



**Historic Denver, Inc.**

**2019 Municipal Candidate Questionnaire**

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**CANDIDATE NAME: Tony Smith, District 10**

**1. Do you have a personal connection with historic preservation?**

Since October 2000, I have lived in Congress Park and worked in Cherry Creek North, and my first home was the Rivera Apartments at 1273 Cook Street, built in the 1932. I have personally witnessed the transformation of Cherry Creek North and am beginning to see signs of evolution in Congress Park. It is my greatest desire to preserve the character of ALL Denver neighborhoods in Denver, as all neighborhoods collectively contribute to our city's character and soul. It would be the city's epic loss for future generations to lose historic elements that comprise Denver. We currently own a home at the Blueprint Condominiums at Madison and Colfax (1488 Madison), which has its own interesting history, per Jeanne Robb, not to mention our condo building's namesake and zoning history. Living on Colfax Avenue, we have fallen in love with its unique charm and have learned that Colfax has its own history at stake – some have the desire to rezone all of Colfax to U-MX-8, which could have challenging consequences. After speaking with PUMA and knowing of the data-driven plans for not just Colfax but the East Central Area Plans as they relate to Blueprint Plans and Denveright, we have opportunities to preserve the history of one of the United States' beloved Main Streets. This same story plays over and over again throughout Denver, and we must do everything possible to preserve our city's precious history.

**2. What is your favorite example in Denver (or in your district) where historic preservation, economic redevelopment and strategic reinvestment were successfully combined to create something new?**

The first example that comes to mind is the McNichols Building at Civic Center Park, built originally in 1910 as the Carnegie Library, then repurposed over time to the 2010 Inaugural Biennial of the Americas, to 2012 when it reopened in its current state – then housing the city's Arts & Venues, at which time I served on the Cultural Affairs Commission, which I served as Chair 2013-2014 – at which time we proudly launched Imagine 2020, Denver's first cultural plan since 1998. Another fine element of the repurposing of the building was allocating public art funds for the entrance to

McNichols, further evolving the incredible history of the building, which I was also proud to be a part. The building continues to this day as a successful event center, offices, art gallery and more – all transformed from its original library roots to the historic building it is today.

**3. Neighborhoods across Denver are facing intense development pressure, and Denver's population is expected to increase in the decades to come. What specific ideas do you have to balance new infill with our historic built environment?**

This is certainly the complex and extremely important collaborative process of involving all respective communities, businesses, developers, city entities & agencies. Denver currently has a myriad of plans (Denverright, Comprehensive Plan 2040, East Central Area Plan, etc.), and we must all come together for open and real discussions about moving these data-and-community driven plans forward with a balanced ear to Denver's growth challenges, housing and public space needs, transportation, economic development, etc – all while absolutely working diligently to maintain the heart and soul of Denver's history.

**4. Identify the most critical historic preservation challenge/opportunity in your district. At- Large and Mayoral candidates: you can pick anywhere in the city.**

One of the largest issues at hand is the proposal by one organization to rezone Colfax uniformly to U-MX-8; it is currently U-MS with varying heights. Upon meeting with PUMA, their data-driven recommendation is that this is not needed within the next 20 years. Their recommendations include adaptive reuse incentives to maintain historic buildings, and other elements that would accommodate approximately 7,500 new residential units, 3,500 of which would be within two blocks of Colfax between downtown and Colorado Blvd. I strongly believe we need to keep Colfax Avenue a true "Main Street USA" type of street with lower scale / approachable buildings no more than five stories on East Colfax. We need to build on the 'crunchy' and authentic character of Colfax for cafes, neon, tattoo parlors, bars, etc – as well as adding as much greenery and public art as possible – all of which builds on the already authentic culture of Colfax.

**5. Please finish this sentence: "*I believe historic preservation in Denver can be strengthened by...*"**

"...elevating and educating the cultural importance and economic value of historic preservation to residents, business and government. We must secure Denver's heart and soul for all future generations."

**6. Extra & Optional:** We think historic preservation is most authentic as a personal and visual experience. *Show us in 1 or 2 images (no more than 2, please) what historic preservation means to you.*



**New street art banners, preserving Colfax Culture and History, one tattoo artist at a time. Featured artist: Mandy Hazell, Denver Tattoo Artist, Shop: Bound by Design. Instagram @mandy\_pants\_tattoos. Info: ColfaxAve.com/Art. Photo: Tony Smith**