

**Place 1 Race
Candidate Questionnaire Responses**

**Chris Riley
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Responses from Chris Riley

Better Austin Today - May 2009 Election

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

ENVIRONMENT

1. Postponing the construction of the \$500 million “Water Treatment Plant #4” for at least three years

If elected to City Council, will you support the Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, Clean Water Action, Save Our Springs Alliance and others by voting to postpone construction of the \$500 million “Water Treatment Plant #4” for at least three years while the City focuses efforts on water conservation and reuse and comprehensive planning? This would include expenditures for site preparation.

I will support postponing construction of Water Treatment Plant #4 pending completion of an updated water plan, which needs to be a high priority within our Comprehensive Plan. Having served on our Water Conservation Task Force, I was glad to see that its work paid off: our peak pumpage in 2008 – a hot and dry year -- was down to 227 MGD, well below the historical peak of 247 MGD in 2005. And there is much more to be done to reduce our per capita water consumption. I will prioritize additional investments in water conservation, as well as expanding capacity at our Ullrich and Davis plants, ahead of construction of WTP4. Based on the city’s own numbers, it seems clear that we should be able to postpone construction of WTP4 for at least three years.

2. Protecting East Austin from the dumping of trash and toxic waste

Many in the Austin community have championed environmental causes, yet the areas to the east have been and are continuing to be dumping grounds for trash and waste not only from Travis county but surrounding areas. If you are elected to the City Council, will you set as a priority ensuring a safe and healthy quality of life especially for those in East Austin by working with all citizens and city staff to learn about threats and to ensure better protection of all citizens.

Yes, absolutely. Community involvement on these issues has brought some successes in recent years, such as the cleanup of the East Austin Tank Farm and the establishment of the Oaks Springs Water Quality Protection Preserve. But much more remains to be done. One priority for me will be to provide more support for community gardens in East Austin, where rich soils offer opportunities for the cultivation of a healthy, local food supply.

3. Eliminating environmentally destructive and hazardous energy sources

What measures would you take to help the City of Austin phase out coal as an energy option? Are you willing to commit to not only no further ownership investment in the South Texas Nuclear Project but not enter into future power purchase contracts from the STNP?

I would move aggressively to increase our access to renewable energy. I see Austin Energy’s currently proposed goal of 30 percent renewables by 2020 as a floor, not a ceiling. I support placing a 30 MW solar plant on the Webberville Tract, significantly expanding the presence of photovoltaic arrays on our rooftops, pursuing concentrated solar and wind options, and stepping up our efforts on energy storage to make both wind and solar more

viable options for meeting base load demand. I would also expand our efforts on energy conservation—for example, through increased coordination between Austin Energy’s GreenBuilding program and ACC, and through additional water conservation measures. I would oppose further ownership investment in the South Texas Nuclear Project, and I would also oppose future power purchase contracts from the STNP.

4. Protecting the Barton Creek Watershed

If you are elected to the City Council, will you vote to oppose upzonings (increase in density and environmental impacts) in the Barton Springs water shed? Will you also oppose debt financing of toll roads in the city’s Drinking Water Protection Zone that would encourage sprawl in the Hill Country and Edwards Aquifer recharge zone?

Yes, and yes. I will oppose upzonings in the Barton Springs Protection Zone that would result in an increase in the density and environmental impact on the watershed, and I will also oppose debt financing of toll roads in the city’s Drinking Water Protection Zone that would encourage sprawl in the Hill Country and Edwards Aquifer recharge zone. Additionally, I will actively support an interim bond election for transportation and open space, so that we can take advantage of the current real estate slump by acquiring additional open space and easements that will mitigate pressure to build costly road infrastructure over the aquifer.

GENERAL

1. Honoring maximum height limits established in the 1986 Waterfront Overlay District

The Waterfront Overlay Task Force appointed by the City Council has recommended that the maximum height limits that were in the 1986 Waterfront Overlay ordinance, omitted in the 1999 “plain English” re-write of the land development code, be reinstated. Will you, if you are elected to the City Council, support reinstating these height limits in the Waterfront Overlay District and oppose any project now in the pipeline that would violate the intent of the 1986 ordinance?

