6-8 hours per day, I plan to spend touring the city and listening to people, deeply with all my soul, with a team taking copious notes. Then I will continue this tradition after the initial tour for at least 2 days a week. Some may sadly call this a distraction, yet I see it as a reaffirmation of our true priorities. This is one facet of</p> |

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| | <p>our plan to become radically smarter listeners in City Hall. Our use of a voting app, decentralized consensus modalities, rank choice voting, and advanced computing tech will enhance the process, and the people will truly have Open Ears at City Hall.</p> <p>So, as per this approach, I look forward to hearing the intimate details of your lived experiences and help facilitate an environment where solutions can become Actualized ASAP. I don't like waiting when people need something now. Our city should be leaner and more real-time in it's application of policy, more sensitive at adjusting.</p> <p>On a universal scale, though, all Austinites face the same fundamental issues related to environmental and air pollution, pathetic and dangerous transportation infrastructure, limited pedestrian and biking mobility, water toxicity, nutritionally dearth foods, skyrocketing taxes, and a complete and total sentiment of distrust in the competence of our public institutions to act with integrity and full transparency.... We need to get our act together!</p> |
| <p>Sidewalks - We have some good sidewalks, but many need maintenance and it would be great to get more. Often sidewalks required in connection with construction don't get built and it is hard to find out why. What would you do to improve sidewalks in our neighborhood?</p> | <p>We believe the fastest, most cost effective, most equitable, and most beneficial to overall mobility efficiency, is to accelerate the construction of transportation infrastructure as a project within the Cooperative Volunteer Network.</p> <p>We would also aim to rid ourselves of potentially over-redundant bureaucratic processes that may ignore present community consensus and possibly overtaxed community improvement projects.</p> <p>Let's also be open to using new sidewalk materials that aren't so environmentally toxic, nor planned for obsolescence like concrete. It's possible we can build stronger sidewalks that could last 200 years <i>and</i> restore vitality to the soil. Let's not forget about 'true cost' and maximize our return!</p> <p>Also, we're looking forward to the safety aspects of sidewalks and all pedestrian travel. Eventually, I do believe we need an impenetrable protective element to shield all pedestrians from car traffic. In fact, I think the smartest fix to our transportation is to create dedicated roadways for cars, trains, busses, bikes, and humans, all separated and potentially multi-level. This, again, may seem too futuristic or unfeasible to some, but for multi-century planning, we need to do Step One correct, or else we're wasting resources in the present and causing problems for the future. How do we, as soon as possible, build a system that overcomes traffic congestion and accomplishes Zero road deaths? If we want walkability, should we design entirely uninhibited free mobility? Perhaps a network of over-under channels and multi-level roadways would eliminate the need for traffic lights all-together? While simultaneous advancements in rail tech and autonomous driving streamline traffic into perfect-motion?</p> |
| <p>Housing - Many families want to live in this neighborhood, but lately prices are too much for most people. We want more families to live here to keep Mathews full and the neighborhood vibrant. What should we do to enable more people to live here?</p> | <p>Identify all potential Density Zones and Multi-Family buildings in the area, Then Work cooperatively with the People's Incentive Network to bring land/property owners together with current and interested residents; Construct Resident-Owned. Collectively assess how to the neighborhood can accommodate the maximum number of people. Only build net-zero construction methods, earth resonant and biofield optimizing designs, rain water capturing, integrated natural environments and more to ensure high quality of life and access to neighborhood amenities/culture. The whole point here is to BUILD COMMUNITY. Overcome the cloudiness of greed and come together with your assets to invest in regenerative, sustainable and abundant housing stock.</p> <p>Truly, when we shift our thinking away from "how can we build on this land to serve the maximum profit of a single-lifetime entity or individual?" into a mentality of "developing land and resources for the immediate and multi-generational vitality of all people", anything is possible. People can still profit together, and everyone becomes more fulfilled because of it.</p> |

