



September 22, 2026

In addition to the September 23rd Roundtable, the Downtown Boulder Partnership asked each candidate to provide written responses to three questions important to the Downtown Boulder and University Hill business communities:

1. Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen the downtown and University Hill commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?
2. What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?
3. If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

The deadline to respond to these questions was Monday, September 21, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. Responses are limited to 200 words per question. The following Candidates submitted responses by the requested deadline (alphabetically by first name):

Aaron Brockett
David Martus
Lynn Segal
Ryan Schuchard
Taishya Adams

Aquiles La Grave
Jamillah Richmonod
Rachel Rose Isaacson
Sam Faqua
Tara Winer

Benita Duran
Jill Adler Grano
Ryan Jamieson
Scott Rendleman
Tina Marquis

The following pages include the responses from each candidate. Thank you!

Aaron Brockett

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

Thank you for participating in the Downtown Boulder & University Hill Candidate Roundtable on **Wednesday, September 23**.

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Please provide original responses. If AI tools were used in developing or editing your responses, we ask that you acknowledge that use at the end of this form.

Email *

aaronboulder@gmail.com

Candidate Name *

Aaron Brockett

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

I do think that Boulder needs a significant new strategy to strengthen Downtown and University Hill. I voted in favor of the DDA for that reason, and I support bringing it back in 2027. When we bring it back, we will need to do additional outreach with the other taxing entities including BVSD, Boulder County and the Library District, as well as with the community as a whole. With additional engagement, I think we can successfully move the DDA forward to the ballot in 2027 with good community buy-in and start leveraging the powerful new capabilities of the DDA to energize and improve downtown and the Hill.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Businesses deserve commercial districts that are safe and pleasant to visit. Unfortunately that is not always the case in Downtown and on University Hill. I'm glad that the city in partnership with Downtown Boulder Partnership has taken a number of steps to work on these issues, including adding the Downtown Ambassadors several years ago, adding Park Rangers, and staffing regular patrols on the Mall as well as on the Hill and bike patrols along the Creek Path. But there is still an unacceptable amount of disruptive behavior in those areas. I have been working with the city manager on improving the situation by making sure our enforcement protocols include the confiscation of illegal drugs, and discouraging people congregating in problematic places such as by the nature play area in Central Park. We need to continue to work hard to make improvements in these critical areas.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

Decisions made by City Council can have significant financial and operational impacts on local businesses. Business owners and employees often participate in public meetings, surveys, working groups and other engagement opportunities, yet there can be frustration when they feel their input has not meaningfully influenced the final decision.

If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

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I have made community engagement a cornerstone of my time on city council and as mayor, and I will continue that approach if reelected. I regularly attend events and meetings put on by DBP, the Boulder Chamber and other business groups, and I accept every invitation I'm given if I don't have a conflict. I have had many one-on-one conversations with downtown business owners about many different topics and I always honestly represent my opinion or approach while striving to learn the perspectives of others and updating my thinking on issues based on what I've learned. Disagreements are inevitable, and it's important we talk through them and then continue to work together on shared problems. I'm a former small business owner myself, so I know firsthand the challenges of making payroll and managing the many issues that arise daily for a business owner.

AI Disclosure *

Did you use an artificial intelligence tool in developing or editing any portion of your responses?

☐ Yes

☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

Please briefly describe how AI was used in developing or editing your responses.

Final Acknowledgement

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Aquiles La Grave

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Email *

aquiles@boulder.vote

Candidate Name *

Aquiles La Grave

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

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Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

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Downtown requires major reinvestment and commitment in our mission to keep Downtown local. Today, 75% of businesses in the Downtown area are locally owned and operated. This is the social infrastructure that keeps Boulder Boulder. These friends and neighbors sponsor our little leagues, school fundraisers, and families in need. They own the restaurants, bookstores, and stores we frequent, representing generations of families who created a one-of-a-kind experience along Pearl Street. If these local businesses fail, they will likely be replaced by large national storefronts.

We should not just wait for the next DDA election to take action. Staff should return to Boulder, at least two hours of free parking should be provided to customers, and permitting fees on local businesses reduced. Supporting local business must be a top priority today. Council needs to engage in a genuine dialogue with the community regarding long-term funding investments for Downtown without raiding other vital funds. If Council doesn't initiate this action, I will, and if it takes 4,000 signatures for a ballot measure, I will personally help collect them. Let's keep Downtown local.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

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Let's stop pretending and say the quiet part aloud. Parks are for kids.

