

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org



Citizens' Transportation Coalition

PO BOX 66532, HOUSTON TX 77266-6532

Candidate name: _____ Chris Brown _____

Position sought: _____ Houston City Controller _____

List briefly what you consider to be the top 3 (or 4) obligations for your position or needs of your district (if applicable)

1. ___ Timely and accurate reporting on City finances. _____
2. ___ Wisely managing the City's investment and debt portfolios. _____
3. ___ Increasing financial transparency at City Hall. _____
4. ___ Promoting financial literacy and independence for Houstonians. _____

Topic A: Complete Streets Policy

The Houston Complete Streets Coalition notes that “Streets are a vital part of livable, attractive communities. Everyone, regardless of age, ability, income, race, or ethnicity, ought to have safe, comfortable, and convenient access to community destinations and public places—whether walking, driving, bicycling, or taking public transportation. But too many of our streets are designed only for speeding cars or, worse, creeping traffic jams.” Furthermore, the city policy currently does not adequately address safety.

1.Question: Please explain how you will support the City of Houston’s goal to make the Complete Streets concepts a reality city wide, and particularly, in your specific district’s neighborhoods.

As Controller, I would not have the ability to affect City policy regarding Complete Streets. I will, however, work to ensure the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars, so that resources are available to fund the expansion of Complete Streets, which I support.

2.Question: How would you achieve the following safety features in Houston’s Complete Street & Plan Zero policies?

- a. Complete, Safe, and Maintained Sidewalk Networks?

As Controller I would not have the ability to affect policy regarding this matter, but I do support having complete, safe and well-maintained sidewalk networks.

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

b. Bike Plan Implementation?

As Controller I would not have the ability to affect policy regarding this matter, but I do support having complete, safe and well-maintained bike network.

c. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) federal compliance?

As Controller I would not have the ability to affect policy regarding this matter, but I do fully support ADA compliance.

d. Lower Speed Limits and/or Speed Calming Features?

As Controller I would not have the ability to affect policy regarding this matter, but I do support having safe streets.

e. Reduction in Traffic Deaths?

As Controller I would not have the ability to affect policy regarding this matter, but I do support measures to reduce traffic deaths.

3.Question: How will you pursue the Complete Streets & Transportation Plans to ensure a connected equitable safe multimodal system?

As Controller I would not have the ability to affect policy regarding this matter, but I do support having a complete, safe multi-modal network.

4.Question: Under what circumstances should a developer or utility be granted a variance from sidewalk construction and/or maintenance?

Only under the most extreme of hardships. We need our development community and utility partners to adhere to current CH 42 regulations to ensure adequate and proper build out and maintenance of our sidewalk infrastructure.

5.Question: Instead of allowing utility poles in the middle of a sidewalk, what other solution would you support to resolve this situation?—e.g. have sidewalk go around; have utility site pole to the side of the sidewalk; use of greenspace; underground utility; city regulations for pole placements, etc.

We need better coordination between the COH public works department and utility providers. My father Peter Brown, aka Pedestrian Pete, has been vocal about this issue for some time and I support the idea of better coordination.

2015 Houston City Elections Transportation Issues Questionnaire Citizens' Transportation Coalition

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

Preferences for mobility and reducing traffic congestion are rapidly changing.

The April 2015 Kinder Houston Area Study for reducing traffic congestion

(https://kinder.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/Urban_Research_Center/News/2015%20Kinder%20Institute%20HAS_PDF_4by3-1.pdf)

lists the top 3 transportation modes as

- Roadways: 26% in 2015 (down from 33% in 2009)
- Urbanism: 27%
- Transit: 43%

6. Question: Focusing on urbanism and transit, how will you propose to upgrade infrastructure to facilitate citizens' increased preferences for urbanism and transit as noted in the Kinder/Klineberg study?

We need to further the implementation of a multi-modal transit system that includes rail, bus, ride-share, bicycle and pedestrian networks. All these systems should complement and connect to each other as they do in other world-class cities. This will ultimately improve walk-ability in Houston and the dependence on automobiles.

Topic B: Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking, Signalization, Mobility Studies

Traffic can flow more efficiently if signals are properly synchronized and can reset when they go out. This lessens the time spent in vehicles, reduces the space needed for cars queuing at intersections, and reduces fuel waste and air pollution. Science and modeling have improved since signal syncing was last a major initiative.

Poor signalization is especially a problem on major arterials and freeway access roads around commercial activity centers.

7. Question: Please explain your support (or non-support) for some form of rail, either commuter or light rail, to reduce traffic congestion on major arteries.

As Houston continues to grow, mobility is increasingly limited. We need to look at all transit options to improve mobility, including rail. We will, however, likely need federal funding assistance to expand rail, which is very expensive to build.

8. Question: What efforts should the city, in cooperation with other agencies, do to make computer controlled intelligent traffic light synchronization?

Mayor Bill White led efforts to synchronize the downtown traffic lights in 2004-2005. More can be done city-wide on this effort and utilizing technology is the key.

