

Denver City Council

October 30, 2025

Re: Al Gardner nomination

Dear City Council members:

I wanted to write to you regarding a recent topic that has been very concerning to me. That issue is the recent nomination by the mayor of Mr. Al Gardner for the Director of Public Safety position for the city of Denver.

I am a 74 year old native of Denver, a product of the Denver Public Schools, the University of Colorado – Boulder, BA, MA, PhD (endocrinology), and Colorado State University, Fort Collins, DVM. For the past 43 years, I have practiced veterinary medicine at Alameda East Veterinary Hospital in east Denver where we care for the dogs of the Denver Police Department. Since 1982, I have been assistant professor adjunct at the University of Denver teaching pre-veterinary students and have served on the Board for the Foundation of the Rocky Mountain Poison and Drug Center. Since 2009, I have served on the Board for the Denver Zoo and its Leadership Council. I grew up here and I remain very invested in my city and pay close attention to its leadership.

On Wednesday, October 29th, I attended the “Community Conversation with Al Gardner” held at the Glenarm Recreation Center. I wanted to see for myself what made the mayor nominate and select Mr. Gardner for the Public Safety Director position. I was not disappointed.

The event was well attended with well over 100 people. I was happy to see several old friends who like me continue to be interested in the safe and efficient management of our city. I was particularly impressed to see that the current Chief of Police, Fire Chief and Sheriff had all made the effort to be in attendance in support of Mr. Gardner. That in itself spoke volumes.

Mr. Gardner started off by introducing himself to the audience, he fielded question for over one hour. In doing so, he was open and accessible and handled the questions with candor and transparency. He outlined his management style and put forward his vision for the position. As you might expect, not all of the questions were easy or softballs, but he did not shrink from hard lines of questioning and did his best to stay focused and answer every question. His answers showed consideration and thought and seemed genuine and non-scripted. His style of speaking is refreshing and he came across as very likeable and thoughtful. I liked him very much when he said that he didn’t have all the answers but that no one would work harder. I see now why the mayor nominated this fellow.

I came away from this evening very impressed with Al Gardner, his answers and his honesty. I also came away certain that we do not need a “badge” for this job. We have done that many times before and it have never worked out that well for the city.

I have lived in Denver my entire life and I have always tried to keep up and take stock in the leadership of my city. I hope that the City Council will consider Mr. Gardner seriously and confirm his nomination as Director of Public Safety for the City of Denver.

Sincerely,

Kevin T. Fitzgerald, PhD, DVM

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Staff Veterinarian – VCA Alameda East Veterinary Hospital
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