



---

Candidate Name: Doug Linkhart

Candidate Address: 3100 Downing Street, Unit C

Campaign Manager: Wendell Pryor

Phones: Candidate 303-295-2945 Campaign: 303-295-5003

*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

---

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?

I am not a big fan of the IHO and would like to see changes in the ordinance as a whole, including further limitations on where it applies and how covenants affect buyers. For downtown, we need to continue in the direction of flexibility for developers in creating affordable housing off-site or in combination with other developers. Downtown needs a stock of affordable and transitional housing, but this should not deter developers or result in complexes that harm the value of nearby properties.

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

The revision of Denver's zoning code was the first step in directing investment to particular areas. Now that we have a better framework, we need to focus our energy on infill and redevelopment of high priority areas.

As far as incentives for these neighborhoods, everything is on the table. Denver has cut its business incentive fund by 75% over the last three years, to the point where it took four years' worth of incentive money to attract DaVita. We need to expand this fund and focus strategically on needs of the neighborhoods and other parts of the city to support other development.

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

As a member of the original Homeless Commission, I support Denver's Road Home and its various programs. We need to continue our investment in helping the chronically homeless get into transitional housing and get the services they need to stay off the streets.

I particularly appreciate the partnership between the city and Downtown Denver Partnership in conducting outreach to people on the street. We need to continue to discourage people from giving panhandlers money and limit the sales of newspapers and other annoying behaviors.

Some of the additional steps I would take regarding the homeless are to: 1) increase general city funding for mental health and drug treatment programs by reducing the cost to maintain the jail; 2) work with businesses and nonprofits to create more day shelters, 24-hour shelters and possibly wet shelters; and 3) prevent further homelessness by eliminating the "cliff effect," in which people on public assistance lose their benefits when they start working.

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?

I support the new zoning code, but it's essentially a shell in which we need to flesh out details. The current planning effort for the Arapahoe Triangle is an example of how we need to approach particular sections of the city with a customized set of goals and zoning standards. I am working with neighborhoods distant from downtown to assess the possibility of using overlay zones, which is one additional tool that we might investigate for downtown-area neighborhoods if the tools in the new zoning code are insufficient. Areas like Cherry Creek should now take priority in efforts to plan and guide future development.

## City Management + Services

---

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?

Yes, I would retain and expand the Development Services Office, as well as involve it in the review of each agency that I described earlier. This Office has made good headway in streamlining permitting processes for major projects and residential projects. What still needs to be done, though, is to streamline permitting for small and medium-sized commercial projects and a thorough review of existing requirements to determine which can be eliminated.

I will also establish an Employee Innovation Fund which will empower employees to provide ideas for cost-savings measures and encourage investing money up-front to save money later. By bringing all of the stakeholders together, including the employees, we can achieve the goal of strengthening, streamlining and, where necessary, simplifying the process. Finally, we need to provide more services online.

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?

The roles of the Office of Economic Development, Community Planning and Development, and Public Works are to implement and administer the various codes that promote and protect the quality of life for Denver's residents. Another role is to facilitate job creation.

The linkages among these organizations will be strengthened when I am elected Mayor by reducing the "silos" that exist in each organization. They can be better linked by implementing more on line services, reducing red tape, and asking the employees for their ideas about how the city can better serve the public and the goal of economic prosperity. Continued operation of the Development Services Office is one step toward collaboration.

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?

Real estate development, when done well and in conjunction with zoning and codes, can increase the potential for housing. These support economic development spending on transportation, water, and wastewater, and provide the needed infrastructure to attract new businesses.

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

One of my first acts as Mayor will be a top-to-bottom review of each major agency to identify more effective ways of achieving goals within existing resources. By harnessing the ideas of city employees, business leaders and the broader community, I believe that we can find efficiencies, areas that can be eliminated, and ways to invest money in ways that save money later, as we have with the Crime Prevention and Control Commission.

There are many areas in which partnerships with private businesses and nonprofit agencies can bring additional benefits. One thing that I have proposed is the securitization of parking meter revenue by a private entity to provide a lump sum of revenue that would allow us to make some of the up-front investments that will save us money later. This type of partnership is being used elsewhere, along with other ways of borrowing private money to make investments up-front.

The city also needs to invest more in itself to save money later. I will use the budget cuts and parking meter revenue discussed above to invest in programs for kids, energy efficiency, mental health services, and other areas that save us money later.

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

Generally, I oppose the privatization of public services.

## Public Realm

---

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

The person I will appoint as Public Works Director will share my interest in transit-oriented development and alternative modes of transportation, the Strategic Transportation Plan, and be experienced in working collaboratively with employees and the broader public. I will also look for someone with interest and experience in multi-modal transportation who will be able to implement Denver Moves and the city's responsibilities for FasTracks.

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?

The Strategic Transportation Plan and Denver Moves are good blueprints for how to prioritize expenditures to create a balanced transportation system. We need to better prioritize capital improvement funding to implement these plans and begin to put into place the pedestrian components by creating a citizens' advisory committee or panel to suggest ideas that will make Denver more walkable.

