



Urban Land  
Institute

Colorado

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*Instructions: Please type your answers in the form below and email the form to [Colorado@uli.org](mailto:Colorado@uli.org) by close of business on Friday, March 4. **Please note: Your questionnaire must be submitted to participate in our public forum on Thursday, March 10.** Limit responses to 100 words or less and adjust the size of the answer space to fit your response if necessary.*

### **Housing + Neighborhoods**

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1. Denver's Inclusionary Housing Ordinance has not generated as much affordable housing as hoped. Do you support the IHO? If so, how can it be revised to work better with more incentives for the private sector? Can the IHO be used to support rental as well as for-sale housing?

**We must ensure affordable housing is available for our residents. It is critical that the City step in to ensure basic shelter is available in mixed-income neighborhoods for our at-risk population. I believe we need to cast a broader net in looking at the inventory of affordable housing that should include new and old, for sale and for rent. I would spearhead mapping out human needs for affordable housing to match need with entire available inventory and then create a targeted plan based on the analysis.**

**As far as the IHO, I believe we have a very mixed record, and we need to reevaluate it. I think the foundation of the IHO included only new housing starts in its measure of affordable housing. It never considered existing housing and, yes, rental stock. I believe we need a full realistic analysis of need and capacity. It may need to be adjusted for our community. We have to strive to get it right.**

2. How would you guide investment into neighborhoods that need it? What tools (CDBC, special districts, tax incentives) might you use?

**I would use all available tools. The City has them. We need to target them as part of an overall strategy.**

**The City's approval process for development projects must become a better balance of economic development goals, customer service and legal review and comment. Right now, it is legalistic and unhelpful, unless there is a champion inside the City for a project. That must change. Tax abatement and gap financing are tools that should be reserved for highly desirable targets that will anchor a section of the City and spur further redevelopment.**

**With regard to the use of special districts as an investment tool, we need to identify cities that are doing the best with special districts, map out their processes on a chart and compare them to ours. I would use that comparison as a guide to improvement in Denver's special district processes**

**Tax Increment Financing is also a valuable financing mechanism when used to further neighborhood investment. I used TIF while redeveloping the University Hills Mall and Bonfils-Lowenstein Theater on Colfax. Using the resources and powers of the Denver Urban Renewal Authority to create new economic development is critical to growing our City the right way.**

**The suburbs use something called 'PIF,' private investment financing. I am curious about whether this might fit in Denver.**

- 3. Do you plan to continue Denver's Road Home? How would you fund the program and the achievement of its goals?**

**I support the housing-first model of Denver's Road Home. I think the outreach services to the mentally ill and to youth are weak and need substantial improvement. We do not have an adequate plan for homeless individuals recently discharged from hospitals and we still have too many of them in jail. Some housing providers allow too much lawlessness in their facilities and make bad neighbors. We need tighter standards and enforcement on those operators. We also have a significant shortage in women's shelters and protective housing. The plan is a good start but not yet complete, and as Mayor I will work to complete it.**

- 4. Denver adopted a new zoning code in June 2010. How will you measure and verify the success of New Code? What about areas within the city's domain like Cherry Creek and B5 that were left out of the Zoning Code?**

**The new code is based on form, context and use. On City Council, I voted to ensure the updated code was written in the style that is accessible to architects, engineers and lay people, not just lawyers. These are its good qualities. Unfortunately it was built and released without adequate modeling and some terribly wrong standards were proposed in a variety of districts.**

However, I think the core principles of the code are good. A thoughtful deliberative process with all stakeholders should start over on the areas, like B5 and the B5A, that were not updated in the new Code. This deliberative process should be conducted with an eye to the context that the City and the neighbors and property owners hope to achieve in these areas.

The success of the new code will be measured by the vibrancy, growth, economic health, walkability, and diversity of our neighborhoods. The new Code was written to embody 21<sup>st</sup> Century development values as reflected in the 'Blueprint Denver' document. A successful zoning code will help Denver become a more architecturally and economically diverse City that supports a work-life balance, economic growth and creativity, environmental sustainability, and protects our Western heritage.

