INTRODUCTION

Name: Andrew Stober
Seeking The Office Of: City Council Member at Large
Political Party Affiliation: Independent
Campaign Website and/or Facebook page: http://www.andrewstober.com/

YES OR NO

For each question below please indicate whether you agree or disagree. You may comment to elaborate on your response. (optional)

VISION ZERO

Do you support funding a Vision Zero approach for pedestrian & cycling safety citywide?

O YES  I would go beyond pedestrian and cycling safety to ensure that the City develops and implements a plan to eliminate all vehicle related fatalities and significantly reduces vehicle crashes. A Vision Zero approach will require an investment from multiple City, State and Federal agencies and will work to bring private sector and foundation resources to support Vision Zero initiatives.

O NO

Would you support enhancing penalties for aggressive, distracted and reckless driving, including speeding and DUl, in order to reduce road safety deaths and injuries?

O YES  However, limited by state law. I would want Council and staff to work with legislators to strengthen penalties. I would work with the PPD to ensure data driven enforcement to maximize the safety gains from enforcement. We must also encourage the District Attorney to aggressively prosecute negligent traffic fatalities and call for judges to apply appropriate penalties.

O NO

Candidate, please initial each page and sign last page.
The 5th Square PAC

Should the Philadelphia Police Department do more to enforce existing traffic laws?

O YES Of course – enforcement is a key component. However, we need to be sure that enforcement is pro-actively data driven. We need to recognize the opportunity to for the police to act as educators as well as enforcers.

O NO

Do you support the use of traffic calming devices, such as curb bump-outs, chicanes, speed bumps or garden medians?

O YES I’d especially support the installation of raised medians and median refuge islands on arterial streets that previously had them. I’d also like to see us start using traffic calming circles and roundabouts – both of which can sharply reduce crashes.

O NO

Would you find room in the budget for additional Streets Department traffic calming devices?

O YES I will try, but Streets is being asked to do a lot with very little. I’d like to make sure that staff in the Streets Dept. understand why traffic calming devices should be used and how they should be installed. I’d like to focus on funding training programs so that traffic calming can be internalized.

O NO

TRAFFIC PLANNING

Do you support giving buses priority over private cars on city streets?

O YES Where appropriate. But pedestrians should have priority over all vehicles. This is an operations issue, so Council’s role would be limited. But from an oversight and community outreach perspective, I would want to work to make sure that SEPTA, PPA, PPD and Streets are communicating.

O NO

Do you support the installation of 30-minute loading zones on all blocks with high residential density and/or commercial activity?

O YES I’d prefer to see 30-minute metered parking zones in most locations and using pricing of curb-side parking as a tool to assure adequate curb space for economically important delivery functions.

O NO

Mayor Nutter created MOTU (Mayor’s Office of Transportation and Utilities) in his first administration. Do you support continuing the overall mission of MOTU in the next 4 years?

O YES Of course, I was the Chief of Staff of MOTU. I believe MOTU has been instrumental to garner state, federal and foundation resources to benefit the City. MOTU was critical to advancing smart transportation and utility projects.

O NO
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Do you support restricting commercial deliveries to late night and early morning hours, and banning the largest trucks from residential neighborhoods absent compliance with special permit and insurance requirements?

- YES
  - As phrased, this goes too far. But I will work with the Streets Department, Parking Authority and community groups to identify ways to reduce the impact of commercial vehicles on residential streets. I will support ideas for better managing commercial deliveries.

- NO

Philadelphia used to repave streets every 9 years. It now repaves every 15 years. Overall, the city has a 900 mile backlog of streets needing to be repaved. Do you support doubling the funding levels for Streets Department's paving budget by fiscal year 2017?

- YES
  - Yes, but we need to make sure that existing capital dollars are being spent. The FY15-20 Capital Budget included more than $15M of capital spending that was authorized more than seven years ago and is still unspent.

- NO

Do you believe that universities, colleges and large non-profits should be encouraged to subsidize the cost of public transit for students, staff, administration, etc.?

- YES
  - I previously worked for the Colorado DOT, and in the Denver-Boulder area universities provide regular transit passes for students and employees. It's a good transportation management practice. The implementation of new payment technology creates opportunities to build a program that is good for SEPTA and the Universities.

- NO

OPEN DATA

Should the City Revenue Department release as much of its records as legally possible for independent analysis and overall transparency?

- YES
  - Not a yes or no issue. There are privacy and security issues that have to be carefully considered before releasing data.

