



2009 SAN ANTONIO CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES' QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. How will you protect the Edwards Aquifer, our City's drinking water source, if elected to City Council?

I support the extension of the 1/8 of a cent sales tax to purchase conservation easements over the recharge and contributing zones. We must have full enforcement on the current development regulations, but we should also work to formalize the optional enhanced measures for the protection of water quality in the Edwards Aquifer as delineated in Appendix A of the TCEQ publication RG-384 which provides technical guidance on best management practices for construction over the recharge and contributing zones of the Edwards Aquifer.

2. Please identify priority water issues in your district.

Water problems are regional so actions in District 8 must comply with the broader regional requirements. Specifically in District 8, we need to improve storm water systems which will slow and contain runoff during heavier rain events. Storm water improvements will not only protect lives and property, but will also increase the recharge into the Edwards Aquifer.

3. True or false: The Edwards Aquifer filters stormwater runoff that enters it.

False.

4. According to the 1995 San Antonio Water Quality Ordinance, the amount of impervious cover allowed in the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone is up to 30% for Residential, 50% for Multifamily, and 65% for Commercial developments. (Note: Impervious cover = any surface that does not allow water infiltration). Why are different amounts of impervious cover allowed for different kinds of development?

Having reviewed the original Aquifer Protection Ordinance Number 81491 approved on January 12, 1995 and the approved updates on February 16, 2006, it appears the different amounts of impervious cover allowed for different kinds of development was a negotiated process with the affected parties who held existing zoning rights on their properties. While we might not be in agreement with the variance by type of development, I would work to incorporate more of the optional protection techniques on a project by project basis. In this manner, the quality and quantity of water recharged into the Edwards Aquifer is improved at the established level of impervious cover.

5. Would you support extending impervious cover and land use restrictions (for example, prohibiting uses that might threaten or degrade water quality) to the Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone within San Antonio and the ETJ?

Yes, but we must recognize that this must involve negotiations with land owners and could be considered a taking under the 5th Amendment. This should be the objective, but it will not be free.

6. Would you support a Proposition to purchase land or conservation easements in the Recharge Zone and Contributing Zone within the San Antonio Metropolitan Area?

Yes, as stated in question number one. I prefer purchasing conservation easements because it will protect more land than purchases and could be used as compensation to extend the land use restrictions to the Contributing Zone.

7. What do you propose to relieve traffic congestion on the Northside while protecting the Edwards Aquifer?

First, we should work to balanced development across our City. The North Side has developed rapidly over the last 10 years. We have not appropriately set aside sufficient land for transportation corridors which include bike lanes and pedestrian walkways. Higher density development closer to the center of

the city or employment centers will reduce congestion in the North Side of the city. Second, we must fix public finance for our transportation systems which include all modes of transportation. The fuel tax system is the best method to support transportation systems in Texas, but it has been compromised by vote of the citizens for public education and reallocation by the Texas Legislature to support other services. Third, we can initiate programs now to capture high value and low cost improvements such as light synchronization, turn lanes and shoulder extensions to safely accommodate bikers and walkers.

8. Agree or disagree: Developers have the right to the highest possible return investment on their land.

All individuals have a right to their property. This right was assumed in the Constitution, but specifically protected in the 5th Amendment. Valuation for any piece of land is situation specific. The externalities resulting from a specific use reduces the value which a developer expects to receive for a property. Externalities are difficult to calculate. Affected parties must prove damages to force mitigating actions or payments to compensate the affected third parties. Damages to third parties caused by developers are usually resolved by compromises made by the developers during the rezoning process. If this is not possible then value and damages must be determined by our courts.

Developers and citizens want consistency and a transparent system to resolve disputes. My specific interest is to assist in communication between the parties and assure an open and fair process.

9. Agree or disagree: Land owners are entitled to any rezoning request that is allowed by the Unified Development Code.

Rezoning requests are situation specific so I can not agree or disagree with this generalization. All the affected parties should be brought to the table with sufficient time and complete information to participate in the decision process. In most case this process produces an acceptable solution for all parties. The responsibility of the Council person is to facilitate respectful dialogue among the parties and assure that fair and proper processes are followed.

10. Agree or disagree: Each Council Member knows what is best for his or her own district.

A Council Member should have more knowledge about their individual districts and a closer relationship with the citizens in their district, but might not individually know what is best for the district. I believe that the best solutions come from a broad range of concerned citizens participating in decisions from the district and across the City. Decisions in one part of the City can have impacts in other areas of the City. That is why zoning issues are voted on by the complete Council. Single member districts are geographic areas designated to assure proper representation, but are not independent political entities separate from the City. The City must progress as a whole and not on an individual district basis.