We continue to struggle where other cities have already succeeded, and the entire town is the victim of that failure, and that includes our unhoused. We've already approved Reimagining Policing, and have a blueprint in the Clutch report. We've just failed every year since, to fund and commit ourselves fully to these recommendations. So we're left debating, is it getting better?

We do not need another study, we need to fund the work already approved. I will refuse to support a City budget that continues to leave these pledges unfulfilled. Compassion and enforcement are not mutually exclusive, and Boulder can offer people who are experiencing crises assistance while continuing to require that our shared areas remain safe and accessible. Parents shouldn't think twice before bringing their kids to our parks

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

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First, I already get the emails, because I run a business downtown, so I see who replies and who doesn't. When I'm mayor, you send me an email about something now working you call me, you want me to loop someone? I'll do it. If I don't, I fully expect you to come knocking at my door and we can have a beer. Trust is an exercise of going what you say you will repeated over time. I will earn that trust.

Here's what you can expect in terms of my process, I will be transparent on a common set of requirements when voting to put things on the agenda and on that list includes meaningful stakeholder participation. You will know, publicly, how I think about an issue before the council meeting so you can challenge and engage transparently, and I will maintain a dashboard to measure how we did.

AI Disclosure *

Did you use an artificial intelligence tool in developing or editing any portion of your responses?

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☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

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Benita Duran

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

Benita Duran

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

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Yes, support the DDA. I believe council had made a commitment to move it forward to a vote of the area voters. They also had an obligation to be engaged in the process updates they received throughout the year and seems, as an outside observer, that they could have brought forward concerns of the process. I have experience in establishing districts and authorities and would hope to utilize that expertise in a policy shaping role, if elected to city council.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

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My position is that the city is on a better and more productive track in addressing safety and security issues of the downtown. There is more to do in coordination w church groups and other non profits but I believe the city is on a more coordinated and aligned track. I would do everything I could to see that resources align with goals and outcomes for the benefit of our businesses' needed. It's critically important to our economic recovery is how I see it.

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I was once a part of a family-owned business in downtown Boulder - People Productions was owned by Brad Gilbert for over 25 years and we met, married and had a son when I worked in the city manager's office. Brad sold the business to Don Poe in 2017 when our son finished high school at Boulder High. (Brad died of a dementia disease in 2024.). So I personally have experienced the challenges of downtown businesses, and have a soft spot for all small businesses in downtown and the Hill. I will be your ally and supporter. I will commit to being accessible for conversations about any concerns and even if I'm not a liaison role, I would regularly show up for meetings and events in support of downtown and University Hill businesses.

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David Martus

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

David Martus

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

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I support the fundamental mission of a DDA, but the lack of detailed coordination with impacted agencies would have led me to vote no as well. With appropriate planning and communication among agencies and stakeholders, I support reconsidering a DDA.

In the meantime, there are steps we can take that do not require a new authority:

Reduce unnecessary permitting complexity & delays - lowering development costs and planning uncertainty

Improve cleanliness, lighting, and safety (extend police patrols); and

Close the roughly 25% occupancy-cost gap between downtown and other commercial areas, which is pricing out innovative "missing" concepts that could thrive here

We should understand what businesses will thrive in the downtown and Uni Hill areas that are not directly on Pearl Street Mall. For instance, what group or groups of consumers led to the circa 20% drop in sales tax collections downtown (ex., Pearl Street Mall).

The bigger issue is that after decades of being the first choice of new businesses, The City of Boulder now needs to compete vigorously with nearby cities that offer attractive location options.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

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Maximum: 200 words

Businesses should be able to expect a public safety presence to match their operating hours. Police patrols that end in the evening do not match the cadence of visitors downtown, especially on The Hill. Council should address the Police Department's staffing shortage and what will fill the gap.

On drug activity and disruptive behavior, I support strict enforcement of the ban on rough sleeping, ending service delivery in public parks, and prioritizing services for unhoused individuals with local ties. We should always balance compassion and enforcement. The latest city metrics show a multi-year improvement.

