

City Council Candidate Questionnaire



Colorado Springs Faith Table, a caucus of Together Colorado, a Colorado 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, has put together this questionnaire for Colorado Springs City Council Candidates. As a nonpartisan organization, we are not endorsing any candidates. Rather we hope this questionnaire can serve as guide for you while you vote in this important election.

Why are you running for city council?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	I'm running for city council at-large on a "Love Your Neighbor" campaign, which means I pledge to vote the same way I believe you would, if you were in my shoes, and I were in yours. As a charity leader I've already led a charity since 1999 that now feeds nearly 1,000 orphans and children overseas, cares for widows, and broadcasts the gospel. After my service as a Navy Chaplain I cared for the elderly in 3 nursing homes in Colorado Springs, and stood up for religious freedom for all.
Lynette Crow-Iverson	I have spent over 23 years in Colorado Springs building a business and raising a family. In those 23 years I served on many boards and committees such as higher education, economic development, workforce development board, as well I was on the PlanCOS committee. I am currently the vice chair for UCHHealth Grandview Hospital. I have spent many years understanding the needs of our community and City Council is the next place I am led to serve.
Chineta Davis	I was encouraged to serve in the political realm after volunteering to work several campaigns of local leaders. My knowledge of Colorado Springs and the dynamics and composure of many different communities makes me the perfect candidate to contribute toward improved services for our citizens.
Jaymen C. Johnson	I am running for city council because I believe in the power of community and the need for diverse representation in local government. I am committed to addressing issues related to public safety, affordable housing, and economic development, and I want to use my experience as a community organizer and advocate to make positive change for the people of Colorado Springs.
Scott Hiller	I am a scientist. I look at the world around me and approach challenges from that perspective. As a Chief of Geosciences and a geophysicist, I regularly use evidence and data to make consequential decisions that affect public safety as well as billions of dollars of infrastructure. Looking at what obstacles we in Colorado Springs are likely to face in the future, whether it is wildfires or water allocation issues, a data-based scientific approach is something I will bring to the table.
Jay Inman	I want to see more citizens flourishing in our community. Protecting life and economic opportunity are the central themes of my campaign. As a military veteran I am especially attentive to the families of those serving our country. I listen to the concerns of my neighbors, community and friends. This includes crime and public safety, housing and development, City and County services, and business opportunity. I want to serve my community, protect life, and economic opportunity for my city.
Glenn Carlson	As a COS native; I have lived, worked, volunteered, and played here my entire life. This is home, simply put. Having experience working in a global leadership capacity for Colorado's largest company and now running our own business with our 35 employees, I see first hand what concerns and challenges people face. I have a responsibility to utilize my skillsets, energy, and creativity to leave COS better than I found it.
Michelle Talarico	I believe I am uniquely qualified as I have owned a successful business for 34 years and lived here for 40 years. I have a broad base of supporters who know they can trust my integrity. It is a natural next servant leadership step for me.

What are three things you hope to achieve on city council if you are elected?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	<p>A) Support our first responders for enhanced public safety including police, fire, medical and community caregivers.</p> <p>B) Support critical infrastructure including roads, energy, and efficient use of natural resources, to grow the economy and prosper our beautiful city.</p> <p>C) Reduce over-taxation of our citizens and protect the rights of taxpayers. With inflation doubling grocery or gasoline prices, why are Colorado Springs sales taxes now higher than Denver, Pueblo, and Castle Rock?</p>
Lynette Crow-Iverson	<p>Public Safety- is my priority. COS has some of the highest homicide and auto theft rates in our history. I am dedicated to making sure that our Police and Firefighters have the resources that they need to keep our community safe. Infrastructure- as we grow, we need to do so wisely. I will ensure our infrastructure needs are always met. Economic Development- I believe that communities to be successful, must have a growing economy.</p>
Chineta Davis	<p>My first priority is housing with focus on more home ownership opportunities (generational wealth) than on rental properties owned by out-of-state investors. My second priority is Transportation. Expansion of transportation opportunities must be extended in the Southeast area to allow more scheduled routes for its citizens. Third of my priorities is addressing the water scarcity in Colorado Springs in relation to surrounding communities.</p>
Jaymen C. Johnson	<p>1. Increase transparency and accountability in the city government by bridging the gap between the council and the community.</p> <p>2. Address the issues of affordable housing and homelessness by working with developers and non-profits to create sustainable and affordable housing options.</p> <p>3. Prioritize the protection and preservation of natural resources, including parks and open spaces, while balancing the needs of growth and development in the city.</p>
Scott Hiller	<p>Most of what the city council does concerns land use. As such, I intend to advocate for a complete repeal of ReToolCOS. Secondly, I will advocate for the reinstatement of the formally robust requirements for the Geological Hazard Study currently required for new developments. Finally, I want to help create a Water Commission that includes experts in water law, conservation, hydrology, developers and the public to carefully analyze and develop the best water policy possible.</p>
Jay Inman	<p>1. Crime and Public Safety</p> <p>2. Housing and Development - more options for housing, especially homes young families can afford.</p> <p>3. Innovation in a business-friendly environment</p>
Glenn Carlson	<p>1) Affordability and inflation, especially as it relates to housing</p> <p>2) Protecting our outdoor spaces with a strong parks, trails, and open space system</p> <p>3) Maintaining a clean, affordable, reliable utility with long-term water and energy planning</p>
Michelle Talarico	<p>Truly listening to understand instead of listening to speak, understanding the huge responsibility of sitting on CS Utilities board, being a fair minded, sensible leader.</p>