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| | <p>If we want to solve our issues with the land development, we need to let go of greed completely. Our dangerously naïve and egoic assertion that a person can own a piece of Earth is causing us to slowly destroy ourselves. Profit can have many forms, but accumulation of money while destroying the Earth and excluding millions of people will only lead to a deeper feeling of emptiness, and perhaps the demise of human consciousness itself.</p> <p>WWJD?</p> <p>This fundamental issue of “who get’s to decide how land and resources are developed?” will decide the fate of our species. It’s literally that massive, folks.</p> <p>(And the rest of the world isn’t doing anything about it! WE NEED TO BE THE FIRST. We need to set off a catalyst for the saving of human kind.)</p> |
| <p>Parks - We’ve applied for grants to build shade structures in our neighborhood park, but have repeatedly been denied. These applications are time consuming. The sun is trying to kill us. Can you help us get some shade?</p> | <p>Again, this is the bureaucratic mess that seems to enjoy insulting sovereignty and the intelligence of human beings. Simply, with a cooperative incentive for investment of time, energy, expertise, and resources, we can accomplish any and all projects more rapidly.</p> <p>No one likes an un-checked list.</p> |
| <p>CodeNext - What should happen next? How would you use the work that was done on CodeNext, Imagine Austin, and neighborhood plans? How would you balance preservation of older neighborhoods with pressure for growth? Do you support adding more density to single family (SF) zoned lots as a way to add housing inventory?</p> | <p>A Single, All-Encompassing Document, up to the Yes or No vote of 11 people, is the most absurd and costly way to run a process like this.</p> <p>We need to do this One-By-One, Issue by Issue, through a secure rank-choice-voting mechanism, perhaps a decentralized Holochain-like, non-hackable, advanced voting system. The issues are too nuanced to be lumped together, and there are WAY too many ‘stakeholders’ currently left out of the process. Frankly, we should update the Land Development Code to be Adaptive in Real-time. We need to maximum efficiency in achieving the most vital immediate and multi-generational outcome for all people and life on the planet.</p> <p>Again, we must address the fundamental question of shared ownership over land. As a principled respect for liberty and sovereignty, we never advocate for nationalizing or centralizing any pre-existing property through force, violence, nor mandates; Rather, we establish a parallel, decentralized, non-governmental, non-hierarchical, People-Owned Cooperative Land Trust for all NEW development. Existing Land owners who do wish to offer their existing properties to the land trust for development, will be incentivized appropriately. Always, we seek full respect for sovereignty by always maximizing win-win-win outcomes for everyone.</p> <p>Citizens of Austin, open yourself to become aware of ourselves; We are equal-stake ‘owners’ in the shared Responsibility to be Stewards to this Earth we live with. Let us not forget and dishonor the many People who lived here for thousands of years, in absolute harmony and abundance with the land and these precious waters. When we view land development through this lens, our perspective suddenly becomes much clearer.</p> <p>Sadly, our current stumbling approach relies on reckless market assumptions, unashamedly shackled by limited belief systems. Frankly, the way we build is ecologically destructive, toxic to our physical wellness, and flat out boring. We’ve set the bar way too low...However, do not lose Hope! There are No Limits to what we can accomplish when we Bring Austin Together.</p> |

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| | <p>We imagine a skyline of vertical green towers, all owned and looked-after by the residents, with solar glass and natural air flow, where EVERY person lives in absolute luxury and comfort, where everyone is deserving the respect to live in the most vital way possible. These are net-zero, perhaps energy-positive, regenerative structures that bio-mimic the frequencies of nature. Architectural and Historical masterpieces, simply because they were built to be the Great Wonder of thousands of years, by the Magical and Enterprising People of Austin, not because some real-estate entity was able to squeeze as much profit out of one city block. Let's be Epic, not cookie cutter.</p> <p>Another way to put this: We Cannot Afford To Screw Up The Density Zones. They belong to the People. The millions who will live here over the next centuries. The land cannot be exploited for Profit. It MUST be developed with full consideration.</p> <p>We also imagine Single Family Vitality Districts all over the city, comprised of the most Unique and Individually Expressive, truly custom Homes to meet the maximum wellness outcome for the families who live there. This is truly a master-planned neighborhood, comprised of net-zero, self-sustaining & resilient homes. Each custom built, cooperatively by Contributors in Cooperative Network. This is where we can explore all sorts of cooperative investment, contribution equity, build-to-own programs, and develop a truly strong commUNITY by asserting that Everyone deserves an Amazing place to Live. A Healthy, garden-rich neighborhood with NO DEBT, NO BILLS, True Freedom.</p> <p>For all Indigenous to this land, and to all displaced, there will be ample and initial opportunity for the Right to Return. We have plenty of room for Everyone.</p> <p>Think about it folks, we can either continue building these vapid boxes and likely run ourselves over a cliff, or we can Pivot majorly and catalyze a Planet-Wide Era of Egalitarian Abundance for All. We must become the symbol of a new Paradigm on Earth. Let's be EPIC. It has to start somewhere...</p> |
| <p>STRs - Do you support the city's existing regulations of short term rentals? Should the law or the enforcement be changed?</p> | <p>Short Term Rentals are our friend when we build cooperative, net-zero, people-owned housing in abundance. We can reserve 20% (or so) of units in the density housing for Short Term Rentals, as a way to generate revenue from all the tourism that flows through Austin. This way, Austin can build our own app to manage it, and our own abundance of units will generate more revenue with far less costs and far greater outcomes. We can even incentivize current hotels to transfer into cooperative ownership with the People's Trust, revive the experience and relieve the burdens for all involved.</p> <p>This way we address the need for locals to have access to housing, and give them (ourselves) the direct means of profiting from short term rentals. AustinBnb would be an example of a Regenerative Business. As we co-own and profit-share, the tourism revenue stays and builds wealth in Austin.</p> <p>This becomes a cultural opportunity! Imagine the type of traditions and offerings we can develop by becoming the worlds most Unique hosts for tourism. We can inspire the world and truly Dive Deeper into what Austin culture can truly become.</p> |
| <p>Parking - Streets are crowded and it can be difficult to navigate and find parking, but on site parking requirements make development more expensive. How should the city balance parking requirements?</p> | <p>As we reprioritize our transportation infrastructure toward the best possible outcome, we will inevitably develop safe pedestrian zones, more neighborhood walkability, less need for individual cars, more use of autonomous smart pods, trains, and busses. However, we will still need space for cars. I think the multi-level roadways should be explored more creatively, since it would give us the space to offer free parking everywhere in the city, due to the exclusive car roadways and platforms.</p> <p>We have to look at larger urban areas as what to not do. Any traffic is bad traffic, and we need to liberate pedestrians from the confinements of sidewalks.</p> |

