

**FORT COLLINS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
CANDIDATE ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
2021 CITY OF FORT COLLINS ELECTION**

**Questionnaires are due back to ahutchison@fcchamber.org
by noon on Tuesday, February 16, 2021
Please note that all questionnaire answers
will be shared with the business community.**

Office Sought: Mayor of Fort Collins	District:
Name: Molly M. Skold	
Home Address: 1416 W. Mountain Ave Fort Collins, CO 80521	
Daytime Phone: 970-732-1540	Evening Phone: 970-732-1540
Email: info@molly4mayor.com	
Employment: Vice President, East Campus Realty/ Mutual of Omaha	
Length of Residence: In City: Native. Returned home 2015.	

Please limit responses to approximately 200 words per section.

Education:	B.A. Marketing/Journalism, Colorado State University Middlebury, Vermont - Russian language program Harvard University - Urban Retail Program
Past and Present Community Service or Volunteer Positions Including Offices Held:	I am an active and positive-minded community contributor who thrives on working with others to elevate the lives of others. I currently serve as a board member and executive board secretary of Visit Fort Collins. I am also a member of the Tourism Master Plan Committee – a committee of civic leaders and visionaries committed to stimulating economic activity capable of generating inclusive employment, developing quality of place across all parts of the community, driving a sustainable tourism development model and preparing Fort Collins for future destination opportunities. I serve on the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery Board of Directors and work with museum staff and other board members to find solutions during this difficult and critical time in the museum’s history. I was also appointed to serve on the museum’s recent search committee to hire the new Executive Director. I am a current member of the Advisory Board of Elevations Credit Union. I was a key member of the Larimer County Food Bank Capital Campaign, led by Tony Frank, and worked with a committed team to raise millions for

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	the region’s food insecure population.
<p>Past and Present Employment/Business Experience:</p>	<p>I learned, early on, the value of hard work and commitment. At age 15, I worked at South Eventide Nursing Home as a nurse’s aide. In high school, I worked for John Batson, owner of Batson Drugs on College Ave., who taught me the value small businesses have on the local economy.</p> <p>More recently, and for more than 11 years, I have served as a catalyst for the revitalization, vibrancy and growth of historic midtown Omaha as Vice President for Mutual of Omaha’s real-estate arm, Midtown Crossing at Turner Park – a once blighted and substandard section of midtown Omaha. I was hired to bring midtown Omaha to life, make it a destination, and realize its mission of urban core revitalization.</p> <p>I worked to open Omaha’s \$75M Ray and Joan Kroc Community Center, a key public/private partnership with noteworthy philanthropist Walter Scott’s Heritage Services foundation and other local donors. For over 5 years, I directed the Greater Omaha Chamber’s highly successful O! Campaign and O! Public Art Project. The citywide endeavor allowed me to work closely with corporate partners, city leaders and visionaries, educational institutions and non-profits – all to spur enthusiasm and encourage citizens to be more active advocates for their city.</p>
<p>Current Employment and Responsibilities:</p>	<p>Based in my hometown of Fort Collins, I oversee all aspects of marketing, strategic planning, public relations and communications for Midtown Crossing – a \$365M mixed-use development in midtown Omaha. I offer guidance to strategic retail leasing decisions and residential strategies and help conceive, direct and work collectively with my team to obtain financial backing for event offerings, urban core partnership projects, and citywide campaigns. In 2018, I was appointed Executive Director of Midtown 2050 and am a member of a</p>

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	<p>collaborative team overseeing Midtown Vision 2050 – a plan to transform midtown Omaha into a dynamic, vibrant urban core destination and healthy community for decades to come.</p>
<p>Specific Qualifications for This Office:</p>	<p>The last 11 years of my career have been squarely focused on returning a once-thriving community to vibrancy and growth – with incredible success: a to-date economic impact of \$1.7 billion driven by strategic planning and teamwork.</p> <p>I understand public-private partnerships and how they will accelerate Fort Collins’ future. I have helped ignite and have been affiliated with countless impactful collaborations throughout my career. I worked to open Omaha’s \$75M Ray and Joan Kroc Community Center, a key public/private partnership with noteworthy philanthropist Walter Scott’s Heritage Services foundation, other local donors and the City of Omaha.</p> <p>I understand the significant role chambers play in a community. I worked for one for over five years. I directed the Greater Omaha Chamber’s highly successful O! Campaign and O! Public Art Project. The citywide endeavor allowed me to work closely with corporate partners, city leaders and visionaries, educational institutions and non-profits – all to spur enthusiasm and encourage citizens to be more active advocates for their city.</p> <p>Day one, our mayor needs to have the skills and the know-how to engage the collective intelligence, energy and innovation of the entire population to solve local challenges and restart the success of our economic engine – our job-creating local business community.</p>
<p>Why are you running for this office?</p>	<p>I’m running because I believe I can make a difference. I have a deep understanding of Fort Collins and a profound respect for the people who make their livings and raise their families in this community. I believe great communities happen on purpose. Every skill I’ve learned – professionally and through my volunteer involvement - has shaped me for effective public service. I will channel these</p>

