

# Questions for Georgetown City Council Candidates

What was the most important factor that influenced your decision to run for Georgetown City Council?

**Over the past few years, I feel there has been a growing division within District 6.**

**People are angry and misinformed. Some because they don't feel they are represented and others because, I believe, they are not being represented well.**

**Council meetings are, at times, dysfunctional.**

**If we want to keep that small town feel, we need a representative that can bring people together. Someone that can work with council, staff and citizens, without a personal agenda, to be effective.**

**I love Georgetown, I want to live in a strong community and I decided to run to do my part to make that happen.**

What is your ideal vision for the future of economic development in Georgetown?

**We need to work on distributing commercial build out across the City. Focusing on one or two areas will lead to mobility issues and frustrated residents.**

**Future economic development must also include respecting the history and maintaining the personality of downtown.**

**In addition, we need to implement programs that support neighborhood identities. Not just in Old Town, but in other areas across the City.**

The City of Georgetown is currently looking at a mobility bond. Based on the current information available, would you support a call for a bond vote?

**Based on the current information available, they are very early in the process, I would support a call for a bond vote.**

**We need to be proactive about addressing the future mobility needs of Georgetown.**

What is the biggest infrastructure gap facing your district in Georgetown?

**The biggest infrastructure gaps facing District 6 are:**

- **Missing or incomplete sidewalks.** There are several areas within the district that do not have sidewalks or if they are there, they don't cover enough area.
- **Drainage.** When we have significant rainfall, some areas of the district get flooded. Specifically, along University and Austin Avenues.
- **Traffic Flow / Speeding.** At certain times of the day, drivers are using neighborhood streets to avoid traffic and/or intersections. This is particularly noticeable on Hutto Road, 15th Street, and 2nd Street. This needs to be addressed in a safe and unobtrusive way.

Over the coming years, TxDOT plans a major reconfiguration of the Williams Drive overpass of Interstate 35. This project will impact businesses in this corridor and in your district. How do you plan to work with TxDOT and City Staff to ensure the businesses do not have another unnecessary burden on their operations?

**When this long overdue project begins, it will be critical that everyone stay informed about what is planned, when things will happen and how long each phase will last.**

**We will need to have regularly scheduled meetings with business owners and the public to get their input and share important project information.**

**It will be a challenge, but if we ensure the lines of communication are open and we allow ourselves to be agile and flexible, the burden can be reduced.**

The Chamber surveyed our members and 80% of those surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that "government should avoid action that unnecessarily raises the cost of housing so that our housing is as obtainable as possible for the community's workforce." Based on these results, how can local government avoid action that unnecessarily raises the cost of housing?

**I don't believe that anyone on council should ever support anything that "unnecessarily" raises the cost of housing. If it is unnecessary, then why do it?**

**The way to avoid this is to call out items that aren't necessary - get information from whoever is proposing them - and work together to find the solution that best addresses the needs of Georgetown.**

What is the biggest concern you have heard from businesses and how do you plan to address these concerns?

**Parking - specifically downtown. Visitors will not stay if they can't park and if they don't stay, they don't spend money. We need to find a way to provide additional parking downtown.**

**Confusing policies/requirements & lengthy processes - in some instances, policies or requirements are confusing and getting things approved can take too long.**

**We need to find ways to add clarity and efficiency.**

**Misunderstood intent - I have heard many times that citizens believe some businesses and building owners are getting "special treatment" or have bad intentions for our City. Based on my experience, neither of these are true and allowing these beliefs to persist causes division in our community.**

**I would do what I can to make sure that people know why decisions were made and if there ever are instances of unethical behavior or bad intention, I will call them out and do what I can to eliminate them.**

What do you think has been our City's greatest accomplishment within the past 10 years?

**When we moved to Georgetown over 7 years ago, activity on the square was somewhat limited. Businesses closed early - people were not spending time (or money) there like they do today.**

**Today, the square is full of activity almost every day of the week.**

**There are several new businesses - a few buildings have been restored - and everyone talks about how much they love being downtown.**

**The investment in our square by building & business owners, the work of the Main Street board and the City's Economic Development team has been one of the greatest accomplishments in the last 10 years.**

What makes you the ideal candidate for the City Council position?

**I believe I am the ideal candidate for District 6 because I am honest & fair and I will focus on the business of Georgetown without a personal agenda.**

**I respect all viewpoints, will listen and utilize all available information when making decisions.**

**My 21 years of experience at IBM have provided me the capacity to work with a wide variety of people, cultures and perspectives.**

**An effective representative must be able to put aside differences and work with everyone to get to a solution. I will do that.**

What do you believe is the biggest threat Georgetown faces, and how would you address the issue if elected?

**Georgetown's greatest challenge is managing the growth.**

**We need to be more proactive and implement policies that address the growth while not financially burdening the citizens. Roads, utilities, accessibility and affordability all need to be addressed.**

**For District 6 - the greatest challenge is maintaining the success of downtown. All new development in other areas of the City introduces competition to our downtown businesses. We need the variety and convenience, but if we aren't cautious and deliberate in supporting the downtown area, it will be at risk.**

**It is a major reason why people come to Georgetown and it is the heart of our City. We need to make sure it stays that way.**

In January, the Chamber sent a letter to City Council in support of City Council adding downtown parking. The Chamber's Board was indifferent on location and encouraged council to move forward with the addition of parking. What is your solution for parking in downtown Georgetown?

**With the current popularity of downtown and with more businesses expected to open there soon, parking challenges are very real.**

**I served as the chair of the council appointed citizen committee for the design of the parking garage. I believe the work we did there was productive and I'm proud of and in favor of the proposed design.**

**I believe the only way to add parking downtown is with a garage. Locations can be discussed, but long term, I'm certain there will be multiple garages built.**

**There have been concerns raised about visitors parking in the nearby residential area. If we don't provide a parking solution, that issue will continue and likely increase.**

**It is very important that the City provide parking options for visitors.**

Please provide the following:

Name: **Michael Walton**

Position Seeking: **District 6 City Council**

Campaign Website: **waltonfordistrict6.com**

Campaign Facebook Account: **facebook.com/walton4d6**