IndivisibleNOCO Voting Recommendations

Fort Collins and Poudre School Board

2025 Elections

City of Fort Collins Races

This year, Fort Collins will use ranked voting to elect its mayor and city council members. You will rank your choices from most to least preferred candidate. You do not have to rank all the candidates. Learn more about ranked voting in Fort Collins.

Mayor

Fort Collins is fortunate to have four strong, values-driven candidates running for mayor. Of the seven individuals in the race, IndivisibleNOCO identified four as serious and viable contenders who reflect the priorities of our community: Tricia Canonico, Emily Francis, Adam Eggleston, and Shirley Peel.

We encourage voters to closely review the platforms and experience of **Tricia Canonico and Emily Francis**, whom we rank as our top two choices, though we leave the final order to your judgment after reviewing their materials. Both women have served with distinction on City Council and bring deep knowledge of the challenges facing Fort Collins. Their leadership styles and strengths differ, but each would be a compelling and capable mayor.

Emily Francis brings valuable experience to the mayoral role, having served as mayor pro tempore – a position that gave her direct insight into the responsibilities and demands of the office. We were particularly impressed by her thoughtful, well-researched proposals to improve quality of life and support local businesses in Fort Collins.

Tricia Canonico has represented Fort Collins on a range of city, state, and national committees, and she offers a bold, progressive, and achievable vision for the city's future and addressing housing, transportation, environmental and business issues. Her ability to clearly communicate that vision and advocate for Fort Collins on broader platforms sets her apart. We were especially struck by her innovative approach to pooling resources across Colorado municipalities to tackle shared challenges – such as enhancing quality of life and meeting state mandates on environmental and housing regulations.

We recommend ranking Adam Eggleston third. He has a strong record of community involvement, a progressive set of values, and a solid understanding of local issues. However, during our conversations, he did not demonstrate the same depth of insight into the city's more

complex challenges as our top two candidates. That said, we believe he has the capacity to grow quickly into a more nuanced understanding.

Shirley Peel, a former City Council member, is now running as an independent after previously campaigning on a conservative platform. She is widely respected by her peers for her thoughtful listening and openness to changing her views when presented with compelling evidence. **While we recommend ranking Ms. Peel, we place her fourth** among the viable candidates for two key reasons.

First, she was unable to provide a clear response to our question about defending the city against federal overreach – an issue the other candidates addressed with specific strategies. Second, while Ms. Peel has moderated some of her positions, she continues to hold certain conservative views that raise concerns for us about their alignment with Fort Collins' values. For example, she stated that both political parties have problems. While we agree that both parties have problems, we believe the nature and impact of those problems are not morally or practically equivalent.

IndivisibleNOCO does not recommend ranking any other candidate.

City Council District 1

Both Chris Conway and Daisy Montgomery stand out as strong candidates for Fort Collins City Council District 1. IndivisibleNOCO recommends ranking Chris Conway as your first choice and Daisy Montgomery as your second.

Chris Conway has demonstrated a deep commitment to our community, particularly in addressing one of Fort Collins' most urgent challenges: housing attainability. As the son of a local small business owner, he brings firsthand understanding of the pressures facing small businesses and offers practical, thoughtful solutions to support their long-term viability. Mr. Conway grew up in Fort Collins and returned after college to teach in our public schools. His roots in the community run deep, and his dedication is evident in the time and energy he has invested over the past year engaging with District 1 residents. When we spoke with him, he showed a strong command of the issues and had clearly done his homework.

Daisy Montgomery shares many of Mr. Conway's values and policy positions. While she did not demonstrate the same depth of understanding of city issues during our conversation, we are confident in her ability to learn quickly. We were especially impressed by her pragmatic approach to problem-solving and her skill in connecting with people across diverse backgrounds. Ms. Montgomery is also a passionate advocate for neurodivergent individuals and has spoken nationally on the topic, bringing important visibility and insight to this work.

We do not recommend ranking Susan Gutowsky. During her time on City Council, she has not been an effective representative for District 1 or an effective colleague on City Council. Of

particular concern, she previously supported a white nationalist candidate in a local election and publicly criticized a fellow councilmember for speaking out about sexual harassment she experienced from another candidate. These actions raise serious questions about her judgment and alignment with the values we believe are essential for public leadership.

City Council District 3

IndivisibleNOCO recommends ranking Joshua Fudge as your first choice for City Council District 3, with Lance Smith as your second.

Joshua Fudge brings a strong combination of progressive values and deep experience in government budgeting—skills that will be essential as Fort Collins faces growing fiscal challenges, including reductions in federal funding. With over 20 years of experience in local government, including more than a decade at Larimer County, Mr. Fudge has worked extensively in budget management, strategic planning, process improvement, and performance measurement. These are critical tools for ensuring Fort Collins remains a thriving, well-managed community.

We ranked Mr. Fudge above Mr. Smith due to his extensive background in these key areas. That said, Lance Smith also has experience in local government and shares progressive values. We believe he would serve District 3 well and represent its interests effectively if elected.

We do not recommend ranking Stephen Yurash. He is running on a conservative platform that does not align with the progressive values of Fort Collins. During his campaign for HD51 against Yara Zokaie, Mr. Yurash employed racist dog-whistle rhetoric in an attempt to discredit Ms. Zokaie—behavior that is unacceptable and has no place in our community.

City Council District 5

Forthcoming.

Poudre School Board Directors

Poudre School Board Directors are voted on at large. Voters vote for one candidate from each director district that is open during the general election. This year, director districts C, D and E are open.

District C. IndivisibleNOCO recommends voting for **Karla Baise**. Ms. Baise brings a positive energy to the school board. Her work experience as a community outreach coordinator translates well to connecting with constituents with diverse perspectives.

District D. IndivisibleNOCO recommends voting for **Coronda Ziegler.** Dr. Ziegler's experience includes strategic and budgeting skills that will benefit the school district. While both candidates embody progressive learning-centric values, Dr. Ziegler explicitly states that, while parents and

guardians should have meaningful opportunities for curriculum input, the final responsibility for curriculum decisions rests with trained educational professionals. Additionally, Dr. Ziegler has children currently enrolled in district schools, providing her a front-line view of the issues facing children today. Finally, she has received endorsements from the most progressive leaders in our community and current school board members.

District E. Andrew Spain is running unopposed.