

**ATX Safer Streets 2014 candidate questionnaire.**

**Responses are unedited and appear as submitted by the candidate, except as indicated by brackets [].**

**The percentage under each candidate's name is a score based on how frequently their responses mirrored our responses to each question.**

**The order the candidates are listed are the order in which they responded.**

**If you have questions please email [outreach@atxsaferstreets.org](mailto:outreach@atxsaferstreets.org).**

**ATX Safer Streets is a volunteer run, grassroots non profit.**

## **MICHAEL CARGILL - DISTRICT 1**

**79%**

**How would you explain your understanding of ATX Safer Streets mission and principles?**

I love the grassroots approach to getting things done.

**What is your opinion on the state of transportation in Austin? (Please touch on CapMetro, taxis, TNCs as well as personally owned vehicles)**

Austin is continually growing and we must end the indecisiveness of the City Council. We must work with the community and experts to develop a comprehensive traffic plan that includes rerouting commercial trucks, reversible lanes, and encouraging alternative work schedules. The City Council should engage county and state government, and local businesses in its efforts to encourage working from home, telecommuting, carpooling, the use of public transportation and staggering work hours to drastically reduce congestion on Austin's roadways without limiting the public's access to services. Restructuring bus routes and bus stops could improve the public's access to transportation for commuting to work and at the same time relieve traffic congestion.

**Do you believe Austin has a transit shortage? (Not enough taxis, buses, etc.) Why or why not?**

Yes - We need more busses and bus stops.

**Do you believe that Austin has enough "for hire" transportation options? (Taxis, pedi-cabs, TNCs, limousines) Why or why not?**

No - We need to support Uber and Lyft to get Austin Moving.

**Do you support an expansion of our current transit system to accommodate daily commuters? Why or why not?**

Yes - The City Council should engage county and state government, and local businesses in its efforts to encourage working from home, telecommuting, carpooling, the use of public transportation and staggering work hours to drastically reduce congestion on Austin's roadways without limiting the public's access to services.

**Do you support a more comprehensive late night service plan for downtown visitors, hospitality and graveyard shift employees? Why or why not?**

Yes - I'm tired of seeing Austenite's begging for a taxi once the bars have closed.

**Do you support the current urban rail initiative? Why or why not?**

No - The rail to no where is too expensive to not address traffic on IH35.

**Would you support utilization of city owned parking lots and garages as overnight parking areas on weekends as a means to prevent drunk driving? Why or why not?**

Yes - We need to promote prevention buy providing options.

**Do you support the legalization of regulated Transportation Network Companies (such as Uber and Lyft) in Austin? Why or why not?**

Yes - Read above

**Do you support increasing the number of permanent taxi permits in Austin?**

Yes - This will help when the bars close at 2am.

**Do you support temporary "peak time" permits for special events to allow licensed out of town cabbies to meet increased demand?**

Yes - We need more taxis.

**Would you support using designated "cab stands" for downtown pick up as an alternative to "street hails"? Why or why not?**

No - This gives police a reason to start ticketing.

**Do you personally use public or alternative (taxis, TNCs, bicycle) transit? If yes, how frequently?**

No

**Would you be willing to join other officials in going without personal vehicles for a week to study, first hand, what issues Austin commuters are facing?**

Yes

**Why do you believe ATX Safer Streets should endorse you?**

I support Uber and Lyft to get Austin Moving. Austin is continually growing and we must end the indecisiveness of the City Council. We must work with the community and experts to develop a comprehensive traffic plan that includes rerouting commercial trucks, reversible lanes, and

encouraging alternative work schedules. The City Council should engage county and state government, and local businesses in its efforts to encourage working from home, telecommuting, carpooling, the use of public transportation and staggering work hours to drastically reduce congestion on Austin's roadways without limiting the public's access to services. Restructuring bus routes and bus stops could improve the public's access to transportation for commuting to work and at the same time relieve traffic congestion. Let's roll, Austin!

## **ORA HOUSTON - DISTRICT 1**

**71%**

### **How would you explain your understanding of ATX Safer Streets mission and principles?**

The mission and principles of ATX Safer Streets are in alignment with my vision for the community.

Many of my neighbors throughout the district work in the service and hospitality industries. It is important to keep them safe and provide an integrated transit system which offer them efficient options

### **What is your opinion on the state of transportation in Austin? (Please touch on CapMetro, taxis, TNCs as well as personally owned vehicles)**

Transportation is one of the major linchpins to a connected, employed, well educated community. The orientation on frequent, dependable transit options is north/south. Growth is in the Business district and on the edges of and beyond District #1. We must have conversations about including transit options which will move people into and out of the city from the edges and provide a circular system of connectivity. I support rail in the most appropriate configuration which will take the most vehicles off the road.

### **Do you believe Austin has a transit shortage? (Not enough taxis, buses, etc.) Why or why not?**

Yes - Especially during extremely high volume events. The rate of growth over the past 15 years was, in my opinion, unplanned and unsustainable. The lack of planning has created consequences that were not considered...what are the appropriate transit options and where are the appropriate locations , for example. There must be a balance between growth, where it is located and the availability of transit options. As the city moves to geographical representation there is an opportunity for the conversation about an integrated transit system including urban rail, to be discussed in a holistic way.

