



## **Mayoral & City Council 2023 Election Questionnaire**

Dear Candidate,

We are the Larimer Alliance for Health, Safety & the Environment and seek to learn your ideas specific to our mission of educating the public & policy makers of the harms of Oil & Gas (O&G) development. We ask that you please provide your responses by October 5th, so that we may share them with our member list and other interested voters. We may or may not choose to endorse a candidate. Thank you for taking the time to address these important public health & safety issues. **(If you feel a simple yes or no response is insufficient to answer any question, we encourage you to add your comments and ideas.)**

SB19-181 substantially revised Colorado's law governing (O&G) development establishing a clear priority of protecting public health, safety, the environment and wildlife resources. SB19-181 also enabled significant local government authority for regulating O&G development with a number of local governments having undertaken & established local regulations that increase protections of public health, safety, the environment and wildlife resources beyond what the State of Colorado feels is protective enough.

1. The City of Fort Collins is currently undergoing a rewrite of its O&G regulations with the next segment to be discussed & written being the operational standards. Operational standards include important regulations encompassing leak detection & repair (LDAR), air quality monitoring, financial assurance, water usage and Fort Collins & Larimer County's joint O&G inspection program.
  - a. What ideas do you have for these operational standards that would be an improvement and more protective of public health & safety?

*I have publicly stated my support for oil and gas regulations in Fort Collins exceeding those required by the COGCC which would, in essence, constitute a moratorium on drilling within the GMA. I am grateful for Fort Collins' commitment to strict oil and gas regulations, as I believe they are critical to our progress toward our climate goals, clean energy aspirations, air quality and, most importantly, the health of residents. Overall, I believe oil and gas activity in proximity to homes and community resources (e.g., parks) is counter to Fort Collins' core values and should be avoided.*

- b. Do you support having a collaborative City and Larimer County inspection and enforcement team that conducts regular inspection and monitoring of O&G facilities,

with the ability to fine and penalize non-compliant O&G operators for violations at their facilities?

*I like the idea of having more data about the day-to-day operations of local oil and gas companies and their impacts. However, I would need more information about the purpose, procedures, costs, and potential actionable benefits such a team would provide before approving such a team.*

- i. Should local taxpayers or O&G operators pay for these inspections?

*I would need more background to make an informed decision about this. However, I believe, in general, that oil and gas companies should be held accountable for monitoring and remediating their negative environmental impacts; I would be hesitant to shift responsibility for such costs being passed on to community members.*

- c. Full cost bonding requires O&G operators to post financial assurance equal to the costs of plugging, abandoning and reclaiming the O&G site once activities have been completed. Do you support full cost bonding requirements for all new O&G facilities?

*Yes*

- d. Do you support monitoring and measuring actual water usage by O&G facilities, rather than relying on estimates provided by operators?

*Yes*

- i. Do you support water provisions in the City's regulations so that O&G operators are strongly encouraged or required to recycle & reuse their produced water?

*Yes*

- 2. The American Lung Association consistently gives Fort Collins an F-grade regarding air quality with the most recent 2023 report (link below) listing us as having the 15th worst air quality of over 200 American cities. Fort Collins has been moving down the most polluted list with more & more dangerous air quality. NCAR's FRAPPÉ study found conclusively that O&G emissions are the major driver of unhealthy air quality in the northern Front Range area.

<https://www.lung.org/research/sota/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities>

- a. Do you support 24/7 air quality monitoring and real-time data reporting at O&G sites and facilities within the City's jurisdiction including the growth management area, to be paid for by the O&G operator?

*As a person with a background in data and statistics and a resident invested in improving our community's air quality, particularly regarding oil and gas emissions, I would be interested to learn more about the benefits and costs of implementing this kind of program.*

- b. Do you support 24/7 air quality monitoring and real-time data reporting including signature O&G pollutants for addressing regional air pollution affecting Fort Collins?

