

Colorado Springs Candidate Survey

Response date: 2/24/19

Q1

Thank you for completing our survey.

Name: Tony Gioia

Office you are seeking: Colorado Springs City Council At-Large

Q2

What is your solution to ensure adequate Public Safety response times throughout the City? Please explain.

The simplest answer is that we need more uniformed officers and firefighters. We are in the process of increasing both numbers in the city, but it is a process that takes time and money. The city has committed to the increase in funding, and more officers and firefighters are being trained.

Q3

Do you support the implementation of automated red light cameras throughout Colorado Springs? Please, explain.

No. I am against government invasion of privacy and entrapment. More often than not, these red light cameras have been used around the country as a means of increasing revenue and have not had a significant impact on safety.

Q4

What is your position regarding the elimination of motor vehicle traffic lanes (road-dieting) in favor of installing bicycle lanes? Please, explain.

In Colorado Springs, we have a seeming lack of interest among some elected officials and city bureaucrats of what their public thinks of their projects. Again and again we have seen so-called public processes where the public has come out in force against a proposal only to have the project move forward without any changes. We saw this on Research Parkway with the bike lanes that were installed and then removed again a couple months later. While bike lanes are not bad and are appropriate in many areas, the city must listen to its citizens when making choices on where they go.

Q5

Should City for Champions projects —either initial construction or long-term maintenance— be funded through additional local taxes? Please, explain.

No. TABOR rules still apply, and if there are to be additional taxes, the public must approve.

Q6

Do you support the implementation of new taxes or fees to solve the City's growing homelessness problems? Please, explain.

No. Right now, we use massive amounts of public funding to support the homeless population when they spend extra nights in jail or in hospital beds because they have no home. A diversion of those funds to stable apartments for those who are seeking mental health and addiction treatment, as well as job training and placement, would save us a lot of money.

Q7

What are your thoughts on in-fill, sprawl, and the growing population in Colorado Springs? Should the growth of development be encouraged or restricted?

We are growing, and the way to make sure that we grow appropriately and can increase transit options is through increased density in the city center and various neighborhoods around the city. Incentivization of affordable housing and multiple unit housing development can help us. Smaller, denser neighborhoods lead to more multimodal transportation opportunities, thereby taking cars off the road and reducing congestion. This increased density will also reduce per capita costs on infrastructure build out and maintenance.

Q8

Do you pledge to oppose and vote against any increases in taxes or fees? Do you pledge to oppose and vote against the establishment of new taxes or fees? Please explain.

I will not pledge to oppose all such votes, but I will pledge that before I vote in favor of them, I will seek the approval of the voters. It is important that we educate the public on the need for new taxes and fees and get their approval before moving forward. The money belongs to the public, not to the government or elected officials.

Q9

Do you support local Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) dollars for City for Champions projects without a vote of the people? Also, would you support or oppose any new proposals of Certificates of Participation (COPs) for City financed projects?

I would not support the use of COPs for city projects, as this is a rather sneaky way of getting around TABOR. They still require tax money to pay back the loans taken out against public assets. TIF is a tool that the state allows in Urban Renewal Zones to incentivize new development. It is NOT tax money that must be paid by the public. It is a reduction in taxes on the development from those that would be collected above and beyond what is collected currently. For that reason, I would not look to a vote of the people in using TIF dollars.