Water - What is your view of the City's role and that of the Public Utilities Board in preserving water resources and ensuring that growth will be possible with enough water to sustain our community?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	Water rights in our State Constitution are private property rights, traded openly on the free market. When our city taxpayers pay to procure water rights, they should have fair access to use they city water for which they've already paid, without waste, pollution or intrusion, and without leakage to nonpaying customers. Annexation of future developments should carefully plan to match the need for resources projected for future users, to minimize housing costs and provide fair equitable access.
Lynette Crowl-iverson	As our city grows, we need to do so wisely. We need a thriving economy that supports businesses and creates opportunities for our citizens. A growing economy is essential to improving our quality of life. Property rights and smart growth both principals that must complement each other. I will always prioritize serving our citizens by collaborating with the experts from the industry and the experts at CSU to determine the viability of each project one at a time.
Chineta Davis	I feel the City council and Public Utilities Board must work together to insure water availability to all citizens on a fair and equitable base. No building should be approved without detailed plans on water sustainability for our communities. The 130 percent water rule seems reasonable.
Jaymen C. Johnson	I believe the City and Public Utilities Board must balance growth with water resources to ensure a sustainable community. I plan to work collaboratively with experts in the field to make informed decisions that prioritize responsible water use and conservation.
Scott Hiller	Water supply concerns are becoming top-of-mind all across the American West. Colorado Springs is not immune. With 80% of our water imported, we cannot continue to dole out this precious resource without serious consideration. Growth for growth's sake is a dangerous concept for us here in Colorado Springs. We need to study our water resources and we must ensure that decisions about growth are made based on evidence and data.
Jay Inman	In the past 5 years, typical four-service Utility bills almost doubled. As a Utilities Board member, I will request assignment on the Utilities Finance Committee and forensic analyses. We have robust water delivery systems that will serve us for the next 50 years. Yet, much of our water infrastructure is aging and is a potential liability for future generations. I will push for a plan to address water infrastructure using asset management to optimize future capital and maintenance efforts.
Glenn Carlson	This has really grown to be critical as we have used more water AND grown at a faster rate than planned. This is an entire western US issue and I believe it's really two-fold. 1) We need a comprehensive plan to ensure we have access to water well into the future. 2) Be more efficient with what we have and eliminate waste.
Michelle Talarico	I am a fan. What I want to know about is , "is it enough"? i am in support of a call for a special task force to help determine if it is in fact the right amount.