### **City Management + Services**

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1. Denver has made progress making the development review process more efficient through use of an ombudsman to help guide the private sector. How would you institutionalize and formalize these improvements within Development Services and Community Planning and Development?

**I would use the LEAN process implemented by Dr. Gabow at Denver Health to improve efficiency and processes within Development Services. Furthermore, I will work with the Downtown Denver Partnership, American Institute of Architects, Denver Metropolitan Commercial Association of REALTORS®, Associated General Contractors of Colorado, NAIOP Colorado Chapter and Denver Metro BOMA and all stakeholders to implement suggested improvements and ensure excellence throughout city government.**

2. What are the roles of the Office of Economic Development, Community Planning and Development and Public Works? How could the link among these three organizations be strengthened to support the types of positive growth envisioned in documents like Blueprint Denver and the New Code? How could they be better linked?

**I would preserve the Development Services process and support the project manager system to integrate processes for applicants in multiple departments. All departments are linked – they report to the Mayor.**

**I also believe implementation of the LEAN process will be helpful in improving interdepartmental communication, collaboration and efficiency. This process, used by Dr. Gabow at Denver Health and in companies throughout the world, involves reevaluating processes that have built up over the years. It asks: is our current process the most efficient, or just what has accumulated piecemeal over time in the bureaucracy?**

Process by process, a team of employees is brought together and given the tools to map out their own department's systems and hone improvements. A little over a week later, after consideration and testing, a plan is presented and results are implemented. Overall, this productive, employee-based evaluation often results in overall organizational savings of 5 to 10%.

3. Do you agree there is a link between economic development + real estate development? How would you strengthen this link? And do you agree there is a link between public works spending + seeding development?

**Yes, of course they are linked. We must raise our level of economic development to match the level of real estate development. We need companies and middle-income jobs to attract people to live in Denver, buy in Denver, and work in Denver. I will strengthen this link with my much-needed comprehensive economic development platform (see below). The link between public works spending and seeding development is also readily apparent: The City must prepare an area with good sewers, water, transportation options, energy and fiber optics.**

4. What is your assessment of the budget? How would you cut costs and raise more revenue?

The City budget is an expression of our moral priorities as a community. As we meet the challenges of a tough economy, we must protect Denver's core values. As chair of the General Government Committee and vice chair of Finance Committee on City Council, I learned a lot about how to do more with less to make government more efficient, maneuver the twists and turns of the city budget, while still keeping up quality of service and treating city employees fairly. I also performed that work for eight years as an agency's executive director. Half of this year's \$100 million budget shortfall can be met by reapplying last year's cuts, though I would review them line-by-line to make sure they make sense to enact again. The other \$50 million will require tough new cuts. As Mayor, I will ask each department for its high, medium, and low budget. Just as I did on Council, I will then put in the hard work to gather consensus and go through the budget line-by-line to do what is best for Denver's people.

Most importantly, we must GROW the economy to keep city services strong and keep Denver's unique quality of life. My economic development program will increase the number of companies and jobs in Denver, thereby increasing revenue and ensuring the high quality services Denverites know and deserve.

5. Do you support privatization of city services such as libraries, trash collection, and rec centers?

**I primarily support public employees providing public services. When specific short-term projects that require specific expertise arise, I would investigate using private employees. With regard to recreation centers, I believe that there is an opportunity to match capable non-profits with the specific needs of a community to improve service delivery, capture economic efficiencies and support the continued health of Denver's non-profit sector, in order to supplement the work of City employees**

## **Public Realm**

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1. For Public Works Director, what skillset do you envision the ideal candidate possessing? Would you appoint an experienced advocate for multi-modal transportation?

