



September 14, 2018

Question 1	Why are you seeking this public office? (Please be brief)
Steve Adler	I love this city. I want to be at the forefront of making sure that Austin stays the magical place that it is – a city that creates art and doesn't just consume it, a city where everyone is good enough and no one is too good, and a city where everyone feels safe and welcome.
Travis Duncan	I am running for mayor because I have solutions that will end poverty, maximize quality of life for all people, and transform our city into a truly free community, where everyone is respected with the dignity of accessing Earth's abundant resources, and where everyone has opportunity to live their purpose in maximum vitality.
Laura Morrison	I am running for mayor to provide a voice for everyday Austinites of all walks of life and to restore transparency and trust in City Hall. During my two terms as a City Council Member, I made solid gains that improved people's lives in every part of our city, and I am eager to bring my collaborative leadership style, strong work ethic and positive approach to problem solving to the office of mayor.
Alex Strenger	The City of Austin is in an affordability crisis and our traffic congestion has reached epidemic levels. I am running in order to address these concerns and am using my platform to encourage growth in a (KEY WORD) responsible manner.

Question 2	Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. Do you consider yourself to be a Democrat? Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics and/or LGBTQ issues? If so please briefly describe this history.
Steve Adler	I am a Democrat. I have a long history of involvement in Democratic politics, including working on behalf of countless candidates and progressive causes over the past three decades. I am seeking the endorsement of SDA because I have devoted a significant portion of my life, time, and energy to fighting for the cause of equality and civil rights. I believe in the mission of Stonewall Democrats and would be extremely honored to receive the endorsement again.
Travis Duncan	I am an independent voter; I vote for who tells the truth and presents unifying solutions (this is often Democrats). Unfortunately, most who tell the truth are unelected, and the ones who do become elected violate their promises once corrupted by the political system. I am running for a non-partisan position to serve ALL people and the planet. My history is mostly as a worker who has been passionately politically active in my available personal time. I believe in solving the root causes of all oppression and inequality.



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Mayor

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Laura Morrison	I am seeking the endorsement of SDA because of my great respect for the organization and because of the importance of having a mayor who will stand strong for the LGBTQ community. In my own life, I witnessed the challenges my gay brother experienced growing up in the 70s, including the battle he and many of his friends had with AIDS. My personal commitment to these issues is bone deep. I am a lifelong Democrat with a history of involvement in both Democratic and LGBTQ causes, including participation in rallies, marches, clubs and campaigns. During my time on City Council, I was a strong supporter of LGBTQ actions and was the first City Council Member to serve as the Grand Marshall of Austin's annual PRIDE Parade. I was personally involved in a creating a panel for the AIDS Names Quilt, and remain an active supporter of organizations supporting LGBTQ issues.
Alex Strenger	I am seeking the endorsement of as many groups as I can so as to bring about awareness to my socially progressive platform on a mass scale. I am a registered democrat and phone banked for Bernie Sanders throughout the 2016 Democratic Primary.

Question 3	Do you believe LGBTQ individuals should be protected against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression?
Steve Adler	Yes.
Travis Duncan	Obviously, yes. This is resonant with the principles of individual sovereignty and liberty. ALL people deserve the maximum respect, simply by being alive. Everyone is a unique & magical miracle worth cherishing!
Laura Morrison	Yes, it is critical that LGBTQ individuals are protected against all forms of discrimination in employment.
Alex Strenger	I believe that EVERYBODY should be protected against discrimination no matter who you are or what you identify as (unless you're a pedophile). I've had family who died in the Holocaust so this issue hits home to me and I will make it a point as Mayor to ensure that people are hired based on their job qualifications and nothing more.

Question 4	If elected would you commit to appointing LGBTQ individuals to City Boards and Commissions.
Steve Adler	Yes, I have and I would continue to do so.
Travis Duncan	Yes. To clarify, what matters most is relevance of the position and the individual's commitment to serving ALL people and the planet. That said, there are numerous LGBTQ individuals who qualify for every board and commission. The LGBTQ community is diverse, talented, and vast.
Laura Morrison	Yes. As a Council Member, I appointed LGBTQ individuals to city boards and commissions and will continue this commitment as mayor. I also hired LGBTQ individuals who served as valued members of my City Council office staff.



