

# Councilman Kevin Flynn

# HIGH POINTS

Denver City Council  
District 2

Home to the highest natural point in Denver

Summer 2025

## Furloughs, layoffs to help balance city budget

The City of Denver is not just tightening its financial belt, it is cinching it down several notches. Mayor Mike Johnston recently released a projection of a \$50 million shortfall in revenue this year for the general fund, the city's principal source of paying for services. And looking ahead to 2026, the forecast shows the city is facing a \$200 million general-fund gap. Based on these projections, major cuts are being made, including required furloughs for all employees and possible layoffs.

### REVENUE

About 55% of the city's general fund revenue comes from sales tax – this includes general sales tax, use tax, aviation fuel tax, short-term car rental tax, prepared food and beverage tax and the special tax on retail marijuana. For the 2025 budget, the city anticipated receiving \$951.2 million in sales and use tax. Based on first quarter results, Denver is now projecting that to be \$50 million less due to waning consumer spending. Second quarter results will be available in August.

Property tax, the next largest



**A volunteer harvests garlic at The Table garden located at the Denver Police District 4 Station. The garden grows fruits and vegetables that are donated back to the community. For details, visit [denvertable.org](http://denvertable.org). This police station, located in Council District 2, is the only one in the city that hasn't been renovated. See the Page 2 bond story for more details.**

source of revenue, is more stable but at 11% of total revenue, not something that can fill the gap. There are other smaller sources, including fees and charges, that city uses to diversify its revenue. Unfortunately, there is no way around heavily relying on sales tax.

### EXPENSES AND CUTS

To meet the revenue shortfall, the city is having to make hard decisions. The city is currently under a hiring freeze, all employees are taking mandatory furlough

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**Councilman Kevin Flynn**



# Parks make the cut for D2 bond projects

A preliminary list of projects to be included in the Vibrant Denver Bond coming before voters in November includes only a few parks projects for Council District 2.

After public meetings were held around the city, including one in District 2, and a citywide survey gathered idea submissions, a comprehensive list of projects were considered by community-led subcommittees. The subcommittees prioritized the projects into tiers. The tiered lists were turned over to an executive committee that further filtered the list and submitted its recommendation of projects to fund to the mayor on July 8. Two large projects for District 2 were not included in the list.

A parking garage for the Theatre at Loretto Heights was not included since alternative funding has been identified that will allow the garage to be constructed in the near future.

The Denver Police District 4 Station is in need of expansion and renovation and is the only station in the city that hasn't been updated. It is a shovel-ready project that was ready for the last bond but wasn't included. It appears it has been omitted this time around as well.

Projects that did make the list include lighting upgrades at Harvey Park, Southwest Recreation Center pool updates, and renovation of the tennis courts at Southwest Auto Park.

The final list of projects will be evaluated by the mayor and City Council. The final bond package will be voted on by City Council on Monday, July 28, including a courtesy public hearing. Final reading will be Monday, Aug. 4. Monday, Aug. 25 is the last day for Council to refer the bond package to the November ballot. Find up-to-date information at [denvergov.org/vibrantbond](https://denvergov.org/vibrantbond).

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days (not including uniformed and 911 personnel), agencies are limiting discretionary spending for items like meals, travel, training and supplies, and an effort is being made to reduce and/or restructure contracts to lower costs.

The budgeting process for 2026 is underway and \$200 million will need to be cut, to include possible layoffs of 10% to 30% depending on the agency and no pay raises for employees, in addition to other major cuts. The mayor is considering cutting programs and consolidating city departments and agencies. Slashing some rules and regulations will also save time, money and personnel.

"It is my hope that as employees work harder to fill in for vacant positions and take the mandatory unpaid days off that the people of Denver will show some grace," Councilman Kevin Flynn said. "City employees will be working short-handed to maintain our core services."

