

From: Samuel Osemene [mailto:vote4alonghorn@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2008 7:40 PM
Subject: Re: Better Austin Today - Request for Confirmation

1. I want the endorsement of your organization for a single purpose that has motivated many Austinites across the years. I seek your endorsement to build a better Austin. Both our campaign and your organization have the same vision. A vision that believes we can do better. A vision that says business as usual at the City Hall should be changed. A vision that believes the best way to effect change is to elect people outside the City Hall club and to reject candidates that are being forced upon us by members of the City Council. This is our time to say no to those that have benefited and contributed to our current problems. Enough is enough. Many will come before you well prepared to sing familiar songs before you. We have heard these songs before.

2. This election is about the beliefs, values and honors we share as a City. Our campaign believes bowling alone is not the right way to move us forward. When elected to the City Council, I will support cutting property taxes which has disproportionately affected the elderly. Something is wrong with a city that does not care for the elderly. I will propose a freeze on the property taxes our senior citizens pay to the city. The era of eminent domain will be over. Private property should be protected. City government should not be confiscating private property in the name of growth. Gentrification is immoral and against the beliefs we share. Traffic is one of the problems we are facing in this city. The current City Council has not done enough to alleviate this problem. Instead more permits are given to developer to build in the City without proposing solutions to the problems. When elected to the City Council, public transportation will be promoted and citizens will be encourage to leave their cars at home and use public transportation. Individual freedom will be promoted. The City Council is currently considering banning the use of cell phones while driving. This is a bad idea. There are many ways we can reduce auto accidents instead of targeting only those that use cell phones. The idea of installing cameras on public roads in order to deter people from running a red light is misguided. Our freedom is being taken away in the name of public safety. Which company is benefitting from this scheme?

I support community policing. This is one of the ways to reduce crimes. When elected to the City Council, I will support giving more resources to the Austin Police Department Gang Unit. Gang activity is on the rise. My experience will help the community in addressing this issue before its too late.

Protecting the environment is a task that must be done. We need someone at the City Hall that will work with the community in order to move this city forward. I'm that candidate. Austin is a special city because of its diversity and ability to adapt to different ideas that will promote the welfare of the city.

3. Yes. I strongly believe in open government. The City Council works for the people. And council members are the servants of the people. When elected to the City Council, I will not be afraid to disclose the names of those that I met with. Place 4 will be the peoples Place. One of the problems the City is facing today is that elected officials have sold out the interest of the ordinary people to those that fund their campaigns.

4. The City Council has created more problems for the citizens of Austin more than many could have ever imagined. I remember when Austin used to be one of the best places to live in the United States. When was the last time Austin was on the top ten best places to live? Something went wrong somewhere. And that something that went wrong is what this election is all about. We cannot continue to watch a small group of individuals mismanage and misuse power to the detriment of our common values, beliefs and economic interests. This is our time to recapture the aura of good governance and accountability. The era of revolving is over. Never should we elect candidates anointed and appointed by current City Council members. The future of this city is in our hands. As was wisely stated by Winston Churchill that the difference between a politician and a statesman is that a politician always looks towards the next election while a statesman looks towards the next generation . We should strive to leave this city to our children better than we found it. That is why I'm a candidate. This election is about the future. The stakes are high and the choice is crucial because there are many differences amongst the candidates. These differences are as deep and wide as they have never been in the history of our greate city.

5. Yes I support the Citizens of Austin electing a city attorney. The City's attorney should be independent of the City Council for checks and balances to prevail. The attorney should be accountable to the people not elected officials.

6. This is why the City's attorney should be independent of the City Council. Any type of misconduct or abuse of power should be referred to the City attorney's office for objective investigation and prosecution.

7. Yes . The current system is currently working. My fear of changing it is that the city will become more divided along racial, economic, social and religious lines. This is one city. Our diversity unites us. City Council members will see themselves as representing only a part of the city if the current system is changed . If the currently system is not sufficient for the population, the city can opt to increase the number of city council members to eight.

8. I do support a system where voting machines can issue receipts. The hand counted ballot paper is also welcomed.

9. Yes. This involves consulting and recruiting community leaders in decision makings. Citizens should be part of this process.

10. a--I believe citizens should be consulted before any decision is made.

b--citizens should be given information on demographic, economic and infrastructural datas before a decision is made.

c--public education is important . When elected to the City Council, public consultation will be promoted.

11. I will support neighborhood associations petitions on zoning cases. I will not support Councils decisions to override a valid petition against a private citizen.

12. The causes of this problem are many fold. The City Council does not respect individual rights. Proper consultation and deliberation as required in a civil society are not being pursued by the City Council, and the power of special interest against the interest of the people. As a City Council member, I will give back the City to the people by getting people more involved in the political process.

13. Fair and even enforcement of the city codes and adopting best practices to enhance competence and productivity.

14. I will support buying land in water protection zone. We should protect our environment at all cost.

15. I will not support and will vote against any decision to bring nuclear or coal plants in this city. There are other alternative sources of energy that the city can pursue.