Housing - HB23-1115 is the bill in the Colorado legislature to lift the judicial ban on local control of rents. If it passes, what rent stabilization policies would you support?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	While I oppose artificial limits, I will work with bi-partisan stakeholders, as I did when I served in the legislature, to examine the causes of hyper-inflated housing. Frivolous litigation against builders for non-existent "construction defects" has effectively halted new construction of owner-occupied condominiums. Affordable home ownership must be increased, and government-regulations reduced, since they add unnecessary layers of cost and inflation.
Lynette Crow-Iverson	I do not support rental controls. I believe in Private Property rights, and I believe the market will drive the rental prices. Rent control is not the role of government.
Chineta Davis	Costs of rentals have outpriced ranges for the working population. I believe there must be limits to prices owners can demand for rent based on building ages, square footage, and structural soundness. The importance of affordable housing for working families is paramount and reflects directly on the health of our communities.
Jaymen C. Johnson	Rent control legislation can have unintended consequences such as reduced housing availability and quality due to decreased incentives for developers and landlords to invest in new properties or maintain existing ones. On the other hand, just cause eviction legislation provides much-needed protections for renters, preventing landlords from evicting tenants without a legitimate reason, thereby promoting stability and security in the rental market.
Scott Hiller	While I would need to look more into this specific bill, my general belief is that the government, whether local or otherwise, should not meddle in the markets nor pick winners and losers. I believe in the free market and private property rights.
Jay Inman	I am a limited Government and low tax advocate. We must do something about rents, but the classic services of municipal government are public safety, public works / infrastructure, and parks. To the greatest extent possible, I will work to keep our municipal government out of the housing market. The worst thing we could do is to defy market demand and curtail building new single family and multi-family housing. We need a broader range of housing choices for our residents, not a smaller one.
Glenn Carlson	I am generally not in favor of rent control as a sweeping policy. It has been shown to keep families in their homes temporarily, which is a great thing, but there has been very little empirical data to show that it has kept control of rent prices. I am much more in favor of other methods and incentives to develop affordable housing within the community.
Michelle Talarico	This is a hard question. I want to study that language better. In general, I am not a fan of the government telling homeowners and apartment owners what they can and cannot do. But I look forward to learning more.

Housing – What is your position on just cause eviction legislation as it relates to Colorado Springs? What will you do to increase protections to renting residents against unjust eviction?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	Evictions must be handled with compassion, and with compliance with the law, which enforcement gives primacy to property rights of landowners, while balancing the rights of peaceful rent-payers to their privacy and dignity. Non-rent payers, or non-peaceful tenants are on a limited time clock, as I'm sure you agree.
Lynette Crow-Iverson	There are already laws put in place and a separate court to determine evictions. I believe in private property rights.
Chineta Davis	I would have to research the pros and cons of this legislation.
Jaymen C. Johnson	As a City Council candidate, I support the concept of Just Cause Eviction legislation in Colorado Springs. If elected, I plan to work towards implementing such legislation and increasing protections for renters to ensure they are not unjustly evicted. I believe that everyone should have a safe and stable place to call home.
Scott Hiller	I worry about the small landlords on this one, especially the ones in the single-family rental market. By setting them up for probable failure, large corporate landlords may be the only ones left because they are the ones that can "take the hit". I would hate to drive mom-and-pop landlords into other States.
Jay Inman	Until I see the proposals in front of me, I will not answer this one because I might have to recuse myself from voting. I do want compassionate and wise responses and to sit at this table and vote.
Glenn Carlson	This has really become a large issue and unfortunately, I see a lot of completely unfair leases and conditions put on renters. As a landlord myself, I have never been interested in taking advantage of tenants, but I do see a lot of it. I believe in individual property rights and the right to enter into a lease willfully and freely, but I also believe there should be guardrails in certain areas on those leases.
Michelle Talarico	Also a hard question. There are so many people unfairly evicted but there are also people should should be evicted. I will be an advocate for my constituents on this so I wish to know more.

Housing - Many areas of our city are undergoing revitalization, which both brings new opportunities and also threatens the homes and lives of poorer residents. How should the city handle resident displacement in areas like the Mill St. neighborhood?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	I recently met many members of the Mill Street neighborhood at the Colorado Springs Utilities board meeting, as they were discussing the closure of the Martin Drake Power Station, and its potential for future repurposing and development. A community benefits agreement could be negotiated to protect their interests. I oppose eminent domain except in extreme circumstances, and long-time homeowners property values may increase when the neighborhood ultimately improves.
Lynette Crowlerson	Infill sights that are going through a rezoning application process must be carefully analyzed to weigh all the pros and cons to the immediate and broader community. I believe that applying the city's codes, ordinances, and adopted plans, are more efficient than introducing subjective additional criteria. At the same time, community character and neighborhoods are important. Private property owners have the right to develop their property how they see fit, so long as it fits within zoning.
Chineta Davis	Revitalization should be done in such a way that current residents are given fair consideration. Developers should be encouraged to provide homes that are designed for today's lifestyles. A 3000 sq. ft. single home is not ecologically effective. Mixed use housing might be an answer.
Jaymen C. Johnson	I believe that community involvement is essential in managing revitalization projects. I would advocate for resident representation in planning and decision-making, ensuring that the needs of current residents are met. To address displacement concerns, I would prioritize the creation of affordable housing options in revitalized areas and provide resources and support to those who may be at risk of displacement.
Scott Hiller	We should really avoid "displacing" homeowners who already reside in an area. Unless it is literally for public safety, to displace someone sends the message that the new people or business has more of a right to be there. I simply cannot get behind that.
Jay Inman	Again, I want to sit at this table as opposed to providing an answer that recuses me from voting. I want Council, businesses, and Developers to figure out – across the city including close to downtown – how to solve our housing shortage with common sense solutions that build homes young families can afford. I want our city to develop economic opportunity from downtown outwards to the edge. As a city, with City Council, Citizen, Developer, and Business help, we can work together to do this.
Glenn Carlson	The city and it's residents need to engage in a ROBUST conversation around what they want their neighborhood to look like. Mill St is a critical area within the city and with the closure of Drake it will be widely impacted. Involved the stakeholders and work on common solutions.
Michelle Talarico	Mill Street is near literally and dear to my heart. Our business is less than 1/4 mile from the neighborhood. I believe it to be concerning that 60% of the residents are renters. I didn't know that but now I do. They are potentially being affected by airbnb's. This is a hard issue. they have requested that their representative be in favor of a CBA agreement signed by future owners or developers of the project (Drake). I will champion that possibility and to the degree it comes before council .