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Maximum: 200 words

I spent 25 years in institutional finance building consensus among people with different views, and I would bring that same approach to Council: listen first, be clear about facts and tradeoffs, and work toward practical agreement.

Concretely, I would make myself accessible and respond directly to outreach, not only at public hearings. I would push to involve the community earlier in the process. Too often it feels like Council has already settled on a direction/decision before staff presents three to five "options" to the community. Extensive public comment then occurs, and Council picks the middle option, sometimes with minor tweaks — an illusion of choice rather than real input. Let's get community input earlier in the process to help us build the short list of options up front.

I will bring financial acumen that complements the existing council makeup, paired with a common-sense, pragmatic approach to deliver policy that makes sense to the business community.

AI Disclosure *

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☒ Yes

☐ No

AI Use Disclosure

Please briefly describe how AI was used in developing or editing your responses.

AI was used in the following ways:

- * For my answers to reflect the body of work from previous questionnaires, my website, and my platform in order to be consistent.
- * For initial research that is personally confirmed.
- * For clarity, spelling, and grammar

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Jamillah Richmonod

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Email *

jamillahanewvoice@gmail.com

Candidate Name *

Jamillah Richmonod

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

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Maximum: 200 words

I support the reconsideration of the DDA, it was not a plan without creativity, it was a plan that lacked community engagement, transparency and buy in. I believe, we can with time design a framework that the city won't just vote for, but champion and be proud of.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

I think all community members should expect to feel safe from harm and that they can rely on city governance to help support that. I would do this through working with my fellow council members to ensure that we are utilizing existing resources such as CIRT and reevaluating opportunities to create more non-police response teams that are qualified to provide response to people experiencing mental health and substance use disorders. These resources are vital to providing the mental health services that some of our community members need, and they are not utilized to their full capacity. Police are not equipped to address mental health and substance use disorder in ways that create lasting impact and serve public needs so it is necessary that we have all three resources at our disposal and that these departments are working collaboratively to address concerns related to safety. It would also benefit the city to ensure that we have satellite sites where mental health and substance use professionals are operating out of various areas to ensure timely response to concerns raised by patrons and businesses as well as having a regular presence in areas of concern.

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Maximum: 200 words

As the co-founder of a non-profit in Boulder, and previous owner of a for profit business and single parent with a job it is important to me that there is meaningful engagement between sectors, that allow for business owners and employees alike to have a voice. As someone who believes in direct communication; I do not, nor have I ever presumed to tone police and silence communication provided it does not involve threats of harm. I plan to be available, that means showing up regularly as someone that supports Boulder resident owned businesses with my dollars, attending meetings, and inviting dialog through hosting office hours and discussions on the issues that matter to the community.

AI Disclosure

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☐ Yes

☒ No

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Jill Adler Grano

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Email *

jill@jillgrano.com

Candidate Name *

Jill Adler Grano

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

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Boulder definitely needs a strategy to revitalize downtown and the Hill. I want to fill vacant spaces, support locally owned businesses, and keep more of the money generated here in our community. In my view, the first step should be regulatory reform. Small-business owners have told the city for decades that it is too difficult to open and operate a business in Boulder. The DDA discussion jumped directly to "give us more money" without first addressing those structural barriers. That is one reason I did not support the proposal as presented. Another is that outreach came far too late, and too few stakeholders were at the table. I remain open to a revised proposal if there is: 1. More robust stakeholder engagement, 2. More realistic financial assumptions, 3. A clearer plan for what we want to accomplish. With or without a DDA, we should: 1. Rewrite Title 9 (streamline review, enable adaptive reuse, and stop treating temporary uses as permanent), 2. Keep downtown and the Hill clean, safe, and welcoming, 3. Address vacancy. My research found that more than 35% of units in five major luxury condo & townhome developments were second homes. We should use every tool possible to bring [REDACTED].

