



# FixAustin.org

Dear City Council Candidate,

As you are likely aware, FixAustin.org is Austin's only non-profit organization dedicated to ending the killing of Austin's lost and homeless pets through the use of proven, cost-effective policies that have ended shelter-killing in communities across the country. In less than two years, FixAustin.org has garnered the support of more than seven thousand Austinites, hundreds of donors, and roughly five hundred subscribers to our animal-welfare e-mail alerts.

To educate the community on the animal-welfare preferences and records of candidates for the upcoming City Council Election, we have put together and attached a short questionnaire for each candidate to answer. After reviewing the answers and animal-welfare records (where available) of each candidate, we will be distributing an Animal Welfare Report Card to our supporters, the Austin community, and the local press.

We understand your time is valuable and have therefore kept our questionnaire very brief. Please return the answers to Ryan Clinton at [ryan@fixaustin.org](mailto:ryan@fixaustin.org) by Wednesday, April 23rd. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ryan at the above e-mail address or by phone at (512) 294-5003.

Thank you and warmest regards,

The FixAustin.org Team

[Attachment]

1. **In October 2007, the City Council voted to relocate Austin’s animal shelter from the shores of Town Lake to a mostly industrial area on the eastern edge of the City. Do you support the decision to relocate the shelter? And if the issue comes before the Council again, how will you vote?**

I voted on the compromise that would leave an adoption center at the current location. If the issue came before Council again, I would want to be sure we had an open process with all stakeholders at the table.

2. **When the Council voted to relocate the shelter, the Council purported to adopt a “compromise” that would keep part of the current shelter on Town Lake open as an adoption center. But the shelter’s management has expressed great confidence that an adoption center on Town Lake will not actually materialize once the shelter is moved.**

- A. **Assuming the shelter is relocated, what is your position on whether an adoption center should remain on Town Lake?**

I support this.

- B. **What steps, if any, will you take to stop shelter management from thwarting the Council’s decision to keep open an adoption center at the current site?**

Once Council passes a resolution, staff is required to implement it. I will ask for regular updates.

- C. **What do you envision the Town Lake adoption center to look like? Would it be open during all regular shelter hours? And what percentage of the animal-services budget do you believe should be allocated to the adoption center?**

The Town Lake Adoption Center should be open regular hours and will be in the remaining usable space at TLAC, in the Davenport building. The percent of the budget will depend on many factors, including necessary maintenance for Davenport, and the success of the program.

3. **Each successful “no kill” community in the United States— San Francisco, CA; Ithaca, NY; Reno, NV; Charlottesville, VA; Ivans County, UT; and Orange County, VA—has become “no kill” by implementing shelter expert Nathan Winograd’s No Kill Equation, which, unlike Austin’s “Mission Orange” plan, places focus on getting animals out of the shelter alive through increased adoptions. Would you commit to demanding the implementation of shelter practices that increase adoptions—like off-site adoptions and volunteer foster programs? If so, would you be willing to direct budgetary expenditures towards these programs?**

The programs I support that can decrease the killing of shelter animals include foster programs, trap-neuter-release programs, working closely in partnership with rescue groups to move animals into their foster homes, the City's spay-neuter programs, especially through partnerships with Emancipet and Animal Trustees of Austin, micro-chipping to increase potential for reuniting owners with lost pets, and off-site adoption programs. I have already supported budgeting funds for these programs, and will continue to do so.

4. **Since 2000, Austin’s pound has sheltered roughly the same number of animals (around 24,000) and killed roughly the same number of animals (around 12,000) each year. During the same period, the pound’s annual budget has nearly doubled to nearly \$5 million. Do you believe that killing roughly half of Austin’s lost and homeless pets—while other communities kill less than 10%—is evidence of effective government and strong shelter leadership? If not, what will you do to change the management of the pound?**

I am concerned about these numbers. I am also concerned that the potential for them to increase has grown because of a new pet store in town that will sell unaltered animals. In response to that concern, I passed a new ordinance to require a fee to be paid to the City (to be used for spay/neuter programs) for every animal that is sold unaltered, and to require microchipping and a certain standard of care.

5. **Would you support the implementation of performance standards that tie management performance to salary increments or bonuses? If not, why not?**

Yes.

6. **The shelter management has discretion to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual donations to the shelter, yet it is unclear—in public documents—where that money is spent. Would you support an audit of the City’s animal-services budget—including all discretionary funds? If not, why not?**

Yes.

7. **No City in America has achieved “no kill” success—defined as killing less than 10% of pets sheltered at the community’s open-admission pound—by implementing a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance. In addition, such ordinances require increased enforcement costs, taking money away from life-saving programs that are correlated with reducing shelter killing. Would you vote for or against a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance for Austin? And why?**

I would want to have an open process to determine where stakeholders and the public stand on a mandatory spay/neuter ordinance before any vote.

8. **What, if anything, do you envision as the role of the Austin Animal Advisory Commission? What kind of person will you appoint to the commission?**

The Animal Advisory Commission's role is prescribed to the City by the state, and it is to review any issue relating to the animal shelter. The membership of the commission is also prescribed by state law, and my appointee is currently the state-required animal shelter operator.

9. **Do you have pets? If so, where did you get them?**

I have a rescued Pekingese named Sammy who is my sidekick. I got him from Texas Pekingese Rescue.