Housing - The community at highest risk of experiencing homelessness are those earning 0-30% of the area median income (AMI). What will you do to prioritize the creation of affordable housing for those earning 0-30% AMI in Colorado Springs?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	People experiencing homelessness need our compassion. My own charity buys and gives away free coats to the homeless at Christmas. Cooperation between city officials, law-enforcement, and private charities must be enhanced and continue to provide beds and counseling to people experiencing homelessness. Thankfully the Colorado Springs Rescue Mission and Marion House and other charities have sufficient beds to offer, allowing our police to keep sidewalks safe and campsites clear. (Denver not so.)
Lynette Crowlerson	The role of the city is not to build affordable housing, but to set the groundwork for developers and non-profits to accomplish affordable housing projects. The city can do this by partnering with entities such as HUD entitlement funds, Private Activity Bonds, supporting LIHTC projects, utilizing tools like TIF, City and CSU fee rebates/ discount programs, CDBG and HOME Funds.
Chineta Davis	I would give additional incentives to property owners that have vacant or abandoned property to convert these properties to affordable housing properties, and/or temporary and transitional housing. As a person that has worked directly with the homeless in our city, I feel that we should offer indoor relief that is more dignified and includes veterans services, medical assessment, shower, washer/dryer and kitchen access.
Jaymen C. Johnson	I plan to address the issue of affordable housing by working with community developers to prioritize affordable housing and historic preservation projects, focusing on infill and revitalization of existing service areas. I also plan to slow down the continual sprawl by making consideration of new annexations contingent on agreement to one of these projects.
Scott Hiller	While I am ok with Federal and State assistance, I do not believe that it is the local government's job to "create" affordable housing. In addition, the city should not allow unbridled growth, the overcrowding of residential neighborhoods, nor create irrational zoning types in the name of "affordable housing". These actions only reinforce high prices during economic boom times and ensure an environment of overbuilt and vacant buildings during recessions.
Jay Inman	Big picture, affordability of housing in our community is becoming a crisis. I will propose a committee consisting of two City Council Members acting in their legislative and fiduciary role, along with two Utilities Board members acting in their regulatory and fiduciary roles, working with Low/Moderate Income lenders and other non-profits, to look for ways to cut through red tape, unnecessary legislative and regulatory requirements, and provide alternatives for our very real housing crisis.
Glenn Carlson	Much of this happens at the macroeconomic level. Nothing erodes purchasing power faster than rapid inflation. We have to get inflation under control.
Michelle Talarico	I truly believe we need to insist that for every number of apartments and small homes built in a certain range of \$2k per month, we need to also be building a certain number of under \$1000.00 for those that cannot afford more. There are incentives and public grants. We need to collaborate and also look at mixed use areas such as the new artist low income cultural space that is going in at 315 Costilla happens.

