



The Denver Foundation

2024 Public Policy Principles

The Denver Foundation has always led on issues of importance to our community. We believe we have a responsibility to take bold steps to advance racial equity and drive meaningful systemic change. Our community believes we have this responsibility, too.

To that end, the foundation has developed a policy framework and principles to inform our activity in policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels in alignment with our mission, vision, and core values.

In 2022 the foundation distributed more than \$115 million, making more than 5,700 grants across Denver, Colorado, and the U.S.



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

We believe economic opportunity is achievable when the community has the tools and resources to build individual and community wealth.

We support policy proposals that strengthen community wealth building and workforce development opportunities across Metro Denver.

We will consider policy proposals to address past and current systemic barriers to economic opportunity (lending, housing, income equality).

We will also consider policy proposals to increase access to cash assistance programs, employee ownership of businesses, and workforce development programs.

Our recent work: During the 2023 state legislative session, the foundation supported legislation that improved protections for consumers needing small-dollar loans and increased flexibility of a current state program that supports businesses wanting to transition to employee ownership.

Our recent work: We are a stakeholder in the Colorado School Safety Initiative, a coalition and research initiative to understand better issues affecting school safety and climate. The foundation is also a member of EDUCATE Denver, a civic coalition for DPS students comprised of leaders across the Denver community.



EDUCATION (K-12)

We believe that access to a well-funded and racially equitable education system is critical for communities to thrive.

We support policy proposals prioritizing racial equity in the K-12 public school system and equitably increasing local school funding in Metro Denver.

We will consider policy proposals to modify the school funding formula in Colorado. We will also consider policy proposals to enact reforms to address student well-being and safety and efforts to ensure underserved students receive a high-quality public education.

THE DENVER FOUNDATION

For almost 100 years, Denver residents have trusted The Denver Foundation to steward charitable funds to meet today's needs and tomorrow's opportunities. It's a growing legacy and a community-wide effort to build a better future for everyone.

As a tax-exempt, nonprofit, philanthropic organization, The Denver Foundation stewards more than 1,000 funds established by engaged philanthropists. In partnership with the foundation, our donors make gifts to organizations throughout the Seven-county Metro Denver region, across Colorado, and beyond.

MISSION

We inspire people and mobilize resources to strengthen our community.

OUR VISION

A Metro Denver that is racially equitable in its leadership, prosperity, and culture.

CONTACT

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ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

We believe that environmental justice must be rooted in policy change and government investments in under-resourced communities to address the impacts of climate change.

We support policy proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create resilient communities across the Metro Denver region.

We will consider policy proposals that help improve air quality, increase resources for the transition to energy-efficient homes and buildings, and mitigate the impacts of extreme heat.



HOUSING

We believe that to address the affordable housing crisis in Metro Denver, policy and programs should be well-funded, respond to the history of exclusionary zoning and housing policies, and mitigate displacement.

We support policy proposals that increase the development of permanent affordable housing and establish systemic support to address barriers to housing security.

We will consider policy proposals to improve tenant protections and living conditions, lessen regulatory barriers to acquiring, preserving, and building affordable housing for those of the lowest income, and increase resources for those experiencing homelessness.



TRANSPORTATION

We believe that access to reliable and affordable public transportation options is a core function of a thriving community.

We support policy proposals that make equitable investments into public transit to address the current challenges impacting ridership.

We will consider policy proposals to increase funding for transportation systems in Metro Denver and improve service routes and fare structures to get people, especially those of lower incomes and disabilities, to services, education, and jobs.



PHILANTHROPIC GIVING AND NONPROFIT SECTOR

We believe that philanthropists and nonprofits must collaborate to co-create systems to meet community needs and ensure that policies further both sectors' investments in community change.

We support policy proposals at the federal level to further charitable giving, deepen collaboration between philanthropists, nonprofit organizations, and government entities, and address evidence-based concerns of the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. The foundation also supports advocacy efforts to educate decision-makers on the foundation's engaged philanthropy model (grantmaking, business model, etc.).

We will consider policy proposals that impact philanthropic giving, community foundations, and nonprofits in Colorado.

Our recent work: The foundation serves as a member of the City of Denver's Sustainability Advisory Council – an advisory committee to the Office of Climate Action, Sustainability, and Resiliency, and funded the work of the Colorado Health Institute to create the Colorado Health and Climate Policy Agenda.

Our recent work: During the 2023 state legislative session, the foundation supported numerous bills to improve protections for renters and engaged as a stakeholder in legislative efforts to reform zoning practices in Colorado.

Our recent work: During the 2023 state legislative session, the foundation supported legislation that increased funding and flexibility of a state grant program to increase transit use during ozone season.

Our recent work: The foundation serves on national and state-level workgroups with philanthropic organizations to identify reforms to address the concerns behind regulations on community foundations.