



denver STREETS PARTNERSHIP

Denver City Council At-Large Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name

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Candidate Website

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What are your top mobility-related priorities as a candidate? How do you expect to implement them if elected?

More and reliable public transit is the biggest priority. Of the hundreds of people I've talked to in the past month, when I ask them "What is one thing you want to see changed in Denver?" the answer is almost always "better transit." And when I ask them to elaborate, they usually mean public transit (although several have talked about making neighborhoods more walkable and bikeable.)

The how is multi-tiered. I want to expand our participation in RTD's Partnership Program, where direct investment in RTD can produce specific outcomes, like increased frequency on specific corridors. But my plan is to hold RTD accountable with those dollars, attaching performance conditions, like on-time percentage, to those dollars. I plan to legislate rezonings to upzone around BRT corridors. The success of BRT will also be in its ridership, and that takes density near it. Additionally, now that parking minimums are abolished, I want to introduce an ordinance for parking maximums, especially near BRT corridors. I would also "unbundle" leases in Denver, as part of that ordinance, to require parking be leased separately from housing (making rentals cheaper in the process for those who want to opt-in to transit.) I also want to investigate more into city-owned parking lots and garages as an alternative to street parking that can free up our roads for public transit, bikes, and walking, versus parking cars.

Do you support the city's Vision Zero commitment of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2030?

Yes

If yes, what actions should City officials take to reverse the current traffic-fatality trend and make meaningful progress toward Denver's Vision Zero commitment?

Last week, I watched as car after car sped by at 40 and 50mph on a residential street in City Park. The family I was talking to said it's an every day, all day occurrence, and they fear for their young son. Speed is one of the greatest factors of traffic fatalities.

My wife is from Pueblo. Their police department is plenty busy, and it's not effective to have them patrolling every neighborhood street to catch speed violators. Do you know what they have? Massive dips in the road at many of the intersections. Massive speed bumps throughout the neighborhoods. If you speed through a Pueblo neighborhood going above 30mph, say goodbye to your bumpers and your undercarriage. Natural consequences.

Another lever we have, that Denver is late on pulling, is speed cameras. We have had the authority to implement them since 2023, but only recently installed them in 2 corridors. Those 2 corridors saw 10-20% crash reduction. Greatly expanding speed cameras will bring actual consequences to the worse and worse driving we are experiencing around Denver. And it will save lives.

You know what else that residential street in City Park did not have besides speed bumps? Speed limit signage. Now, you wish people head their head screwed on straight enough not to speed past homes and children, but what I have learned in life is that if you want people to do something, you have to make it painfully clear. Dynamic feedback signage has been proven to reduce speeds by 10-20%. It's not as good as a physical road design changes or speed enforcement cameras, but it's a lower-cost alternative to incorporate in our strategy that has proven to be effective.

Do you think public transit (bus and train service) can play a role in helping Denver achieve its Vision Zero goals?

Yes

If yes, explain how.

It's very simple. The less people are driving cars around Denver, the less car accidents will happen. The less car accidents happen, the less traffic fatalities are possible. So many people in Denver WANT to ride public transit, but they feel they can't rely on it or they aren't near enough to a stop for it to make sense. Expanded routes, increased frequency, and accountability on timeliness will be key strategies in getting to Vision Zero.

Do you think the City should play a role in ensuring that Denverites have access to enough frequent, reliable public-transit service to make transit a practical option for daily trips?

Yes

If yes, how should the City partner with RTD to improve transit service?

As I mentioned earlier, increased funding going towards the RTD Partnership Program, upzoning areas near transit (especially BRT corridors), introducing parking maximums, requiring unbundling parking from housing leases, and exploring city-owned parking near transit locations, to encourage their usage.

Are you willing to champion projects that prioritize street safety and multimodal access over driver convenience?

Yes

Please explain why you answered the way you did.

Denver voters want this. It's simple. I want this. I used to be able to rely on RTD to get to and from work, 10 years ago. I no longer can. We can have a future where no one needs to pay thousands and thousands of dollars just to get around our wonderful city. This future is more equitable, this future is more communal, and this future is more enjoyable. We can build this city of our dreams, and I plan to do everything within my power to make it happen.

How would you deal with local pushback to projects that experts agree would significantly improve street safety?

Awareness is challenging. There's so much misinformation. But, we have to meet people where they're at. Next Door, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, these are places where so many minds are being made up. Simultaneously, it's proven that people are more open-minded in person vs online. So, a social media strategy has to be combined with in-person events and conversations. Visiting RNOs, speaking at breweries and PTO meetings, and holding town halls will be essential. Engaging with traditional media (TV and news outlets) will also be an essential piece of getting the right information to the right people.

