



denver STREETS PARTNERSHIP

2023 Denver City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Chris Hinds

What are your top priorities related to transportation as a candidate? How do you expect to address them if elected?

Regarding transportation, multi-modal transit is a priority for me - personally and professionally. It's important enough to me that Denver Streets Partnership made a video about me. You can see it here: <https://vimeo.com/490822721> . I also featured multi-modal access in my original video I created: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8js1Fhp82Q> . We all deserve the freedom to get from A to B safely no matter how we choose to get there. Denver workers commute by single occupancy vehicle more than 70% of the time. That means they go from their locked homes to their locked garages, then their locked cars, to their secured work parking garage, to their desks at work. By promoting multi-modal transit, we help the planet (by taking cars off the road), promote community (pedestrians and cyclists can talk with one another more easily than if they were enclosed in thousands of pounds of metal and glass), encourage better physical health (pedestrians and cyclists get more exercise than if they just pushed a steering wheel), and so much more. I have promoted multi-modal transit by advocating for shared streets in Denver, including well before they were opened (<https://twitter.com/DenverPerfect10/status/1233049955683700739>) (and again <https://twitter.com/DenverPerfect10/status/1242541465143738370>), resulting in the first shared streets being in District 10 (I led a letter to the Mayor unanimously signed by all of Council, too <https://twitter.com/DenBicycleLobby/status/1298807022150995969>) District 10 had the first street permanently closed to cars since the 16th Street Mall in 1982 (Bannock between 14th and Colfax) permanently closing District 10's Cheesman Park circle to cars (or "open to the people" <https://denverite.com/2021/03/11/denvers-major-parks-wont-be-car-free-this-spring-but-most-will-be-car-lite/>) (part of the 2008 Cheesman Park master plan but never implemented until I took office <https://denver.streetsblog.org/2016/07/15/cheesman-park-was-supposed-to-have-fewer-cars-not-more/>) (also see my op-ed <https://coloradosun.com/2021/03/28/cheesman-park-cars-opinion/>) pushing for the 5280 Trail <https://www.denverperfect10.com/the-5280-trail-and-why-i-support-it/> , including \$7m in bond funding to realize the first section of the 5280 Trail located in the Golden Triangle neighborhood of District 10 championing a zoning change in Golden Triangle that prioritizes the pedestrian experience <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Community-Planning-and-Development/Community-Engagement/CPD-News/2021/Golden-Triangle-zoning-update> Work is not done yet, I advocated for funding to make shared streets permanent but did not get it <https://twitter.com/DenBicycleLobby/status/1441134799335264260> We voted to ensure #20IsPlenty - ie to limit the speed of cars in neighborhood streets. I

voted in favor of the initiative, and it is now law in Denver.

I will continue to push for a better pedestrian and cyclist experience for Denver. This includes recreating a sidewalk repair program in Denver. The original program was full of issues. I wasn't silent about my opinion, either:

The sidewalk program would take more than 100 years to complete (

<https://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/front-range/denver/high-number-of-cracks-tripping-hazards-and-small-crew-bog-down-denvers-sidewalk-repair-program>).

... or 156 years given the pace of repairs (<https://www.denverpost.com/2020/01/08/denver-sidewalk-repair-program/>)

Since Denver leaders made a commitment in 2017 to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious bodily injuries by 2030 (an initiative known as Vision Zero) over 460 people have been killed in preventable traffic crashes on Denver's streets. Fatalities have increased every year except 2020, when traffic volumes were significantly reduced during the pandemic. Meanwhile, other cities in the U.S. and across the world have succeeded in substantially reducing traffic fatalities. What actions do you think the City should take to ensure we reverse the current trend and actually make meaningful progress toward the goal of zero traffic fatalities here in Denver?

We must make our pedestrian experience broad and inviting so people want to use our sidewalks. We must also build additional housing density so it becomes economically viable to install robust mass transit and locate shops near homes. District 10 is the center of government, commerce, culture, and tourism for the entire Rocky Mountain region, and it makes sense for District 10 to be the leader in breaking Denver's dependence on cars.

Recently, Denver has started making some limited investments in infrastructure to improve bus service, such as dedicated bus lanes, traffic signals that prioritize buses, and enhanced bus stops. The build out of this infrastructure has been slow, however, and the City has not proactively partnered with RTD to increase service frequency along these routes. What role do you think the City should play in ensuring that Denverites have access to enough frequent, reliable public transit service to make transit a practical option for daily trips and reduce our dependence on driving?

RTD is a mess, but we need RTD as a partner if we truly want to break Denver's dependence on cars. One sign of the mess: two RTD Board elected positions were elected by having 0 names on the ballot and just one write-in candidate for each. If we have no one interested in that elected Board, it suggests that Board needs adjustment. The people voted to change our agency from Public Works to DOTI, and that tells me that the people are willing to have Denver actively support mass transit in the region by investing and augmenting RTD. After all, Denver has the population density, far more so than surrounding cities/counties.

Parking issues inevitably come up in any discussion about modifying our streets to better accommodate people walking, biking, and accessing transit, and can often be a stumbling block that prevents much-needed street safety projects from moving forward. What changes, if any, would you make to how the City manages parking to ensure we are using our limited street space in the best way possible to achieve our community's goals for providing healthy, safe, and affordable transportation options for everyone?

Installing alternatives to cars polls highly, particularly the younger the respondent. The younger someone is, the greater the chance they don't have a car at all. However, voting trends are the opposite: the older one is, the more likely it is that they vote. For many reasons, we must ensure more participation in our democracy, including (in this case) ensuring more of our younger residents vote. It would be easier for elected officials to support pedestrian and cyclist improvements if they knew they would be better supported at the ballot box.

Denver Streets Partnership sponsored the Denver Deserves Sidewalks ballot measure, which passed in November 2022 with 56% of voter support. How will you ensure that this new sidewalk program is successfully implemented in a timely manner?

I asked to be on the stakeholder committee, but instead Kashmann and Flynn were appointed. I will still closely follow the committee even if I'm not on it. After all, when I announced my candidacy in May 2018, I only had one policy plank in my platform: fixing our busted and broken sidewalks.

While funding over time for biking, walking, transit, and Vision Zero has generally increased over the last five years, including the recently established Transportation and Mobility Fund, the City is still well short of what's needed to build and maintain safe, accessible infrastructure citywide. How would you expand funding for these needs?

I have publicly called for a dramatic shift in how we budget DOTI. In budget conversations, I have said we should use the Oakland model: that DOTI's budget should be based on the mode share we WANT to have, not the mode share we have now. That would mean a much larger investment in sidewalks and protected bike lane infrastructure.

District

10