9. Question: Which measures will you encourage to minimize traffic congestion?

- Promotion of smaller vehicles _____ Yes _____
- Improved Mass Transit _____ Yes _____
- More vehicle lane miles _____ No _____
- More bicycle use _____ Yes _____
- Increased gas tax _____ No _____

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

Topic C: Competing Vehicular Passenger Cars-Jitneys, Ride Share, and Others

10. Question: Please express your views on ride share and jitney programs in Houston as substitutes for single passenger vehicles.

I am supportive of ride share and jitney programs as long as they comply with current COH ordinances.

Topic D: Bike Trails and Bayou Greenway Initiatives

Bayou Greenways is an approximately \$480 million project that will be tackled by many public and private stakeholders in several phases over ten to fifteen years.

When complete, the greater Houston area will have added 4,000 acres of new and equitably distributed green spaces that can also serve the function of flood control and storm water quality enhancement.

We will have also completed 300 miles of continuous all-weather hike and bike trails that will meander through those greenways — an amenity unparalleled in the nation.

(Source: <http://www.bayougreenways.org/bayou-greenway-initiative>)

11. Question: Please describe your position on integrating people, walking, hike, and bike pathways into our public transit system (i.e., Metro, Park & Ride, Transit Center, & Neighborhood connectivity).

I am a big supporter of the Bayou Greenways initiative, which will expand park and green space for all Houstonians, as well as provide needed flood control and storm water management improvements. My wife and I also donated much time and effort into the Parks By You campaign and were thrilled when it passed.

Topic E: Multi-modal Transit Alternatives (Bus, HOV/HOT, Light Rail, Bikes, Ride Share, Jitney, Park & Ride, Walking)

One in five adult Texans cannot or does not drive.

Houston METRO comprehensively redesigned the city's transit system with implementation, and rolled out the new system in August 2015.

Hard choices were made about reducing expensive service to very small numbers of people, where ridership was low despite bus service being the only choice for transportation in these poor/minority communities.

The plan devotes 80% of Metro's resources to maximizing ridership, which all of these frequent lines do, and only 20% to providing access to people living in poor/low ridership areas of the city.

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

12. Question: Please express your views on the need for more transit for the Houston region to serve the one in five adults (plus children) that do not drive.

Houston has, for decades, been a sprawling, car-dependent city. As growth continues and density increases in our urban core, mobility is an increasing concern. In short, we need more options to get Houstonians where they need to go. I support a comprehensive approach, which includes expanded multi-modal transit options, to improve mobility.

Topic F: Passenger Rail – High Speed Rail & Commuter Rail

13. Question: What is your position on developing high-quality rail connections for passengers between Houston and other major Texas cities?

I am generally supportive of developing new rail connections between Houston and other Texas cities, as another option to efficiently allow Texans to travel across our state.

14. Question: How will you as a city official work with constituents to abate the impacts of commuter or High Speed Rail on neighborhoods?

_____ As Controller, I would not have the ability to affect City policy regarding high speed rail. I will, however, work to ensure the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer dollars, so that resources are available to fund the expansion of high-speed rail, which I fully support.

Topic G: Shipping - Freight Rail, Heavy Truck Traffic, Port Authority

15. Question: How should the city and other governmental authorities, such as the Gulf Coast Freight Rail District, cooperate with the state legislature to enact statutes that preserve and allow for expansion of freight rail corridors?

Houston has a large number of at-grade freight rail lines within the city limits, which often pose traffic and safety concerns in neighborhoods. I support financially feasible options to allow needed freight rail traffic with minimal impact on neighborhoods.

Topic H: Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy

16. Question: Should it be a protocol for the design manuals established by Public Works & Engineering (eg Chapter 9 Storm water Design) to be incorporated by reference into ordinances and integrated with other design standards to survive political administration turnovers?

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

This seems like a reasonable approach and I'm generally supportive of continuity and consistency in design standards as this creates efficiencies and ultimately better projects.

17. Question: Does the city have an independent obligation to oversee compliance with planning requirements in order to avoid complaint driven enforcement (i.e., brought up from below by affected citizens who have the money and time to protest)?

I believe the City does have this responsibility but proper enforcement is a function of available resources, which are quite limited given the City's current financial constraints.

18. Question: Do you support designating seats for representatives who are active in neighborhood organizations such as the Super Neighborhood Alliance instead of having a significant number of planning commission seats filled by professionals in the building, real estate, and construction industry?

While as Controller, I would not have the ability to appoint commission seats, I support having a broad ranges of stakeholders participate on these boards and commissions.

19. Question: The Planning Commission and/or City Engineer can grant variances to almost any City Building/Construction Ordinance. How will you reduce the number of variances granted?

As Controller, I would have no influence on the granting of variances.

20. Question: How should the city handle the increased infrastructure demands and other cumulative impacts of Chapter 42?

