



2023 Denver Mayoral Race Questionnaire

Thank you so much for taking our survey! We are excited to learn more about how you plan to address some of the issues that matter most to our immigrant community in Denver. This survey is meant to provide some background information on critical issues in Denver, please feel free to reach out to our team after you have completed the survey if you have additional questions on any of the topics discussed.

We also want to prioritize voter education and plan to publish answers publicly afterwards. We will be reaching out to all candidates in the Denver Mayoral race with the opportunity to respond. We do not plan to endorse any candidate in the Denver Mayoral race but hope this survey serves as a way for our constituents to differentiate between candidates.

This survey includes values based “yes or no” statement questions as well as qualitative open ended questions. We encourage you to add as much detail to your open ended answers as you can.

Candidate Background Information

Tell us more about your campaign.

1. **Candidate name:** [James Walsh](#)
2. **What is the candidate's party affiliation, regardless of whether the race is partisan or non-partisan?** [Unaffiliateds](#)
3. **Who should we contact if we have questions? (i.e. name of campaign manager, if applicable)** [Hatem Teirelbar 720-660-5459](#)



4. What is the best email to contact the campaign/candidate?

james.walsh@comcast.net

5. What is the best phone number to contact the campaign/candidate?

303 709-5110

6. Campaign social media handles listed by platform

[listed on website](#)

7. Campaign website

www.jimwalshformayor.com

8. Why is the candidate running for office (e.g. platform)?

To make Denver the most worker-friendly city in the U.S. and to get resources to those most in need.

9. Do you support a small tax on landlords to fund legal representation for tenants who are being evicted?

Not on form

On the Issues

Tell us more about your values and how you would tackle major issues impacting the immigrant community in Denver.

10. In 2017, Community leaders in Denver pushed council to pass an ordinance to limit police collaboration with ICE and create the Denver Immigrant Legal Services Fund (DILSF) to support community members through immigration legal proceedings.¹ Since the program launched in 2018, local nonprofit legal service providers have received a total of more than \$1.5M in funds to provide Denver

¹ <https://denverite.com/2017/08/31/heres-else-denver-will-help-immigrants-risk-deportation/>



residents with direct legal representation and affirmative relief services including support with DACA renewals and citizenship applications.² Denver residents served by this fund - who on average have called Denver home for 17 years - have been able to stay with their families and in their communities thanks to the support provided!

While the fund has been critical to expanding legal services for hundreds of Denver residents, many continue to go through immigration proceedings without representation due to gaps in available resources.

a. Are you in support of Denver's Immigrant Legal Defense Fund?

Yes

b. What will you do to continue expanding the Denver Immigrant Legal Services Fund (DILSF) to ensure Denver residents have access to counsel in immigration proceedings?

I would use city resources to ensure that this fund is healthy and that it can reach everyone who needs services. This is a vital part of serving the larger immigrant community and I am committed to building on this immigrant-support infrastructure.

11. The 2017 ordinance also sought to tackle long standing issues for the immigrant community regarding police collaborating with ICE and federal immigration officials. The passage of the ordinance made strides to protect Denver residents from federal overreach by prohibiting Denver city employees from asking about immigration status or sharing that information with federal agents and prohibiting Denver law enforcement from holding individuals beyond their release date for ICE.³

² <https://denverfoundation.org/denver-immigrant-legal-services-fund/>

³ <https://denverite.com/2017/08/28/ice-cooperation-bill/>



While this change marked a powerful shift in Denver standing up for the equal rights of all residents, there are still some key practices Denver’s Sheriff Department engages in that contribute to the separation of our immigrant families. The Denver Sheriff’s Department continues to inform ICE proactively when undocumented Denver residents are being released from custody. This practice of notifying ICE of individual release leads directly to the incarceration of undocumented Denverites and separation of Denver families through deportation.

a. Do you support ending the practice of ‘ICE notifications’ in Denver?

Yes

b. What additional measures would you propose to limit police collaboration with ICE in Denver?

As Mayor, I would end all city law enforcement collaboration with ICE immediately, ensuring that city resources are never used to do the work of ICE or to support ICE in any way.

12. Our groundbreaking report titled, **“Sabotaging Sanctuary: How Data Brokers give ICE access to Colorado’s Data and Jails,”**⁴ shows how ICE contracted with the data broker company Appriss Solutions, a subsidiary of LexisNexis, to receive jail-booking data from a Colorado jail alert system (VINE). The system alerts ICE agents immediately when anyone on the agency’s target lists is booked into county jails, allowing ICE to arrest them upon release. By contracting with 3rd party data brokers ICE can obtain information on hundreds of millions of people across the country.

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https://notechforice.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Sabotaging-Sanctuary_Final-Report_Design-4.pdf?ink_id=2&can_id=c3f37b433cea47238c8ae84f743f8f72&source=email-new-report-shows-ice-uses-data-brokers-to-skirt-sanctuary-laws&email_referrer=&email_subject=new-report-shows-ice-uses-data-brokers-to-skirt-sanctuary-laws



Further, our report also shows that Denver’s ongoing contract with LexisNexis permits information sharing with other LexisNexis customers, including ICE.

- a. **Do you support efforts to limit expansive surveillance by third party entities and law enforcement/ICE?**

Yes

- b. **What steps would you take to address this issue in Denver?**

I would launch a thorough audit of all city data brokers and information systems to ensure that these practices are halted. I would also work to create a system that protects the privacy of all who are incarcerated in city jails.