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| | <p>Also, it should be noted that as parking becomes restricted and metered, it results in inequitable blockage of access to all of Austin for all Austinites. Those with low income are less likely to be able to find parking, which can limit their ability to experience parts of the city. It adds up over time.</p> <p>What we definitely must not do is make the foolish assumption that we are going to need dramatically more cars in the future and then go and build a bunch of massive, goonish parking garages.</p> <p>Most urgently, we need to focus on building a magnetic rail system and interconnect it regionally. Then we need a fleet of autonomous smart pods for more localized, specified destinations. Like ride sharing fluid taxis.</p> <p>There's only predicting how exactly we may change once we become free and unified. This accelerated infrastructure plan, in communion with our parallel liberation from resource-debt, people will travel at different times for different reasons. Traffic patterns will dramatically change when people are not travelling for survival, they are travelling for pleasure.</p> |
| <p>Budget - What parts of Austin's budget are the most overfunded? What are the most underfunded?</p> | <p>Generally speaking, there is likely millions of dollars of redundancy in our city spending, and much of it might sadly be focused on data rather than actual reform, marketing rather than action, paperwork rather than projects.</p> <p>That said, I fully support the proposed efficiency audit, although not in the way the council characterized it. I believe we can do it for free and use it as a tool for citizen engagement and radical transparency, as well as an opportunity to empower ourselves.</p> <p>(WE NEED A COOPERATIVE AND CREATIVE MIND)</p> <p>We also might be selling ourselves short by depending on tax and utility revenue to fund our social services. I believe we can generate quadruple or more in revenue for our budget by developing cooperative businesses that solve massive problems for the entire planet. However, we're not reckless, so we're going to take it one step at a time.</p> <p>We need to make our money stretch and immediately do what we can to eliminate extractive spending, meaning if we aren't providing direct benefit to people's lives, short and long term, we need to spend somewhere else. Always invest in people's wellness and we will have a strong foundation upon which to build.</p> |
| <p>State - The state lege and governor overruled Austin last session on so much and threatened more. What do you think we should do to anticipate this happening?</p> | <p>Under Article 2 of the Texas Constitution it clearly states the people are the ones that give authority to the State to begin with. It is the people's right to alter the State if anything interferes with any right of the people.</p> <p>The 9th Amendment to the United States Constitution asserts that we the people, have rights not acknowledged in the Constitution, rights we will know about when we need to know about them, and that the government cannot infringe on these rights.</p> <p>I believe these two fundamental points grant the people of the CITY OF AUSTIN (chartered by the STATE OF TEXAS), the authority to declare Sovereign Territorial Control, meaning the State, nor any other entity may dictate what we do in Austin, so long as we are not violating anyone's sovereignty or other constitutionally protected rights.</p> <p>We've been missing the mark by fighting each micro-issue. We've had the legally established power all along, we've just been too distracted to assert it.</p> |
| <p>Funding - Would you</p> | <p>I will consider any financing that will invest in the regeneration and maximum wellness</p> |

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consider TIF financing so that future taxes on new development, for example the AISD headquarters, could be leveraged for improvements such as to parks and sidewalks in Old West Austin?

outcome for people and neighborhoods.

Quite simply, I do believe there is always a win-win solution when we approach everything cooperatively and without limiting beliefs.

We must not become reliant on this model of taxation long term, since it is inherently non-resilient to disaster or economic collapse, nor does it address the root human needs. We must always seek to find the regenerative way.