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

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What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Businesses need to feel confident that customers (and employees) can enjoy downtown and the Hill safely, and that the city will respond (reliably) to open drug use and other dangerous or illegal behavior. To that end, I support: 1. Fully implementing the Reimagine Policing Plan, including staffing the department to the levels identified in that plan, 2. More competitive pay to recruit and retain officers, 3. Consistent foot and bike patrols (on which officers build relationships with businesses and residents on their route), 4. A clear reporting process, including tracking response times and outcomes so Council knows whether what we are doing is actually working. // I also believe that our responses should match the situation. For example, a mental health crises calls for a co-response team; addiction calls for treatment; and repeat offenses calls for enforcement and follow-through. I would be more inclined to support a DDA if it helped fund safety efforts. I have been (and remain) concerned that if TIF captures new revenue - while growth increases demand for police, fire, and maintenance - we will effectively cripple our own efforts by crippling the very services that will help revitalize downtown and the Hill.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

Decisions made by City Council can have significant financial and operational impacts on local businesses. Business owners and employees often participate in public meetings, surveys, working groups and other engagement opportunities, yet there can be frustration when they feel their input has not meaningfully influenced the final decision.

If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

Maximum: 200 words

People and businesses not feeling heard is the number one thing I hear on the campaign trail. I do not blame this council, but I do believe that there has been a breakdown in stakeholder engagement and response to community concerns. I do not know exactly where or why the breakdown has occurred, but I have some theories, and am determined to work on it. If elected, I plan to hold regular office hours and seek out input from business owners, property owners, and labor before major decisions are made (or take shape). For proposals with significant business impacts, I will strive to understand the will of the business owners, financial impacts, unintended consequences, and possible alternatives. I also think that we need to do a better job of checking back after we adopt a policy or plan to understand what is working and what needs adjustment. If we disagree, I will say so directly, explain my reasoning, and work to identify where there is room to find common ground. I cannot promise every business and property owner their preferred outcome. I can promise that I will take their input seriously and explain how they helped shape my decision-making.

AI Disclosure *

Did you use an artificial intelligence tool in developing or editing any portion of your responses?

☐ Yes

☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

Please briefly describe how AI was used in developing or editing your responses.

Final Acknowledgement

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Lynn Segal

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

lynnsegal7@hotmail.com

Candidate Name *

lynn segal

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

Let the developer pay. No on DDA, the Deeper Debt for All . Recruit and invest in hardware stores and services residents actually use in the PSM. Gather the public to aggregate the intellectual capital to organize to get it done. Get THEM invested. TIF raises the rent so local small businesses can't compete. They finance on future revenue, more loans. Sundance plus more college students buy the stuff. They write it off as losses and the rents go up driving up the land value and in a concentrated area. It depletes money to the local schools. We need to organize folks to extract intellectual capital and revolutionize the corrupt system. We need a progressive city manager. A minority of a hundred fifty people are infecting the entire system. Question the premise that we need this economic growth. It's bringing everyone into debt which is no longer feasible with the war and national debt. Get the big investors to pay up and stop spending money on bad investments City needs to be as frugal as a resident.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

The answer corresponds to the last question's answer. The public should expect to be safe and welcomed and organized members of the community need to be involved as more than complainers. The city should utilize its base. Fire Steve Redfearn, engage more restorative justice and community policing and let the developers pay rather than giving them more handouts at Planning Board. Decreasing wealth inequity will go far towards solving this homeless issue, which is very expensive.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

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If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

Maximum: 200 words

How to engage? The same as I would with anyone. Connect. I've always been accessible 24/7, no change. Disagreement is especially beneficial. The business community has too much of a non productive undependable voice, and no councilor is going to correct that, exclusive of an open and collaborative portal. I will set up and organize WITH the residents, not at them. I will authentically connect at the root causes and work up, gather the community opposition and have open forums of debate that will deliver to both sides. I will follow the philosophy of like Melat Kiros, Zorhan Mamdani and Mohsen Mahdawi and consider the impact of war on the locality with impending long standing inflation reaching critical mass. We need to spend on our community.

AI Disclosure *

Did you use an artificial intelligence tool in developing or editing any portion of your responses?

☐ Yes

☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

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Final Acknowledgement

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Rachel Rose Isaacson

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

Rachel Rose Isaacson

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

Boulder would benefit from a coordinated, long-term strategy to strengthen Downtown, University Hill, and the Civic Area. Their vitality supports local jobs, small businesses, arts and culture, and the sales-tax revenues that fund essential city services.

I support reconsidering a DDA with a clearer investment strategy, broader community engagement, and transparent governance. Small businesses, workers, residents, and property owners should meaningfully shape its priorities. Before committing future tax revenues, we should evaluate the effects on citywide services and establish measurable public benefits, public reporting, and accountability.