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	<p>skills into leading and re-invigorating Fort Collins during this crucial time. I am a rational, proven and transparent leader who works to find solutions, not point out divisions. Someone who will, above all else, be a champion of Fort Collins. Right now, our city needs a mayor who brings out the best in local government, strengthening our foundations for a safe and exceptional Fort Collins for generations to come. I grew up with leaders like these, visionaries who elevated our city by working together, rolling up their sleeves and leaving their egos at the door. I find energy in their example and inspiration in their legacies. I'm running because I care about the future of Fort Collins.</p>
<p>What have you done to prepare for election to this office and how you will you conduct yourself if elected to this office? What experiences have you had that makes you qualified to serve in office?</p>	<p>I am actively engaged in the collective intelligence, energy and innovation of the entire Fort Collins population and continually initiate discussions on how to solve local challenges. Throughout my career, I have brought the full spectrum to the table – corporate partners, city leaders and visionaries, educational institutions and non-profits – to advance projects, programs and events, and create excitement across all sectors. As mayor, I will continue to employ a positive, inclusive approach and encourage diversity – including diversity of thought – to keep Fort Collins a safe, welcoming and eclectic community. I am blessed to have had a very versatile and interesting career, proving myself, with each opportunity, to be a strong, seasoned and multifaceted professional. Every skill I've learned has shaped me for effective public service. I know the power of vision, straight-forward communication and collaboration. I've had the privilege of igniting ambitious public-private partnerships, channeling their potential into real, long-lasting community benefit.</p>
<p>What do you think are the top 3 economic priorities city government should undertake during the next four years? What role should the City of Fort Collins have in economic</p>	<p>As mayor, my priorities will be the following – each of great importance. Attracting and retaining qualified workers and skilled labor. Our city plays a critical role in job attraction and supporting our local businesses. I</p>

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<p>development? How will you make the economy a City budget priority?</p>	<p>will lead the community discussion with business partners, educational institutions and others about job creation and help uncover opportunities to grow our job base. Sustaining the quality of life we enjoy in Fort Collins requires smart planning to attract and retain quality, community-appropriate jobs. I fully support the Talent 2.0 Regional Workforce Strategy and echo the commitment to removing barriers and prioritizing the development, maintenance and accessibility of a talented, high-performing workforce.</p> <p>Innovation/ ecosystem. These ecosystems (tech, breweries, startups, etc.) pave the way for our city to organize communities of innovative people united by various visions and ideas. They lead co-creation and collaboration of new ventures. They bring diversity of thought. They create new businesses, bring in new revenue streams, spur innovation and make our city stronger. Our city’s strategy should actively promote, attract and support these ecosystems.</p> <p>Affordable and attainable housing. Viable housing options for all members of our community contribute to our city’s stability. Solving these issues in a constructive, pragmatic and balanced manner will entail building and strengthening mutually respectful relationships with durable partners including developers, city representatives, business leaders, and other stakeholders to analyze areas of improvement and create collaborative solutions.</p>
<p>How will you make the City of Fort Collins a more Jobs Friendly community? Are you willing to engage with business leaders to discuss these solutions? Please explain how you will stay in touch with business leaders.</p>	<p>I am firmly committed to developing public-private partnerships to accelerate Fort Collins’ future. I don’t just talk about public/private partnerships. I’m working on them currently. I understand how to initiate these partnerships and why they are vital to the overall health of a community. I’ve had the privilege of igniting these impactful collaborations throughout my career, channeling their potential into real, long-lasting community benefit. Once elected, I will also be exploring public-private employment and housing solutions for those in</p>