| Question | Kathie Tovo – District 9 |
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| <p>Election - What is the most important thing to be aware of in this election?</p> | <p>At a time of significant disruption at the state and national level, it's critical to elect local leaders who will fight for progressive values and who have the experience necessary to be effective. I have a proven track record fighting against climate change, against displacement and for the preservation of affordable housing, and for paid sick leave and worker protections. To name just a few accomplishments, this term I supported the creation of the Homelessness Outreach Street Team (HOST); led the Council in passing numerous affordable housing resolutions, from working to strengthen our density bonus programs to exploring offering a "right to return" preference to individuals with generational ties in rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods; and led the Council in creating and opening the Austin-Travis County Sobering Center, which will divert publicly intoxicated individuals from our jails and emergency rooms. I also successfully advocated for shifting a portion of hotel occupancy taxes from Visit Austin to use instead for renovating and preserving our city's historic facilities and parks.</p> <p>As your Mayor Pro Tem and District 9 Council Member, I have balanced major policy initiatives such as these alongside the needs of the many constituents for whom my staff help resolve individual issues each week.</p> <p>In the next few years, the Council will re-engage with revising the land development code and work on other major regional planning efforts, including Project Connect. The Council will need to continue to confront other challenges, such as rapidly escalating land values and housing costs. All this will take place with a brand new City Manager and a very new form of representative government in the 10-1 system.</p> <p>It has been a privilege to serve as your Council Member during a time of significant transition and challenge, and I respectfully ask for your support in my re-election.</p> |
| <p>Neighbors - How can OWANA neighbors get involved to help the city?</p> | <p>OWANA has engaged with the City on a number of topics, including submitting feedback on CodeNEXT, advocating for changes to the Aquatics Master Plan, supporting the Smoot/Terrace Park Historic District and changes to the Historic Landmark Commission's voting requirements, and asking to partner with the City on West Austin Park improvements, among others.</p> <p>These efforts have helped inform the City's work and deliberations, especially in my office. My work on CodeNEXT reflected many of the concerns OWANA outlined in their communications with the City, and I also sponsored a number of resolutions consistent with OWANA's positions, such as requiring additional review of the proposed Aquatics Master Plan and changing the Historic Landmark Commission's voting requirements. OWANA residents are active advocates on behalf of their community, and I look forward to the continued collaboration.</p> |
| <p>Neighborhood - What should the city be doing to help this neighborhood?</p> | <p>OWANA residents have worked hard to identify community needs and organize efforts to address them. I support exploring opportunities to further empower these community-driven efforts. Two such community-identified needs have been the need to improve West Austin Park as well as the need for neighborhood parking solutions. I believe both the City and OWANA could benefit from exploring the range of opportunities available to help address these needs and, to the extent that there are challenges to progress, working together to identify these challenges and proactively discuss possible paths forward.</p> <p>Additionally, the Clarksville CDC is a great example of a community-driven approach to affordable housing. I support the item on the City Council August 30 agenda to transfer the city-owned parcel at 1611 West 10th to the Austin Housing Finance Corporation for development by Clarksville CDC, and I am hopeful that we will have the opportunity to consider a similar proposal for the health clinic. I am</p> |

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| | <p>eager to see the City provide more support for existing and new CDCs, and I will continue to advocate for a strong partnership with Clarksville's CDC and the important work it has pursued for approximately 4 decades.</p> |
| <p>Sidewalks - We have some good sidewalks, but many need maintenance and it would be great to get more. Often sidewalks required in connection with construction don't get built and it is hard to find out why. What would you do to improve sidewalks in our neighborhood?</p> | <p>I have worked to expand the City's efforts related to sidewalks – and support continuing to do so going forward. In 2016, my colleagues and I passed and voters approved one of the largest mobility bonds in Austin's history, which included \$65 million for new, ADA-compliant sidewalks and safe routes to schools projects. This year, we have put forward to the voters another mobility bond including \$20 million for rehabilitating existing sidewalks and making them ADA-compliant. I would also be interested in exploring the suggested code revisions City staff put forward in the update to the Sidewalk Master Plan, which could potentially strengthen the City's requirements for sidewalk installation in connection to construction and make it less likely that developments would opt to pay a "fee in lieu" of actual construction.</p> |
| <p>Housing - Many families want to live in this neighborhood, but lately prices are too much for most people. We want more families to live here to keep Mathews full and the neighborhood vibrant. What should we do to enable more people to live here?</p> | <p>I believe that the City should seek to manage the growth we are experiencing, rather than turning our housing policies over to the market.</p> <p>OWANA has one of the original neighborhood plans, which Council adopted in 2000. That plan recognizes the diversity of housing stock that exists in OWANA's neighborhoods and outlines a vision and strategies for providing affordable housing opportunities in order to maintain social and economic diversity. I believe the plan's vision is still relevant today and that any future efforts to revise our land development regulations should be guided by and rooted in this community vision. Before becoming a Council Member, I served on the City's Families and Children Task Force and AISD's Community Committee on Neighborhoods and Schools, both of which recommended that our planning efforts need to encourage family friendly developments if we want to keep our neighborhood schools open and vital. Much of the new development and density that has come online is not family friendly: we need to continue to work toward achieving that goal.</p> <p>Additionally, OWANA has a key community asset in the Clarksville Community Development Corporation, which helps provide affordable housing to families in the neighborhood. I have supported and will continue to support the Clarksville CDC's efforts to provide affordable housing for families.</p> |
| <p>Parks - We've applied for grants to build shade structures in our neighborhood park, but have repeatedly been denied. These applications are time consuming. The sun is trying to kill us. Can you help us get some shade?</p> | <p>OWANA residents have taken a leadership role in advocating for an updated master plan for West Austin Park and important improvements, such as shade structures. I support these community-driven efforts and would like to empower them where I have the authority to do so. Under our City Charter, City Council has the authority to set higher-level City policies, while the City Manager retains the power to implement them. While these limitations preclude me from directing City resources to specific projects, there are a number of avenues I would like to explore in partnership with OWANA, including convening meetings with relevant City staff to discuss challenges and identify potential opportunities and paths forward, helping OWANA residents navigate City processes, and offering official letters of support that OWANA can include in their applications for parks improvements.</p> |
| <p>CodeNext - What should happen next? How would you use the work that was done on CodeNext, Imagine Austin, and neighborhood plans? How would you balance preservation of older neighborhoods with pressure for growth? Do you support adding more density to single family (SF) zoned lots as a way to add housing inventory?</p> | <p>I believe that CodeNEXT fell short by not reflecting community feedback and priorities – and that any future efforts need to be truly community-driven.</p> <p>For instance, CodeNEXT initially proposed zoning maps that diverged significantly from Council-adopted neighborhood plans, including in OWANA. While some problems were corrected in subsequent drafts, many community concerns remained, including about expanding the ability to have bars and about the potential for increased zoning entitlements driving up land values and making it harder for residents to stay in the neighborhood.</p> |