**A good Public Works Director ideally should combine the mind and education of an engineer with the management skill and outlook of a chief executive. A Public Works Director must understand the complex and technical nature of building and servicing a city, while, at the same time, understanding and promoting the Mayor's long-term vision for the City. I would seek to appoint an advocate for multi-modal transportation at the Department of Public Works. We must become a more walkable, bike-friendly, transit-oriented city to continue to attract and retain the highly-educated and skilled young workforce and maintain our excellent quality of life. As with all my appointees, I will seek candidates who appreciate and can use effective public process.**

2. Denver has a goal of becoming a more walkable, bike-friendly and transit-friendly city. Yet most citizens still drive. How will you prioritize Public Works maintenance and new spending for roads, bike paths, sidewalks and other pedestrian enhancements like sidewalks, bulb outs, street trees, etc?

**From FASTracks to recreational transportation, from bike-friendly streets to pedestrian friendly roadways, the City must do everything in its power to make Denver a modern, green, multi-modal city that attracts the educated young workforce we need to keep growing. It's critical we fund these improvements.**

3. How would you fund improvements to the public realm, including streets, parks and greenways?
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**The generous voters of Denver have already approved a mill levy for capital maintenance. Where we have the opportunity, we should also explore potential public-private partnerships. For the time being, we must learn to live within our means. For the longer term, we must grow the economy with my aggressive economic development plan.**

## **Regional transportation and cooperation**

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1. Do you support a tax increase to fully fund FasTracks? How much? Should this go to ballot in November 2011? Will you campaign for or against?

**We absolutely must do what we can to ensure that FASTracks is completed. It is a critical economic development tool, will help further enhance us as an international business hub with better transit to DIA, will relieve traffic congestion and will ensure all rails lead back to Union Station (with the consumers they will bring).**

**I believe the most important goal to achieving a complete FasTracks project is to keep the 33 government coalition together. If the Metro Mayors and the RTD board support the current schedule plus the .4% sales tax increase, I will support it and fight for it on the ballot. If together, they propose a lower tax increase and a lengthened construction schedule, I would support that. Right now, I believe that a decrease in lines or line length would severely weaken the coalition, and we must stick together to get this done.**

2. Mayor Hickenlooper was active and effective in Metro Mayors Caucus. As Denver Mayor how will you participate in organizations like the Caucus and DRCOG? Should Denver have a role as mediator and coalition-builder or being looking out for its own interests?

**Yes – I spent the last eight years representing the city at Colorado Counties Inc seeking collaboration throughout the state with county governments. I served on the Metro County Commissioners working for Metro area cooperation and on the Policy Committee of the Colorado Municipal league. I believe in cooperation to solve our problems – so many migrate across jurisdictions.**

3. What will be your administration's role be in the I-70 (DIA to Vail) discussion?
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**Congestion issues on this route are critical to Denver's role in tourism and in the business of distribution. In addition, any realignment of I-70 affects the stock show – also critical to Denver and many of our neighborhoods. I will be deeply engaged in all conversations on this subject to protect our interests, seeking cost effective answers that respect our goals.**

## **Economic development**

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1. What is your vision of making Denver more competitive? For example, jobs are an issue everywhere but particularly in Denver as it loses corporate jobs through the relocation of Molson Coors, ProLogis and Qwest. What is your strategy for job growth through small business incubation and support? Corporate retention and recruitment? Which of the seven employment sectors identified by the Denver Metro Chamber will you focus on?

**As Mayor, I will set the tone to make the City an attractive place to live and do business, keeping our role as the preeminent City of the Rocky Mountain West and enhancing our status as an international business hub. I will increase innovation and skilled middle income jobs, support tourism, invest portions of the City's budget in local banks to help meet new capital reserve requirements, enhance Denver's excellent quality of life, and position us to be a market leader in important modern industry segments.**

**We already have many economic development tools; we must now come together over a concrete plan to use them effectively. I will work with the community to develop that concrete plan to achieve our vision and use the full resources of the City to make the plan a reality. To be effective, I will appoint a strong lead economic development officer whose job focus is finding and closing business opportunities that fit the plan. Furthermore, we need an effective marketing program, a strong community consensus on the plan, and the full commitment of the Mayor to use all the powers of her Office to achieve the plan.**