With or without a DDA, I strongly support streamlined permitting and adaptive reuse of vacant buildings, a single navigation point for businesses seeking city assistance, targeted grants and technical support for independent businesses, and partnerships that activate empty storefronts with local entrepreneurs and artists.

We should also expand attainable housing near these districts, improve transit and safe walking and biking connections, and invest in lighting, cleanliness, infrastructure maintenance, and welcoming public spaces. City-owned properties and public-private partnerships can help advance these goals.

My priority is an economically resilient Boulder where commercial districts thrive, workers can afford to remain, and public investments deliver lasting community benefits across all three districts and beyond.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Businesses should expect timely responses to threats, violence, theft, and illegal drug activity, accessible sidewalks and entrances, maintained public spaces, and clear communication about how to obtain help. Employees, customers, visitors, and unhoused residents all deserve and benefit from safe spaces.

I support implementing the Reimagine Policing Plan and maintaining police staffing sufficient to meet community needs, alongside expanding access to behavioral health professionals and crisis response. Responses should match the situation. Emergencies require prompt intervention, while mental health or substance use crises often require specialized care.

The City should enforce rules against harmful conduct consistently and fairly, with attention to behavior rather than housing status. Poverty and homelessness should not themselves be treated as threats.

I would support coordinated outreach, accessible treatment, managed public restrooms, safe disposal of needles, and shelter options available around the clock. Better lighting, cleanliness, and maintenance can also make commercial districts more welcoming.

Businesses need a reliable point of contact and coordination among police, outreach teams, service providers, and district organizations. I would be interested in tracking response times, recurring incidents, and outcomes, and adjust strategies based on data.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

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Maximum: 200 words

I would maintain regular office hours and make myself available for contact with our business community. You deserve to feel heard and have your needs acknowledged. As someone who works for a small independent business in Boulder, I know firsthand how deeply council decisions impact our community and those who depend on our local industries.

As council makes decisions that effect the lives of our local business community, we need to get clear about financial and operational impacts and examine how proposals affect businesses of different sizes. My goal, all in all, is to take real consideration to the diverse impacts policies can have on all stakeholders and do the real work of listening so we can successfully co-create win-win-win solutions and minimize unforeseen consequences and harm.

AI Disclosure *

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☐ Yes

☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

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Ryan Jamieson

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

Ryan Jamieson

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

I think the DDA is the right tool for the job from a financial standpoint, but I also think that the city needs to overhaul much of the municipal code that makes doing business in Boulder outrageously expensive and more complex than it needs to be. The DDA creates a virtuous cycle, investing in our core commercial districts to make them more attractive to consumers, thereby drawing more money into the city overall via sales and use taxes. Coupled with greater flexibility from a revised code and a set of simplified permitting processes atop it, the money accrued can improve the infrastructure and diversify the uses of buildings in both areas to draw even more people to our downtown and the Hill. For me the case is clear: investing in downtown and the Hill with a proven tool like a DDA is a no-brainer. If it didn't work as advertised, other cities on the front range would be vocal about it, not renewing them.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

I think it's entirely reasonable for businesses anywhere in Boulder to expect the city to enforce existing laws related to public safety. It's city government 101. My goal on council will be alignment between the stakeholders in the criminal justice process to facilitate real change in what we're seeing on the ground today. That means BPD, County Sheriff's Department, service providers like All Roads, aid groups like Harvest of Hope and Circle of Love, and the Municipal Courts all on the same page to what our residents expect from the city: clean, safe streets and parks where people, housed and unhoused, feel safe. Like any other city we have a homeless population, but it's not a monolithic bloc and we do a disservice to the most vulnerable among us by not directly addressing criminal elements in our city that prey upon them and disrupt our public spaces. A safer city is better for businesses, better for our homeless that have simply fallen on hard times, and better for the students and families that want to use our parks and walk down Pearl without fear of being accosted.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

Decisions made by City Council can have significant financial and operational impacts on local businesses. Business owners and employees often participate in public meetings, surveys, working groups and other engagement opportunities, yet there can be frustration when they feel their input has not meaningfully influenced the final decision.