Yes. I respect the recommendations of the Waterfront Overlay Task Force, and I will oppose any project that would violate the intent of the 1986 ordinance.

2. Ensuring community involvement in the Comprehensive Planning process:

The City is about to hire a consultant to help in the development of the new comprehensive plan. However, there has been almost no community involvement in establishing the process and extent of community input that the planning process will use. If elected to the City Council, would you support establishing a community advisory committee, much as was used in developing the 1979 Comprehensive Plan, that includes a full range of community interests including neighborhood, environmental, local and small business, and social equity advocates?

Yes. Active community involvement will be critical to the success of the comprehensive planning process, and a community advisory committee will be an important part of the process.

3. Alleviating the increasing economic burden of middle and low income community residents:

The cost of living continues to climb in our community and Austin is no longer seen as an affordable city for most people in the middle and lower income brackets. Property Taxes are a major factor in the escalating financial burden. While we are facing a financially difficult time, we need to address this problem now and therefore would you be willing to sponsor and actively support a homestead exemption for the City of Austin’s portion of our property tax? If

not what do you propose to do to reduce the growing economic burden on the middle and lower income residents of our community?

At this time, a homestead exemption for the City of Austin's portion of our property tax would compound the financial difficulties our City is facing. In 2005, the City estimated that a 10 percent homestead exemption would cost \$9.7 million, and a 15 percent homestead exemption would cost \$14.5 million. Until we make more progress on our city budget, I don't believe we can afford this exemption. In the meantime, I would support doing everything within our means to reduce the growing economic burden on the middle and lower income residents of our community: for example, by maintaining strong social services; ramping up our efforts on affordable housing; empowering more Austinites to reduce their dependence on cars; helping Austinites reduce their utility bills through aggressive conservation measures; and promoting urban farms, community gardens, and backyard gardening to enable more Austinites to meet their own food needs locally. Details on my affordable housing and transportation platforms are available on my website, www.chrisforaustin.com.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

1. **Community participation in budget planning:**

If you are elected to the City Council, will you support opening up the City budget process to allow for more community input into establishing budget priorities and support the ability of the City Council to set budget priorities and move funding between the various departments and programs to reflect the community's priorities?

Yes. Even Council Members have complained about the lack of openness in the City's budget process in recent years. We need a process that allows anyone to understand and weigh in on our budget priorities. There are some restrictions on moving funding between departments, especially with regard to enterprise funds and CIP projects; but even with the latter, there is flexibility on the timing of projects, and the community should have ample opportunities to speak up on that.

2. **Establishing clear lines of authority and accountability of COA staff and elected and appointed officials**

It is the experience of many Austin stakeholders that COA staff, across all departments, too often make changes to ordinances, regulations, and procedures at administrative decision levels, thus circumventing due legal process and public oversight of those changes. Do you agree with this statement, and if elected to the City Council, will you make it a priority to establish clear and transparent roles for elected/appointed officials and especially COA staff, and work to eliminate the de facto policy-making habits of COA staff?

Yes, yes, and yes. Our codes, regulations, and procedures should be written more clearly to reduce the prevalence of varying and sometimes inconsistent decisions. And appeal procedures should be improved to ensure that interested parties have the right to seek review of adverse decisions.

3. **Involvement of Boards and Commissions with City Council decision-making:**

The increase use of City Council sub-committees is viewed by many as an attempt to bypass the expertise of Board and Commission members. If elected to the City Council, will you make a commitment to reduce the number of Council subcommittees that duplicate Boards and Commissions, respond to the recommendations in the Austin Chronicle article that addresses Boards and Commissions efficiency, and re-integrate City Boards and Commissions in the decision-making process?

Having devoted much of my adult life to serving on city boards and commissions, and having witnessed the expertise and commitment of countless others who have also served, I absolutely support the reintegration of boards and commissions in the decision-making process. I would support revamping the Council sub-committees, but rather than reducing the number of them (which is not addressed in the Austin Chronicle article), I would look to them as a potential mechanism for bridging the communication gap between boards and Council (which is discussed at length in the Chronicle article). I would also support action on the recommendations in the Austin Chronicle article, which are based in part on the 2003 report of the Boards and Commissions Process Review Task Force.

NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Honoring valid petitions:

Valid petitions are one of the most important means that neighborhoods have to prevent inappropriate and intrusive zoning changes. Would you support a neighborhood's valid petition on a zoning case in all cases (with the possible exception of where public safety is concerned)?

I would support a neighborhood's valid petition in all cases except where doing so would compromise an overriding community need, such as public safety.

2. Honoring zoning established in neighborhood plans:

Neighborhood Planning was supposed to help alleviate conflicts between neighborhoods and developers by defining what was and was not acceptable development in the neighborhood, and as such was a balanced compromise between competing interests. However, too often after a Neighborhood Plan is adopted by City Council, and almost before the ink is dry, there are requests to approve zoning changes that are in conflict with the adopted plans. And often these requests are looked at by staff and the boards and commissions in isolation and not in the context of the overall compromises already reached during the planning process. As a City Council member, would you pledge to oppose any change of zoning that is conflict with an adopted plan unless it is supported by the plan implementation or contact team?

I would generally oppose any change of zoning that's in conflict with an adopted plan and opposed by the plan implementation or contact team. I recall a number of cases at the Planning Commission, such as the 2005 case involving Dr. Loya's dental office on E.15th, in which I voted with the neighborhood to oppose a change to the neighborhood plan.

3. Establishing growth capacity in the Comprehensive Planning process:

The City is embarking on developing a new Comprehensive Plan. Do you believe we should examine the issue of what is the capacity of our current public infrastructure and available resources, in particularly water resources, with regard to how we manage future growth of our city?

Yes. Our City Charter expressly requires our Comprehensive Plan to have ten elements, all of which relate to our capacity for accommodating future growth:

(1) a future land use element; (2) a traffic circulation and mass transit element; (3) a wastewater, solid waste, drainage and **potable water** element; (4) a conservation and environmental resources element; (5) a recreation and open space element; (6) a housing element; (7) a public services and facilities element, which shall include but not be limited to a capital improvement program; (8) a public buildings and related facilities element; (9)

an economic element for commercial and industrial development and redevelopment; and (10) health and human service element.¹

An updated master plan for Water and Wastewater is long overdue, and will be a particularly important component of the upcoming Comprehensive Plan process. We need to make sure that our future growth does not outstrip the capacity of our infrastructure and resources.

LOCALLY OWNED BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC HEALTH

1. Keeping our hard earned dollars from exiting the community by stimulating local business opportunities.

Billions of dollars leave the Austin economy each year to buy goods and services that could eventually be produced locally. If elected to the City Council, will you authorize a comprehensive study to detail these opportunities to grow our local businesses?

I strongly support keeping our dollars in the local economy, and I will pursue initiatives aimed at growing local businesses: for example, promoting our local food supply through community gardens and urban farms, and working with the private sector to establish a regional materials recovery facility that can process our recyclables here. Given current budget constraints, a comprehensive study might be difficult to undertake immediately; but I agree with the goal of having such a study as soon as we can afford it, and in the meantime I would support any efforts to that end in cooperation with private-sector groups such as the Austin Independent Business Alliance or the Chamber.

2. Committing to locally owned financial institutions for City of Austin banking relationships

The City of Austin's depository agreement (banking relationship), which includes deposits held, is with Bank of America. If elected to the City Council, will you direct the city manager to favor locally owned financial institutions like credit unions, small thrifts, and small commercial banks?

Yes, I would support favoring locally owned financial institutions. One possibility on the horizon is One Earth Bank, which plans to emphasize loans to local, environmentally sensitive businesses.

3. Directing the City of Austin Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office to focus on local businesses.

If elected to the City Council, will you direct the City Manager to instruct the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office to concentrate its Business Retention and Expansion program to concentrate its efforts on locally owned businesses which, dollar for dollar, provide far greater economic and cultural impact for the city?