13. When Mayor Hancock signed the 2017 ordinance he stated the administration’s goal of “affirm[ing] Denver’s commitment to stand with immigrants and refugees” and “maintain Denver as a welcoming city where everyone can feel safe and thrive.”⁵ Over the past months migrants have been coming to Denver and the city has mobilized staff, shelter, and support to help people find security and stability.

- a. **Do you support Denver’s efforts to support newly arrived people?**

Yes

- b. **How do you think the city has done with the current plan to support newly arrived immigrants?**

Overall, the city has done a good job in mobilizing local support networks and services, but more resources are needed to ensure that people can get to where they need to be and be in touch with family.

- c. **What would you do as Mayor to support newly arrived people?**

I would ensure that city resources are adequately channeled to local organizations such as CIRC, AFSC, El Centro Humanitario, and others so

⁵ <https://denverite.com/2017/08/31/heres-else-denver-will-help-immigrants-risk-deportation/>



that these organizations with a long history of immigrant rights work can organize within communities on the ground to ensure that everyone is safe and comfortable. This includes shelter spaces, food, pay for staffing, and ongoing support to ensure that everyone is supported and can get to their final destination with adequate resources. The city should play a prominent role in unlocking resources, while the expert organizations on the ground should lead in the planning.

14. H.R. 8433, introduced by Congressman Lofgren and Senator Padilla, revises the Renewing Immigration Provisions of the Immigration Act of 1929. The act allows the Secretary of Homeland Security to grant lawful permanent resident status to individuals who have been in the US since the registry date - which is currently January 1, 1972. Historically updates to the registry date have had bipartisan support with the last update happening under the Reagan Administration in 1986. This bill updates the date and changes it to a rolling cutoff so that an individual may qualify for lawful permanent resident status if they have been in the U.S. for at least seven years. This would benefit millions of undocumented Americans who currently have no path to citizenship, including DACA and TPS recipients and their family members, farm workers, and essential workers.

a. Would you support a rolling update to the US Registry Act?

Yes

b. Do you support a pathway to citizenship for all 11 million undocumented people?

Yes

15. Though the timeline is not clear yet, we expect the 5th circuit to rule negatively on DACA, possibly ending the program in its entirety. With a split Congress, we are doubtful that a federal solution will come in time to aid the 11 million undocumented people who have built lives here in the US.

a. Do you believe leaders in Denver have a role to play to support DACA recipients in the wake of a negative supreme court decision?



Yes

- b. Within your elected role in Denver, what *specific* actions would you take to support the community in the wake of a negative DACA decision?**

The Mayor of Denver has a powerful and symbolic role to play in working with City Council and the State Legislature to ensure that DACA recipients are protected in our city and our state. Any ICE and DHS actions to deport DACA recipients should be met with widespread resistance, including from official city channels. I would move to create an official committee consisting of those from local immigrant rights organizations tasked with building a rapid response protocol to respond to any threats to our DACA neighbors.

- 16.** As an immigrant rights coalition, our members have identified access to affordable and dignified housing as a top priority.

- a. If elected, what are you willing to do to expand access to affordable housing and to support Denver's immigrant community and workforce to meet their housing needs?**

I will push to raise the minimum wage closer to a living wage, to implement a Universal Basic Income program in Denver, which offers a guaranteed income to all low-income residents, and to use city resources to support Worker Centers and Worker-owned cooperatives. Getting resources directly into the hands of those most in need, regardless of status, is imperative in making housing more accessible.

- b. Immigrants have also identified cost of housing as a key issue impacting mental health, financial stability, and the overall wellbeing of our communities. With housing costs and costs of living far surpassing raises in wages, do you support local control on rent stabilization if the state repealed the ban on rent stabilization?**

Yes



17. Denver recently announced plans to wind down the federally funded Emergency Rental Assistance Program due to limited federal funding⁶. With a budget of over \$130 million, this program helped around 14,000 Denver families stay housed and displacement by offering to cover rent and utility debts. Cost of living in Denver remains inaccessibly high for too many working class Denverites and evictions are steadily climbing.

a. Would you support Denver reinvesting in the program to provide rental assistance at similar levels to Denver residents?

Yes

Connection to Community

Tell us more about the communities you work most closely with.

18. What grassroots leaders and organizations are supporting your campaign? Who are you accountable to?

I have been a Professor of Labor and Immigration Politics at UCD for 25 years, connecting countless numbers of students to direct actions and volunteer opportunities in the Immigrant Rights community. For many years, my students have been very active in the Wage Theft Direct Action Team at El Centro Humanitario, as well as working with Jobs With Justice, AFSC, and other organizations that serve the larger immigrant community. I myself have been active as an ally in the movement since 2006. Eighteen years ago, I founded the Romero Theater Troupe, an all-volunteer radical community theater. During these years, many members of the immigrant community have used the stage as a tool to spread awareness, build solidarity, and educate the public about large issues. Our performances have engaged with thousands in the greater community and have raised money for local immigrant rights organizations.

While we don't have any official endorsements, many grassroots organizers have supported our ""Denver Workers First"" campaign in various ways.

⁶ <https://denverite.com/2022/12/02/denver-emergency-rental-assistance-application-deadline/>



19. What does co-governance mean to you? How do you hope to serve in partnership with the community as an elected official?

This means that we work together as a collective, where everyone brings their gifts and talents to the table. It means avoiding a top-down model of governance and inviting the true experts on issues such as immigration and labor to the table. I have practiced this for many years with the Romero Troupe.