



DENVER METRO
ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

2021 Municipal Election – Arvada Questionnaire

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1. Please provide a brief summary of your background and the reasons you are running for office.

I am licensed landscape architect and urban designer with 12 years experience designing, managing, and leading innovative public realm infrastructure projects and mixed-use developments. I am a LEED Accredited Professional, with the highest scoring LEED ND Gold development in Colorado (Sloan's Lake). I've spent the last 5 years on the Arvada Planning Commission, where I am currently the Vice Chair. Because of my background in design and development, I provide a unique voice on planning commission often negotiating for better outcomes by making amendments to motions and providing critical guidance to City Council.

Arvada is growing rapidly and the choices and decisions we make today will directly impact the quality of life for generations to come. I am running for City Council At-Large because the citizens of Arvada deserve a qualified design voice with a history of service and commitment to guide Arvada's growth. Arvada has proven to be one of the greatest places to live in the county. It is clear the secret is out, and people want to join our community. I believe this is positive for Arvada and that the necessary housing and infrastructure projects that follow are a great opportunity to shape the future of the city while preserving historic charm and empowering existing communities.

2. What are the most important opportunities and challenges facing Arvada over the next four years?

a. Amongst these, which issue or issues are the highest priority for you if elected? Why?

The most important opportunities and challenges Arvada will face over the next 4 years are housing affordability, building a robust network of mobility options to alleviate congestion, maintaining access to parks and open space, investment in roadway infrastructure that keeps regional traffic off local roads, securing water resources, and continuing to make public safety standards a top priority.

These opportunities/challenges are directly related to managing growth. My highest priority as a City Council member will be addressing growth with a collaborative and informed approach. I will draw on my leadership background in the design of complete streets and mixed use developments, enhancing mobility networks, applying sustainable building practices, and community placemaking to advocate for expanding transportation options (including cycle facilities, micro transit, and bike/ped safety), to address first and last mile transportation and alleviate congestion, to build consensus between City staff and my fellow Councilors on critical decisions, to identify and advocate for appropriate sustainable building practices on all projects, and to ensure each project is reviewed objectively in its own unique urban context.

3. Land Use, Planning and Zoning:

a. Arvada's population will continue to grow over the next decade. What is your philosophy on growth and development and how do you intend to implement this philosophy if elected?

As I stated above, Arvada has proven to be one of the greatest places to live in the county and people want to join our community. I believe growth is positive for Arvada and that the necessary housing and infrastructure projects that we now need are a great opportunity to shape the future of the city while preserving historic charm and empowering existing communities.

When I am elected to City Council, I will use my position to encourage partnerships between realtors, developers, builders and the city to find public improvement opportunities throughout the city, specifically in underserved neighborhoods. Historically, public investment in facilities like recreational centers and parks have proven to build stronger communities and create additional housing and real estate opportunities.

We are all in this together and I intend on working with residents, staff, and developers to find right sized solutions to fit any context.

b. In 2019, Lakewood voters passed a 1% annual cap on residential growth. Would you support similar legislation in Arvada? Why or why not?

I would not support a growth cap. I view growth caps as a short-sided solution to a long-term issue. Cities with growth caps have solved little with these policies. Traffic, parking, and housing prices are still

issues, even more so in some cases. I prefer to be more proactive and look to the market to help solve gaps in product type and inventory.

4. Affordable Housing:

- a. Please provide your thoughts on the City's current funding mechanisms for affordable housing. Do you feel the City is doing enough to address the issue? If not, please provide your thoughts on how the City can expand existing programs or create new ones.**

Affordable housing is mentioned as a priority in the comprehensive plan but is not a requirement in current city policy or code. I know that markets respond faster than policy changes and I generally prefer to allow markets to freely meet the needs of consumers.

Currently, there are federal programs for housing that subsidize the cost for a few lucky program participants. Because of the program rules, existing Arvada residents have no greater chance of success in their applications than applicants from out of town or even out of state. Thus, these programs do little to help existing residents find affordable options.

I view affordable housing as one tool in the effort to make housing more attainable. Subsidized housing will not solve the affordability issues associated with a white-hot housing market. A select few will benefit but the larger population will still be dealing with an inflated market. There are only two sustainable options to curb or even lower housing costs, make Arvada a less desirable place to live or build more housing. That's it, everything else is a micro solution to a macro problem. Building more housing is necessary, I support building diverse housing products across the city that respond well to local needs and character.

5. Transportation

- a. Population growth has been a catalyst for ongoing frustration with traffic and congestion in the Metro Area. Would you support Arvada looking at a local tax or more regional approach to improve the City's transportation infrastructure?**

I would not support a local tax to support infrastructure projects. I would support specific bond projects that give people a clear choice on their investments. Also, there is a significant amount of federal dollars for infrastructure and grant programs from the stimulus packages that would be more appropriate than asking the people of Arvada to pay higher taxes. Because our mobility network does not exist in a void, I support a more regional approach to improve the City's transportation Infrastructure.

- b. What is your position on the completion of the Jefferson Parkway?**

The future and the direction of the Jefferson Parkway is currently unclear. Completing the regional beltway around the Denver metro area should remain a priority to keep regional traffic off local roads. Broomfield's recent decision and the challenge of finding a way to more directly connect C470 to

Highway 93 mean the future is far from certain. What is clear is that City leaders from Arvada, Broomfield, Golden and others will need to come together to figure out a solution.

Further, I will support efforts to evaluate the future of projects like the Jefferson Parkway to keep regional traffic off local roads.

6. REALTOR® involvement:

- a. What role do you see the Denver Metro Association of REALTORS® having in Arvada and how would you invite participation from our organization?**

I see, and would support, an opportunity for the City to partner with DMAR to identify historically under served and under valued neighborhoods in Arvada. These areas could be evaluated for public improvement projects that would open opportunities for developers and realtors.

Thank you!

Michael P. Griffith