16. I support smart growth. I will not support an ordinance that will displace private citizens in the name of growth. The zoning laws as they relate to protecting our neighborhoods should be pursued. Preservation of our old neighborhoods will be my top priority. The City failed its obligation to the people when it turned its back against the residents of Allendale Neighborhood.

17. Community participation is necessary in order to promote public welfare. I will support giving citizens the power to decide what type of businesses should be located in their neighborhoods. The City Council should be an agency of the people to effect the changes needed in our community. Government is there to serve the people not the people serving the government.

18. Public services for the people will be my top priority when elected to the city council. The City budget should reflect the needs of the people.

19. The disparities in economic, education, housing, public safety and the environment amongst different groups is self evident in our city. One of the ways to ameliorate these problems is to make them affordable to everyone regardless of race, religion, gender and other factors. Equal opportunity should be promoted. Invest in education and encourage local businesses.

22. The City should not raise taxes on the backs of the poor. Subsidies given to companies should be re-evaluated. The City has to encourage these companies to invest and allocate resources to the health care district. I will not support subsidies for corporations. The City has a budget deficit partly because of the bad policies the City Council has followed in the past six years. Poor people need help not big corporations.

23. When elected to the City Council, I will support the public housing initiatives. There should be no limit on the number of housing for our citizens. The City should be willing to spend whatever it takes to provide housing for Austinites. Policy should be determined by needs not costs. A moderate/low income housing is a home where the leaders of our city will like to live. Whatever standard that is good for the Mayor and the Council members is good for the poor.

There should not be a second class citizens in terms of housing. Social and economic class should not determine who deserves the best housing.

24. The City Council should support local businesses. Instead of the City Council giving corporate subsidies to their political contributors at the expense of local businesses, when elected to the City Council, I will fight for the rights of local businesses. I will support giving local businesses the incentives they deserved. They are the back bones of our local economy.

25. Yes. I will support stopping the corporate domain subsidies. This practice has corrupted our political process. City Council elections have been high-jacked by these corporate **masters** in the name of economic growth. The role of the City Council has been redefined by these heartless economic parasites.

26. One of the reasons the tax subsidies have not solve the economic problems is because only the poor and the middle class bear the brunt of this bad policy. The only way to change this trend is to elect people who do not work for the interest of these corporations.

28. I will support local businesses. No more corporate subsidies at the expense of local businesses.

29. I support the music industry. The current trend of building more residential homes in the Downtown district will eventually lead to the demise of the music industry. Going by past and current experiences, the City Council will eventually pass a city ordinance that will make it impossible to play music in the Downtown district. We should be mindful of who resides at these residences. The rich and the famous. I fear the Downtown district will become a restricted area in the future. I will fight against any City Ordinance that will directly or indirectly give the Downtown district to the rich and famous.

30. I deserve your endorsement for many reasons. I'm the only candidate in this election that is not being funded by corporations and special interest groups. I'm being supported by the common interest groups like yours. I will not be bought . I will not be sold. I 'm not being sponsored by any City Council member(s) that has a political score to settle. I'm the true outsider who shares your frustrations and hopeful future for our city. I'm a candidate for the Austin City Council Place 4 because I believe this city will rise again. In order to move this city forward; let us discard the low expectations that have been forced upon us by those that doubt our resilience and courage to change the system. Let us recapture the mood of optimism and faith that define this great city. Let us join together to ease the pains of today while working for the gains of tomorrow. Let us set aside the cynicisms created by the dangerous policies of the past and present and strive for the good society that we are known for in the world. Let us recapture our place as one of the best places to live in the world by voting for Sam Osemene. I urge the residents of this great city to embrace the challenges we are facing today with courage, grab the opportunity of changing these irresponsible and dangerous policies with vision and enter into tomorrow with abiding faith , hope and confidence. We should always be guided by the understanding that we have been given this opportunity to change incompetence because providence has seen it fit to trust the responsibilities of guiding the future of this city upon us. We

should take a cue from other cities where public servants know that their jobs are secure to the extent that they make accountability their forte. Policy makers have constructed cocoons around themselves by implementing policies and exhibiting behavioral patterns that emphasized their own exalted status and the ordinariness of the people. The electorates are now accountable to elected officials instead of the opposite. The City Council has embraced the idea that we the people will have our say and they (elected officials) will have their way. The City Council has become destructive of our common interest and it is our right to change it. The powers possessed by Council members were given to them by the people. We are the people.

I seek your endorsement because I believe we can do better. The future generation are depending on us to effect a positive change. Status quo is not an option in this election. I will always stand with you for justice, equity, equal economic and social opportunities. The choice is clear. More of the same or new ideas, change, transparency, and accountability. We cannot afford replacing the same people with their surrogates. Remember, the current City Council has demonstrated repeatedly it does not listen to the will of the people. You should not listen to their surrogates when they come before you singing the same old song that has put our city in dire need for change. Thanks.