The goal of the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office is "to enhance livability and economic viability in a manner that preserves the character of Austin and its environment." Local businesses serve that goal well, and yes, I would be glad to direct the City Manager accordingly. In the economic crisis we are now facing, we cannot afford to ignore any responsible opportunities for job creation, so I would expect that some efforts may be directed toward non-local businesses as well.

SOCIAL EQUITY

¹ Austin City Charter, Article X, § 5 (emphasis added).

1. Ensuring that APD prioritizes and focuses on felony crimes over low-level misdemeanors.

The Austin Police Department spends significant resources on arrests and booking of misdemeanor crimes that could be dealt with through a citation process thus saving funds that either could be reallocated to more serious felony crimes or could result in having these funds available for other city priorities. If elected would you support a City Council resolution directing the City Manager and Chief of Police to vigorously implement the citation process for misdemeanor crimes and redirect those freed up funds to other city priorities?

I am pleased that as of this week, APD has implemented a cite and release program. I strongly support this program, and if there are any signs that its implementation is lacking in any respect, I would support a resolution calling for more vigorous implementation.

2. Supporting equal distribution of locally undesirable land uses (LULUS) versus encouraging concentration of such uses in “cheap dirt” areas with already deteriorating “quality of life.”

Often undesirable land uses, such as land fills, maintenance and industrial facilities are located in areas with lower land costs and these areas tend to be in lower income or in predominately minority neighborhoods, especially East Austin. If elected to the City Council will you support calling for the City Manager to direct City Staff to review the location of existing LULU's within our whole community and develop future LULU placement criteria that prioritizes the impact on the adjacent community instead of the relying solely on the cost of land to determine appropriate locations for LULU's?

The placement of any land use should be sensitive to its context. I support prioritizing the impact of any undesirable land use on the adjacent community, rather than relying solely on the cost of land. And given the history of East Austin, we need to be particularly careful in regard to the placement of any locally undesirable land use in that area. I'm not sure we'll be able to undertake a comprehensive study of LULUs right now, but in the event any particular LULU is proposed, I would support a review of the location of similar uses to ensure that they are fairly distributed.

3. Maintaining city services to low and moderate income Austin citizens during economic downturns and proposed across the board city budget cuts.

In anticipation of a \$25 million shortfall during the fiscal year (2008-09 budget), if elected to the City Council, would you assure that any proposals you consider and support for budget cuts would not result in the elimination or reduction in funding for the most needy, underserved and poor in our community?

I can't control what proposals will be considered, but I will work to prevent budget cuts that would result in the elimination or reduction in funding for the most needy, underserved and poor in our community. Cuts in those services at this time would not only be inhumane; they would likely be counterproductive, as they would result in greater demands on city services in the near future.

Responses from Perla Cavazos

Better Austin Today - May 2009 Election

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

ENVIRONMENT

5. Postponing the construction of the \$500 million “Water Treatment Plant #4” for at least three years

If elected to City Council, will you support the Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, Clean Water Action, Save Our Springs Alliance and others by voting to postpone construction of the \$500 million “Water Treatment Plant #4” for at least three years while the City focuses efforts on water conservation and reuse and comprehensive planning? This would include expenditures for site preparation.

Because conservation efforts exceeded expectations in the last year, I fully support postponing WTP4 while we analyze how our conservation efforts might stem the need for a new multi-million dollar treatment plant. We are being responsible stewards of, not only the environment, but also the economy when we take a step back to evaluate needs prior to committing hundreds of millions of dollars to a potentially unnecessary project. Especially in this economic climate, when the City is discussing cuts to social services, it is imperative that we take a critical look at this controversial, multi-million dollar project.

6. Protecting East Austin from the dumping of trash and toxic waste

Many in the Austin community have championed environmental causes, yet the areas to the east have been and are continuing to be dumping grounds for trash and waste not only from Travis county but surrounding areas. If you are elected to the City Council, will you set as a priority ensuring a safe and healthy quality of life especially for those in East Austin by working with all citizens and city staff to learn about threats and to ensure better protection of all citizens.

I absolutely support bringing attention to the inequities in East Austin. As an East Austin resident, you can bet I will be championing environmental protection in the east and citywide.