### WHY ARE WE INVESTING IN MAJOR PROJECTS?

Infrastructure projects have often provided part of the recovery from a down economy, and projects

like the National Western Center and the National Women's Soccer League stadium are financed with capital funds that are restricted. They are not part of the general fund. Capital funds are provided through property taxes and other financing mechanisms and are more insulated from short-term economic impacts. Capital funds cannot be used to cover general fund expenses.

Plus, major projects create jobs and other supply chain opportunities, ultimately putting more money into the local economy.

### WILL THERE BE A BOND ON THE BALLOT?

Yes. Bond projects come from issuing bonds to investors and paying them back over time, using the current mill levy devoted to bond repayment. The money from the bonds can be used only for the designated projects approved by voters. Bonds cannot be used to pay general fund expenses. Bond projects create jobs and opportunities for a variety of workers and industries.

See the related bond story at the top of this page.



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## HIGHLIGHTS

### Bear Valley sculpture to be dedicated in August

Bear Valley Park will be getting a piece of public art in early August. The art installation is called "All Twisty" by the artist David Farquharson.

The concrete base is poured. Next, the colorful metal sculpture and lighting will be installed. A dedication is scheduled for Aug. 8 at 4 p.m. at the sculpture site, near the tennis courts. All are welcome.

Additional public art is coming to the Theatre at Loretto Heights. A panel of community members has been convened to select artwork to be installed at the theater as part of the renovation project.

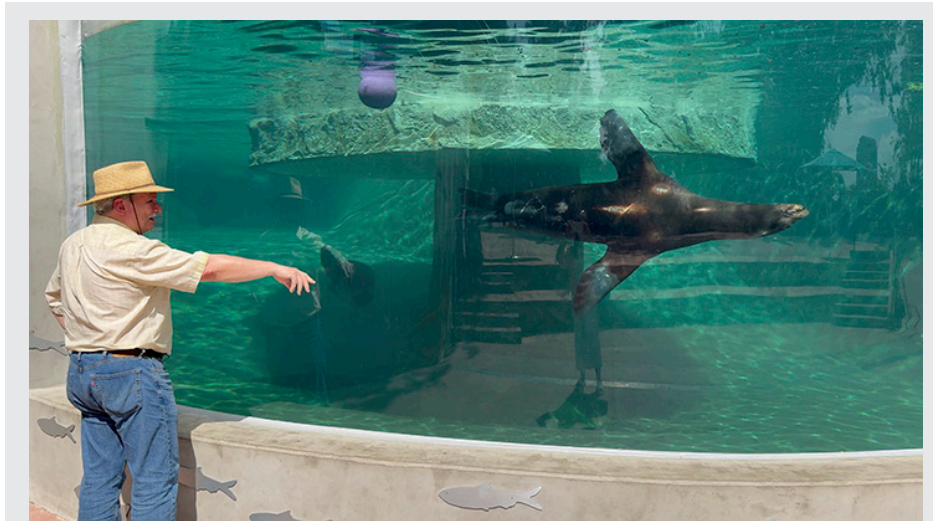
A request for proposal for artists who would like to apply to create artwork for the site will be issued in the coming weeks. Stay tuned for details. The city encourages local artists to apply.

### Southwest rec center hosts movie in the park

Grab a blanket and your favorite movie snack and head to the Southwest Recreation Center for a free movie in the park.

Enjoy an outdoor screening of "The Sandlot" on Tuesday, Aug. 12 at 6:45 p.m. The recreation center is located at 9200 W. Saratoga Place. All ages are welcome and no registration is required.

The movie is presented by the MY Denver Card. See [denvergov.org/mydenvercard](https://denvergov.org/mydenvercard) for information.



**The sea lions have returned to the Denver Zoo Conservation Alliance after extended stays at other zoos while their new habitat was being built. Learn more about their new home in the District 2, Two-Minute Talk. Use the QR Code to go straight to the video or visit [youtube.com/@FlynnCD2](https://youtube.com/@FlynnCD2).**



### Glenbrook community garden starts this fall

Denver Urban Gardens has started preliminary design for the community garden to be located at the Denver Public Schools Glenbrook Greenhouse property located at 4890 S. Field Way.

