



# Fast take: Council candidates

PRODUCED BY BRIAN PORTER

This is the eighth and final in an 8-week series that examines the views of city council candidates up for election May 10. The *Times* asked each candidate to answer four questions each week on a variety of topics. The candidates' answers were only edited for style, grammar, spelling and libelous material.

**This issue:** Candidacy  
**May 10:** Don't forget to vote Saturday

*Missing candidates: Uncontested city council incumbent Laura Hill, Place 1, declined to answer the questions.*



Questions → Candidates ↓	What experience, such as roles on boards, commissions and community service, could you bring to the position?	What specific goals do you hope to achieve, if elected?	Why are you the better candidate?	How will you make a difference, if elected?
<b>Place 6</b>  Suzanne Maisto, candidate	My 21 years professional and Fortune 100 business and consulting experience with emphasis on process analysis/efficiency improvements, and internal audit control background provide me with the skills necessary to review situations, analyze problems and generate solutions. I have been the president of the Southlake Woods HOA Board since 2005 and have served as a board member for Southlake Girls Softball Association since 2006. I co-founded the SPARK Task Force, and regularly attend city council meetings and workshops. I have served on numerous PTO School Boards, and city planning boards in other cities.	Ensure Southlake continues to prosper by: improving city communications between staff, council, and residents; honoring neighborhood adjacency, while searching for new housing products to satisfy our growing empty nester population; and, encourage more corporate business, to increase daytime consumers to retail/restaurants and provide a welcome boost to city tax revenues. I will avail our residents and Southlake of the benefits that well-controlled mineral drilling will afford. Careful execution of the gas/oil drilling ordinance is a key goal and I've had the benefit of learning from one of the city's foremost experts.	My business background, breadth of local issue knowledge, passion and focus, have garnered me the endorsement/support of our mayor and council member majority. A strong council must work together with level-heads to better Southlake. With children, ages 6 to 22, I am the only candidate who, first-hand, recognizes all our youths' needs and was led to co-found S.P.A.R.K. My business skills and focus allow me to make clear decisions on tough issues without waffling, such as Prop. 143, which I am against; Pam Muller has refused to take a position on this issue.	I am a tireless worker, with a proven ability to motivate our residents, while ensuring Southlake's standing as a top destination for new residents and businesses. I will be approachable, fair, and available to all Southlake residents and businesses. Listening is one of my key attributes and will enable our city to reach its full potential. I will exercise due diligence, perform detailed, research/analysis on current issues, and be informed to make decisions to benefit Southlake, not only now, but well into the future. I am passionate about Southlake and will work steadfastly to the betterment of our city.
 Pamela Muller, candidate	I have served on most of Southlake's commissions and community organizations. With my past experience, I will be able to evaluate the needs of each organization requesting city funds. I know how to evaluate projects brought before the city council requesting approval. I was instrumental in helping Southlake adopt many ordinances that set the high development standards you see today. I am familiar with Southlake's vision and the ordinances that are in place to achieve that vision.	As revenues increase from commercial development, I will work hard on the budget to find ways to reduce the tax burden on our citizens without sacrificing safety and services. I want our city to provide city services and amenities that will add to the quality of life in our community for all age groups, including expansion of the city library and senior citizens center, completing sidewalks and paths throughout the city, and reopening discussions to build a community recreation center that will offer our young people a safe and fun environment.	I have the most experience and knowledge of Southlake's past and future development plans. I have been actively participating in our community, in many capacities, for more than two decades. I am a good listener, a mediator and educated in city planning. I am the most knowledgeable about our city's history. I was on the council that produced our master plan, many city ordinances, the initial development of Town Square, and set the low-density build out goal to protect our property values and Carroll ISD. There will be no learning curve.	I know the goals set when the city was first planned. I am one of the forefathers that helped create this beautiful town. I will work toward the completion of 'the vision' along Hwy 114 and the crucial north side of town. I will use my knowledge and experience for Southlake citizens' advantage.
 Ralph Williams, candidate	I would use my extensive real estate and financial knowledge to help govern the city in the best interest of her residents. I would take a common sense approach and represent our entire city, not just selected sections of it. I am a founding member and treasurer of the Carroll Education Foundation and a 10-year member of the finance committee and administrative board of White's Chapel UMC.	I hope to reprioritize our city's needs. We need street, road and drainage improvements, especially north of Hwy. 114. Our city's total discretionary income for 2008 is expected at only \$14 million. We do not need any more "pet projects" from our city council members, including \$120,000 log cabins, \$950,000 nature centers and \$25,000 city logos.	I am the only independent candidate with 45-plus years of real estate investment and development experience with a substantial financial investment in our community. One of my opponents is supported by one existing council member. The other opponent is supported by five existing council members. I will bring fair representation for all Southlake residents to our city council.	I will be a voice for our silent majority, the 85 percent who moved here because of Carroll's academic excellence and are too busy raising families, holding jobs and volunteering at our schools to get involved with city politics.

