

Colorado Springs City Council Candidate Survey

Candidate name: Olivia Lupia

District: 3

Website: www.VoteOliviaLupia.com

Date: 2/24/21

1. Do you support or oppose increasing taxes or fees, or the establishment of new taxes and fees? If you support increasing taxes and fees (or establishing new taxes and fees), what would be acceptable reasons to you?

I oppose increasing existing, or creating new, taxes and especially fees as they are simply “taxes” that avoid voter approval. Our existing tax revenue should be adequate, but needs to be properly allocated and maintained with transparency. Taxes should never be raised/created until they have voter support and consent.

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

I do not support the forced sacrifice of our existing thoroughfares or parking for initiatives such as bike lanes. This is not a practical effort for a vehicle-dominant city with a climate that truly does not allow for year-round use of bike lanes.

3. What is your opinion of infill projects that receive opposition from neighbors? Should zoning change projects proceed—even with opposition from the majority of neighbors living there?

Absolutely not. The voices of the communities City Council represents should be honored and respected, not unilaterally railroaded. While redevelopment must occur, it must be done with respect for the existing communities.

4. As Colorado Springs expands in population and infill projects press forward, infrastructure is stressed. What is your solution for financing new infrastructure?

Developers who are undertaking the infill projects should have some responsibility for infrastructure improvements. Metro districts are an option in addition to public-private partnerships. For example, COS Utilities has a fund to assist with upgrading and replacing existing infrastructure for projects all over the city.

5. As COVID-19 closures and restrictions persist, many local businesses are suffering. What should be done for businesses and their employees?

Businesses need to be fully opened as soon as possible so owners and employees can earn a living. I believe business owners should have the right to decide the best safety measures to implement for their businesses and their employees.

6. Local activists raised the issue of defunding the Colorado Springs Police Department. Do you support or oppose increasing the number of Colorado Springs police officers? Please explain.

I support increasing funding for CSPD officers as the department is already not operating with full staffing or resources. Public safety is a top priority.

7. Colorado Springs has a stormwater fee of \$5 per home, and \$30 per acre for businesses. The current council members appear to be in favor of a fee increase and will likely increase it soon. Many of the violations ruled on in a recent EPA lawsuit found that the City failed to enforce requirements that construction site operators implement appropriate measures to prevent polluted stormwater from running off active construction sites. During your term, will you vote to raise the stormwater fee?

Sadly, the fee increases were approved by Council on 2/23/21. I would not have supported raising the fee (tax in disguise) and will not support additional raises in three years when the recently approved annual increases cease. It is not the taxpayer's responsibility to make up for the city's inability to properly use revenue.

8. Do you support or oppose the implementation of recreational marijuana within the City of Colorado Springs in order to capture additional tax revenue?

No, from a moral and ethical perspective I do not agree with recreational marijuana sales or use. Though it could perhaps increase tax revenue, the negative impacts on the community would outweigh any increased tax benefits.

9. There is a push in the City for separate affordable housing complexes. According to the National Association of Realtors, the average price of a home in Colorado Springs increased from \$175,000 to \$371,900 in 10 years. Wages have not kept up with that increase. What is your solution to help residents afford housing?

The city should incentivize new businesses that can increase the median income, and not subsidize affordable housing projects. By also finding ways to cut excess regulations/fees, the city can partner with developers to make housing affordable.

10. Is there anything else you want the taxpayers to know about you, or is there an important topic we didn't ask about that you want to share?

I believe in minimal taxation and government regulation/interference in conjunction with a free markets and personal responsibility. As a Council member, my goal would be to promote and enact these values on behalf of the residents of our city.