*In general, being a data-based decision-maker, I believe more information about public health concerns is an important tool that can empower residents to self-advocate and enact change. Should research by City staff suggest that continuous monitoring is a worthwhile pursuit that would enhance our community's capacity for meaningful action, I would want us to explore its feasibility. I believe that, should resources be allocated for real-time air quality reviews, they should be focused most intensively in areas disproportionately impacted by environmental risk factors, like lower-income neighborhoods and spaces near oil and gas operations.*

*I believe the most important area in which to invest our resources, however, is assertive air quality improvement actions. Although we do not currently have data as sensitive as those available to Boulder, the body of evidence has clearly indicated that our air quality is poor/hazardous, that this issue has persisted over time, and that it is not improving. With that knowledge, it seems reasonable for us to consider our community to be in a state of need regarding air pollution and to take immediate steps to address this.*

- c. What other idea(s) do you have to address Fort Collins's dangerous air quality?

*I believe the city must be assertive in their approach to addressing air quality and combating climate change. In residential/commercial development and transportation planning, we must always strive to increase walking and biking opportunities and decrease driving, as through expansion of bike trails, creation of safe intersections, redevelopment and infill vs. new development (especially in far-flung areas), and mixed-use development. Likewise, we must increase our fund of achievable housing options in the city to de-incentivize commuting into Fort Collins from adjacent, less expensive communities. Aspiring to a 15-minute city model might serve to significantly decrease our city's net emissions.*

*Although zero-emission transit is optimal, for situations that are not conducive to such options, we must expand and improve our public transportation options and encourage their use; it is imperative that we make less-polluting forms of transit easier and preferred over driving. Finally, incentivization of electric vehicles/tools (e.g., leaf blowers) for both city and personal use (including maintenance and landscaping vehicles) is critical.*

*Another priority I support relates to the environmental impacts of waste management in the city. I agree with the City's decision to centralize trash hauling services to remove trucks from the road. In the future, I would like to see more assertive action around electrification of trash hauling vehicles and more importantly, waste diversion, especially via pursuit of zero-waste point-of-sale strategies and municipal composting infrastructure.*

*I support expansion of alternative energy sources. The city should enhance options for both private and public entities to minimize dependence on fossil fuels. This should include improvements to city facilities to make them carbon neutral over time. Consistent communication with state and federal legislators on optimal regulation of emissions by private and public industries is warranted. Continual monitoring and regulation of our most impactful industrial emitters will also be an important component of this process. Additionally, I have publicly stated my support for implementing oil and gas regulations exceeding those required by the COGCC which would, in essence, constitute a moratorium on drilling within the GMA. I am grateful for Fort Collins' commitment to strict oil and gas regulations.*

*Finally, with the quality of our air being a regional issue, I want to help foster collaborative relationships with our neighboring communities, so that we can all work together to ensure a healthier environment for our residents.*

3. Have you received or will you accept campaign contributions from companies whose primary business is the development of fossil fuels?

*No*

4. What other idea(s) do you have that could improve environmental protections and sustainability in Fort Collins?

*With reference to growth and development, I will advocate for smart planning/zoning that provides healthy and stable housing at all price points and which is optimally located for access to jobs, essential businesses, schools, and nature. I believe redevelopment and infill are superior to new development in previously undeveloped areas. Ideally, any new developments we pursue will bring exceptional value to the city (i.e., structures and resources that fulfill an identified and compelling need, and which provide marked benefits, and which further Fort Collins' mission to become a 15-minute community). In upcoming decades, Fort Collins will grow, and I believe our city government must take active steps to ensure that growth occurs in a manner that meets the needs, values, and character of our city.*

