



DENVER CITY COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

# Policy and Budget Vision

## Denver City Council's Policy and Budget Vision 2018-2019

The City and County of Denver is vibrant and thriving – ranked number two on U.S. News & World Report's inaugural Best Places to Live rankings for its value, strong job market and high quality of life. Along with this success comes growth and with that, some challenges. Denver is in a housing crisis and many can no longer afford to live here. Moving people around the city is a challenge, traffic congestion and bike and pedestrian safety are issues. There are increased demands on police, fire, parks and right-of-way enforcement. In addition, Community Planning and Development is under pressure to keep up with the influx of building permit requests and public works is striving to meet infrastructure demands.

With these challenges in mind, Denver City Council held its annual Policy Planning and Budget Retreat on Friday, January 11, 2018. Based on input from all 13 council members, the body established two key citywide issues to focus on for 2018 along with two specific projects.

### KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

#### **MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION**

Multimodal solutions that prioritize convenience, affordability and safety are important for a growing, active city. Council will continue to identify opportunities for citywide mobility improvements:

- Continue to build and improve bike infrastructure with a goal of 25 miles of bikeway infrastructure annually, including protected bike lanes. Fully build Denver Moves bicycle plan no later than 2030.
- Improve intersections for all forms of mobility. This will require a capital investment as well as an increase in the number of traffic engineers available to do the work.
- Increase right-of-way enforcement.
- Focus on transit-oriented development.
- Expand pedestrian infrastructure, including building and maintaining sidewalks, improving crosswalks, installing flashing pedestrian lights, producing visible striping and providing more driver feedback signs.
- Create a plan to divert truck traffic out of neighborhoods during I-70 construction.
- Support efforts to implement the Vision Zero goal of no traffic-related deaths or serious injuries by 2030.

#### **HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS**

As property values continue to rise, availability of and access to affordable housing remains a critical issue in Denver. Council will continue to seek solutions and has set the following goals:

- Increase funding for affordable housing.
- If a pilot program funded by City Council is successful, a permanent funding source will be explored to create and implement a legal defense fund to help those facing eviction.
- Create renter protection policies.
- Adopt a bolder approach to tackling homelessness and affordable housing issues, including pushing for more preservation of existing affordable units and building new affordable units for all levels under the area median income.
- Expand the Denver Day Works program to continue to help with high-demand issues in neighborhoods like graffiti removal and waste pickup.



## KEY PROJECTS

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### **Planning for a new police academy**

The Denver Police Department's police academy is outdated and functionally obsolete. In order to recruit and retain top candidates to the academy, it is critical to provide quality training facilities that prepare recruits for the challenging job ahead. The Council will recommend funding for this project and work with the administration to create a plan for a new facility.

### **Expediting the number of neighborhood area plans**

Denver's Neighborhood Planning Initiative is a new long-term commitment to ensure every corner of the city can enjoy the benefits of an area plan. Over the next 10 to 14 years, residents, neighborhood groups and community leaders will work alongside the city's neighborhood planning team to create a vision and plan for their specific area.

To expedite the initiative, Council would like to increase the number of planners in Community Planning and Development so that more plans can be completed simultaneously.

## ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES

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While the above areas of focus and projects rose to the top of the priority list, there are several other areas of focus that Council will continue to address:

### **Public Safety**

- Maintain police and sheriff hiring at adequate levels.
- Add appropriations to the city's Capital Improvement Program to incrementally expand and improve the District 4 Police Station.

### **Sustainability**

- Full implementation of the solid waste master plan, including free citywide composting and incentives to divert garbage to recycling/composting
- Recycling for commercial and multifamily buildings.

### **Workforce Development**

- Invest in a workforce development plan.
- Use training and hiring goals to increase Denver resident participation in construction career pipelines for contracts generated by the City and County of Denver.

### **Parks and Recreation**

- Explore the creation of a park foundation to help acquire park land as it becomes available.
- Addition of park rangers to help patrol our parks.