7. Eliminating environmentally destructive and hazardous energy sources

What measures would you take to help the City of Austin phase out coal as an energy option? Are you willing to commit to not only no further ownership investment in the South Texas Nuclear Project but not enter into future power purchase contracts from the STNP?

I know the City Council voted last week to end a partnership with STNP. If I had been on the Council, I also would have voted to end a partnership with STNP.

The future of our energy is clearly in alternative, renewable sources: wind, solar, biomass, etc. As such, I would support the phasing out of coal. I am excited about the current solar, wind and biomass projects that Austin Energy is currently undertaking and believe we should strive to increase our renewable energy goals.

8. Protecting the Barton Creek Watershed

If you are elected to the City Council, will you vote to oppose upzonings (increase in density and environmental impacts) in the Barton Springs water shed? Will you also oppose debt financing of toll roads in the city's Drinking Water Protection Zone that would encourage sprawl in the Hill Country and Edwards Aquifer recharge zone?

Absolutely. I believe we must seriously limit development in the Barton Springs water shed and instead direct growth toward the desired development zones.

GENERAL

4. Honoring maximum height limits established in the 1986 Waterfront Overlay District

The Waterfront Overlay Task Force appointed by the City Council has recommended that the maximum height limits that were in the 1986 Waterfront Overlay ordinance, omitted in the 1999 "plain English" re-write of the land development code, be reinstated. Will you, if you are elected to the City Council, support reinstating these height limits in the Waterfront Overlay District and oppose any project now in the pipeline that would violate the intent of the 1986 ordinance?

While on the Planning Commission I supported preserving the height limits outlined in the Waterfront Overlay District by opposing projects that requested variances – such as the development at 222 and 300 Riverside. I believe that reinstating the 1986 height limits to the overlays is the appropriate thing to do.

5. Ensuring community involvement in the Comprehensive Planning process:

The City is about to hire a consultant to help in the development of the new comprehensive plan. However, there has been almost no community involvement in establishing the process and extent of community input that the planning process will use. If elected to the City Council, would you support establishing a community advisory committee, much as was used in developing the 1979 Comprehensive Plan, that includes a full range of community interests including neighborhood, environmental, local and small business, and social equity advocates?

Yes. Community involvement is fundamental in ensuring a transparent process. It is also key in directing a realistic outcome to how our city wants to look to the future that is based on community values. .

6. Alleviating the increasing economic burden of middle and low income community residents:

Property Taxes are a major factor in the escalating financial burden. While we are facing a financially difficult time, we need to address this problem now and therefore would you be willing to sponsor and actively support an exemption for the City of Austin's portion of our property tax? If not what do you propose to do to reduce the growing economic burden on the middle and lower income residents of our community?

Something I have been talking about on my campaign is that the cost of living continues to climb in our community and Austin is no longer seen as an affordable city for most people in the middle and lower income brackets.

Options to stabilize affordability and tax burden must be considered. An across the board homestead exemption is not an easy choice because of the impact it will have on the city budget, especially during these tough times. I would support a carefully crafted homestead exemption to address affordability for those most affected. For example, I know some have

suggested a homestead exemption for low-income individuals who have been living in their homes for more than 20 years.

I would support something like this to balance affordability for individuals with the collective impact on the city budget. By carefully crafting such a policy we must account for any negative impact on valuable safety net services provided by the city.

I also believe we must actively pursue ways to increase the affordable housing stock by prioritizing publicly owned land for affordable developments, creating incentives for developers to incorporate affordable housing into their projects, and expanding landbanking in Austin. We should have an aggressive outreach plan to weatherize homes to keep energy use and utilities low and invest in small business lending and subsidies for child care.

OPEN GOVERNMENT

4. Community participation in budget planning:

If you are elected to the City Council, will you support opening up the City budget process to allow for more community input into establishing budget priorities and support the ability of the City Council to set budget priorities and move funding between the various departments and programs to reflect the community's priorities?

Yes. Community involvement is fundamental in ensuring a transparent process for our city plan and our budget. It is also key in directing a realistic outcome based on community values as to how our city wants to look to the future.