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| | <p>In response to what I saw as the lack of consideration of this community feedback, I opposed CodeNEXT as drafted and worked with several of my colleagues to develop a better and more balanced approach. This vision focused on creating a livable Austin for everyone that is equitable, sustainable, accessible, vibrant, and community-driven. Going forward, I would want to see any future process the City pursues to change our Land Development Code rooted in these values, in our residents, and in our existing, Council-adopted plans. OWANA's Neighborhood Plan includes infill tools such as accessory dwelling units, and past studies have demonstrated that existing zoning in many neighborhoods does provide opportunities for, in some cases, significant increases in housing units. I support these strategies, along with those identified in Imagine Austin for focusing increased density along major corridors and in activity centers. We must take a context-sensitive approach rather than one that just broadly increases density entitlements.</p> |
| <p>STRs - Do you support the city's existing regulations of short term rentals? Should the law or the enforcement be changed?</p> | <p>Yes, I support the city's existing short-term rental regulations. I led the effort in 2015 to revise the ordinance to preserve homeowners' abilities to rent their property on a limited basis as short term rentals, but to phase out the investor-owned, commercial short term rentals that operate as mini-hotels in our neighborhoods.</p> <p>These revised regulations support the City's overall housing strategy and help protect quality of life in our residential neighborhoods. Our regulations maintain the ability for homeowners to rent out short-term space and generate additional income. But they remove the incentive for an investor to purchase a property and convert it from use as a long-time rental or ownership opportunity for an Austin family.</p> <p>Although Austin Code has increased and strengthened its enforcement, some property owners continue to operate illegal short term rentals with flagrant disregard for the city regulations. I have met multiple times with the director of Austin Code and with the City Manager to explore possible next steps that could help, including escalating more cases to district court and re-evaluating city costs to ensure that staff time is fully reflected in the fees and fines assessed. This work is ongoing.</p> |
| <p>Parking - Streets are crowded and it can be difficult to navigate and find parking, but on-site parking requirements make development more expensive. How should the city balance parking requirements?</p> | <p>I support policies that enable the City to require and manage parking in a way that maintains quality of life for our residents. Currently, the City has a number of policy tools regarding parking, including baseline parking requirements and allowable requirement reductions if certain context-sensitive criteria are met. For areas facing parking issues, the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) Program, which requires vehicles to display a permit when parking during certain times, can be a potential option, as well.</p> |
| <p>Budget - What parts of Austin's budget are the most overfunded? What are the most underfunded?</p> | <p>I wouldn't really describe any area of the City's budget as "overfunded." Areas where I would like to see the City focus increased investments include health and human services, affordable housing, and in our parks and pools.</p> <p>While the current budget proposal includes increased investments in these areas, we need more resources— particularly with regard to funding programs for our most vulnerable neighbors.</p> <p>Last year, I advocated successfully for an additional \$2 million for programs serving individuals experiencing homelessness, including childcare for women staying at the Downtown shelter and an innovative "Pay for Success" permanent supportive housing model. However, the Action Plan to End Homelessness, which I led the Council in adopting last Spring, identifies an additional \$30 million that is needed to end homelessness in this City. While the proposed budget does fully fund the Housing Trust Fund for the first time since a resolution I sponsored expanded the amount of money flowing into this program for building and preserving housing, we</p> |

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| | <p>will need to continue to work as a community to raise more money from the public, nonprofit, and private sectors to generate more resources.</p> <p>Additionally, the need for the City to help the Austin Independent School District support public education for our children has expanded as state-level policies continue to drain the school district of local resources. I have led efforts to ensure support for our students by funding afterschool programs and AISD parent support specialists. The City must continue to work closely with AISD to partner and collaborate on additional funding strategies, including pursuing the possibility of a “tax swap.”</p> |
| <p>State - The state legislature and governor overruled Austin last session on so much and threatened more. What do you think we should do to anticipate this happening?</p> | <p>It is clear to me that many state and federal officials do not share our progressive Austin values. The governor, especially, has put forward a number of proposals to curtail local control. While these actions are concerning, I believe that we, as locally elected officials, have a responsibility to pass policies that are appropriate to our city and reflect our community values.</p> <p>Our Intergovernmental Relations Office works with state and federal officials to represent the City of Austin’s interests at those levels of government, as well as coordinating with other strategic stakeholders, such as their counterparts in other local governments. When our legislative team’s strategy included having an Austin elected official testify, I have made myself available and will continue to do so. These efforts will continue to be important to representing the priorities and interests of local control at the state and federal level.</p> |
| <p>Funding - Would you consider TIF financing so that future taxes on new development, for example the AISD headquarters, could be leveraged for improvements such as to parks and sidewalks in Old West Austin?</p> | <p>I am always open to evaluating proposals for using creative policy tools such as tax increment financing or public improvement districts to support needed infrastructure. During my time on Council, I have supported TIFs in cases where I believed that mechanism is an appropriate use; I also believe in being cautious about their use since they are removing property taxes that would otherwise flow to the General Fund. In the case of the AISD property, existing Council policy dedicates all taxes from formerly-untaxed lands to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. It is possible, however, that the resulting redevelopment could trigger parkland dedication fees and sidewalk infrastructure improvements and/or fees in lieu.</p> |

