



September 14, 2016

Question 1	Why are you seeking this public office? (Please be brief)
Greg Casar	I believe that given Republican obstructionism in Congress and our regressive statewide leadership, the progressive movement must do our policy work in cities and in local government. I've been honored to be a small part of some very important progressive work done at the City Council this last year and a half. I'm committed to continuing to use the City Council as a tool of the people to make progressive change and build our movement.
Question 2	Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics and/or LGBTQ issues? If so please briefly describe this history.
Greg Casar	I have been a lifelong Democrat, and my work before being elected to council revolved around organizing around our progressive principles. I am proud that my office has been involved in LGBTQ issues at the city - something I'll expand upon in the specific questions below.
Question 3	Do you believe LGBTQ individuals should be protected against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression?
Greg Casar	Absolutely- I am glad we have nondiscrimination laws in Austin, but we have a long way to go in ensuring that laws on the books become realities in our workplaces and public accommodations.
Question 4	If elected would you commit to appointing LGBTQ individuals to City Boards and Commissions?
Greg Casar	Since taking office in 2015, I'm glad to have appointed several LGBTQ individuals to our City Boards and Commissions who have led on policy initiatives I've introduced that have been adopted by Council. Of course I will continue to do so, because many of the extremely qualified volunteers who have applied and who will continue to apply for B&C seats in my office are LGBTQ.
Question 5	Do you think that the Austin Police Department is doing everything it can to make its officers aware of and sensitive to the rights and dignity of Austin's LGBTQ citizens?
Greg Casar	I believe our City services-- particularly public safety services-- can always improve to establish strong and trusting relationships with marginalized communities in Austin. I was shocked about what happened with my constituent Monica Loera, and while I appreciated the Police Chief's response to the department's mistake, I did not find that the Police Chief's opinion on the matter was shared by the rest of his leadership team. I provide more information in Question 7.



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Question 6	If elected, would you act to increase recruitment of LGBTQ employees for the police, fire, and emergency medical services? What proposals would you suggest to make coming out on the job safer for LGBTQ employees?
Greg Casar	Yes, recruitment from underrepresented and marginalized communities for Austin's public safety departments is a priority. Another priority of mine is ensuring that the City of Austin in particular is a safe workplace for everyone. I believe our Human Resources Department should continue to re-evaluate practices at our City to ensure it is a welcoming and inclusive environment particularly for LGBTQ individuals and women. I will be hosting a job fair for the Fire Department in order to recruit more diverse cadet classes, and I will continue to keep open lines of communication with our LGBTQ employee groups. I've worked hard to make sure that employees know they can reach out to my office without fear of retaliation.
Question 7	Do you think the City of Austin is doing enough to ensure equality for its LGBTQ employees? For example, how would you address organizational issues such as transgender employees transitioning on the job?
Greg Casar	The City of Austin has been a leader on improving services for its LGBTQ employees, but we can always improve our efforts to ensure all employees are valued and recognized for who they are. I believe our Human Resources Department should continue to re-evaluate practices at our City to ensure it is a welcoming and inclusive environment particularly for LGBTQ individuals. While in office, I've been a strong supporter of initiatives to review and improve working conditions for employees at the City of Austin.
Question 8	If elected, would you continue to uphold the current requirement that a company that receives economic incentives from the City not discriminate against its LGBTQ employees?
Greg Casar	Yes, I believe nondiscrimination protections, workplace safety, and living wages are all basic values that should be upheld with anyone who chooses to do work with the City.
Question 9	How familiar are you with organizations, such as Out Youth, the Austin Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, and AIDS Services of Austin that serve the LGBTQ community? If elected, would you support increased funding for the services organizations like these provide? What services do you think are crucial for LGBTQ residents?
Greg Casar	Yes. While on Council I've worked to ensure our City's investment in social services funding addresses health disparities in LGBTQ communities-- I will continue to support and seek access and expansion of innovative HIV prevention strategies, like PrEP. I believe affordable housing for people of all income levels continues to be a pressing issues particularly for marginalized people, and will continue to fight to increase access to housing for all Austinites. I am very familiar with Out Youth, AGLCC and ASA, and I support funding work like this.



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Question 10	Describe a step you would take, or have taken, or a proposal you would make, or have made as a member of Austin’s City Council that would specifically benefit Austin’s LGBTQ community.
Greg Casar	When I was made aware that the first known transgender murder victim in the United States of 2015 was here in Austin and was misgendered by APD, I worked with members of our Public Safety and Human Rights Commissions to craft a framework for our police department to meet with LGBTQ stakeholders to improve the way the department communicates the identities of victims, and to make additional recommendations where relations could be improved. The resolution I sponsored on this item, I believe, sent a strong message to the police department that their response was not acceptable for our community. I have also worked to ensure our City’s investment in social services funding addresses health disparities in LGBTQ communities. I will continue to support and seek access and expansion of innovative HIV prevention strategies, like PrEP.
Question 11	Do you support the requirement that all single-occupancy public restrooms are made available to all people, (for example families and transgender people)?
Greg Casar	Absolutely, I’m thankful that Austin became a national leader in 2014 with its gender-neutral bathroom ordinance.
Question 12	The Texas Democratic Party recently adopted a plank in their 2016 Platform that reads, “support the right of all people to use facilities and participate in all aspects of life in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender they were assigned at birth”. How would you advance or further the goals of this Platform plank in Austin and how would you work with other jurisdictions to advance or further the goals of this plank?
Greg Casar	Texas’ top officials have continued to push regressive, transphobic policies against the common interest of our community. I believe the majority of the Austin City Council remains dedicated to making Austin an inclusive and safe City for everyone. We must fight regressive policies on the state level, continue to work on policies locally that improve the quality of life for LGBTQ and gender non-conforming folks, and encourage other Texas municipalities to do the same. I am willing and ready to provide leadership in our community and call out Legislators that promote transphobia, not just through their words but through their votes.
Question 13	Do you believe that public schools should institute rules and policies to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBTQ students?
Greg Casar	Yes.



Austin City Council Candidate Questionnaire Responses
District 4

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Question 14	If elected, how would you stay informed of the concerns and interests of your LGBTQ constituents?
Greg Casar	I don't stop blockwalking after election day. I've hired community organizers on my staff, and we keep in constant communication with our constituents, whether they are voters or not. I also am committed to regular meetings with progressive organizations, especially those that can keep me informed about the needs of our LGBTQ residents.

Question 15	Have you attended functions in Austin's LGBTQ community and, if so, which?
Greg Casar	These are just the ones that recently come to mind from the last year: Queerbomb, PRIDE, Dinner with board of Equality Texas Board, Marriage Equality SCOTUS Decision day, handing out water and celebrating with the newlyweds & allies in my District at the County offices.