

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

Return to in MS Word format to [chair@ctchouston.org](mailto: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](mailto:chair@ctchouston.org)



**Citizens' Transportation Coalition**

PO BOX 66532, HOUSTON TX 77266-6532

Candidate name: \_\_\_\_\_ Jack Christie \_\_\_\_\_

Position sought: At-Large 5

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

1. Truly Balancing the Budget
2. Pension Reform
3. Collaboration and cooperation between all levels of government, reducing redundancies
4. Infrastructure repair

**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.

**I have been a supporter of complete streets since the very beginning. I participated with the Mayor in the upcoming complete streets projects**

**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?

**Make sidewalk connectivity a priority**

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b. Bike Plan Implementation?

**Continue to expand the B-cycle program. I have been working with Senator Ellis on this.**

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

**Ensure enforcement**

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

**I will listen to and act upon requests from all neighborhoods**

e. Reduction in Traffic Deaths?

**I will encourage more education about the dangers of impaired driving, not just from alcohol but also from illegal and prescription drugs.**

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

**Sticking with the masterplan for enhanced connectivity**

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

**Very limited**

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**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.

**All of the above. Using the method which best fits the situation.**

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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](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?

**Mandate appropriate guidelines that assist stated goals from developers**

**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.

**I support commuter rail and light rail when funding is available**

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

**I have promoted this for four years. I want all of the agencies that have jurisdiction over signals to participate in synchronization.**

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

- a. Promotion of smaller vehicles **The city has more and more electric cars in its service**
- b. Improved Mass Transit **Yes**
- c. More vehicle lane miles **Yes**
- d. More bicycle use **Yes**
- e. Increased gas tax **No**

**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 have strongly encourages them since I was elected**

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**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 have helped assemble support for the \$200million Bayou Greenway Project with an 8 year timeline**

**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.

**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.

**This multi-faceted system is working to provide transportation options for all Houstonians**

**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 believe the proposed systems are designed to reach as many as possible**

**14. Question:** 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\

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**14. I have always listened to the voices of every neighborhood. I will make sure any concerns are made a priority in the project development**

**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?

**I need more specific information about this topic**

**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?

**The flexibility to apply regulations on a case by case basis is necessary.**

**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 need more information to answer this question.**

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

**I think there should be a balance.**

**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?

**Variances are a way for the city to promote development while allowing neighborhood input.**

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

**The city should continue to monitor the effectiveness of developer impact fees.**

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

Question #	Category	Questions for Candidates
<b>Topic A: Complete Streets Policy</b>		
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?
<b>Topic B: Traffic Congestion, Streets, Parking</b>		
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

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		9c · More vehicle lane miles
		9d · More bicycle use
		9e · Increased gas tax
<b>Topic C: Competing Vehicular Passenger Cars - Jitneys, Ride Share, and Others</b>		
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.
<b>Topic D: Bike Trails and Bayou Greenway Initiatives</b>		
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).
<b>Topic E: Multi-modal Transit Alternatives (bus, HOV/HOT, Light Rail, Bikes, Ride Share, Jitney, Park &amp; Ride, Walking)</b>		
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.
<b>Topic F: Passenger Rail – High Speed Rail &amp; Commuter Rail</b>		
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?
<b>Topic G: Shipping, Freight Rail, Heavy Truck Traffic, Port Authority</b>		
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?
<b>Topic H: Public Infrastructure Ordinances and Policy</b>		
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)?

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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?