- NO

Should the city make all data concerning street use, street conditions and traffic crash investigations available in a timely, digital format to the public?

- YES
  - Again, not a yes or no issue. First, I would like to see the process of collecting this data improved so that it is reliable and usable, and we need additional capital funding to make that happen, including computers in all police vehicles. I would like to see the Streets Department, PennDOT and the PPD working together to produce meaningful information on a more timely basis. We need to be implementing lessons learned from accident investigations to reduce the number of future crashes.

- NO
**BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Protected bike lanes on JFK and Market were piloted and found to be minimally disruptive to drivers in 2011. Will you support funding the installation of these protected bike lanes if elected?

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<td><strong>O YES</strong></td>
<td>MOTU led that pilot and traffic operated fine, so I’d like to see the lanes implemented. This project would also provide an important safety benefit to the many older adults and pedestrians who live, work and visit the corridor.</td>
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Do you believe that bike-friendly infrastructure is economically beneficial to a community’s commercial corridors & cities at large?

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<td><strong>O YES</strong></td>
<td>Of course. Quality of life is critical in making Center City viable in attracting businesses and residents. A network of bicycle friendly streets and trails is one essential element of a city that provides great quality of living, and is especially important in attracting and keeping educated young adults.</td>
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**ZONING & LAND USE**

Do you support raising millage rates on the land portion of the property tax, and lowering millage rates on improvements to the structure?

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<td><strong>O YES</strong></td>
<td>Pittsburgh has been doing this for a long time, and I think it makes a lot of sense. It encourages people to invest in buildings in order to realize the inherent value of the land. It also avoids penalizing property owners who want to improve their buildings.</td>
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Do you support revising the zoning code to remove minimum accessory parking requirements?

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<td><strong>O YES</strong></td>
<td>In Center City, South Philadelphia, University City and portions of the city between Vine Street and Girard, and perhaps around Temple, but not everywhere, especially not where lots are larger and the transit network is not as dense. The code should also adopt maximum standards in areas with excellent transit services.</td>
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**PUBLIC SPACE PLANNING**

Would you support pedestrianization of street space that may currently be used for parking or vehicle transit?

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<td><strong>O YES</strong></td>
<td>MOTU has led the process for creating parklets and pedestrian plazas. People like them and we can do more. I’d also like to see the City create more shared streets where the curbs are removed and the entire street becomes shared space with pedestrians having the right-of-way.</td>
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Is regularly scheduled street sweeping of Philadelphia's streets more important than preserving the convenience of residents who prefer not moving their vehicles?

O YES  Clean streets are important for maintaining the value of property, having a healthy neighborhood climate and protecting our waterways from pollution. Regularly scheduled does not have to be weekly or alternate days of the week. We should see what works best for Philadelphia.

O NO

The current cost for an annual parking permit for car owners to store their private vehicle on public streets is $35. Do you think this price point should be revisited?

O YES  And the $35 cost only applies to those zones with residential parking permit programs. I support an escalating fee structure for multiple vehicles. The problem with a high price is that it has little impact on demand and adds additional costs for families with employment that requires use of vehicle.

O NO

OPEN RESPONSE

For each question below please answer using the provided space. Detail is appreciated.

VISION ZERO

What is an appropriate legal speed limit on a neighborhood street in Philadelphia? On an arterial street? What are some policies and/or physical alterations that can be implemented to help ensure drivers obey speed limits and other traffic laws?

Appropriate speed depends in part on context, but on most residential streets, an appropriate speed limit would be 20 MPH. However, to adopt it would require a change in state law. Pending such a change, which I would encourage, residential streets are 25 MPH. A speed limit of 20 to 25 MPH would also be appropriate on many commercial streets with higher volumes of pedestrians. On through arterial streets, the current 30 MPH speed limit is often appropriate, with exceptions made for some outlying streets with lower land development densities or longer blocks. Providing PPD with the power to enforce speed limits using radar and similar electronic devices is essential if drivers are going to lower speeds. Speed cameras – widely used in the rest of the world – should also be authorized. For starters, in construction sites and in school zones.
The 5th Square PAC

ZONING & LAND USE

What kinds of zoning and land use policies can best help our neighborhood commercial corridors and small businesses?

I think that we know what types of policies are needed – mixed use zoning, development regulations that require buildings to front the street, with at most a 10’ set-back to accommodate sidewalk cafes, etc. Parking needs to be limited and not placed in the front yard area.

We know what is needed. Council should support the Planning Commission and its staff in implementing those policies. Council should not be over-riding them with special ordinances serving bad development.