If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

Maximum: 200 words

In my time in corporate spaces, I found regular meetings with key constituencies was really the simplest way to ensure that everyone was aware of what was underway and what was coming down the pipe. I'd welcome the same opportunity with the business community. Like all of us, I have a full calendar, but a regular cadence makes it easier to get time face to face to discuss what's happening. Clear communication about possible impacts to businesses as part of ongoing city work is also a must: nobody likes surprises, and it's better for possibly impacted parties to know as far ahead of time as possible to provide input, discuss impacts, and help figure out a way forward for everyone. I can't commit to answering every email I get or every text I receive, but I can promise that I'll do my best to communicate meaningfully with impacted parties to seek the best outcome for everyone as we do the city's work.

AI Disclosure *

Did you use an artificial intelligence tool in developing or editing any portion of your responses?

☐ Yes

☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

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Final Acknowledgement

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Ryan Schuchard

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

ryan@ryanwithboulder.com

Candidate Name *

Ryan Schuchard

Office Sought *

☐ Mayor

☒ Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

Need: Boulder's downtown challenges reflect a nationwide pattern of chronic vacancies and low investment, aging buildings and infrastructure draining city resources, and high costs of living, on top of lacking healthcare and childcare that squeeze residents and business owners alike. Boulder's high cost of land and heavy reliance on sales tax and dedicated funds add structural weakness and limit DDA negotiating space. So yes, we need a multifaceted approach to adapt Boulder to a world it wasn't built for.

DDA: I loved the win-win a DDA could offer, but I voted no on August 6 because it would have affected citywide dedicated funds without clear enough policy or community buy-in, and would have left the decision to fewer than 2,500 district voters. A workable deal may exist, but DDA proponents need to identify deal points and test agreement with affected stakeholders, especially on financing, before I'd support restarting a city-led process.

Alternatives: Ending destructive power outages, an evidence-based plan to fill vacancies, a restaurant vitality effort, Title 9 reform with attention to live-work-play neighborhoods and value-per-acre frameworks, a fee reasonableness review, activation including common consumption, public restrooms and drinking fountains, a transit circulator, easier paths to worker cooperatives, and [REDACTED]

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Expectations: Businesses can reasonably expect the City to do three things. First, place high value on a people-centered urban environment and public realm, with safe, clean, welcoming urban neighborhoods, crucial for business and so much else, including an equitable, sustainable town. Second, commit to economic strategies that raise the tide for everyone, lifting businesses and the whole community together, balancing the many interests and claims on the City. Third, in dealing with dysfunctions like homelessness, crime, and disorder, focus on evidence-based, systems approaches that address root causes, working with regional partners and the state. One example is creating places for people to go and services they need rather than leaning too heavily on enforcement in their absence, which can dangerously drive encampments into open space.

Approaches: I've supported development and am now supporting implementation of the City's new homelessness strategy and day center, while advocating for better regional and state services. I'm working to strengthen the City financially so there is more to go around. I champion urbanism that is secure by design, co-architecting council's priority on bicycle security with Councilmember Tara Winer. I continue to learn and would love to hear more from DBP voices to strengthen my approaches.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

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Maximum: 200 words

My engagement: I hold open office hours downtown every Thursday morning at the Main Library cafe, no appointment needed. This is a place where I have learned a lot about the community's needs and developed new focus areas in response, like pressing for a much stronger customer service approach, protection from wildfire, and protection from coal ash. Sometimes people come to me with an objection of sorts, but I have almost always found common ground and productive paths together. I bring an open mind with an attitude of wanting to say "yes" and figure out "what it would take." I read every email and work to be responsive.

My practices: I have evolved to try to focus early in engagements on the success factors for approval rather than exploring blindly, so the procedural path is as clear as possible and we are careful with people's valuable time. When I disagree, I try to say so plainly and explain why. I'm working to institutionalize this in the city by pressing for a cross-departmental customer service hub. The Boulder business community deserves great city services at a great value.

AI Disclosure *

Did you use an artificial intelligence tool in developing or editing any portion of your responses?

☒ Yes

☐ No

AI Use Disclosure

Please briefly describe how AI was used in developing or editing your responses.

Research and copyediting. The ideas and first drafts are from me.

Final Acknowledgement

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Sam Fuqua

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

Sam Fuqua

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

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Maximum: 200 words

I am open to reconsidering the DDA because there is some evidence of its effectiveness in strengthening downtowns elsewhere. But there is significant opposition to using this tool, in part, due to the capture of some voter-approved tax revenue designated for other purposes. We need to find a way to genuinely engage opponents in any reconsideration.

