

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.

LESLIE POOL - DISTRICT 7

100%

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

A coalition of citizens whose mission is to advocate for expansion and improvement of Austin's downtown transit and parking infrastructure as a means to reduce intoxicated driving. ATXSS' goals are to ensure easy and convenient 24 hour transportation in Austin.

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

People need many, multi-modal transit options - taxis, trains, buses, bicycles.

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

Yes. Austin is now a 24-hour city, and there is an enormous demand for safe rides home at night.

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

No. Transportation options need to grow in proportion to the city growing.

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

Yes. Rapid, reliable, easy-to-access transit can help people decide to get out of their cars.

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

Yes. Downtown doesn't close when office workers end their days. As a destination, downtown Austin is an economic driver that benefits from the variety of shops, bars, restaurants; people; at all hours of the day or night - weekday & weekend.

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

Yes. I support rail in general as one of the many multi-modal means of transportation needed in an urban region. The current ballot proposition, however, is flawed and may very well not pass. The ballot should have split the rail and road packages so people could have an honest vote and vote for what they prefer. If this rail

initiative fails, the city will need to keep looking for a balanced approach that provides options to improve our traffic.

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 action that reduces the chance of a drunk driver being on the road increases safety.

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

Yes. Analyze how TNCs operate in other cities (e.g., LA, Chicago) and measure the size of the need for expanded car service in Austin. Metrics would include: number of cars, where they operate, provisions to safeguard passengers, drivers, and other motorists; ensure potential risks are reduced.

The city regulates the taxi industry, balancing demand v. supply for driver livelihood, to ensure public safety (insurance, background checks) and that access extends to all parts of town/all folks (fares in all geographic areas, ADA accessible cabs). Regulations should apply to all franchises. The City must exercise oversight/regulation to protect the safety of the public and to ensure visitors are not rate-gouged.

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

Yes. As Austin grows and becomes more of a destination for tourism and businesses, demand will increase. How to address this should be based on an analysis that includes TNCs that want to operate in Austin, the level of current service provided from all franchises, and the extent and general location of the unfilled need.

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

Yes. Visitors to Austin should have a reasonable expectation that they will be able to get from point A to point B without a lot of trouble. At peak times, we should have sufficient multi-modal options for moving about the city.

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

Yes & no. Done properly cab stands have the potential to reduce traffic hazards compared to street hails. An additional consideration is how easy a cab stand is to find and get to, however, and how they are clustered to ensure traffic is not impeded. Catching a ride should be as safe & convenient as possible for locals and visitors.

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

Yes. A couple times a week

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?

As a longtime resident, I have experienced Austin's (continuing) growing pains. I recognize that creative thinking and a willingness to pilot projects to determine efficacy can be important when charting the City's future.

JIMMY PAVER - DISTRICT 7

86%

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

The mission of ATX Safer Streets is to reduce drunk driving by advocating for the provision of alternative transit options.

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

Austin relies too heavily on personal vehicles as a primary means of transportation. We must look at the whole picture – improving and expanding roads will carry us only so far, we must have a public transit system that focuses on maximizing ridership where demand exists. It must be reliable and frequent in order to attract sufficient ridership that will ease road congestion. I think TNCs are a really positive addition to our transit options but these companies need to operate within the compliance standards laid out by the city.

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

Yes. In terms of physical public buses, I think we have sufficient supply (for now at least) but our route system doesn't address demand appropriately. Our taxi supply falls below the demand, particularly in the evenings when, beyond driving our personal vehicles, our public transit options are very limited. Extending our bus schedule to at least 2am on the weekends (3AM would be better) is one of the most important changes that needs to be made.

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

Yes. We do not have enough taxis. Even on a normal weekend, it is very difficult to hail a cab. The presence of Lyft and Uber has alleviated some of this pressure and most anyone I have spoken with has had a positive experience with TNCs in terms of availability and service. Pedi-cabs are certainly an abundant option as well.

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

Yes. Our current bus system is not reliable or convenient enough to accommodate demand at peak hours. We need to consider ridership first. Our transit policy has not put this key variable in front of predicative patterns of growth. Policies that address existing demand first, have been shown to be the building blocks of a successful transit system. We need to expand our bus system with priority given to addressing high-demand areas first.

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

Yes. After midnight, we have virtually no public transit options beyond the urban core. Workers and partiers alike need to have safe, affordable and accessible alternatives to late-night driving.