3. How would you fund improvements to the public realm, including streets, parks and greenways?

Denver's parks need continual investment to keep them attractive and functional. I chaired a task force on parks and recreation bond improvements 20 years ago and have worked since then to make beautification, ongoing maintenance, and water conservation high priorities.

As Mayor, I will prioritize capital improvement dollars to invest in our parks and open spaces. I will also work with foundations and nonprofit organizations to draw private money and ideas, particularly Civic Center.

There are a variety of public-private partnerships that can be used to enhance activity and funding for parks and open space, including efforts to accommodate more vendors as we did in Civic Center in the Tuesday Eats program. We should also prioritize use of the McNichols Building as a public or private venue to generate traffic.

## Regional transportation and cooperation

---

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?

Yes, I support the proposal for full funding of FasTracks funding through a 0.4% sales tax increase, but I also agree with the business leaders who want to do more polling before we move forward. Losing this vote would make it difficult to go back to voters later. We need to clearly understand their

tolerance levels and propose a tax increase that can pass. Once the measure is on the ballot, I will campaign tirelessly for its passage.

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?

As Mayor of the largest city in our region, I will work with other public officials to create a stronger regional economy. We must untangle the state's budgetary mess and get more revenues flowing to state programs. I will also make Denver a stronger player in the global economy by capitalizing on our international connections and diverse population. My experience as President of the Colorado Municipal League and my work with international communities in creating Global Denver will serve as a foundation in these efforts.

As someone who has already worked with leaders from throughout the region, I will jump right in to work with other regional figures as a team player with the well-being of the whole region in mind.

3. What will be your administration's role be in the I-70 (DIA to Vail) discussion?

As Mayor of the biggest city in the state and a former State Legislator, I will play a leadership role at the state level to work with other entities to solve problems like peak traffic congestion on I-70.

## Economic development

---

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?

To strengthen our home-grown economy, I will make Denver a hotbed of innovation and entrepreneurship. My strategies include creation of a seed capital fund, entrepreneur support network, a gap financing fund, head tax exemption for small businesses, and regional Economic Prosperity Centers similar to the one I helped set up in Curtis Park.

*Denver's economy needs long-term fixes, not just a shot in the arm.* As Mayor, I will streamline Denver's regulatory processes by bringing together businesses, community leaders and city employees to eliminate permitting requirements (did you know that we even require a permit for going out of business?) and empower inspectors to allow more flexibility, particularly in the rehabilitation of older buildings.

The key indicators for sectors that we should support are the wage levels and level to which the sector brings new dollars to the region. To grow jobs from within, I will work with area universities and colleges to capitalize on their strengths.

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?

Business retention is a huge priority and something for which I will dedicate staff. We need to constantly listen to the needs of these businesses and accommodate them when possible.

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?

The key step is to create the framework for redevelopment at each site and facilitate permitting processes when developers are ready. Beyond this, the city should prioritize development incentives based on their value to the city in terms of leveraging other investments and projects.

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?

Downtown Denver needs additional retail and entertainment anchors. It's time that we get serious about this critical link to economic vitality. As Mayor, I will assign a full-time economic development worker to this effort until we achieve our goal.

I will also work with neighborhoods to create comprehensive neighborhood business plans to make stronger neighborhood retail environments and enhance the link between residents and businesses.

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?

The educational success of our young people is extremely important and something in which I have been involved for years. The city's role in this effort should be to support kids and their families, not to take over or second guess the school district.

We can play a critical role in helping kids be successful by creating better preschool opportunities, after-school and summer programs, school-based health centers, school-to-career opportunities, and mentoring programs. The city can also help parents be more successful by providing job training, connections to good-paying jobs, mental health services, drug treatment, and health care. I have worked in all of these areas to improve opportunities for our young people and their families.

We also need to leverage our higher education system, both for workforce training and spinoffs to create homegrown companies. As a business economist, I have extensive experience working with business incubators and university research parks to connect innovation to businesses. The Bard Center at University of Colorado Denver is a great model for this connection.

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

As Mayor, I will support and expand the goals of Greenprint Denver. We should support sustainable land use by encouraging density, connections to transit, bike and pedestrian paths, urban gardens, water conservation, and energy efficiency.

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 continued development of downtown will be a high priority for me. My goal is to enhance downtown pedestrian and bike pathways, expand mass transit connections, increase our green space, enhance transitions with surrounding neighborhoods, and attract retail and entertainment anchors.

The most important strategy for DIA is to continue to leverage this asset to create off-site economic growth in manufacturing, tourism, and international trade.

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

We need to create stronger connections between our schools, colleges, major employers, and research institutions to spawn new businesses in the energy and environment arenas. The other priority should be to make capital available for these businesses and provide job training to connect people to these jobs.

**Final general question:**

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

As Mayor, I will help make Denver the greenest city in the country. By investing in recycling, energy efficiency, green jobs, alternative transportation modes and other conservation, we can put Denver at the top of the list for sustainability.