

Colorado Conservation Voters

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Sustainability Questionnaire for Denver Mayoral Candidates

Please return to brian@coloradoconservationvoters.org by **Monday, April 4th at 8am.**

1) Sustainability: What does sustainability mean to you? What is the top sustainability issue you will focus on as mayor?

Sustainability is about developing innovative solutions that address our environmental concerns in cost-effective ways that attract businesses to Denver. We need to use place-based economic development to recruit and retain the best companies and jobs to Denver, while reducing our environmental impact. DaVita recently moved into LoDo to be in a transit-oriented, biking friendly work environment – a success story we need to replicate.

As Mayor of Denver my primary focus will be to continue cutting red tape for businesses and consumers and to further incentivize sustainable development and growth. We can put people back to work while reducing our carbon footprint.

2) Climate Change: Do you agree or disagree that global climate change is occurring and caused mainly by human activities? If yes, how important do you feel this issue is and what priority would you place on addressing it? What specifically will you do as mayor to address the issue?

Climate change is real and we need to act. I will promote transit-oriented development (TOD), place-based economic development and innovative sustainable initiatives to help reduce Denver's carbon footprint. I helped to pass the rainwater harvesting bill that empowers businesses and individuals to be innovatively sustainable.

Too much of Colorado's economy -- agriculture, recreational tourism, and winter sports -- is reliant on a stable climate. The Mayor of Denver must take the lead on sustainable practices and initiatives.

3) Water: Water is a precious resource here in the West. Denver Water plays a leading role in water conservation and efficiency, not just in Denver but also throughout the state. What will you do as mayor to encourage further water conservation and efficiency efforts in Denver? What type of person would you look to appoint to the Denver Water board?

The Front Range needs to recognize that it cannot continue to divert water supplies from other users without further exacerbating negative environmental and economic impacts

throughout Colorado. I will promote innovative conservation initiatives like the rainwater harvesting legislation I passed in the State Senate.

As Mayor I would look to appoint someone to the Denver Water Board who has a strong background in water conservation -- I want innovative thinkers who can help plan for water conservation over the next several decades.

4) Transit: Transit is critical to Denver's future development. Transit promotes smarter land use policies, reduces traffic congestion and the number of vehicle miles traveled, decreases household transportation costs, and is an economic driver. Do you support an increase in the RTD FasTracks tax and what level do you believe the tax should be? What year would you propose RTD goes back to the voters for approval? Please describe your role and profile in the campaign for an increase of the tax.

I strongly support the completion of the FasTracks system approved by voters in 2004. I will support the initiative approved by the RTD Board and supported by the business community, who will support the campaign. I will actively campaign for this proposal's approval by voters. I will work very hard to achieve the transit-oriented development we all want for FasTracks.

5) Greenprint Denver: Greenprint Denver was created in 2005 to integrate sustainability into city programs and policies and to address the urgent issue of climate change. Since then, Greenprint Denver has implemented programs to promote energy and water efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and preserve natural resources, while saving Denver residents money. Tell us about your plans for Greenprint Denver. If elected, will you continue the program? How will you fund the initiative and programs? What changes, if any, will you make?

As mayor, I will continue the program and take it to the next level. GreenPrint Denver has provided a sustainability direction for Denver and I will provide the committed leadership to communicate how businesses and individuals should contribute to achieving our citywide sustainability goals.

6) Land Use & Growth: Denver and the surrounding Metro region continue to grow quickly with another million people anticipated to move here within the next two decades. A more compact, less sprawling land use pattern will result in decreased traffic and driving, reduced water use, and lower costs for infrastructure and services, while promoting more livable, transit-reachable communities and neighborhoods. As mayor, how would you promote a compact land use pattern and combat urban sprawl? What land use and zoning policies would you pursue to ensure that Denver neighborhoods are vibrant, livable and walkable?

Our new zoning code provides incentives for high-density urban in-fill and I will promote transit-oriented development. I believe that alternative modes of transportation like walking, biking and carpooling are critical to a modern city and Denver's sustainable future.

Walkability must be an important component of our long-term development plans, as well as the construction of safe, usable biking options in the City of Denver. When evaluating new downtown development projects, we must ensure that pedestrian access is a significant consideration to foster tourism, minimize long-term maintenance and promote sustainability. Place-based economic development is our future.

7) Waste Management: Waste reduction and recycling reduces natural resource use, waste disposal costs, and greenhouse gas emissions from landfills. Denver is consistently ranked among the top U.S. cities in most aspects of sustainability, but is admittedly weak on solid waste management. This is in part because, unlike a growing number of communities around the state and country, Denver does not directly charge residents for trash removal, which creates an incentive and revenue stream for waste reduction, recycling and composting. As mayor, what will you do to encourage greater recycling, composting and waste reduction in Denver? Would you support implementing a “pay as you throw” program in Denver? If so, what would your first step entail?

We need to implement more recycling and composting in Denver, using innovative incentives not mandates. We must be creative in our approaches and be careful what we ask families for when people across Denver are still hurting from the economic downturn.

8) Bicycle, Pedestrian & Other Human-Powered Transportation Opportunities: In April 2010, Denver launched the first, citywide bike sharing program in the United States – Denver B-cycle. In its first season, this program provided nearly 103,000 individual rides for a total of 211,111 miles traveled. Do you think B-cycle is an important program to provide more transportation options in Denver and, if so, what would you do as mayor to increase its success and effectiveness? What changes, if any, would you make to Denver’s transportation system and policies to facilitate the increased use and safety of bicycling, walking and other human-powered transportation?

I ride my bicycle 40-60 miles per week during the spring and summer and will continue to do so as Mayor, so I understand the importance of increased bicycle and pedestrian access. I will work to make Denver the most bike-friendly city in the country by significantly expanding B-cycle, ensuring bike paths and routes do not stop at city lines and improving infrastructure throughout the city to encourage cycling tourism and commuting.

When evaluating new development projects, we must ensure that pedestrian access is a significant consideration to foster tourism, minimize long-term maintenance and promote sustainability.

9) Energy Efficiency: Reducing the amount of energy we use is the cheapest and easiest source of new energy. As mayor, what would you do generate greater energy efficiency in Denver? How would you build on existing efforts to make the City's operations, buildings and fleets more efficient? What efforts would you undertake to help Denver residents improve their energy use?

I believe city government should lead the way in saving money and energy. I will insist that all new construction projects undergo energy efficiency reviews and urge new buildings to meet high sustainability standards. This would include passive efficiencies and active renewable energy features, potentially funded in part through the capital construction budget.

To save taxpayer money and make our city more sustainable, I will convert more of Denver's vehicle fleet to run on compressed natural gas and introduce more electric vehicles where appropriate.

10) Policy Leadership: The mayor of Colorado's capital and largest city has a bully pulpit to promote policies and practices beyond those for which he/she has direct jurisdiction and oversight. As mayor, do you plan to use this opportunity to influence important policy debates? What, if any, sustainability issues would you ask Colorado's state or federal elected leaders to take action on?

I have been committed to sustainability throughout my public career and will be as mayor. In my first session in the Colorado Senate I co-sponsored legislation which created a Clean Energy Fund to not only draw green business to Colorado but also to help assist private citizens and local governments implement energy efficiency programs. That same session we authorized local governments to create tax incentives for local businesses in order to encourage more responsible and sustainable growth.

As Mayor of Denver I will pursue the same goals – increased investment in the green economy, incentives for sustainable growth and development and a dedication to enhanced sustainability.

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