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

No. I fully support the concept of urban rail but, I am not in favor of the current proposal from ACC South to ACC Highland. A few of the reasons why: cost of \$110 million a mile, projections of less than 1% reduction in road traffic and a route that sidesteps areas of existing demand. Most importantly, this proposition saddles weary residents with additional tax burdens they cannot afford. I agree we must do something but, don't believe this is the only and best option.

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. City-owned parking spaces are an important resource for city employees and city operations so yes, but only to the extent that these areas are still available during business hours. Additionally, I would suggest that proof of alternative transit use (much like the current policy for overnight parking at street level) be required to prevent individuals from parking in those spaces long-term.

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

Yes. These companies offer Austinites a safe, convenient transit option and it seems that the demand for their services is high.

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

Yes. Supply falls far below demand for "for-hire" transit, especially late at night and on the weekends.

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

Yes. Only if our force of in-town cabbies is not sufficient or if there is little demand for those permits by in-town cabbies

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

Yes. This would allow for some centralization of supply/demand.

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

Yes. A couple times a week

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 committed to advocating for a public transit system that focuses on maximizing ridership where demand exists. It must be reliable and frequent in order to attract sufficient ridership that will ease road congestion.

I am the only candidate in District 7 with over a decade of public policy experience at the state and federal level & the know-how to navigate these agencies. My background will allow me to jump right into productive working relationships with state and federal authorities to finally address our city's traffic woes.

JEB BOYT - DISTRICT 7

93%

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

ATX Safer Streets has been working to build awareness of how dangerous our streets are, particularly late at night. ATX Safer Streets advocates for more responsible transportation options. ATX Safer Streets has worked to form valuable partnerships in support of its mission.

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

There's good and bad about Austin's transportation. We're all aware of the bad: increasing congestion, uncertain travel times, and more people moving to town everyday.

The good is that we have a broad range of initiatives for improving transportation. The launch of B-cycle Bike Share has been a tremendous success. The Mopac managed lanes are under construction. MetroRapid is running on North Lamar and South Congress and will shortly start on Burnet and South Lamar. MetroRail has received federal and state grants to upgrade and expand its service. Through Project Connect, we're developing a vision for improving public transportation throughout Central Texas. Urban Rail will be on the ballot this November.

More projects are being planned, like Lone Star Rail and rebuilding I-35. We're tackling our transportation problems, but there are significant challenges ahead to secure the funding and political support needed to complete these projects.

In District 7, there is a need for sidewalks and better bikeway connections. In particular, the corridor linking ACC Metric to the Kramer Lane Station to the Domain and Pickle Campus and to the Arboretum is in need of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements to provide people with safe transportation alternatives.

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

Yes. There is demand for additional services and expanded service hours for both MetroBus and MetroRail. Taxis are not able to meet our regular demand, particularly late at night, and are overwhelmed during major events.

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

No. Taxis have not been able to meet demand during regular weekends and particularly not during special events.

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

Yes. There is a great deal of demand for increasing our transit service. Through its corridor plans, Project Connect is compiling lists of individual projects, as has been done with the North Corridor plan. The challenge will be in finding the funds to implement these projects.

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

Yes. These workers need to have safe and reliable ways to get home.

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

Yes. Through my work with the Alliance for Public Transportation, I have actively taken part in the development of the current urban rail proposal and all of the prior discussion for more than a decade. We need high capacity transit. We need transit that will support land uses consistent with the vision of a compact and connected city set forth in the Imagine Austin comprehensive plan.

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. This seems like an idea worth exploring. Though, I would prefer initiatives that gave people more choices about how to get to, around, and home from Downtown other than driving their own cars.

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

Yes. TNCs could play a valuable role in meeting the demand for for-hire services, particularly during major events.

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

Yes. Generally I support increasing the taxi permits. Taxis are not able to meet the current demand. However, full-time drivers are rightly concerned that the market is not so flooded with additional taxis, TNCs, and other services that they will not be able to pay their bills. We need to increase service in a way that is fair to the existing taxi drivers.

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

Yes. Our existing services were unable to meet 40 percent of the demand this year at SXSW. We need to do better.

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

No. Past efforts to implement cab stands have had mixed success. The major Downtown hotels already function as cab stands, and we could encourage a wider use of them as cab stands.

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

Yes. A couple times a week

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 committed to creating safe streets for walking and cycling. I have worked for more than 15 years on these issues through my work with the Alliance for Public Transportation, 2012 Bond Committee, 2010 Bond Campaign, Waller Creek Commission, Downtown Commission, and Austin Metro Trails & Greenways. I look forward to working with ATX Safer Streets to improve the safety and quality of life in Austin.