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Alex Strenger	I firmly commit to appointing qualified individuals who are diverse in both their sexuality and gender identity that share my vision for the City of Austin.
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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?
Steve Adler	believe that APD is working hard to be sensitive to the rights and dignity of Austin's LGBTQ residents, and I am committed to working with the department and our city's LGBTQ community to strengthen that effort because there is always more work to be done. The Lesbian & Gay Peace Officers Association is an important body that I turn to for advice and help on these issues.
Travis Duncan	The Austin Police Dept. can do better at being more aware and sensitive in every aspect. We will lead with a culture of service, and institute a new system of mandatory expanded education for every officer in the fields of mental health awareness, emotional intelligence practices, spiritually-grounding exercises, updated scientific foundations, and non-violent de-escalation practices, as well as a dramatic increase in community led engagements.
Laura Morrison	There is always room for improvement and it is important to keep close eye as issues arise to ensure that all Austinites feel safe in our community. As a Council Member, I initiated the Hate Crimes Task Force in response to a violent act against two gay men right outside city hall, after it became clear our police department needed to step up its understanding; this resulted in improvements to process for handling potential hate crimes. I also sponsored a resolution to explore the feasibility of a Municipal ID card to allow government-issued identification without gender classification, in order to make our city safer for those who are transitioning or have transitioned.
Alex Strenger	I firmly believe that we need a specifically trained LGBTQ liaison within APD in order to address the concerns of LGBTQ citizens. I am excited to work with members of the LGBTQ community in order to better address their needs.

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?
Steve Adler	Diversity in public safety work places is important and I am committed to increasing it. I think that, working with city and department leadership, public safety associations, and community groups, we can do more to raise awareness and break down misperceptions. The most important thing is ensuring that all of our public safety employees understand that our differences make us stronger and understanding those differences help us to treat everyone equally and fairly.
Travis Duncan	Yes, however I think the second half of the question may come as a prerequisite to any LGBTQ individuals feeling inspired to volunteer themselves as recruits. We need more cultural awareness and emotional intelligence training for public servants, as to ensure the sensitivities reach a place of unified teamwork and mutual respect for all people's sovereign personal choices.



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<p>Laura Morrison</p>	<p>Yes, I would strongly support increased recruitment of LBGTQ employees in these fields. First responders need to represent the people they serve and protect.</p>
<p>Alex Strenger</p>	<p>Yes, I will make it a point to try and increase recruitment of LBGTQ individuals for police, fire, and EMS positions. As far as coming out on the job, I first plan on speaking with members of APD (along with LBGTQ advocacy groups and city employees) in order to gain an honest assessment of how LBGTQ employees are treated after coming out. I will then offer appropriate proposals based on what I find out.</p>

<p>Question 7</p>	<p>Do you think the City of Austin is doing enough to ensure equality for its LBGTQ employees? For example, how would you address organizational issues such as transgender employees transitioning on the job?</p>
<p>Steve Adler</p>	<p>I think the city can always do more. I'm proud of the efforts that the city has undertaken, and I believe the city should be supportive of any employee who is transitioning on the job. I pledge to work on any barriers or issues preventing the city from providing its full support. I am honored to know and proud to support our city's trans employees.</p>
<p>Travis Duncan</p>	<p>Frankly I am disappointed if any current city employees are discriminating or shaming anyone for their personal choices, and if this is the case, those discriminating individuals are not fit for public service (they need to be fired, and they need healing from their own childhood trauma, more self-love, so they don't continue to project hatred onto others). We need a workplace culture of full support and love for all humanity, in all of our many wonderful forms.</p>
<p>Laura Morrison</p>	<p>We must continually monitor our actions as a city to ensure full equality for all employees, including LBGTQ individuals. Regarding organizational issues, we must have effective training for all city employees, with targeted training for co-workers when an employee is transitioning.</p>
<p>Alex Strenger</p>	<p>I think that LBGTQ employees deserve the same treatment and benefits that every city employee receives. I believe that the medical expenses of gender transitioning should be covered in the City Employees medical benefits.</p>

<p>Question 8</p>	<p>If elected, would you continue to uphold the current requirement that a company that receives economic incentives from the City not discriminate against its LBGTQ employees?</p>
<p>Steve Adler</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Travis Duncan</p>	<p>Yes. Frankly, why would any company that discriminates against anyone be allowed to get any permits to conduct any form of commerce in our city? We need to be consistent across the entire city in protecting the rights of all people and the planet. As a side note, I want to completely audit and revisit every financial incentive the city is giving out, as I have deep skepticism about the responsibility and value of such investments. I believe we need cooperative and creative incentives that only invest in regenerative systems to maximize quality of life for ALL.</p>



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<p>Laura Morrison</p>	<p>Absolutely. I fought for this requirement as a City Council Member, and it is imperative that we continue to uphold it. The first time we raised this as requirement for any company receiving economic incentives, we lost. But with a subsequent change in Council composition, we were able to insert a strong requirement on our second try, mandating that companies produce their employee handbooks to prove they contain an anti-discrimination clause.</p>
<p>Alex Strenger</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