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	<p>need. Being a Jobs Friendly community means you are a community that values durable partners. Our durable partners include CSU, Woodward, UC Health, Poudre School District and so many others. I will work with these partners to ensure strong, long-lasting relationships while exploring opportunities for growth and ways we can continue, collectively, to thrive as a community.</p> <p>I will help lead the community discussion about job creation and seizing what may be productive, proactive opportunities to grow our primary job base. In order for our quality of life to be sustainable, our city must attract and retain good jobs.</p>
<p>What role should the City of Fort Collins have in the region? What do you believe are the top issues facing Northern Colorado in the next several years?</p>	<p>It's critical, now more than ever, the City of Fort Collins has a seat at the table, both regionally and at the state level. We're still reeling from national, state and local divisions and there are some leaders with specific party ideologies and agendas who will give special privileges to their political allies. I am not that candidate. I am the business-minded candidate who will build relationships, not walls. I am the candidate who appreciates and values our durable partnerships throughout the region and who will create a culture of collective collaborations and intelligence. We are facing tough issues as a city and as a region. Water being one of these issues. The future of water in our region demands a "come to the table" approach. We need to shift our mine/yours attitude to an "our" mindset. The time is now. Transportation is another key issue. We've made great strides in the I-25 improvement project to improve I-25 between Mulberry and south Loveland. And yet, our work is not done. With population counts significantly on the rise, it's crucial we bring the full spectrum to the table – corporate partners, leaders and visionaries – so as to build our local and regional economies.</p>
<p>Colorado will continue to grow, including our area. How should the City of Fort Collins plan for growth, if at all?</p>	<p>We owe it to our kids, grandkids and future generations to be intentional and thoughtful about our future. I will support the kind of disciplined growth that will ensure a healthy community</p>

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	<p>moving forward. I will oversee a fiscally responsible city government where every tax dollar counts. And, I will engage a range of views to restart the success of our economic engine – our job-creating local business community.</p>
<p>What are the top two issues facing city government over the next 4 years and why do you believe they are the most important?</p>	<p>I’m running for Mayor of Fort Collins, in large part, because I see a diminished respect and admiration for local government. I see fewer people being engaged, wanting to have a voice, asking for a place at the table. As mayor, I will help foster a culture of both a high performing board as well as a high performing city government – collections of individuals who prioritize mutually respectful working relationships and work together to solve key issues. I’ll also work to improve and help strengthen and engage the collective intelligence, energy and innovation of our entire population – lifetime and newer residents, young professionals and older – to solve local challenges and rebuild our community stronger than ever.</p> <p>We must prioritize transparency. We owe that to our residents and to all those who do business with us. A commitment to transparency helps eliminate toxic “private behind-closed-door deals”, prioritizes accountability and provides trust. I’ve seen Fort Collins raise the bar on our community before. We can do it, again. Allowing for a culture of various viewpoints, prioritizing integrity and respect and acting with conviction will ultimately make our city stronger.</p>
<p>What economic tools should the City add to their "tool box" of resources to attract key employers?</p>	<p>Amplifying our existing assets and the economic success of our past with a collaborative, future-focused strategy will provide long-term value to attract new investments and employers. Working with city partners, businesses and developers to co-create a tangible strategic “blueprint” will guide the overall strategy and lay the groundwork for direction as well as foster cooperative, constructive conversation. Regional partners and city leaders can work together to create a resource navigator to help entrepreneurs strategize financing opportunities, identify mentorships and obtain</p>

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	<p>relevant marketing assistance. This will lead to identifying, targeting and working with high-quality and innovative businesses. An enhanced commitment to the entrepreneurial and start-up community will result in increased innovation throughout our region and ultimately create job growth. Finally, a concentrated effort to broaden our regional partner relationships and co-author regional economic development opportunities will make Fort Collins and the surrounding area a stronger, attractive and more viable community. Instilling a partnership philosophy, to work across boundary lines and to encourage capital investments throughout northern Colorado, will benefit each community. Building and strengthening relationships with our durable anchor partners like Colorado State University, NOCO Regional Airport, Woodward and UC Health will help us solve problems, identify new areas of opportunity and achieve goals, together.</p>
<p>What are the top three transportation improvements the City of Fort Collins should accomplish? What is your position on the Fix North I-25 effort? Why?</p>	<p>I am fully supportive of the Fix North I-25 effort and appreciate the work done by the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, regional leaders, state partners and CDOT. An effort of this magnitude takes grit, perseverance and a dedication and commitment to move people and goods safely and conveniently throughout the I-25 corridor region between. I appreciate the Keep Colorado Moving campaign which allows for communication and transparency to residents and businesses alike as well as the opportunity to cast the net wider and pave the way for additional entities, businesses and organizations to become active and engaged. As our region grows, so must the commitment to a wide variety of transportation modes – roads, bicycles, pedestrians, trails, parking, transit and other forms of multi-modal forms of transportation. Collaboration with non-profits, police and rescue, businesses, city leaders will shape how we move throughout our city and our region. Our work is not done, however. As mayor, I will collaborate and explore opportunities to improve and expedite projects like Vine and Lemay bridge and</p>

