

Krista Kafer

Candidate – At large

Littleton Business Chamber Candidate Forum 2021

1) What do you believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the downtown Littleton area? Give us three positive and three negative responses with a short explanation.

Littleton has the best main street of all of the communities along the Front Range. We have great restaurants, bars, and shops as well as a wonderful playhouse. Our events and Christmas lights are fantastic. Our main street gives us a sense of place lacking in other metro areas. We can improve our main street by increasing available parking. We also need to find a way to increase foot traffic to the great shops on Alamo and the Art Depot, and to provide a connection to shops and restaurants on Littleton Blvd or just off Main Street like Romano's, home of the best eggplant parmesan, Café Terracotta, and Mud Coffeehouse.

2) What is your priority for development in the city and why?

a) Although we are landlocked, there are areas in Littleton that can be redeveloped to welcome new homeowners. A particularly exciting idea is mixed development. Consider what Belmar and South Glen did with their old shopping malls. Imagine what Aspen Grove can become, a place to shop, recreate, see a movie, eat out, live, and work.

b) One of the best things about Littleton are its shops and restaurants. From big box stores and chain restaurants to one room stores, mom and pop restaurants and food trucks. There are still some vacancies in our shopping areas. How can we encourage business owners to fill in the gaps? The Envision Littleton Plan provides a good start.

c) We have an opportunity to revitalize Littleton Blvd, Broadway and Santa Fe by redeveloping areas for new business.

3) The Littleton Business Chamber (LBC) advocated for a \$.50 tax increase to be placed on the ballot in November, City Council voted for a \$.75. increase. LBC has requested that the City Council sunset the \$.75 tax increase down to \$.50, after the city has met its capital improvement requirements. Are you for or against sunsetting \$.25 of the tax increase? Explain why or why not.

Although I supported the .50 sales tax increase, I will vote for the .75 sales tax increase. The capital needs are too great to not act at this time. I agree with the Chamber that the smaller tax increase is preferable. The proposal has several accountability measures within it to ensure that the money is spent as proposed. A sunset would give voters even greater confidence in the council and its commitment to spending wisely and frugally.

4) Other than the proposed sales tax increase, what three steps would you take to get the City in a more stable financial position?

The small tax increase is the first step in putting the city on stable financial ground. It will enable us to target capital needs and gain matching grants from the federal government. We need to pursue partnerships with other funding partners. Additionally, we need to attract more businesses and customers to the city to increase the amount of revenue. Given the problems in Denver with urban camping and urban unrest, Littleton has a wonderful opportunity to draw businesses and their customers to our safe, friendly city.

5) Why do you feel you are the best choice for City Council? Why should someone vote for you?

I'm running for Littleton City Council because I love this city. I'm committed to keeping Littleton the best place to live, work, raise a family, start a business, and retire. Livability, Opportunity, and Security are my top priorities. With the right policies we can preserve Littleton's special small city character while expanding opportunities for home ownership, entrepreneurship, the arts, recreation, and education. With 25 years of public policy experience, I know I can make a difference.

While public policy experience is important for an elected leader, the ability to listen and to follow through are the most essential qualities. People tell me how much they value good roads, beautiful parks, wonderful places like our unique museum, main street and library, our neighborhoods and shopping districts, and city events. They are concerned about how traffic and urban camping are impacting our city. I'm listening and I'm committed to finding solutions.

6) What is your plan to involve businesses outside the "football" in your decision-making process?

Some of my favorite restaurants and shops are in Woodlawn and South Park. Thanks to Home Depot, I learned how to tile my floors. My car mechanic is in the northwest end of Littleton. We all know where the best eggplant parmesan is served. These wonderful places are outside of the football. We need get the word out about the business gems around the city. Strategizing with the Chamber and area businesses is the first step.

7) How do you plan to get input regarding business in Littleton other than through City staff?

Littleton is fortunate to have a great city staff, business community, and residents. It is essential that council members frequently meet with all stakeholders to gain ideas and solutions. Meeting with people in their own neighborhoods and shops will facilitate that communication.

8) What would be your plan to handle the increasing issue with the homeless disrupting businesses and how would you expect the police department to handle these problems?

Urban camping, vagrancy, and aggressive panhandling have no place in our city. Along with our neighboring cities Sheridan and Englewood and humanitarian community partners, we can help those individuals who truly need and want help to get back on their feet. Those who do not want help and wish to camp in our parks need to move on.