# Fast take: Trustee candidates

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This is the eighth and final in an 8-week series that examines the views of school board candidates up for election May 10. The *Times* asked each candidate to answer four questions each week on a variety of topics. The candidates' answers were only edited for style, grammar, spelling and libelous material.

**This issue:** Bonds  
**May 10:** Don't forget to vote Saturday

Questions → Candidates ↓	What areas should the next bond election address?	Are you in support of bond packages as a primary financing tool for school district construction projects? Explain.	How can the state legislature fix school financing so that individual districts would require bond packages less often?	What are your ideas for private funding that might alleviate the need for publically-funded bonds?
<b>Place 1</b>  Craig Rothmeier, incumbent	It's not a foregone conclusion that the board will call a bond election any time soon. A key factor in that decision would be any requirements dictated by student population growth. For example, development along State Highway 114 may bring about a need for additional elementary schools in that area. To address the possibilities, a long-range facility planning committee was created and this committee is tasked with identifying specific facility needs over the near term. Should they determine a need for facilities or other expenditures that might need to be handled outside of the budget process, they will present their findings to the board.	Bond packages are but one part of financing district operations, but are not the primary one. The exception would be the need for a new campus or other large expenditure that could not be met using existing available funds. Seeking approval from the voters for a bond referendum would only occur after extensive due diligence by the administration, the board and the long-range facility planning committee, including an assessment of funding sources, requirements and available dollars.	The question of school finance is much more than just looking at bond package requirements. School finance must address overall funding needs that protect the financial strength of districts and enable us to address the needs of all students, as well as to recruit and retain personnel. In Carroll ISD, we have a low enrollment growth rate, creating challenges for us under current school finance law.	The legislature and federal government have an obligation to fund public education and I do not see a shift toward private funding. That said, support from individuals and corporate sponsorships is critical to the continued success of Carroll ISD. Their support, whether direct or through organizations including campus PTO's, the Carroll Education Foundation and Digging for Dragons, provides the district with additional flexibility when budgeting for programs and other expenditures. The continued cooperation among all of us will continue to have a very positive impact on the educational opportunities for the students of Carroll ISD.
<b>Place 2</b>  Bernie Ausdenmoore, incumbent	We currently have a long-range facilities planning committee formed to investigate the short-term and long-term facility needs for the district. We are looking at additional schools, facility upgrades, technology upgrades etc.	Yes, I am in favor of using bond packages for school district construction projects, even if it requires changing the tax rate. Just as an individual would like to use long-term financing for their home, I think it is the same general concept for school district construction projects. Dipping into fund balance is an option, but in my mind it is the last option.	School financing is primarily about funding the operations of the school district and not about debt payment for the most part. There are different tax rates for the M&O (maintenance and operations) and the I&S (interest and sinking, debt service) side of the budgets. Bond packages are set up to pay for capital expenditures vs... recurring expenses. Some of these expenditures could be paid with money from fund balance, but "bricks and mortar" projects are more suited for bond packages. The I&S tax rate is set to cover the interest and principal on bonds secured with property tax revenue. The I&S tax rate is currently at \$0.425 per \$100 of valuation.	Private funding is an interesting idea for bond projects. Since many of the bond projects take tens to hundreds of millions of dollars to cover, it would have to be a fairly-sizeable donation. Anything would help. The I&S tax rate is set to cover the interest and principal on bonds secured with property tax revenue.



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