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	<p>improvements and Laporte Ave. road and bridge enhancements as well as innovative forms of transportation applicable and attainable for our community. I'll also lead the dialog on improvements with the Max Bus Rapid Transit service and how to attract new users while enhancing current use. I'll have a seat at the table with the NOCO Regional Airport and be an active contributor and key participant in the next phase of the development. A dedication and concentration to a strong, strategic transportation plan is imperative to job growth and quality of life.</p>
<p>Tell us about your understanding of water issues in Northern Colorado.</p>	<p>Without a doubt, water is our most important resource. It's also a finite resource. As a state, a region and a municipality, it's critical we come to the table and manage water collaboratively. There is an urgency to this issue in that Northern Colorado is projected to run out of water by 2065. The future of our water and our region depends on this collective collaboration.</p> <p>With regards to the various aspects of water throughout our city and our region, we do well with our point source, treatment and distributions systems. Most recently, with major fires occurring throughout our area, we've been reminded that we are vulnerable within our transmissions systems. The issues surrounding water storage are crucial. We need to build relationships, not walls. Encouraging leaders, volunteers, visionaries and pragmatic thinkers from our region to think more creatively about solving our water storage issues is critical as is forming and strengthening strong partnerships and collective, constructive intelligence.</p>
<p>What is your position on water storage in northern Colorado? Do you support the NISP project? Do you support the Halligan project?</p>	<p>It is critical our city and surrounding region increases our water storage capacity so as to supply much needed water for future growth opportunities as well as protect against drought. I am in support of both the Northern Integrated Supply Project</p>

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<p>Why do you hold these positions?</p>	<p>(NISP) as well as the expansion of the Halligan Reservoir. This is an important year and I'm hopeful we will see major movement forward, with both projects. Regarding the NISP project, specifically the Glade Reservoir close to Ted's Place and the Galeton Reservoir northeast of Ault, the water collected will be critical to use for future growth and development. The project is proposed by Northern Water along with 15 regional water providers. Thoughtful oversight and management, for example, will be key as decisions are made as to the siting of Glade, it's recreational options as well as the details surrounding the pipelines that carry the water.</p> <p>The world is watching. Developers are eyeing Fort Collins as a possible place to live, play and do business. Are we going to come to the table? Are we going to be a viable player in Northern Colorado? It's time to embrace these opportunities, solidify these water storage opportunities and utilize these enhancements for the betterment of our community.</p>
<p>Why should the members of your district support your election to office?</p> <p>Why should someone who is interested in a vibrant city economy vote for you?</p>	<p>Good people, smart people are opting out of local leadership opportunities because of the hostile place public service has become. I am the candidate who will change that narrative. I think independently, act independently and will put Fort Collins first, above all else. I am the proven, transparent candidate who will bring humility, passion and a common sense approach to the office. I am the purposeful candidate who knows how to elevate communities and who's doing it now. I know how to bring people together – the leaders, doers, givers and beneficiaries – to build effective coalitions and better futures. I am the people-driven candidate who will employ a positive, inclusive approach and encourage diversity of thought.</p> <p>I will approach this opportunity with humility, passion and gratitude. I will strive to elevate lives and community and increase opportunity for everyone who lives and moves to our resurgent Fort Collins, our future-focused Fort Collins. I believe</p>

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	<p>that great communities happen on purpose. I've seen it in our community. I've lived it. The decisions we make today, the leaders we choose, will have an impact on our community for generations to come. For those interested in a vibrant city economy – there is one vote. Molly4Mayor.com</p>
<p>Do you have existing relationships with anyone on City Council or Staff? And how will those relationships help you serve the citizens of Fort Collins.</p>	<p>I am endorsed by and have the support of our current mayor, Wade Troxell.</p>
<p>If business groups endorse you, is there any significant information that could come out about you during a campaign that could potentially embarrass you (and them) publicly? (ex: bankruptcy, discrimination, harassment, arrest, conviction, etc.)</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Signature Molly M. Skold</p>	
<p>Date Feb. 16, 2021</p>	