PARKS & GREENSPACES

Do you support increasing funding for Parks & Recreation throughout the city as a means to improving public health and the economy? If so, how would you better fund our parks? If not, why not?

We need to start by making sure that we are effectively deploying all available resources. In the FY2015-2020 Capital Budget there is more than $21 million of unspent funding for the Parks and Recreation that was authorized more than seven years ago. Let’s put those dollars to work. We need to make sure that balance of investment in flagship parks and neighborhood reflects the needs of the City residents.

STREET TREES

At 16% of total land area, Philadelphia has one of the lowest tree canopy percentages among large U.S. cities. Comparable cities exceed 30%. Do you believe Philly needs to increase this percentage? If so, how? Please be specific about how you would fund this.

I would like to see the percent of tree canopy increased, but I am more interested in assuring that the existing canopy is well maintained. The urban forestry program at Parks & Recreation has some excellent staff, and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has provided the City with great support, but I would want to know from PP&R what additional resources they feel are required. One way to increase the number of trees is by constructing raised medians along arterial streets. Raised planted medians make streets safer, especially for pedestrians, and that they add tree canopy.
The 5th Square PAC

PUBLIC SPACE

What is your position about vehicles parked on the City Hall apron/sidewalk?

Most of the vehicles should not be there. That’s why we have a good supply of parking garages. People who work in City Hall should be treated like everyone else – use transit, walk, bike or if you must drive, pay for your parking space. A very small exception would be needed for security purposes and deliveries. I would re-introduce the bill to ban parking on the apron of City Hall.

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

What is your position in regards to creating an integrated protected bike lane network throughout the city of Philadelphia? Are there areas in the city that you believe should be addressed first?

We have bike lanes out there --- we just have critical gaps and we need to maintain the infrastructure we have. I think a first priority should be placed on regularly restoring the painted lanes that have been marked already, as well as crosswalks and stop bars for pedestrian safety. There are neighborhoods in South Philly and North Philly that are deficient in lanes, but they also are constrained by street width. We need to pursue neighborhood bikeway strategies that improve how cars and bikes share the space on those streets.

TRASH & LITTER

Philadelphia provides municipal trash service to residences, but businesses are left to contract with private vendors, resulting in multiple large dumpsters in the public realm (e.g., alleyways). Do you think the City should change this current trash collection strategy? If so, how?

There is a huge opportunity to transform alleyways from their current deplorable state. The challenge is that unlike most cities, Philadelphia actually has a vibrant trash hauling industry with no fewer than five companies providing service to commercial buildings. One possible model for commercial trash hauling, is the franchise system that has been established in Seattle. Where haulers competitive bid to provide services to portions of the City. To take this approach would require significant support from building owners and commercial trash service customers. Organizations like the Center City District should be encouraged to lead effort to consolidate services in alleyways.
TRAFFIC PLANNING

Should City Council be the approving body for traffic alterations to Philadelphia’s citywide street network, e.g. removal of a traffic lane, turning lane, parking lane, etc.? Or should this be determined by the Streets Department, MOTU, PennDOT and other street-related agencies?

Council members, especially District Council members, obviously will be concerned about changes in their neighborhoods and should be informed of major changes. But they don’t need to be told about minor changes implemented to enhance the safety and efficiency of streets. Council should be focused on policy issues and agency oversight including ensuring adequate funding infrastructure and the implementation of strategies to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and drivers.

BLOG INVITATION

We invite you as a candidate for political office to reach out to the voters of Philadelphia by speaking to them directly. We will host your thoughts on one of the following 9 topics below if you so choose. Please choose one topic and detail 3-5 policy changes you would make to achieve this goal.

1. Reducing the number of motor-vehicle crashes and conflicts among street users with appropriate infrastructure or roadway design changes, automated traffic law enforcement, or street- or neighborhood-specific changes in traffic rules
2. Ensuring thorough investigation of, and appropriate consequences for, drivers who commit traffic offenses that result in injury or death
3. Encouraging Philadelphians to use public transit, walk or bicycle within the city, instead of driving
4. Repurposing street space to better meet transportation needs (please specify particular streets)
5. Making land assessments accurate, and keeping them accurate
6. Increasing the amount of public space for non-transportation use, such as plazas and street closure programs (e.g., open streets and play streets.)
7. Expanding the on-street bike network in the most heavily-biked areas
8. Investing in walking and biking infrastructure outside of Center City
9. Getting our most popular bus and trolley lines out of congested mixed traffic