The City implemented a dedicated drainage fund (2011) through Rebuild Houston that addresses ongoing infrastructure demands. This was recently struck down by the State Supreme Court and the future of the program is now unclear.

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

Here is an overview of the CTC transportation topics and questions.

Question #	Category	Questions for Candidates
Topic A: Complete Streets Policy		
1	Complete Streets Policy	Please explain how you will support the City of Houston's goal to make the Complete Streets concepts a reality city wide, and particularly, in your specific district's neighborhoods.
2	Complete Streets Policy	How would you achieve these safety features in Houston's Complete Street & Plan Zero policies?
		2a Complete, Safe, and Maintained Sidewalk Networks?
		2b Bike Plan Implementation?
		2c Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) federal compliance?
		2d Lower Speed Limits and/or Speed Calming Features?
		2e Reduction in Traffic Deaths?
3	Complete Streets Policy	How will you pursue the Complete Streets & Transportation Plans to ensure a connected equitable safe multimodal system?
4	Complete Streets Policy	Under what circumstances should a developer or utility be granted a variance from sidewalk construction and/or maintenance?
5	Complete Streets Policy	Instead of allowing utility poles in the middle of a sidewalk, what other solution would you support to resolve this situation?—e.g. have sidewalk go around; have utility site pole to the side of the sidewalk; use of greenspace; underground utility; city regulations for pole placements, etc.
6	Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking, Signalization, Mobility Studies	Focusing on urbanism and transit, how will you propose to upgrade infrastructure to facilitate citizens' increased preferences for urbanism and transit as noted in the Kinder/Klineberg study?
Topic B: Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking		
7	Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking, Signalization, Mobility Studies	Please explain your support (or non-support) for some form of rail, either commuter or light rail, to reduce traffic congestion on major arteries.
8	Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking, Signalization, Mobility Studies	What efforts should the city, in cooperation with other agencies, do to make computer controlled intelligent traffic light synchronization?
9	Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking, Signalization, Mobility Studies	Which measures will you encourage to minimize traffic congestion?
		9a · Promotion of smaller vehicles
		9b · Improved Mass Transit

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

	9c	· More vehicle lane miles
	9d	· More bicycle use
	9e	· Increased gas tax

Topic C: Competing Vehicular Passenger Cars - Jitneys, Ride Share, and Others

10	Competing vehicular passenger cars-Jitneys, Ride Share, & others	Please express your views on ride share and jitney programs in Houston as substitutes for single passenger vehicles.
----	--	--

Topic D: Bike Trails and Bayou Greenway Initiatives

11	Bike Trails and Bayou Greenway Initiatives	Please describe your position on integrating people, walking, hike, and bike pathways into our public transit system (i.e., Metro, Park & Ride, Transit Center, & Neighborhood connectivity).
----	--	---

Topic E: Multi-modal Transit Alternatives (bus, HOV/HOT, Light Rail, Bikes, Ride Share, Jitney, Park & Ride, Walking)

12	Multi-modal Transit Alternatives (bus, HOV/HOT, light rail, bikes, ride share, jitney, park and ride, walking)	Please express your views on the need for more transit for the Houston region to serve the one in five adults (plus children) that do not drive.
----	--	--

Topic F: Passenger Rail – High Speed Rail & Commuter Rail

13	Passenger rail - HSR, commuter rail	What is your position on developing high-quality rail connections for passengers between Houston and other major Texas cities?
14	Passenger rail - HSR, commuter rail	How will you as a city official work with constituents to abate the impacts of commuter or High Speed Rail on neighborhoods?

Topic G: Shipping, Freight Rail, Heavy Truck Traffic, Port Authority

15	Shipping - freight rail, heavy truck traffic, Port Authority	How should the city and other governmental authorities, such as the Gulf Coast Freight Rail District, cooperate to enact statutes that preserve and allows for expansion of freight rail corridors?
----	--	---

Topic H: Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy

16	Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy	Should it be a protocol for the design manuals established by Public Works & Engineering (eg Chapter 9 Stormwater Design) to be incorporated by reference into ordinances and integrated with other design standards to survive political administration turnovers?
17	Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy	Does the city have an independent obligation to oversee compliance with planning requirements in order to avoid complaint driven enforcement (i.e., brought up from below by affected citizens who have the money and time to protest)?

**2015 Houston City Elections
Transportation Issues Questionnaire
Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

Return to in MS Word format to chair@ctchouston.org; by 25 Sept 2015; Answer at least one question per Topic Group
DEXTER R. HANDY, Chair, Citizens' Transportation Coalition, phone: 832-724-8753 email: chair@ctchouston.org

18	Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy	Do you support designating seats for representatives who are active in neighborhood organizations such as the Super Neighborhood Alliance instead of having a significant number of planning commission seats filled by professionals in the building, real estate, and construction industry?
19	Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy	The Planning Commission and/or City Engineer can grant variances to almost any City Building/Construction Ordinance. How will you reduce the number of variances granted?
20	Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy	How should the city handle the increased infrastructure demands and other cumulative impacts of Chapter 42?