

Candidate Questionnaire on Climate and Energy

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

Candidate Name: Susana Almanza

Candidate For: Austin District 3 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?

- 1) Explore financing mechanisms to enable energy efficiency, demand response, distributed generation, and energy storage.
- 2) Support efforts to work with large employers and academic institutions to implement and improve trip reduction programs that include a regular survey of how the workforce commutes, explanation of benefits to commuters, and includes promotion of transportation alternatives (e.g. carpool/vanpool, bus/rail, bike/walk, flex/compressed work schedules) to their employees; celebrate successful programs.
- 3) City adopts procurement specifications for materials reuse, reduced packaging, products with low embodied energy, materials with recycled content, and locally manufactured products and the City encourages other agencies and enterprises to follow suit

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?

- 1) Focus just as much effort on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources
- 2) Move toward a cleaner, carbon-free energy future

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.

Yes, there should be targeted programs. Low-income residents should be subsidized for installation of solar panels. The residents that need assistance for utilities should be prioritized for solar installation.

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, there should be targeted programs. Rebates should be targeted. Low-income

residents should be subsidized for installation of solar panels. The residents that need assistance for utilities should be prioritized for solar installation.

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?

All future City planning efforts should incorporate climate change impacts as a key consideration in order to effectively and efficiently manage resources, operations, assets, and infrastructure. Becoming more resilient will involve coordination with regional partner organizations, such as the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA), Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT), and Travis and other surrounding counties. Becoming more climate resilient will be an iterative process of responding to evolving changes in vulnerability, risk, demographics, and City infrastructure. The work will be on-going and will need to be assessed on an on-going basis, using the most current projections and data.