

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.

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

John C. Sheppard - DISTRICT 2

93%

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

Austin has a large diverse workforce, many of whom work varying shifts, including throughout the night. That fact, along with Austin's vibrant downtown district create a necessity for more public transportation options.

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

The state of transportation in Austin is lacking options. More options, especially safer alternatives to single drivers in vehicles need to be utilized.

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

Yes - There are not enough late night and early morning transportation options and there is not enough connectivity to areas in the South and South East of Austin's Central Business / Entertainment district.

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

Yes, No - Yes, and no. Taxi / pedi cab owners and operators could argue that there is too much competition in the daytime, however, it is easy to see that there are not enough options late at night / early morning hours.

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

Yes - Daily commuters are the predictable 'fixed cost' that can make more transportation options viable.

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

Yes - The need for more comprehensive late night transportation options is pretty much self-evident. It would be a convenience for tourism / late night visitors, a boon to public safety, and should be expected of a community with such a vibrant night life.

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

No - The current urban rail initiative does too little, for too few. It is yet another example of "insider politics" and real estate speculators who want to push growth to their desired areas. Any transportation spending should focus on areas of need.

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 - Any reasonable initiative that could prevent drunk driving should be utilized. Usage of city or state owned lots and garages would seem to be an easy, common sense way to cut down on drinking and driving.

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

Yes - TNC's should be legal, as long as they are registered and safe.

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

Yes, No - An increase in taxi permits should be considered if warranted.

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

Yes, No - Temporary permits for 'out of town' cabbies should be considered only as a last resort.

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

Yes - Cab stands would seem to make hailing a taxi safer. Unless there is some reason why this shouldn't be considered, it seems like a common sense approach to increasing public 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?

Yes

Why do you believe ATX Safer Streets should endorse you?

ATX Safer Streets should endorse me as the candidate for Austin City Council District 2 because I have pledged to improve transportation options for all Austinites, especially those in South and South East Austin that have been under served. I have worked at the state Capitol (an 8am-5pm daily commute), and for a brief moment, while a student, on 6th St at Maggie Mae's,(late hours till 2-3am), and I have worked at El Lago Tortillas (e.4th st - usually starting at 4am), so I have a wide spectrum of understanding about the needs of Austinites who have been under served by our current transportation mosaic. I will be the City Council Member that will help foster increased, safer options for all Austinites, at all times of day and night.