



**Colorado People's Action (CPA)
Endorsement Questionnaire
Aurora City Council
2019**

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

- a. **Why did you decide to run for office and what will your top 3 priorities be if elected to council?** I have lived in Aurora my entire life. I went to school here, I own my home here, and I teach here. I am exhausted from watching our community be sold out to big money interests. The issue that got me most connected to city politics was housing. Around 15% of students where I teach deal with unstable housing and this is partially due to our current council's decision to put industry above people. As I've learned more, I realize that everything is interconnected. We have no conflict of interest laws and limited campaign finance laws, resulting in developers controlling how our city is developed, leading to rubber stamping oil and gas developments and housing developments that artificially inflate the market. We can no longer allow our neighbors, our environment, and the future our city to be sold out.
- b. My top 3 priorities are:
 - i. Community wealth and affordability
 - ii. Health, safety, and environmental protections
 - iii. Government transparency and accountability

2. The US ranks as a country with one of the highest rates of incarceration in the world and the poorest, most marginalized and people of color disproportionately represent jail and prison populations. What would you do to push the city to address systemic racial bias within the criminal justice system?

- a. I would increase how often officers go through implicit bias training, DAs and Public defenders should go through regular implicit bias training, fully fund the public defender's office, have income based fines, push for DAs to have to consider the cost to the taxpayer when trying people, ensuring that ending cash bail doesn't increase pretrial incarceration time.

3. **Aurora is the most diverse city in the entire state, with a large number of immigrants within our community.**
- a. **What is your opinion about the humanitarian crisis happening inside the GEO Immigration Detention Facility and what actions will you take, if any?**
 - i. Those are concentration camps, plain and simple. As a history teacher, it is very clear to me that we are looking at 1938 Germany in these facilities. I will use the municipal power to hold them accountable to city health regulations as a city license business. I will also use the bully pulpit to push our congress to shut these facilities down.
 - b. **Yes or No - Do you support closing all private prisons? Yes**
 - c. **Will you work to move Aurora to become a “Sanctuary City” and establish a Legal Defense Fund? Why and explain your definition of “sanctuary city”**

The way I use the phrase sanctuary city is that it is not our job as a municipality to enforce federal immigration law. It makes us less safe and it terrifies our undocumented neighbors, including many of my students. Under this definition, I am definitely for a sanctuary city. It is our duty as humans to protect people from persecution and I will do everything in my power to protect them. People need to feel safe and I will establish and support a Legal Defense Fund.
4. **Would you drop citizenship requirements for all boards and commissions? Why?**

Absolutely. I will also push to reduce municipal voting to 16 and allow undocumented residence to vote in our municipal elections. The decisions made on boards, commissions, and by our council impact all residents, therefore, all residents should have a say.

5. **We’re seeing localities across country moving toward 100% renewable energy. Do you support transitioning Aurora to a 100% renewable energy economy? If so, by when? How will you ensure that communities of color, low-income communities, workers and transit dependent community members are not left behind?**

I will push for 100% renewable energy by 2030. We need to ensure that these new jobs created are union and/or worker co-ops or completely government run ensuring we that we have adequate representation and worker voice and protections. This will ensure they are high paying jobs for people who live in our city. By making these public enterprises instead of private, it can be a revenue stream to pay for public transit infrastructure.

6. The oil and gas industry in Colorado is edging closer and closer to residential districts, do you have a plan to protect Aurora residents from health and environmental hazards associated with their operations? Do you support a full ban on fracking?

Now that SB19-181 has passed, we have to opportunity to put the health and safety first in Aurora. On council, I will put a moratorium on all new drilling sites until we have an independent committee, not affiliated with the oil and gas industry, review permit requests prior to being brought to council. I will fight for regulations that consider drilling times, air quality and odor, water quality, and noise, for all current sites and I will vote down all new oil and gas requests until we have an independent commission reviewing the total impact of each new site.

I do not support an immediate ban on fracking because I do not believe we have the infrastructure to take care of our energy needs or the displaced workers tomorrow. I want to, instead, take over the industry and have it run by the city while we transition to 100% renewable energy.

7. Where do you stand on workers ability to collectively bargain, and would you support a resolution for the workers in the city of Aurora to do so?

As a union member, board member, and organizer, I fully support all workers right to collectively bargain. You have the right to control your own labor and the right to refuse it. I would absolutely support a resolution to support workers, unions, worker co-ops, and anything else to help empower workers and build community wealth.

8. Aurora now has the power to increase its wages, will you support and fight for Aurora to increase its minimum wage at a higher level than that of the state? What amount do you think that should be?

We need a path to 25. The cost of living in Aurora is so high and \$15 is nowhere near enough. We need a path to \$25/hour to allow our small businesses to transition to paying this new wage but our community needs to afford to work, live, and play in our city. 25 by 2022 and then having it automatically increase each year based on inflation is the way to go.

9. We are facing an affordability crisis and many in our community specifically communities of color and low-income folks are being pushed out. What will you do to address affordability issues?

Increasing the minimum wage will help but we also need to address how we develop in Aurora. We let developers drive development and they are manipulating our system to guarantee profits on the front end and artificially increasing the market. Having city planned development that is planned at least 10 years in the future will help curb this. We will also require developers to allocate a percentage of development to affordable housing, we will use the community land trust model to provide affordable and emergency housing and community owned communities, and I will work towards decommodifying housing and making housing a right.

10. If elected, what is your plan for working with community and your vision for changing politics as usual?

I am already working to change politics as usual. I am working with other candidates that are community driven to ensure I am not by myself on council and we will impact real change once elected and we will do it together. I will hold two town halls per month, one on a weekday in the evening and one during the daytime on the weekend to ensure accessibility. I will change the rules of council meeting to allow them to be more like discussions instead of speaking to council and allowing them to ignore you. It is our duty to be community servants and it is our job to meet the community where they are at. Part of this includes paying city council a full time salary to ensure not only privileged people can serve in these roles. This will also allow more community outreach because we won't have to have second jobs or be wealthy to serve. I will also work to get rid of the At-Large council position, which are represented entirely by the richer wards (V and VI) and replace them with having two representatives per ward and 5 wards total. This will ensure all communities have representation.

11. Will you commit to meeting with COPA quarterly? Absolutely, without question. I love everything COPA stands for and I need their voice to ensure I am always held accountable.

12. Aurora occupies three counties, what is your plan to reconcile them and advance community-centered policy across Aurora as a whole?

My ward on its own overlaps two countries, which makes me already have to build a relationship with Douglas County. I have also already built solid relationships with the Aurora School Board, The Arapahoe County Commissioners, Aurora City Council candidates and electeds, etc to ensure we are meeting the needs of all of our community members. This will also help us address the gentrification and charter school takeover, it will help us tackle public transportation and infrastructure, and so many of our other overlapping issues. Relationships are so vital and I have spent a long time building them already and will continue to do so once elected. Governing together is the only way, in my mind.

13. What are your thoughts on accountability, are you open to be held accountable by groups and community and are you willing to hold others accountable to a vision for a better Aurora?

Absolutely. No one should run for office if they can't be accountable to their community. If I am no longer accountable to my community, that is when it is time for me to vacate my seat.