*I am a proponent of increased density near the center of town, to increase walkability and bikeability; the allowance of smaller dwelling types, like duplexes, ADUs, and cottage courts, to allow more people in Fort Collins to live where they work, thus decreasing commute-related carbon emissions; and relaxation of parking requirements to shift our allocation of resources from cars to people and to disincentivize driving. I prefer construction that is as eco-friendly and energy efficient as possible, zoning that allows for a variety of housing types to be built, the commingling of residential and commercial properties (to minimize the need for residents to use/own a car), and maintenance of an appropriate balance of population to open space and natural areas. It is important to maintain buffer zones between Fort Collins and adjacent communities and to minimize sprawl.*

*Regarding transportation, I support continued expansion of our clean-running city bus system and would like to see continuous service options like the MAX extend into key east/west corridors, such as West Elizabeth and East Harmony. I am also in support of increasing our efforts to promote alternative transit options, such as walking, bicycling, use of e-bikes, scooter/bike shares, and ridesharing. I believe planning/zoning and infrastructure investments should pursue and promote these transit methods. With reference to water availability, I support expanding the Halligan Reservoir as a means by which to shore up the City's reserves for difficult years, as this appears to be the most realistic and least impactful strategy by which to do so. I am in support of limiting development should ample water not be available to support said development without significantly impacting the flow rate of the Poudre River, however.*

*Finally, per a city document, roughly 40% of our annual water consumption goes to outdoor irrigation. In our increasingly water-sensitive circumstances, we must take decisive action to use our water more wisely. I support incentives for xeriscaping new and existing properties, more stringent irrigation efficiency standards, reduced turf allowances for new developments, and gradual elimination of non-functional turf (e.g., medians, curb easements, stormwater detention areas) throughout the city. I am also in favor of code changes that eliminate minimum turf requirements for houses and businesses.*

- a. How would these lead to improvement(s) in public health, safety, and the lives of Fort Collins residents?

*Actions and policies like those I listed would likely result in less urban sprawl, less driving, more responsible water usage, cleaner air, and better management of our solid waste.*

5. What stewardship, environmental or sustainability practices have you implemented in your life that you feel others should consider enacting?

*In my home, my family and I have shifted to eco-friendly housekeeping and personal care products, to care for our health, air quality, and waterways. We have also made attempts to reduce our use of products that come in plastic packaging, such as through shifting to shampoo bars, bar soap, laundry detergent sheets, and wool dryer balls. We do not use paper towels, get our milk delivered in glass bottles, and engage in home composting. We have been long-time users of reusable grocery and produce bags, reusable food storage containers, metal straws, and to-go cutlery. We buy energy efficient appliances whenever possible and have a programmable thermostat. I am an active gifter and receiver in my local online buy-nothing group, use the library in lieu of buying books, and typically buy used home furnishings from local sellers. In addition, to reduce the number of textiles we throw away, we primarily buy used clothing. My children ride their bikes or take the bus to school every day, and my husband and I complete much of our commuting via bike or e-bike. Finally, I regularly pick up and properly dispose of garbage I find along my walking and biking routes around town.*

- a. Why & what difference(s) has it/they made?

*I feel a sense of responsibility for the health and well-being of my neighbors, children, and society at large. I am distressed by the degree of consumption our American culture encourages and the amount of waste it produces. I am concerned about climate change and the impact it will have on my children's lives in the future, as well as generations that succeed them. Although I believe much more assertive action needs to be taken to hold the biggest polluters (i.e., companies and corporations) accountable for their impacts on our air, land, water, and climate, I try to take reasonable steps to reduce my environmental footprint and those of my family for the time being, as that is where my current sphere of influence lies.*

6. Do you support Fort Collins in collaboration with other Front Range communities taking legal action against polluters responsible for emissions that harm Fort Collins & other Front Range communities' air quality and endanger public health & safety?

*As stated above, I would like to explore strategies for holding the most problematic polluters more accountable for their practices and environmental impacts. However, I would require more specific details about the best approach to achieve these means. I believe the guidance of city attorneys would be imperative in evaluating this proposal.*

Respectfully,

The Larimer Alliance for Health, Safety & the Environment