<p>Question 9</p>	<p>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?</p>
<p>Steve Adler</p>	<p>I am very familiar, and yes, I have and do support increased funding for those organizations. I'm proud to have played the founding role in the formation of the Hate Crimes Task Force as part of my work as Chair of the Anti-Defamation League (Austin). Support services, particularly for youths experiencing difficulty coming out, is critically important. We have to do more to let LGBTQ youth know they are welcomed and loved in our city. We have to make sure that the rest of our community embraces and protects those who are most vulnerable among us, and that includes LGBTQ youth.</p>
<p>Travis Duncan</p>	<p>I am generally aware, and likely know members and have attended events where these organizations had a presence; however, I am not intimately involved anyone from their leadership. I think any funding increases should demonstrate a clear and present opportunity to benefit the vitality of people first and foremost. It seems by your line of questioning that we could use more investment into the cultural awareness and emotional intelligence training across the board: in schools, in workplaces, in the general public dialogue. The more we openly discuss our challenges, the better outcome for everyone. It's crucial we fund programs that improve public health, self-care education initiatives, and access to associated vital services.</p>
<p>Laura Morrison</p>	<p>I am quite familiar with these organizations and worked productively with many of them as a City Council Member. Out Youth Austin was involved in the Hate Crimes Task Force I helped initiate; I have been an invited speaker for AGLCC and worked to increase city support for the organization; and I have been an active supporter of AIDS Services of Austin, speaking at walks and press conferences and forming my own AIDS Walk Team, Laura's Angels. All these organizations provide crucial services to LGBTQ residents, including health care, counseling, business supports and more. We should do everything in our power to help them grow, including supporting increased funding.</p>
<p>Alex Strenger</p>	<p>All of the aforementioned organizations are pivotal in serving the needs of the LGBTQ community and I 100% support increased funding for them. Furthermore, when I get elected, I propose free and consistent STD testing, access to medications such as PREP, and mental health services for at risk populations are all key services essential to the health and safety of the LGBTQ community here in Austin.</p>



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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 <u>specifically</u> benefit Austin’s LGBTQ community.
Steve Adler	I was the first on the Council to call for the formation of the LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission and then I was proud to vote for and strongly support its passage (I supported Council Member Flannigan taking lead on the ordinance). I was one of the first public officials, and among the loudest, voracious fighters against the State of Texas’ discriminatory “Bathroom Bill” legislation. I used my position as a member of the Fire Department Pension Board to provide the deciding vote to ensure equal access to LGBTQ participants. I will continue to fight for every Austinite with every ounce of will that I have. I am ready.
Travis Duncan	Every single one of our proposals benefits the LGBTQ community. As one example, Universal Health Care is one obvious area we need dramatic improvement in our city. When all people have access to a FULL range of healthcare services, despite any condition, we all benefit. We cannot wait for the incompetent and corrupted national or state governments to look after our people, so I plan on doing something about it.
Laura Morrison	I was very active on LGBTQ issues as City Council Member and would continue to be as mayor. My accomplishments included increasing funding for the Austin Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, now the Austin LGBT Chamber of Commerce; redefining what it means to be ‘related’ in the city’s Land Development Code to include same sex partners before gay marriage was legal; and sponsoring a resolution to rename a section of Fourth Street in honor of Betty Naylor, a locally and nationally recognized gay rights activist. As mayor, I would initiate a new proposal to end new HIV infections in Austin; the city recently adopted a goal to cut HIV infections by 50% by 2020, but I believe we must be more aggressive and set a plan for “getting to zero.”
Alex Strenger	I believe that LGBTQ issues need to be comprehensively addressed as early as possible in our education curriculum in order to decrease bullying and stigmatization of LGBTQ children. Furthermore, I plan on making sure that all single occupancy bathrooms in Austin are gender neutral.

Question 11	In the 85 th Texas Legislative Session, legislation was filed that would prohibit people from using bathrooms based on their preferred gender identity. Similar legislation is certain to be filed in the 86 th Texas Legislative Session. Would you be
Steve Adler	I will testify every opportunity that I have, as I did in the 85th.
Travis Duncan	Yes. We must remember that the State has no authority over the people. This is where the City Council has been weak and absent. Rather than assert our sovereign right as people, they posture themselves with rhetoric and pandering platitudes. We need NEW, strong leadership who will remind the state that they have no authority to trample on our rights.



