

# Candidate Questionnaire on Climate and Energy

350 Austin, Solar Austin, Earth Day Austin, Shades of Green

**Candidate Name:** Mitrah Elizabeth Avini

**Candidate For:** Austin District 1 Council Member

- 1. What are your top three priorities for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Austin, and what actions would you take to implement needed changes?**

Promote recycling/reuse

Promote walking and cycling

Encourage local consumption/growing vegetable gardens

Preserve heavily forested wild land; ensure new development adheres to environmental standards, utilizes native plants (to reduce need for watering), preserves trees, and so on.

- 2. As mayor or council member, you will be a member of the Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee. What will you do to make sure that Austin Energy takes the necessary steps to phase out its use of fossil fuels for power generation by 2030?**

This is a matter of budgeting. Demand is also an issue. Addressing population growth may be necessary. Eliminating subsidies and incentive programs that attract relocation to Austin may also be necessary.

- 3. Despite declining costs of solar, many low income residents and multi-family housing tenants are challenged to participate in Austin Energy's existing rooftop solar programs. Do you think it is important to expand access to solar by developing targeted programs and policies at Austin Energy? Please explain.**

I do think it's important to expand access. The up front expenses are a limiting factor in underserved communities. Much of the environmentally-friendly alternatives such as electric cars, solar, wind, et cetera, are simply out of reach.

- 4. Local, distributed scale solar installation has produced values to the utility, community and the local economy. Do you support the expansion of utility investment programs (including rebates) for installing solar locally within the Austin Energy territory? Please explain.**

Yes, but the expansion needs to make solar accessible and affordable to low income communities.

- 5. What specific role and responsibility do you see Austin taking in responding to local, regional and international impacts of climate change, including preparing for large numbers of people displaced by extreme weather events?**

Think globally, act locally – Austin needs to better address equity as one aspect of sustainability. Austin also needs to address the growth of the tech manufacturing industry in Austin, which is problematic.

The City cannot promote massive growth in watersheds, ignore the impact of impervious cover on flooding, and continue allowing the displacement of people of color if it wants to be a genuinely sustainable city.