5. Establishing clear lines of authority and accountability of COA staff and elected and appointed officials

It is the experience of many Austin stakeholders that COA staff, across all departments, too often make changes to ordinances, regulations, and procedures at administrative decision levels, thus circumventing due legal process and public oversight of those changes. Do you agree with this statement, and if elected to the City Council, will you make it a priority to establish clear and transparent roles for elected/appointed officials and especially COA staff, and work to eliminate the de facto policy-making habits of COA staff?

From my experience at the Legislature, I know that the having a public policy making process that is open to the public and offers numerous opportunities for public participation is key in crafting policies that reflect community policies. Clear lines of authority from staff, council, and the public are paramount not only to our City's government but are a fundamental value of good government.

6. Involvement of Boards and Commissions with City Council decision-making:

The increase use of City Council sub-committees is viewed by many as an attempt to bypass the expertise of Board and Commission members. If elected to the City Council, will you make a commitment to reduce the number of Council subcommittees that duplicate Boards and Commissions, respond to the recommendations in the Austin Chronicle article that addresses Boards and Commissions efficiency, and re-integrate City Boards and Commissions in the decision-making process?

As a former member of two City Commissions, the Planning Commission and the Women's Commission, I expected Council to rely on the information provided by myself and other hardworking Austinites who volunteer their time.

The real issue is about using our valuable board expertise to create good public policy as a resource and not duplicating efforts with City commissions which undermine public participation.

NEIGHBORHOOD

4. Honoring valid petitions:

Valid petitions are one of the most important means that neighborhoods have to prevent inappropriate and intrusive zoning changes. Would you support a neighborhood's valid petition on a zoning case in all cases (with the possible exception of where public safety is concerned)?

Valid petitions are a great way for neighborhoods to exercise their rights to be included in an open and honest public process with the City. From my time on the Planning Commission, I supported neighborhood interests. If elected, I would support the vast majority of valid petitions. But, I cannot say unequivocally I would vote on all zoning cases in one way or another simply because zonings and petitions are best evaluated on a case by case basis.

5. Honoring zoning established in neighborhood plans:

Neighborhood Planning was supposed to help alleviate conflicts between neighborhoods and developers by defining what was and was not acceptable development in the neighborhood, and as such was a balanced compromise between competing interests. However, too often after a Neighborhood Plan is adopted by City Council, and almost before the ink is dry, there are requests to approve zoning changes that are in conflict with the adopted plans. And often these requests are looked at by staff and the boards and commissions in isolation and not in the context of the overall compromises already reached during the planning process. As a City Council member, would you pledge to oppose any change of zoning that is conflict with an adopted plan unless it is supported by the plan implementation or contact team?

We need to be honest with our neighborhoods about the extent to which the City is willing to honor the values of our communities. Citizens have every right to expect that when they are asked to volunteer their expertise to assist the City, their proposals should be respected. I would oppose needless alterations to neighborhood plans by the City.

Establishing growth capacity in the Comprehensive Planning process:

The City is embarking on developing a new Comprehensive Plan. Do you believe we should examine the issue of what is the capacity of our current public infrastructure and available resources, in particularly water resources, with regard to how we manage future growth of our city?

Yes. As pointed out by the debate over water treatment plant #4, it is paramount that we take a step back and realistically plan for our future with a heavy emphasis on conservation and on infrastructure. This would include roads, water resources, energy and the environment.

LOCALLY OWNED BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC HEALTH

4. Keeping our hard earned dollars from exiting the community by stimulating local business opportunities.

Billions of dollars leave the Austin economy each year to buy goods and services that could eventually be produced locally. If elected to the City Council, will you authorize a comprehensive study to detail these opportunities to grow our local businesses?

Yes. Supporting small businesses has been a central part of my campaign. As part of a comprehensive long-range plan for the City we need to be considering small business lending and micro-lending opportunities and partner with groups like the Indigent Care Coalition to help local businesses by helping them to provide health care for their employees.

5. Committing to locally owned financial institutions for City of Austin banking relationships

The City of Austin's depository agreement (banking relationship), which includes deposits held, is with Bank of America. If elected to the City Council, will you direct the city manager to favor locally owned financial institutions like credit unions, small thrifts, and small commercial banks?

