



Downtown Denver Partnership 2019 Denver Municipal Election Candidate Questionnaire

Distributed: Wednesday, February 13, 2019

Due Date: Friday, February 22, 2019 at 5 pm – please return to Kate Barton
(kbarton@downtowndenver.com)

Candidate/Campaign Name: Timothy M. O'Brien

Candidate Address: 3266 S. Steele St
Denver, CO. 80210

Candidate Email: tim@obrienforauditor.com

Candidate Phone Number: 303-759-2292

Campaign Manager Name, Phone Number and Email:

Mary Frances Kelley

303-912-3579

Mfkelley910@gmail.com

District #: city wide

Instructions: Please type your answers in the form below and limit each response to 300 words or less. Adjust the size of the answer space to fit your response if necessary.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this process. We look forward to hearing back from you!

1. The [2007 Downtown Area Plan](#) aims to achieve a vibrant, economically healthy, growing, and vital downtown, positioning Denver as the economic hub of the Rocky Mountain Region. How do you view growth in the City of Denver? What is the role of City Council and the Mayor in addressing, supporting and managing growth?

Please see response to #12 below.

2. Initiative 300 – “The Right to Survive” is an issue on May’s ballot that aims to repeal the unauthorized camping ban and other essential laws that protect the public health and safety of those experiencing homelessness and the broader community. Do plan to support Initiative 300?

YES or NO:

Please explain your answer.

Please see response to #12 below.

3. The Downtown Denver Partnership and the [Downtown Denver Business Improvement District](#) (BID) are committed to fostering a safe, welcoming and inclusive city, and place a focused approach on working with the homeless population in Downtown Denver. This includes:

- Over 15 years of directly funding the St. Francis Center outreach workers to connect homeless individuals in Downtown Denver with housing options and supportive services;
- Helping to create Denver’s Road Home and fundraising over \$1 million to support its programs and initiatives;
- Supporting the building of facilities such as the Lawrence Street Community Center and Urban Peak’s Drop-In Center;
- Advocating for additional affordable housing through the City’s Affordable Housing Fund that support housing for 0 – 30% AMI; and
- Working with the Mayor and Denver City Council to support several ordinances that better connect the homeless population with housing and services.

What do you believe is the City’s role in addressing homelessness? What tools do you believe will be effective to address homelessness in Denver?

Please see response to #12 below.

4. Parks and open spaces in downtown are some of the City’s most unique places. In 2017, the Partnership and Denver Parks & Recreation co-funded and launched [Denver’s Outdoor Downtown Plan](#) - a 20-year master plan that provides visionary and actionable policies, programs and projects to enrich downtown parks and public spaces. Denver’s Outdoor Downtown Plan addresses the unique opportunities and challenges related to managing and activating public spaces in the urban core and supports our parks and public spaces serving as positive social gathering places that are managed in a sustainable manner.

(a) Do you believe downtown parks and public spaces should be maintained, programmed and managed differently than other city parks?

YES or NO:

Please explain your answer:

(b) What are your ideas to increase green space in the center city?

(c) How do you intend to help implement Denver's Outdoor Downtown plan that was adopted in 2017?

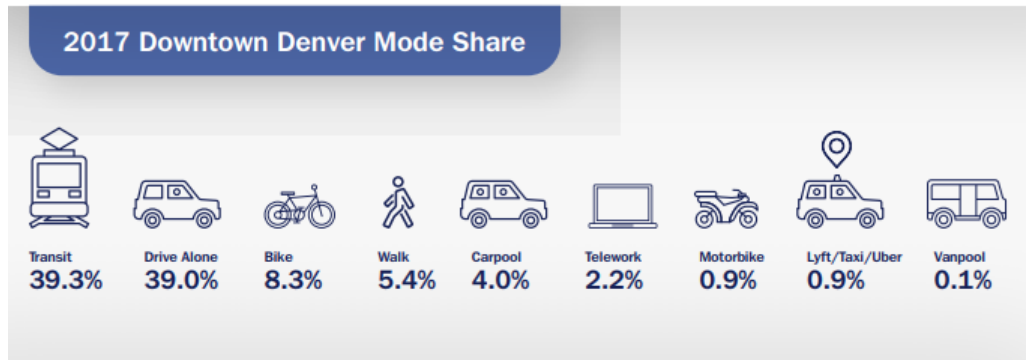
Please see response to #12 below.