**I pledge to be a strong regional partner to the Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce, Visit Denver and our peer governments in the metro region, working directly with them to support economic development and tourism, tourism-related business and manufacturing, and tourism infrastructure, such as increasing runway length at the airport, completing FasTracks, restoring the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, and keeping the Stock Show/Coliseum. We also need to add distribution and medical technology to the sectors the Chamber has listed to further develop our economy.**

2. Our region has strong growth in healthcare + research--yet Denver has lost its share of these jobs as hospitals and medical facilities move to suburbs. How will your administration protect and enhance medical-related jobs, especially at landlocked campuses?

**For starters, I have shown strong leadership on this issue already. I spent the last three months working to build the relationship between National Jewish and DPS to ensure National Jewish stays in its location. I wrote an ordinance to create tobacco free zones around city hospitals so they can meet the same high standards for accreditation that suburban.**

**I will meet with the heads of the hospitals regularly to meet their needs and support them. Ultimately, with an emphasis on the bioscience and medical technology sectors for economic development, these hospitals are critical for Denver's future.**

3. The city currently has numerous major sites for redevelopment: Health Science Center at 9<sup>th</sup> and Colorado, Gates, the Stock Show site, Stapleton, DIA, Central Platte Valley, and numerous FasTracks station areas. How do you prioritize investment to make development happen in these areas?

**Number one, we must view all this in terms of a vigorous economic development plan, and go first with what is ready now. The primary ones are Gates and 9<sup>th</sup> and Colorado, but all of the above mentioned sites are all equally worthy of development attention and focus. Each of these areas have issues that must be worked through, whether environmental, community-based, or other, and the City must create a proactive plan on how those issues will be dealt with in partnership with private investment.**

**Further, to encourage a faster pace of redevelopment everywhere, I will make City Hall function like a Customer Service Center for new and existing business. I will change the regulatory culture of City Hall to work with businesses to meet commonsense regulations, helping them grow and locate here, bringing vital revenue with them and enhancing the quality of life for all of us.**

4. Denver needs a central retail strategy. How would you protect and enhance the retail sales tax base? Incentivize more retail in neighborhoods that lack basic retail services?

**A concerted retail strategy requires more research than we have – what retail exists where, and what retail has a market where? I was a part of a group of Councilmembers trying to bring the Chicago neighborhood marketplace retail initiative to Denver, which involves doing a marketing plan for each neighborhood shopping district and creating a plan to bring retail to the neighborhood. We must do more of these initiatives in our small retail centers.**

**But we also need a clear analysis of retail on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street mall, particularly for our tourism industry.**

5. A well-educated workforce is a vital component to any healthy city. How will your administration address and support the continued reform of DPS? How will you support and leverage our higher education system, both for workforce training and spinoffs to create homegrown companies?

**School District No. 1 and the City and County of Denver serve the identical jurisdiction. Their fates are deeply interconnected but the relationship is collegial, not legally authoritative.**

**I built the Mayor's Office for Education and Children and managed it for eight years to improve the relationship. I created Denver Head Start, expanded school-based clinics and summer recreation opportunities, before and after school programs, developed manuals for non-profits to operate in schools after hours, and put police in the schools. We totally changed the relationship to a partnership on services, cooperative relations with the superintendent, regular communication with the school board and council.**

**We as the City must now foster a collaborative dialogue among parents, classroom teachers, advocates of charters and advocates of neighborhood schools. That starts by ending the food fight over BELIEFS of what works and focusing on the SCIENCE of how learning works.**

**As Mayor, and as a mother who sent two kids through DPS, I will be uniquely positioned to reach out to everyone – the Mayor's office, DPS, DCTA and the community – for a pilot project focused on bringing child-by-child individualization techniques into the classroom at three of the lowest performing elementary schools in the city, using three different models of individualization, with the expectation of success within three years.**