| Question | Danielle Skidmore |
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| <p>Election - What is the most important thing to be aware of in this election?</p> | <p>Not succumbing to the exclusionary, divisive powers at the state and federal level—continuing to reflect our welcoming and inclusive Austin values in all levels of Austin governance, from maintaining our status as a city that welcomes all residents as a ‘freedom city’ to facilitating more diverse and accessible neighborhoods.</p> |
| <p>Neighbors - How can OWANA neighbors get involved to help the city?</p> | <p>To expand upon the answer above, I think OWANA neighbors could take a leading role in supporting efforts to make space for affordable housing in West Austin in order to reduce displacement of communities being pushed farther east, north and out of Austin entirely.</p> <p>The history of Clarksville, one of the only black communities on the west side of Austin not displaced by the segregation of the 1928 Austin masterplan and the subsequent redlining of the 1930’s is a big part of the history of Austin. After decades of marginalization, the loss of ½ of the neighborhood by the original MoPac construction, and the near loss of the remaining parts by the ill-conceived crosstown expressway, community leaders stood up to protect their home.</p> <p>Although the forces of gentrification have long ago changed the neighborhood, I am proud of the commitment of the community and the Clarksville Community Development Corp (CCDC) to continue to provide affordable housing within the community. Within Clarksville and in the larger OWANA neighborhood, we have an amazing opportunity to welcome affordable housing and diverse communities back into our borders; we must live our progressive Austin values in our own backyard. I know that we can be a model for the whole city where we all come together and work to intentionally add affordable housing.</p> |
| <p>Neighborhood - What should the city be doing to help this neighborhood?</p> | <p>What I heard in a recent ANC meeting I attended was a real need for meaningful community engagement to reestablish lines of trust between the City and neighborhood leaders. I would propose a comprehensive effort to gather the research <i>together</i> about how development affects property taxation and other neighborhood concerns, to utilize data-driven insights from these efforts find a real truth we can all believe in, and then to invest in educating the community about our findings before we move forward.</p> <p>Also, as a neighborhood that borders the MoPac expressway, with the east west arterials of Enfield Road and 5th and 6th streets within our limits, it is imperative that the city work proactively to ensure the traffic safety for the community is preserved and enhanced, for local drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians.</p> |
| <p>Sidewalks - We have some good sidewalks, but many need maintenance and it would be great to get more. Often sidewalks required in connection with construction don’t get</p> | <p>As my own son Peter, who many of you may know, is in a wheelchair, this issue is of particular importance to me. There is no excuse for not having sidewalks on connecting roads that are important for community members to access our neighborhoods. It would be helpful to have a solid line of</p> |

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| <p>built and it is hard to find out why. What would you do to improve sidewalks in our neighborhood?</p> | <p>communication with an OWANA liaison to identify instances when sidewalk construction is not being upheld, to more easily rectify violations with the city.</p> <p>Recognizing the limitations of the city budget, OWANA and other community groups, such as ADAPT and WalkAustin can help make sure the limited resources are targeted to the most important projects for the community with the best benefit/cost ratios.</p> |
| <p>Housing - Many families want to live in this neighborhood, but lately prices are too much for most people. We want more families to live here to keep Mathews full and the neighborhood vibrant. What should we do to enable more people to live here?</p> | <p>There is land owned by the city that remains underutilized, but could take on new life as affordable housing to welcome diverse families—including many examples in District 9, such as the largely unoccupied parking lot next to the Clarksville Community Health Center on Toyath. I expand upon this example in a recent blog post on my campaign site: https://www.danielleforall.com/blog/turf-underfoot-roofs-over-heads</p> |
| <p>Parks - We've applied for grants to build shade structures in our neighborhood park, but have repeatedly been denied. These applications are time consuming. The sun is trying to kill us. Can you help us get some shade?</p> | <p>We need to devote more resources to efforts under the strategic outcome Health and Environment, and to work with the Austin Parks Foundation through public-private partnerships to achieve our neighborhood goals. We also need to work proactively with PARD to cut through bureaucracy and get things done. —similarly to how over a dozen years ago our community, with Randi Shade's help was able to get Peter a special-needs swing installed in Mary Baylor Park. This was a swing that PARD already owned and had in storage.</p> |
| <p>CodeNext - What should happen next? How would you use the work that was done on CodeNext, Imagine Austin, and neighborhood plans? How would you balance preservation of older neighborhoods with pressure for growth? Do you support adding more density to single family (SF) zoned lots as a way to add housing inventory?</p> | <p>As an engineer who sees the growth challenges our city is facing—and as a former full-time West Austin resident who faced accessibility challenges to stay in our own home, when Peter and his wheelchair outgrew the stairs— I know the current issues we're facing in affordability and mobility are real, and are the result of the current land development code and its shortcomings; they're the result of us leaving problems unsolved. Just because it's hard doesn't mean we should give up, and as we make room for more Austinites, both immigrants and those born within our city, we owe it to ourselves to struggle through resolving what we've set out to do.</p> <p>That being said, the concerns of people wary about development, and the motives of developers, are real... they're real, because in the past decade, they haven't seen a diversity of affordable or even market rate housing being built—especially in District 9. If we want to change culture so that builders operating under market forces start to really consider and value the needs of the people moving into these structures, we should start with what we have control over as a city government: city owned land. My answer above on underutilized space fleshes out my ideas for what to do with that land more fully.</p> <p>As for preservation in current neighborhoods, one of the most important things we can do is give current residents tools to be able to afford to stay in their homes. With property taxes through the roof, more ADUs to help folks</p> |

