

City Council District 7 Candidate Scorecard

Summary Section

AustinDistrict7's editorial board consists of residents who serve in neighborhood or homeowner associations throughout District 7, or who are local small business owners. The board will evaluate candidates based on eight policy priorities, plus two 'leadership' categories, one citywide and one for District 7.

The scorecard summary section is shown here, with more details on pages 2 and 3.

Livable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Far North Austin needs a library, rec centers o Redress problems with growth on big commercial streets - congestion, late-night noise, buildings looming over private homes, lack of community gathering places, side-street parking
Safe, healthy communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Crime especially acute for Parmer, N Lamar communities. Need better coordination between different law enforcement agencies o Throughout district, people want better code enforcement. Particularly important if City zones more duplexes, eight-plexes with offsite owners
Stable, affordable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Cost of living squeezing out even middle-class families o Need short-term policies for current residents (lower taxes, utility rates, land-banking) o Need long-term policies (more housing that becomes affordable over time) o Reform corporate incentives seen as fueling gentrification
Communities for all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Zone for housing that doesn't exclude children. Support schools o Develop housing, mobility policies for seniors, people with physical disabilities
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Reduce congestion o Invest in sidewalks, bike routes, trees, plazas, seating and play spaces next to transit o Amend transportation plans that ignore North Austin's east-west mobility challenges o Upzone or downzone based on proximity to quality transit
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Add/update storm water, sewers, street lights, sidewalks, curbs. o Analyze area-wide infrastructure capacity when rezoning
Open space and the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Close North Austin's open space gap - 1% open space vs 5% average for urban core o Get the space where it's most needed - in transit-oriented zones o Amend watershed rules to heal North Austin's creeks
Business and Area Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Temper rising commercial rents o Simplify remodeling, other policies important to small business o Level economic playing field - small business shouldn't subsidize big business
Citywide Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What experience does the candidate bring that will help to solve citywide issues?
North Austin Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What track-record does the candidate have of solving problems on the ground here in District 7?

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Detailed Section

The following items were identified by editorial board members when preparing the scorecard.

Category	Candidate Has Shown Leadership and Experience, and Articulated Credible Policies, on the Following:
Livable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 Work towards context-sensitive redevelopment, such that larger buildings are closest to quality transit, and don't loom over private residences. Define strong, measurable rules to prevent abuse of this land use pattern.1.2 Encourage places where a community can gather across age or income lines: public plazas, parks and recreational facilities, sports facilities, places of worship, community-friendly businesses1.3 Support public amenities such as libraries and recreational centers1.4 Protect communities from a concentration of disruptive activity, i.e. late night noise and side-street parking from a bar district
Safe, healthy communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2.1 Improve law enforcement, fire-fighting, EMS, with fair distribution of average first-response times across the city2.2 Work to bring poorly maintained properties into compliance with City standards3.1 Help people live longer in their homes.3.2 Preserve existing affordable and age-inclusive housing, for example by not upzoning in core residential areas away from transit.3.3 Zone new housing that achieves affordability in the future3.4 Address tax and rate relief for today's residents, both home-owners and renters, through effective management of city resources3.5 Offer housing at different levels of affordability, by diversifying housing type and housing age3.6 Temper Austin's demographic growth, and diversify the economy, for instance by reducing or restructuring business incentives3.7 Introduce more methods to keep people in their homes, for instance by land-banking (buying the land under the homes of people who can't pay their taxes).
Stable, affordable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">3.4 Address tax and rate relief for today's residents, both home-owners and renters, through effective management of city resources3.5 Offer housing at different levels of affordability, by diversifying housing type and housing age3.6 Temper Austin's demographic growth, and diversify the economy, for instance by reducing or restructuring business incentives3.7 Introduce more methods to keep people in their homes, for instance by land-banking (buying the land under the homes of people who can't pay their taxes).
Communities for all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1 Encourage new housing and streetscapes that don't exclude children.4.2 Create more housing suitable for seniors, persons with disabilities4.3 Support children and schools with educational and recreational opportunities
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">5.1 Raise quality of public transit, with priority to "last mile" improvements that benefit communities (station areas, plazas, pedestrian/bike connectivity, trees and shade, seating, play spaces)5.2 Reduce congestion on roads and highways

5.3 Zone for lower density in areas lacking sufficient transit and destinations

5.4 Improve bicycle routes and access

5.5 Address long-term plans to improve North Austin's east-west connectivity, in a way that avoids dumping traffic onto any one route

5.6 Encourage walking in transit-oriented areas by shrinking block sizes

Infrastructure

6.1 Address minimum capacity of sewer, storm water, waste water, drinking water. For instance, use capacity as a criterion for zoning decisions.

6.2 Address minimum capacity of sewer, storm water, waste water, drinking water. For instance, add/update infrastructure where missing or outdated.

6.3 Improve pedestrian safety on residential streets by adding sidewalks and street lights, reducing on-street parking

6.4 Maintain affordable and sustainable water quality, power

Open space and the Environment

7.1 Work to close North Austin's open space gap

7.2 Prioritize outdoor features like parks, green space, trees, creek trails, transit plazas, gathering spaces, playgrounds, and sidewalks, in places where they contribute most to walking, biking, transit

7.3 Reduce carbon emissions

7.4 Stabilize and restore North Austin creeks, wetlands; improve their water quality

Business and Area Economy

8.1 Advocate for small businesses, for instance on loans, transportation

8.2 Encourage affordable space for small businesses; simplify remodeling rules

8.3 Level the playing field in incentivizing large vs small businesses

8.4 Demonstrate small business or non-profit experience

Citywide Leadership

9.1 Improve staff responsiveness to citizen and Council input, in particular on issues important to North Austin. Demonstrate awareness and mitigation of staff politics.

9.2 Work towards transparency, especially around fiscal policy

9.3 Build coalitions, especially with neighboring districts, and on citywide issues like Affordability, Transportation, Water, urban Open Space, Austin Energy, shared resources with other government agencies

9.4 Demonstrate a high level of personal integrity

North Austin Leadership

10.1 Show history of civic involvement in District 7 communities

10.2 Listen to constituents, devise credible solutions.

10.3 Demonstrate toughness, credibility to defend the core interests of North Austin's residents and small business people