DUG is gathering site information and organizing ideas around how to best bring the space to life. Site plans should be ready for review by the end of September.

Site preparation will begin at the end of this year with construction slated for 2026.

Several public meetings hosted by Councilman Kevin Flynn in partnership with DUG were held to

engage interest and ideas. Based on that input the project has inched forward and is finally coming to fruition.

In August 2023, DUG planted a food forest at the same location where the garden will be located. Volunteers planted food-producing perennial plants that are tended by volunteer Tree Keepers.

The harvest from the trees and plants is for the community to enjoy. Take only what is ripe — it tastes better and won't risk damaging the plant if you pick when the fruit is ready. If you're not sure if a fruit is ripe, check the indicators placed by Tree Keepers.

For information or to get involved, visit [dug.org](https://dug.org)

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## Diverse legislation moving through Denver City Council

A flurry of legislation on a wide range of topics has been moving through City Council recently. Here are some of the issues already voted on, or soon headed to a vote, and Councilman Kevin Flynn's analysis of them. Your thoughts on these are welcomed.

The council passed a bill eliminating all requirements in the zoning code to provide parking as part of any development. Flynn voted no. "Planning staff said developers and lenders should be able to determine their parking needs, and that they always provide parking anyway," the councilman said.

"But because they do, that demonstrates that we do need to set a minimum level of parking. If it's too high, let's adjust it. But the people expect us to be deliberate in our planning and not cede that ground to bankers and builders." In a survey on this issue in the last quarterly newsletter, 91% of Council District 2 residents also opposed this change.

Another development-related change is being studied that would allow construction of multi-family buildings up to five stories with only a single exit stairway instead of the currently required two stairwells for exiting during fires or other emergencies. This won't come up for a vote soon, but noting the Denver Fire Department opposes it, Councilman Flynn likewise is skeptical.

The goal is to lower the cost

of building more affordable housing. But the proposal so far includes multiple costly additional requirements in single-stair buildings, that the councilman suggested it would actually be more expensive than simply building the second stairwell.

Another just-passed bill is aimed to reducing theft of copper, brass, aluminum and other metals for sale to scrap dealers. It's modeled after a successful law council passed three years ago to reduce thefts of catalytic converters from automobiles for their scrap value. Councilman Flynn voted in favor of both, and was pleased that the data showed our council district had the lowest number of scrap metal thefts in the city, at 3% of the total over the past seven years.

It prohibits scrap metal dealers from providing cash payments and serving walk-up customers. They also must verify the seller's identity and keep records for 180 days. This approach has significantly reduced catalytic converter thefts.

Flynn also supported a new law to more quickly and effectively address neglected and derelict buildings. It expands the ability of the city to cite abandoned, vacant or unsafe properties – homes, commercial buildings, even vacant derelict lots. It requires owners to obtain an approved plan of remediation and pay increased fines for failure to implement them. It also provides owners with opportunity to appeal.



**Wide sidewalks replace gravel shoulders and improved drainage was installed.**

## Sidewalks come to Iowa Avenue and Hazel Court

Construction of sidewalks and storm drainage on Iowa Avenue and Hazel Court, north of Sander-son Gulch in Mar Lee, wrapped up last month, fulfilling a long-sought desire for improvements.

The \$4.3 million job will prevent flooding of properties and delivered wide sidewalks to the neighborhood that had little more than gravel shoulders between Federal Boulevard and Irving Street. The streets were first platted in 1926.

"I have advocated for these sidewalks for nearly 10 years," Councilman Kevin Flynn said after attending a celebration lunch on Hazel Court sponsored for the residents by Hamon Infrastructure, the contractor that did the work. "It's just so good to see the results."