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| | <p>generate supplemental rental income is a one way to do that. I had a good conversation recently about ADUs with Jim Duncan from the Zoning and Platting commission about opening our minds to allow more, but smaller ADU's on property. This could create real benefits toward affordability.</p> <p>Where practical , large SF lots, such as corner lots, can also support more housing units for more families. Perhaps this could involve smaller minimum lot sizes, or more limited setbacks to achieve a goal of a greater diversity of housing options. They key is to work with the community to find solutions together. We can absolutely build more housing units at a neighborhood scale that enhances the community.</p> <p>We can also preserve our neighborhoods' quality of life by ensuring our streets are not overrun with regional traffic from MoPAC, that a real transportation plan is put in place that is not simply routing overflow traffic through neighborhoods. Our current public transportation options do not yet meet the needs of most of Austin. We need to do much better, and the current draft of Project Connect is a good start. Luckily we have the opportunity to elect a transportation engineer to help finally guide the city towards its implementation.</p> |
| <p>STRs - Do you support the city's existing regulations of short term rentals? Should the law or the enforcement be changed?</p> | <p>When my family travels, we often use short-term rentals for housing, as it often meets our needs with my son Peter better than a hotel.</p> <p>I think the city should absolutely have the right to regulate short term rentals, just as the city has a right to enforce laws and codes for safety and nuisance. Given recent Texas Supreme court decision and the State's decision to have the District Court of Appeals take up their case against the city ordinance, it is quite possible the local ordinance may need be revisited in the future.</p> <p>I think our community can find a way to balance the benefits of short term rentals with the needs and concerns of the community. Enforcement of problematic properties, whether owners, long-term or short-term renters must absolutely be a city priority.</p> |
| <p>Parking - Streets are crowded and it can be difficult to navigate and find parking, but on site parking requirements make development more expensive. How should the city balance parking requirements?</p> | <p>I believe that as we move toward implementing the Imagine Austin plans that are less reliant on vehicle traffic, this problem will lessen over time. More bikeable, walkable neighborhoods with better access to public transportation will mean less need for onsite parking.</p> <p>Moving forward, the automobile-centric concept of development, with substantial off-site parking requirements is absolutely unsustainable. Reducing off-site parking requirements is an excellent step toward improving housing affordability and creating more human-scaled communities. Now, as we reduce parking requirements, we can and should use all the tools at our disposal mitigate impacts to existing communities - parking meters, 15-minute parking zone, residential parking permits, etc.</p> |

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| <p>Budget - What parts of Austin's budget are the most overfunded? What are the most underfunded?</p> | <p>As public safety is the largest portion of our city's budget, it is the logical place to look for ways to improve our city's economic sustainability . I value very much the efforts of our police, fire and EMS to keep us safe; I also think policing is not the only determinant of public safety, and certain initiatives—such as Austin Transportation Department's Vision Zero, increasing lighting in parks and spaces for public recreation , and improving mental health services—can substitute aspects of policing in a more cost efficient manner.</p> <p>As far as the most underfunded pieces of our budget, Community Housing and Development hasn't had sufficient resources to achieve our goals in real, affordable housing throughout all city districts. I'm excited about the Affordable Housing Bond (Prop A), and the opportunity it presents for us to change that.</p> |
| <p>State - The state lege and governor overruled Austin last session on so much and threatened more. What do you think we should do to anticipate this happening?</p> | <p>I think it is important to elect a council member who has experience with, and has no fear of, fighting back for Austin values at the Capitol. Peter and my family spent a lot of time there together, starting in 2005 when we advocated alongside March of Dimes to increase newborn screening in Texas and help other kids like him lead healthier lives. I spent even more time back there last year, fighting the bathroom bill which—as a trans woman—hit very close to home. Austin must continue to be beacon for progressive values here in Texas and I would be honored to fight with the city again.</p> <p>The most troubling challenge to Austin's sovereignty as a home rule city is the potential legislation to further limit our city's ability to control our tax rate. In addition to fighting alongside other Texas cities for our right of self determination, the city manager and council must work carefully to ensure that our city budget is as efficient and possible to limit to potential catastrophic impacts to city staff and services should this be imposed upon us. The city manager's draft 2018-2019 budget was a good start.</p> |
| <p>Funding - Would you consider TIF financing so that future taxes on new development, for example the AISD headquarters, could be leveraged for improvements such as to parks and sidewalks in Old West Austin?</p> | <p>I'm all for TIFs! They are a useful tool to help provide and direct community benefit in areas of redevelopment. With respect to the AISD headquarters site, I would consider the use of a TIF for parks and sidewalk improvements.</p> <p>I do, however, think that any TIF should be carefully reviewed with the city's equity assessment tools. Funding may be most equitably directed towards affordable housing. For example, the Mueller project TIF supported public infrastructure and 25% of all housing as affordable.</p> |