### **Do you believe that Austin has enough "for hire" transportation options? (Taxis, pedi-cabs, TNCs, limousines) Why or why not?**

Yes - Downtown perhaps Yes. Around the edges, especially during the peak events and times, probably not.

**Do you support an expansion of our current transit system to accommodate daily commuters? Why or why not?**

Yes - Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan indicates that most of the development will be in the East. Currently, there is not a transit system or plan in place that addresses the growing demographic or will help people who have been moved to the edges of the city leave their cars at home and use transit.

**Do you support a more comprehensive late night service plan for downtown visitors, hospitality and graveyard shift employees? Why or why not?**

Yes - Austin is #1 on a lot of list. It is also becoming known as a 'entertainment destination' and a 'party town'. If that is something that the city continues to promote, it is time now to put transit systems in place to provide safe, reliable and cost effective transit for visitors, and the folks who work in the industry.

**Do you support the current urban rail initiative? Why or why not?**

No - I support transit solution, including urban rail, what will improve the entrance into the city and the connectivity within the city. As I have indicated the solution must focus on encouraging people who are moving to the eastern edges of the city and beyond to leave this cars at home or park and ride and take rail or express bus into the dense 'urban core'.

**Would you support utilization of city owned parking lots and garages as overnight parking areas on weekends as a means to prevent drunk driving? Why or why not?**

Yes - We need to do as much as we can to discourage drunk driving.

**Do you support the legalization of regulated Transportation Network Companies (such as Uber and Lyft) in Austin? Why or why not?**

Yes - My primary focus is for the public safety of the people who live in and/or visiting the city. Would be available to having conversations with ATX Safer Streets to gather their input.

**Do you support increasing the number of permanent taxi permits in Austin?**

Yes - That sounds reasonable I am willing to explore and consider.

**Do you support temporary "peak time" permits for special events to allow licensed out of town cabbies to meet increased demand?**

Yes - Yes. During peak times like SXSW, it is important for folks that have been drinking to easily and safely find a ride home that doesn't require them to get behind the wheel.

**Would you support using designated “cab stands” for downtown pick up as an alternative to “street hails”? Why or why not?**

Yes - Cab stands seem like a safer alternative for the customer and a time and gas saving solution for cab drivers.

**Do you personally use public or alternative (taxis, TNCs, bicycle) transit? If yes, how frequently?**

Yes - Infrequently

**Would you be willing to join other officials in going without personal vehicles for a week to study, first hand, what issues Austin commuters are facing?**

Yes

**Why do you believe ATX Safer Streets should endorse you?**

I want to work with groups who are advocating for safer streets and different transit options throughout the city. It is important to find common ground and common sense solutions based on our concerns for a safer Austin. I believe this is a value throughout the city, it will take sitting together, willing to listen, getting creative to craft the best system for the city.

## **NORMAN A JACOBSON - DISTRICT 1**

**57%**

**How would you explain your understanding of ATX Safer Streets mission and principles?**

I am not familiar with them

**What is your opinion on the state of transportation in Austin? (Please touch on CapMetro, taxis, TNCs as well as personally owned vehicles)**

I think that we are spending way too much for Trains, that are barely being used and have bus service available to duplicate train service and better

**Do you believe Austin has a transit shortage? (Not enough taxis, buses, etc.) Why or why not?**

No - It only takes about 20 minutes to get a cab

**Do you believe that Austin has enough “for hire” transportation options? (Taxis, pedi-cabs, TNCs, limousines) Why or why not?**

Yes - I don't go downtown much, I don't see a problem

**Do you support an expansion of our current transit system to accommodate daily commuters? Why or why not?**

No - The present system is presently being under used. Especially the \$ 4 Billion Dollar Train System.

**Do you support a more comprehensive late night service plan for downtown visitors, hospitality and graveyard shift employees? Why or why not?**

Yes - Transportation businesses more efficiently use their facilities with longer operating hours.

**Do you support the current urban rail initiative? Why or why not?**

No - The money could be used more effectively for other purposes. The train seems to be aimed to benefit the more affluent areas of town (more money for campaign contributions)

**Would you support utilization of city owned parking lots and garages as overnight parking areas on weekends as a means to prevent drunk driving? Why or why not?**

Yes - I would support it also for general use of the public. Many Cities have City owned parking lots. eg. Santa Monica, CA

**Do you support the legalization of regulated Transportation Network Companies (such as Uber and Lyft) in Austin? Why or why not?**

Yes - I think that they can provide services to the public

**Do you support increasing the number of permanent taxi permits in Austin?**

Yes - Our Population is increasing

**Do you support temporary “peak time” permits for special events to allow licensed out of town cabbies to meet increased demand?**

No - I think that the local drivers should be allowed to benefit from increased demand

**Would you support using designated “cab stands” for downtown pick up as an alternative to “street hails”? Why or why not?**

Yes - I would suggest that it would supplement street hails.

