

## **North Austin Coalition of Neighborhoods (NACN) Agenda of Issues Spring 2011**

NACN is a Coalition of 8 Neighborhood Associations Representing 90,000 Citizens:  
Gracywoods Neighborhood Association ([www.gracywoods.org](http://www.gracywoods.org))

Mockingbird Hill Neighborhood Association

North Austin Civic Association ([www.naca-austin.org](http://www.naca-austin.org))

North Creek/Georgian Acres Neighborhood Association

North Park Estates Neighborhood Association

North Star Neighborhood Association

Quail Hollow Neighborhood Association

Walnut Creek Neighborhood Association

NACN: [www.northaustin.weebly.com](http://www.northaustin.weebly.com); [www.main.nacn.org](http://www.main.nacn.org)

1. Briefly state what your top two priorities will be if you are elected.

My top priorities have been and will continue to be: 1. supporting core city services and responsible growth, and 2. running an office that is accessible and responsive to solving citizen problems.

2. What specific initiative or initiatives would you champion for our neighborhoods that would reduce opportunities for crime?

I have been and will continue to be a champion for increasing the number of public safety personnel we have in neighborhoods city-wide, strengthening neighborhood watch programs, increasing 911 call center resources, and improving the training and equipment available to our public safety units. I have also been an advocate for cameras, in officer vehicles, as well as in key hot spot areas of the city. Public safety is critical to our community's health and well-being, and it ranks at the top of the list of priorities in virtually every citizen survey we do. People don't use 911 every day, but when they do, the expectation is that it works and works well. I am honored to be endorsed by all three public safety associations. Austin's Police, Firefighters and Paramedics Associations are supporting me because they know I prioritize the things that help them be more successful in making our neighborhoods safer.

3. What specific initiatives would you recommend or endorse to address the traffic congestion in our neighborhoods?

There is no one silver bullet when it comes to transportation and traffic issues, and the City is one player among many in this region. We need a mixture of transportation modalities. I supported the recent transportation bond proposal for that reason, but also to ensure we had projects in the pipeline until a more comprehensive approach could be offered. This package includes projects with direct benefit to northern neighborhoods, including the Kramer Lane

Multi-Use Trail, between Metric Boulevard and Burnet Road, and the construction of sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure projects to connect transit services, bicycle facilities, and employment centers in the area. It also includes projects in the North Burnet/Gateway area to improve street network connectivity and traffic flow, as well as sidewalk and pavement condition improvements. I have been pleased to see the creation of a Transportation Department during my tenure on the Council and support the Strategic Mobility Planning effort currently underway. It is my hope that this effort be better coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan going forward. I also expect this effort to make it possible to get additional projects funded such as traffic calming, lighting, signage and signals in accordance with neighborhood requests on an ongoing basis. In addition, I want to explore ways the City could do more to help Cap Metro in its mission for better bus service, and do more to promote carpooling, telecommuting and flex-time arrival and departure strategies for major local employers citywide, including your planning area.

4. **What specific initiatives would you recommend or endorse to bring the infrastructure of our neighborhoods up to the high quality and standards expected by Austin citizens?**

Besides the transportation infrastructure initiatives above, I have always felt the City's highest spending priorities should be towards achieving and maintaining clean, safe neighborhoods citywide, and providing reliable, affordable utilities to all citizens. If the City can get those things right, then the other challenges we face as a community are much easier to address. I have supported increasing outreach efforts to bring more community voices into the budget process to help us make better decisions, and I will do so to an even greater extent in a second term. There are utility line and storm sewer projects, as well as parks and recreation center improvements in your neighborhoods that I would support, and I would look forward to working with your neighborhood associations to identify other initiatives, too.

5. **Panhandling is a major problem in our neighborhoods. What solutions have worked in other cities, and what would you propose for Austin?**

Panhandling is a major problem facing neighborhoods citywide, and clearly, it is a problem in your neighborhood to an even greater extent than it is in many other areas of town. While it is not illegal, there are regulations that exist that could be better enforced. There are other things we can do to improve the current situation, too, but no doubt, this is a very complicated issue. I am a strong supporter of ECHO's work to better coordinate services available to people in need of social services, and as Chair of the Council's Public Health and Human Services Committee, I led an effort to re-bid the City's social services contracts for the first time in more than a decade. This effort resulted in prioritizing basic needs such as food, clothing, substance abuse treatment, and case management – all things with direct impact on those living on our streets. I have also advocated for increased funding for the City's emergency shelters, and am supporting the

creation of permanent supportive housing options for those who need it. While I support finding an appropriate partnership between the City and Mobile Loaves and Fishes, I am not supportive of the McKalla Place location. There are cities that have created designated areas for feeding the needy that we could explore, and I am also working with ECHO to participate in the 100,000 Homes Campaign, an effort used in other cities to use a “vulnerability index” to better understand the specific housing needs of those in our community with the most acute needs.