The City needs to be doing everything it can to both protect our assets and support our local communities by diversifying our investments in banking institutions that reflect our values. For example, I know a local Austinite, Bill McClellan, is starting a green bank that would use Austin investments to support green industries. I would support the City investing in similar banking institutions to make sure we are taking advantage of opportunities to use Austin capital to support Austin values.

6. Directing the City of Austin Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office to focus on local businesses.

If elected to the City Council, will you direct the City Manager to instruct the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office to concentrate its Business Retention and Expansion program to concentrate its efforts on locally owned businesses which, dollar for dollar, provide far greater economic and cultural impact for the city?

Yes. In my campaign I have been talking a lot about how both my personal and professional background gives me a unique understanding of how investing in local businesses is the right and fiscally responsible thing to do.

I grew up participating in a small, local business: my Grandparent's restaurant. So, I am intimately aware of how when we support local businesses, we support our communities.

Also, through my professional background I have worked to provide micro-lending and small business lending opportunities to support local businesses. I have a great understanding of how supporting local businesses strengthens our economy. This is something the City needs to do more of – especially in our current economy.

Furthermore, I am excited by the opportunities provided by people like Ann Kitchen, of the ICC, and of Margo Weisz, of the People Fund, to support local businesses in accessing health care for their employees and capital for their unique ideas.

SOCIAL EQUITY

4. Ensuring that APD prioritizes and focuses on felony crimes over low-level misdemeanors.

The Austin Police Department spends significant resources on arrests and booking of misdemeanor crimes that could be dealt with through a citation process thus saving funds that either could be reallocated to more serious felony crimes or could result in having these funds available for other city priorities. If elected would you support a City Council resolution directing the City Manager and Chief of Police to vigorously implement the citation process for misdemeanor crimes and redirect those freed up funds to other city priorities?

I support the efforts of people like Debbie Russell and others who have been instrumental in the City's adoption of cite and release policies for non-violent offenses. Policies such as these focus police efforts on more serious offenses, which are likely to increase during our economic downturn. Policies such as these are a good way lower costs for the City in challenging economic times and ensure sensible public safety policies into the future.

5. Supporting equal distribution of locally undesirable land uses (LULUS) versus encouraging concentration of such uses in "cheap dirt" areas with already deteriorating "quality of life."

Often undesirable land uses, such as land fills, maintenance and industrial facilities are located in areas with lower land costs and these areas tend to be in lower income or in predominately minority neighborhoods, especially East Austin. If elected to the City Council will you support calling for the City Manager to direct City Staff to review the location of existing LULU's within our whole community and develop future LULU placement criteria that prioritizes the impact on the adjacent community instead of the relying solely on the cost of land to determine appropriate locations for LULU's?

Yes. From my time on the Planning Commission, it has been my experience that land price shouldn't be and hasn't been the only consideration when considering where to develop LULU's. Considerations such as zoning, neighborhood involvement and the use of city-owned land are necessary considerations. LULU's should be considered for placement throughout the city so we share any unfair burden created by LULU's in particular neighborhoods. One way we can fairly address this issue is what I have been talking about in my campaign: increased public participation in a citywide, comprehensive, long-range plan.

6. Maintaining city services to low and moderate income Austin citizens during economic downturns and proposed across the board city budget cuts.

In anticipation of a \$25 million shortfall during the fiscal year (2008-09 budget), if elected to the City Council, would you assure that any proposals you consider and support for budget cuts would not result in the elimination or reduction in funding for the most needy, underserved and poor in our community?

Absolutely, yes. We can't balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable. Affordability and protection of the neediest in our communities has been a central part of my campaign. By committing to a long-range, comprehensive plan that also addresses the revenue side of our budget, we can ensure the City is doing everything we can to address basic affordability issues (transportation, housing, childcare, etc) not only in the hard times. After all, the neediest in our community – who are being hit the hardest – had great needs before the economic downturn and will after if we don't commit to real solutions to ensure everyone on Austin's economic spectrum can enjoy a high quality of life.