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Laura Morrison	Absolutely. Last session's 'bathroom bill' was an abomination and I will strongly oppose any return of this hateful and unnecessary legislation. It is the responsibility of the mayor, and the duty of all citizens, to speak out loudly and clearly against such bills.
Alex Strenger	Yes. I believe that anybody who is in the process of transitioning should use the bathroom for the gender they are transitioning to. I also believe that SB100 (the bill that brought Uber and Lyft back to Austin) used language stating that people had to use the bathroom of their biological gender; and I adamantly reject that legislation.

Question 12	In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of <i>Obergefell vs. Hodges</i>, ruled that all marriages be treated equally. In 2017, the Texas Supreme Court threw out a lower court ruling that said spouses of gay and lesbian public employees are entitled to government-subsidized same-sex marriage benefits. Do you agree or disagree with this ruling and would you maintain the City of Austin's policy to provide employee benefits to all married employees?
Steve Adler	I strongly disagree with the Texas Supreme Court and I will absolutely fight to maintain the City's policy for not only married employees but those who have filed domestic partnership papers, as I did on the Board of the Fire Department Pension Fund.
Travis Duncan	I do not appreciate the State or the courts trying to play games with people's lives, and I will do everything in our power to protect and defend same-sex marriage benefits. Of course we will provide for all people.
Laura Morrison	I strongly disagree with the Texas Supreme Court ruling in this case. Family is family, and I will absolutely uphold the city's policy to provide employee benefits to all married employees.
Alex Strenger	I agree with the ruling that all marriages be treated equally and I plan on maintaining the City of Austin's policy to provide employee benefits to all married employees.

Question 13	Do you believe that public schools should institute rules and policies to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBTQ students?
Steve Adler	Yes, and I want to be a part of that. I feel a certain sense of satisfaction every time I go into a school and see a "No Place for Hate Banner" since I helped introduce that program into Central Texas as Board Member of the Anti-Defamation League (Austin).
Travis Duncan	Our schools should be the safest learning environment for all people. So yes, we need protections for LGBTQ students, and everyone else. We must remember that hatred is a learned behavior, and it's wise for us to address the root causes in a greater cultural context.
Laura Morrison	Yes. It is the duty of all adults and institutions, including our public schools, to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBTQ students and all children in our care.
Alex Strenger	Yes. I believe that harassment and discrimination should not be tolerated no matter who you are.



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Question 14	If elected, how would you stay informed of the concerns and interests of your LGBTQ constituents?
Steve Adler	I count on my allies like Council Member Flannigan to keep me informed, as well as my board and commission appointees. I count on my employees, like my assistant Barbara Shack, to make sure that I am in all the places I need to be at in order to be the strongest champion that I can for our LGBTQ community. My friends keep me informed and hold me accountable. I am always open to helping, learning more, and making sure that we are doing everything we can to advance the cause of equality.
Travis Duncan	I am going to listen more often, deeper, smarter, and more passionately than any mayor in the history of this country. The first 90-180+ days, 6 days a week, 6-8 hours per day, we will commence an inaugural listening tour of the city, and subsequently host these type of public town halls at least twice a week. This is important for many reasons, and will reset the priority of mayor to be a servant of the people, first and foremost. I will be the most accessible and humble mayor ever to serve. I am here for you. I stand with you.
Laura Morrison	As mayor, I would rely on strong ongoing communications with LGBTQ commissioners, constituents, organizations and community leaders.
Alex Strenger	I would rely on the news, social media, and interactions of my friends (many of whom I met through pedicabbing and improvisational theatre) in order to address the concerns of the LGBTQ community. I would also appoint qualified member of the LGBTQ community in order to best address the issues that they face.

Question 15	Have you attended functions in Austin's LGBTQ community and, if so, which?
Steve Adler	Yes, many. I am proud to have marched in the Pride Parade many times (not just in Austin), attended and was honored to speak at the HRC Gala, attended numerous meeting and gatherings, and made sure that I'm out in the community as much as possible. I'll continue that in my second term and after. One of my favorite moments of my first term was the celebration on 4th Street after the Obergefell ruling. It was such an historic and meaningful moment and I was overjoyed to be welcomed and partied late into the night.
Travis Duncan	Although I have been to events affiliated with Pride celebrations, private parties, and other events with prominent representation from the LGBTQ community, I have been mainly busy working to survive and spending any remaining availability as quality alone time with my family. I do indeed look forward to more intimate engagements in the future.
Laura Morrison	I have attended and continue to attend many such functions including the annual AIDS Walk, the march in protest of violence against two gay men outside of city hall, the annual PRIDE parade where I served as Grand Marshal in 2010, the AIDS Memorial Night and more.
Alex Strenger	I was the only candidate who attended the Gay Pride Festival and Parade this year.



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Mayor

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