5. Recent studies have shown that Denver's housing supply is nearly 40,000 housing units short of demand, which is a leading cause of the housing affordability challenge. Attainable housing is a key priority for the Downtown Denver Partnership. What do you propose to create housing supply and address the growing affordability challenges in Downtown Denver and surrounding center city neighborhoods?

Please see response to #12 below.

6. Using the 2007 Downtown Area Plan as our guide, the Downtown Denver Partnership is committed to building out a visionary mobility network for all users, connecting center city neighborhoods, and ensuring seamless regional connections. The Partnership's [2017 Mobility Report](#) showed that 61% of people commuted to work in Downtown Denver using a mode of transportation other than a single occupancy vehicle.

The Downtown Denver Partnership aims to reduce the share of commuters driving alone to work to under 35% by 2021, adding to the efficiency of our mobility network and delivering the quality of life that our downtown employees, residents, and visitors desire.



What are your ideas to address mobility challenges in the city and encourage increased use of alternative mobility options in the center city?

Please see response to #12 below.

7. The Downtown Denver Partnership manages the Downtown Denver Business Improvement District (BID) and several other special districts that contribute to the vitality of Downtown Denver and create a vibrant, inviting and thriving commercial core. Through maintenance and operations, safety initiatives, economic development, pedestrian environment enhancements, targeted visitor marketing and communications, as well as holiday events, lighting and decor that attract thousands of visitors each year, the BID continues to ensure that Downtown Denver is a world-class city, to the benefit of residents, employees, and visitors.

Do you support the continued formation of these types of special districts utilizing special funding streams to manage public space?

YES or NO:

Please explain your answer:

Please see response to #12 below.

8. Development related costs and related requirements, including impact fees, development fees, property taxes and other requirements imposed on development are a significant factor in the rising costs of housing and rents in Downtown Denver. Some cite these factors as the leading cause of affordability issues. Do you support imposing additional requirements, such as increased impact fees and permit fees, on development?

YES or NO:

Please explain your answer:

Please see response to #12 below.

9. The Central Business District (CBD) is a core economic driver not only for the city, but also for the region. The CBD contributes by far the highest amount of property taxes per/sf of land at \$18.67 paid/sf of land vs. a city-wide average of \$0.62/sf of land. From 2011 to 2018, property tax collection in downtown has more than doubled, and property taxes levied on downtown properties have increased dramatically.

- A) Do you believe that we should consider finding ways for residential properties to bear a greater property tax responsibility as the city continues to grow?

YES or NO:

Please explain your answer:

Please see response to #12 below.

- B) What do you see as solutions and tools for addressing this issue?

10. Studies of American cities have shown that a city's urban core is a bellwether, and the status and condition of the downtown reflects the health and vitality of the city. Given the limited resources available, how do you plan to balance investment between Downtown Denver and other areas of the city?

Please see response to #12 below.

11. What is your vision for the future of Denver?

Please see response to #12 below.

12. Is there anything else you want us to know about you or your candidacy?

As Denver Auditor, I am required by the city charter to adhere to Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. These standards mandate that as Auditor I remain independent and objective in discharging my professional responsibilities. If I take a position (for or against) policies or proposed policies I could impair my independence and objectivity when conducting an audit of the same policies. Thus, I respectfully decline to answer your questions. I hope that you receive my position in the constructive manner that I intend. Independence and objectivity are the cornerstones of the auditing profession. They cannot be compromised.

Your questions are, appropriately, directed at the mayor and the city council. I ask that you consider the importance of the audit function to assure that the policies of the mayor and council are carried out as intended.

I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process.