| Question | Linda O'Neal |
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| Election - What is the most important thing to be aware of in this election? | <p>Every candidate, regardless of seat, is talking about affordability. While that is important, we must hold our leaders accountable for their promises of making Austin affordable again. Too much talk, too much money, and not enough action.</p> |
| Neighbors - How can OWANA neighbors get involved to help the city? | <p>Owana and other neighborhood associations must grapple with growth, affordability, keeping Austin "Austin", while keeping the character of Austin. I work with "low-income" students (I HATE that term, but it's what we got, so....) and when I discuss CodeNext with my students (I leave my opinion out), I am surprised that a major concern is that they want to maintain the "character" of Austin (even when it may not include them due to affordability). They like the old homes and old trees, and if it were up to them, they would LOVE a census control on the city (not realizing that it would go against their interests... these are "love-income" and brown). But that's illegal.... So the question is, how do we maintain what we ALL love about Austin AND keep it affordable? OWANA and the "urbanists" need to put down the race card and compromise. Every section of Austin needs affordable housing. We need "low-income" families in "high opportunity neighborhoods", and we really need to examine our stereotypes of the rich and poor. Rich people have empathy and want to give a hand up to those who are less fortunate, and "low-income" families want the opportunity for their children to become bigger than the neighborhood they grew up in. Diversity is everything.</p> |
| Neighborhood - What should the city be doing to help this neighborhood? | <p>The city needs to come up with something better than CodeNext. Every draft was worse than the one before. Yes, we need to make room for our new residents. Yes, it's better for the environment if we build up, than build out. Yes, more supply drives costs down. BUT, we are building up AND out, and that is not going to change. Population is increasing faster than we can build. AND building more supply will not drive down costs because building costs are HIGHER. My irritation with CN was the false promises, not compromising with neighbors, and not allowing a petition. We need to make room. EVERY major city is dealing with this. We also need to be mindful of how we are demolishing houses that are 1978 and older. Lead dust is a PROBLEM that we are ignoring. Look to Detroit and see what they are dealing with regarding demolition and lead dust. This needs to be addressed NOW. There are safer ways to demolish homes. (wet demolition, Baltimore style demolitions).</p> |
| Sidewalks - We have some good sidewalks, but many need maintenance and it would be great to get more. Often sidewalks required in connection with construction don't get built and it is hard to find out why. What would you do to improve sidewalks in our neighborhood? | <p>Pay for them. Don't talk about mass transportation if you can't even provide a friggin' sidewalk. AND stop making citizen's provide it with every remodel. It is a requirement that all remodels have sidewalks. This is disjointed and stupid. This is a city issue. Fix it.</p> |
| Housing - Many families want to live in this neighborhood, but lately prices are too much for most people. We want more families to live here to keep Mathews full and the | <p>Lease to purchase programs.</p> |

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| neighborhood vibrant. What should we do to enable more people to live here? | |
| Parks - We've applied for grants to build shade structures in our neighborhood park, but have repeatedly been denied. These applications are time consuming. The sun is trying to kill us. Can you help us get some shade? | YES. And please can we get some dang shade at bus stops. Don't talk about mass transportation if you can't provide four posts and a roof and a dang sidewalk |
| CodeNext - What should happen next? How would you use the work that was done on CodeNext, Imagine Austin, and neighborhood plans? How would you balance preservation of older neighborhoods with pressure for growth? Do you support adding more density to single family (SF) zoned lots as a way to add housing inventory? | Compromise. Otherwise the city will rebrand it and resell it, costing us another 8 million dollars. Let's compromise. Both sides. Real compromise. |
| STRs - Do you support the city's existing regulations of short term rentals? Should the law or the enforcement be changed? | Yes... until this gets more affordable, let people make their money. |
| Parking - Streets are crowded and it can be difficult to navigate and find parking, but on site parking requirements make development more expensive. How should the city balance parking requirements? | The street is public parking. Build parking garages once a neighborhood becomes the next big thing. |
| Budget - What parts of Austin's budget are the most overfunded? What are the most underfunded? | No comment |
| State - The state lege and governor overruled Austin last session on so much and threatened more. What do you think we should do to anticipate this happening? | People! If the front door keeps slammin' ya in the face, then go in through the side door. Infiltrate. Look, Texas is an open primary state. We progressives need to be voting in the Republican primary and voting in Republicans who are reasonable. This last primary, we had more reasonable Republicans running for state, and we ignored them! We all voted for Beto! DUMB. We need to get comfortable with the Republican stamp and vote in reasonable people, while staying Democrat at hear. |
| Funding - Would you consider TIF financing so that future taxes on new development, for example the AISD headquarters, could be leveraged for improvements such as to parks and sidewalks in Old West Austin? | Yes. AISD headquarters really can be anywhere.... But Old Austin, don't forget the rest of Austin. We're in this together. |