Would you work to expand funding for Denver's transportation/mobility needs?

Yes

If yes, please explain how.

We won't accomplish any of these goals without funding. On City Council, I would vote to protect DOTI from funding cuts and to expand funding in the city budget, I would seek additional outside grants and funding, I would introduce and champion a ballot measure to increase sales tax for transportation access and safety, and I would advocate in the budget to reallocate existing sales tax revenue from vehicle sales to transportation needs.

Do you think the City should plan, design, and deliver transportation projects in a more timely and efficient manner?

Yes

If yes, what actions should City officials take to make this happen?

Change orders are one of the huge problems causing projects to take longer, the 16th Street project being a prime example. Better pre-construction risk assessment could help, but the biggest factor would be introducing an ordinance to require that change orders be brought to city council review before approval. Right now, city council often doesn't know the true progress of a project, because change orders bypass the council. Another big challenge is community pushback due to misinformation. This stalls projects, like on Alameda. Front-loading community engagement in a big way BEFORE making public commitments will allow much more timely implementation.

Our streets make up our largest public space, and for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, “streets are not a means to get home but are home itself.” What policies would you pursue to ensure that everyone feels safe and welcome in Denver’s public spaces?

Denver's COVID-era closure of public restrooms worsened conditions for people on the street, and it hasn't improved. 24-hour restrooms and hand-washing stations is one key policy that can make life easier for those unsheltered. Reversing "hostile architecture" and instead expanding benches, shade, and lighting will be a simple thing that benefits all Denverites, as well as our unhoused neighbors. Ending encampment sweeps is a huge priority for my campaign. Sweeps do nothing to increase safety, and in fact do the opposite. People's essentials and necessities get confiscated, and they have to find somewhere else to go due to full shelters and lack of housing. We need to stop criminalizing poverty.

Do you think Denver should encourage higher densities and mixed-use development patterns to support transit-rich, walkable, and bikeable communities?

Yes

If yes, what actions should City officials take to achieve those outcomes?

As a city councillor, I can introduce legislative rezoning to be voted upon. I would do this, starting in areas near BRT corridors, expanding from there. I would also engage the public for early support, to avoid community pushback for these efforts.

Have you ever been a frequent public transportation user?

Yes

Have you ever been a frequent bike commuter?

Yes

How do you usually move around Denver? Please tell us more about your personal mobility experience.

At one point in my life, I rode my bike everywhere I went, rain or shine. When I moved to Denver 10 years ago, my wife had a vehicle, but I did not. I used trains and buses and my bike exclusively to get to work, to attend events, and to hang out with friends and acquaintances. In the past 5 years, however, I have no longer been able to rely on RTD for consistent, on-time travel. But, I use transit whenever I can, using park and rides or walking the 30 minutes to my nearest train station (as train transit is more reliable than the

buses.) I would love to go back to using transit and my bike exclusively to get around Denver. It contributed to my overall happiness in life and with my city. I'm eager to move Denver back towards this reality.

Do you think Denver should transform our streets to prioritize children’s safe and independent mobility? Yes

Do you think Denver should transform our streets to prioritize the safe and independent mobility of people who cannot drive a car due to a disability? Yes

If you answered yes to one or both of the questions above, what actions should City officials take to achieve or make progress toward this transformation?

Longer cross-walk timers, speed bumps and dips throughout our neighborhoods, speed cameras, dynamic feedback speed signs, repaired sidewalks, and advocating for municipal sidewalk clearing of snow and ice (instead of relying on property owners.)

Do you support the rapid implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network in Denver? Yes

Please explain why you do or don't support the rapid implementation of a BRT network in Denver.

I very much do, but the way things were implemented for Colfax was fraught. Small businesses were lost that will never come back. And what will take their places? Chains and corporations? I hope not. For BRT implementation (which I highly support) to work, small businesses have to be supported more widely and more directly. As an example, the owner of Balanced Root Apothecary, one block off of Colfax, was not eligible for any support from the city as they were deemed "unaffected" from the construction since they weren't directly on Colfax. You can't even turn left on Colfax to get to them, anymore. Their business has most certainly been affected. This is just one mild example among many more serious ones of how context, forethought, and direct engagement with local businesses is necessary to implement transit opportunities without alienating the local community. There are lot of very progressive people who want better transit, but are angry about Colfax. This should be a lesson learned to do better on the next project.

Is there anything else you want to tell us?

I am excited about the possibilities for walking, biking, and public transit in Denver. We just need to ensure small businesses are directly supported and the community is engaged with BEFORE projects are started to ensure their completion.