**Do you personally use public or alternative (taxis, TNCs, bicycle) transit? If yes, how frequently?**

Yes - It's my only means of conveyance

**Would you be willing to join other officials in going without personal vehicles for a week to study, first hand, what issues Austin commuters are facing?**

Yes

**Why do you believe ATX Safer Streets should endorse you?**

I am running for District 1, City Council. Fluoride is not a hot topic. However, it should be.

It seems as though no one has crunched the numbers from the research data, except for me. I have found statistical research that shows that in Non-Fluoridated Cities the death rate from Bone Cancer is 195 per 100,000 population and in Fluoridated Cities the death rate from Bone Cancer is 220 per 100,000 population. this results in 25 Bone Cancer Deaths per 100,000 population from Fluoridated Water in Austin, TX. This is  $850,000 * (25/100,000)$  Deaths from Bone Cancer = 212 persons per year. According the Center for Disease Control (CDC) we receive \$38.00 in benefits for each \$ 1.00 spent for Fluoridated Water and the cost is 50 cents cost per person/year. Cost to fill a cavity \$60.00. This is  $0.5 * \$38.00 = \$ 19.00$  per year.  $\$60.00/19.00 \Rightarrow 3$  years per cavity.  $\$19.00/365 \Rightarrow \$ 0.05$  per day per person. Does \$0.05 a day justify killing 212 people a year? It is estimated that Mosaic, Inc. receives over \$ 53,000,000. in benefits (for not having to used licensed dump sites for the poison fluorides they are dumping into the Austin Environment through Fluoridated Water) per year in increased profits. that is over \$ 1 Million per week. Potentially Mosaic could donate (or bribe) with \$ 7 Million to each of the 7 present City Councilman and still be ahead.

## **VALERIE MENARD - DISTRICT 1**

### **71%**

#### **How would you explain your understanding of ATX Safer Streets mission and principles?**

The mission of ATX Safer Streets is to improve safety for late night customers in Austin's entertainment corridors via improved transportation options, e.g. buses, taxi's, trains, and overnight parking.

#### **What is your opinion on the state of transportation in Austin? (Please touch on CapMetro, taxis, TNCs as well as personally owned vehicles)**

Driving in Austin is awful. It used to be that you got some relief when students returned home but no longer. It's been a while since I've ridden the buses since graduating from college but on the campaign trail, I've heard complaints that Capital Metro buses run infrequently and irregularly, or not at all in certain parts of town, including District 1. The current proposed rail line from Highland Mall ACC campus to Riverside is also unappealing to folks in my district.

#### **Do you believe Austin has a transit shortage? (Not enough taxis, buses, etc.) Why or why not?**

Yes - Judging from the current traffic congestion, it's clear that we need freeways, not toll roads, to get traffic flowing again, and from the dissatisfaction voiced by my constituents, CapMetro has not met needs of commuters.

#### **Do you believe that Austin has enough "for hire" transportation options? (Taxis, pedi-cabs, TNCs, limousines) Why or why not?**

Yes - Pedi-cabs abound downtown and I haven't had much difficulty flagging a cab on the rare occasions that I need one.

**Do you support an expansion of our current transit system to accommodate daily commuters? Why or why not?**

Yes - Next to high property taxes, congestion is one of the major issues for Austin citizens and we need to address it.

**Do you support a more comprehensive late night service plan for downtown visitors, hospitality and graveyard shift employees? Why or why not?**

Yes - We need to recognize and address the needs of downtown workers as well as consumers in our entertainment corridors.

**Do you support the current urban rail initiative? Why or why not?**

No - I cannot support property tax increases at this time and the current plan would not significantly affect congestion. This is a major concern for residents in District 1.

**Would you support utilization of city owned parking lots and garages as overnight parking areas on weekends as a means to prevent drunk driving? Why or why not?**

Yes - It makes sense. I would also support reinstating free parking after 6 p.m.

**Do you support the legalization of regulated Transportation Network Companies (such as Uber and Lyft) in Austin? Why or why not?**

Yes - Yes so long as regulation includes background checks for drivers and compliance with safety regulations for the vehicles. We need more options and more competition usually means lower costs for consumers.

**Do you support increasing the number of permanent taxi permits in Austin?**

Yes - We need more options and increased competition usually translates into lower costs for consumers.

**Do you support temporary "peak time" permits for special events to allow licensed out of town cabbies to meet increased demand?**

No - I'd like to work with local cab companies first to improve service. Out of town cabbies, unfamiliar with the city and brought in at peak times may cause more problems than solutions.

**Would you support using designated "cab stands" for downtown pick up as an alternative to "street hails"? Why or why not?**

Yes - It would improve safety.

**Do you personally use public or alternative (taxis, TNCs, bicycle) transit? If yes, how frequently?**

Yes - Infrequently

**Would you be willing to join other officials in going without personal vehicles for a week to study, first hand, what issues Austin commuters are facing?**

No

**Why do you believe ATX Safer Streets should endorse you?**

I support the mission of ATX Safer Streets, and as a public servant, my first priority will be to improve safety for Austin citizens.