

District 3 Community Meeting on City Manager Search
Hosted by Council Member Sabino Renteria and Perla Cavazos
June 30, 2017
Pan American Recreation Center, 6pm to 7pm

Below is a synthesis of emerging themes from the public feedback received at the District 3 community meeting held on June 30, 2017. There were six individuals present, in addition to the Council Member and three of his staff.

Question 1: What skills and abilities are most important for someone to manage our city?

Theme 1-A: Attendees believe proficiency in communication, outreach and interaction with different groups of people and entities are most important in the next city manager.

- Good communication skills. The public wants to know what he/she is doing.
- Be interactive and proactive in the community. Do more public outreach to inform the community about initiatives.
- Know how to listen and work with different (interest) groups.
- Ability to work and collaborate with Travis County officials.

Theme 1-B: Attendees believe political awareness, knowledge of other governing bodies and aptitude for advocacy are important in the next city manager.

- Understand Texas versus Austin politics and be an advocate for Austin.
- Knowledge of federal relations and resources/grants available to Austin.

Theme 1-C: Attendees believe a keen knowledge about the affordable housing challenge in Austin is important in the next city manager, as well as the ability to generate creative ideas to face this challenge.

- Knowledge of the Affordable Housing policies. Be an expert in this area.

Other General skills and abilities

- Be Bilingual (English and Spanish)
- Knowledge of Finance and accounting
- Knowledge of how to manage and delegate to city staff with proper oversight

Question 2: What are the personal characteristics that are most important for our next city manager to lead our city?

Theme 2-1: Attendees believe the next city manager should be open to feedback and listen with sensitivity and responsiveness to the community and elected officials about the Austin we want, and think outside the box to overcome the challenges we face in our city.

- Be creative with public policy challenges facing Austin.
- Listen and act on the needs and desires of the city council and community without having to be told.
- Embrace the character of Austin and try not to change it (Keep Austin Weird), understanding we need to be reasonable about growth that is happening. He or she should hire staff that also believe this.

- Have an open door policy for all citizens.

Theme 2-2: Attendees believe the next city manager should embrace diversity and work to improve racial/cultural tensions in the community.

- Embrace diversity
- Listen and understand cultural/racial issues
- Have a good rapport with the Police Chief (in light of police tensions in certain communities)

Other General personal characteristics

- Salary should not be the carrot. Our next city manager should want to live in Austin and salary should not be the deciding factor.
- Trust city staff
- Have a sense of humor

Question 3: What are the most critical challenges facing Austin in the next 5-10 years?

Theme 3-1: Attendees believe affordability is the most critical challenge facing Austin.

- We need affordable Housing. We need new tools to bring affordability to Austin.
- Rising property taxes
- Homelessness
- Music scene and venues are hurting
- We need Affordable child care

Theme 3-2: Attendees believe city budget concerns are another critical concern for Austin.

- Budget constraints over time.
- Limitations on ability to tax and get revenue for needed services
- Need to improve outreach during census counting to increase federal funds to Austin.

Theme 3-3: Attendees believe diversity and racial/social justice issues are critical issues facing Austin.

- The need for more diversity within the Fire Department.
- Diversity and social/racial justice
- SB 4/immigration concerns. He/she should understand the community feelings about non-citizens and their positive impact to the economic development and tourism of Austin.

Theme 3-4: Attendees believe traffic issues and basic infrastructure are critical issues facing Austin.

- Transportation / traffic issues
- Filling street pot holes

Other general concerns

- There are a lot of vacancies and interim directors filling those roles that will need to be filled permanently.
- Need more and faster and convenient access to health care services