**As a reading specialist, I've seen this work with my own eyes, and the data prove it works in other countries. We have not used it here except for cases of children with extreme disabilities. With this pilot project, full cooperation among the stakeholders, and investment from pro-education groups, we can enhance both the ability of our children to learn and further strengthen the relationship between the City and DPS.**

**With proof that this approach works in Denver, the community can come together on a road map to improve all DPS schools.**

**I chaired Great Education Colorado for five years, with a key focus on resources for pre-school through college. Creating the highly educated workforce that companies need and partnering with higher education to perform workforce development is critical.**

6. What is your view of sustainable land use and how does Greenprint Denver fit in?

**I would preserve Greenprint – it’s done a nice job finding ways saving money and following sustainable practices. We get to sustainable land use by supporting multi-modal transportation, walkable communities. I am interested in fleet conversion either to electric or natural gas vehicles as our current vehicles age out. But the important thing is to avoid sprawl – therefore, we need to look at city practices around entitlements so it is easier to redevelop, adapt and reuse existing urban parcels already served by urban infrastructure. I also support conversion of coal-fired power plants to natural gas.**

7. Within the last 20 years, DIA and downtown have been the top priority for previous administrations, do you this changing? Within Downtown, how would you stimulate more jobs, residences, and infill development?

**The economy of our region is anchored by DIA and downtown. They must always be top priority. Different neighborhoods deserve specific attention tailored to their on-the-ground conditions. For example, in Downtown Denver I would like to see a targeted analysis of the product and service mix that would suit the downtown daytime consumer, the light rail commuter, the evening entertainment consumer, and the 10,000 24-hour residents of downtown. With that plan in hand, the City should use its current toolkit in a more targeted fashion: the revolving loan fund, TIF, CDBG funds, technical assistance, and a new and improved approval process that uses the LEAN process to restore customer service, and a more effective project manager approach for desirable retail.**

**One of the reasons Denver was able to weather the last downturn better than similar cities was the strong conventions that came to town, bringing convention-goers that stayed in our hotels, ate in our restaurants, and shopped in our businesses. Large-scale conventions like these are scoped out five to ten years in advance – we do not want someone scoping out potential convention sites coming to the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, seeing the initial signs of decay, and thinking, “If it looks like this now, how will this be in ten years during my convention?”**

**We must find ways to invest throughout the City during these hard economic days. While we must make critical cuts and sacrifices now, with economic development never seen before in Denver, and through implementation of the LEAN process in city government, we can afford to invest in all areas of the City - particularly our critical downtown, which serves as an anchor for economic activity.**

8. How would you support an industrial development strategy that creates “green jobs” and research and development as a result?

**We need innovation jobs and middle-income jobs that grow out of the targeted sectors identified by the Chamber – including energy, new and old – and the products and the high-tech services that come out of them. I will**

**support and work with the Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce and add targeted sectors in medical technology and distribution for a concerted economic development initiative.**

**Final general question:**

What is your vision for a sustainable urban Denver? What would you like your legacy to be?

**After my time in the Mayor's office, I envision a stronger Denver, with critical middle income jobs in light manufacturing, high tech services, and the new green economy, brought in through my aggressive economic development program, with low unemployment and plentiful job opportunities for all Denverites across the socioeconomic spectrum. I see an efficient and ready city government, doing more with less, and providing high-quality services with a can-do attitude, after I implement the LEAN process and bring more accountability to city government. I will leave not just a more efficient government, but one that safeguards our Denver values, protects our seniors and our children, and makes sure our safety net is not violated. I see a greener city, with FASTracks completed, improved transit options, and a thriving, multi-modal downtown. My legacy will be embodied when, one day after I leave the Mayor's office, I take FASTracks to DIA to pick up my granddaughter, we go into a shining and revitalized downtown, and take a stroll along a safe and clean Colfax Avenue.**