Public Safety - There's been a lot of talk about criminal justice reform. What kinds of specific reforms do you see are needed in Colorado Springs? And if you're the incumbent, what local policing reforms have you supported here in Colorado Springs?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	Fentanyl and opioid addiction is a deadly criminal scourge, and dealers must be fully prosecuted. Our city voters properly rejected recreational pot, but statewide mushrooms passed and must now be regulated. Because I stand for individual liberty, I oppose slavery caused by addiction. Government should not allow crooks to enslave their neighbors, causing or facilitating their addiction. Tech employers and the military need a sober workforce to grow our economy and keep us safe.
Lynette Crowlerson	Colorado Springs needs strong leadership to avoid turning into another large city, such as Denver, where homelessness and lawlessness drive out families and businesses. I will work with Police to lower crime by recruiting and retaining strong police officers and will continue to support CSPD in their increasing roll to keep our community safe by providing them with the resources they need to reduce crime and keep our city a place where families are welcome and can grow.
Chineta Davis	Training officers to respond to calls better matched with the situation seems greatly needed. Over-reactions to situations with militaristic force that simply escalate violence must end. Officers who can evaluate, negotiate and focus on calm solutions can de-escalate situations. But training is needed.
Jaymen C. Johnson	I would support evidence-based criminal justice reforms such as more pre-trial diversion programs, increased funding for mental health and addiction treatment, and ending cash bail. I would also support community policing and hiring more diverse officers.
Scott Hiller	We should not be spending the City's time and resources on marijuana when drugs like opioids, fentanyl, and methamphetamines are the real problem. Let's hyper-focus on the drugs that are actually doing the damage to our society. The ones that are making people act like zombies and could actually kill our children.
Jay Inman	Our first task as voters must be to restore legislative sanity to Denver. Our crime and murder rates are the highest in our state and city since 2008 directly correlating to cannabis legalization and reductions in controlled substance prosecution ten years ago. Fentanyl is a harsh problem Denver inflicted on our State. Council can't fix this, but we can recruit the next generation of police officers and make CSPD a viable career choice. As our city grows, that CSPD need will only increase.
Glenn Carlson	I believe we need to make considerable investment in public safety. It starts with hiring more officers to ensure we have adequate, timely responses to various situations. I also believe policing, in general, is changing and we need to adjust accordingly. Much of the police work involves engagement with the mentally ill or addicted. Adequate training and investment is critical here.
Michelle Talarico	I will be honest I need to know more about. I know there is concern locally that we "the Police" are not doing as much as they can with juvenile justice. I want to understand how the police governs itself and makes those changes and the extent they come before council. I will say that I do not believe we should be issuing tickets to people who are homeless and then when they lose or violate the terms of the ticket we arrest them and it costs the city \$8,000.00 per person.

Health Care - What do you see as the appropriate role of the City of Colorado Springs in meeting the health care needs of all residents? What has been your experience in dealing with the barriers to health care for people in Colorado Springs?

Gordon Klingenschmitt	As a professional chaplain I've been a valued member of health-care teams in three nursing homes here. As a PhD in Theology, Master of Divinity, I've taught college (Bible and Theology) for 3 years at Colorado Christian University. As a national TV host of Pray In Jesus' Name I've often interviewed local pastors and ministry leaders to promote their services. As a former Navy Chaplain, my community service programs won 6 awards including best in Navy. Learn more at http://gordonforcolorado.com
Lynette Crow-Iverson	In my professional life I was a nurse, I worked in the medical field for over 23 years. I am also on the board of UCHHealth Grandview Hospital, so I am very familiar with the healthcare needs in our community. However, City Council does not have much authority over this Topic. I believe we need to do a better job working with the hospitals and non-profits in regard to mental health. I believe the biggest healthcare gap in our city is the mental health issue.
Chineta Davis	I would have to evaluate the research involving the health care needs of our citizens before recommending a pathway toward improvements.
Jaymen C. Johnson	As an advocate for public health, I believe that the City should prioritize access to affordable healthcare for all residents. I recognizes the barriers to healthcare that many people in Colorado Springs face, and I am committed to working with healthcare providers and community organizations to address these issues and advocating for policies that expand access to healthcare and address the root causes of health disparities in the community.
Scott Hiller	The role of the government of Colorado Springs in the health of it's citizens is to maintain a healthy, non-polluted, non-toxic environment. While it cannot provide "health care" for all citizens, the government can enforce safe building regulations, food safety requirements, safe roadways and infrastructure, and an overall healthy environment for it's citizens to live in.
Jay Inman	Classic services of municipal government are public safety, public works / infrastructure, and parks. Beyond those, health care and services are the domains of state and federal government. As a student of history, I believe we are moving toward the historic 'Great Depression' event that occurs every hundred years or so in Western Civilization. Before I weigh how council should collectively and effectively respond, I promise that my responses will be with as much compassion as possible.
Glenn Carlson	I believe our healthcare has been hijacked and monopolized by health insurance and YES, the are two very different products. We need a very serious discussion at the national level about healthcare in this country.
Michelle Talarico	It is not directly a part of the job description except when it comes to land use that may be a part of health care clinics, etc. I believe our healthcare system has been in dire straits fo a long time. It's a complex issue and I will look forward to solving it with my co councilors.