I support building more affordable housing in the downtown area. More people living downtown—including the workers who keep downtown going—means more potential customers for downtown businesses and probably improves worker retention.

City promotion and facilitation of events, festivals and pop-up shops should be a priority. As should making it easier to re-configure retail and office spaces for other uses.

Commercial land trusts may also offer a partial solution. For example, the Denver nonprofit Urban Land Conservancy uses land banking and land trusts to develop and maintain permanently affordable residential and commercial real estate. Could we identify one or two downtown buildings and work with the right partners to create a commercial land trust offering below market office and retail? City-owned buildings would be the first place I'd look.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Businesses should expect the City to enforce ordinances and preserve public safety in all commercial and residential districts but we should target our resources where we have the biggest challenges, including Downtown and on The Hill . I support the recommendations in the city's Reimagine Policing plan, including officers spending more time out in the community (and out of their vehicles) and more focus on crime prevention. I support the staffing goals in the plan, including hiring additional officers.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

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Maximum: 200 words

I am committed not only to making myself available to meet with business owners on a regular basis, but also to proactively seeking them out to listen to their input, ask questions (that probably lead to more questions), explain my positions and also sometimes change my mind based on new information.

Small businesses play such a critical role in Boulder that they should expect council members to be partners in making it easy and sustainable to operate. But there are almost always competing community perspectives and needs. My eight years on the school board taught me that although clear and on-going communication with the community does not always lead to everyone's preferred outcome, it is essential to building trust.

AI Disclosure *

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☒ No

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Scott Rendleman

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

scott@rendleman4boulder.com

Candidate Name *

Scott Rendleman

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

I support reconsideration of the DDA. Despite serious concerns about making a 30-year commitment to a tax-increment financing district, Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area need a reliable source of funding for both cosmetic and structural improvements. I see these areas of Boulder as icons of our community, and the revenue generated by this tax would do more than enhance downtown beautification. I see the DDA as an opportunity to level the playing field for people who want to start and grow businesses in Boulder. By providing a funding mechanism for small businesses to get their start or funding a short-term loan to an established Boulder business looking to grow its business in Boulder, the DDA could help drive the revitalization that other efforts haven't been able to deliver. At the same time, there are legitimate concerns related to oversight, and I would insist on City Council's authority to appoint and remove members of the DDA board.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Boulder businesses rightfully expect commercial districts to remain safe and clean. More than beautification, our businesses should expect the Boulder police department to be visible and present to enforce the laws and provide protection. On the other hand, not every crisis requires police. At times, Boulder's social services should intervene when a person is experiencing the effects of addiction or a mental health illness. Having a person yell at or harass passersby infringes on the rights of people to be downtown. These types of episodes require intervention. For example, it would be appropriate for a social services worker to approach an individual experiencing auditory hallucinations to redirect that individual away from downtown to an appropriate mental health treatment facility. Another specific approach would involve having additional police patrol on foot and having social workers present throughout the downtown area during its busiest times. Having a visible presence, being able to prevent predictable attacks before they happen and responding to emergencies does not turn Boulder into a police state. Another specific approach is to have trash and debris promptly cleaned daily; no one should encounter leftover syringes and trash.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

Decisions made by City Council can have significant financial and operational impacts on local businesses. Business owners and employees often participate in public meetings, surveys, working groups and other engagement opportunities, yet there can be frustration when they feel their input has not meaningfully influenced the final decision.

If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

Maximum: 200 words

So much of the Boulder community feels that City Council is not listening to its concerns, and it's one of the reasons I'm running this year. In this campaign, I have been impressed with how many good ideas come from people and business owners who are trying to build a life in Boulder. I consider Boulder's business community to be an integral partner in the city's success. One of my campaign pledges is to talk with, email, text and town hall with our voters and constituents about the city policies affecting them. My close listening won't stop when I'm in office. I will put in the time and energy to show up for Boulder's business community in its regular meetings or on an invitation, to listen genuinely to its concerns, ask questions on points I may not understand, and tell you the factors that are driving my thinking on policy. I will try to build consensus where it exists, and when we disagree, I'll remain open-minded and talk about our points of disagreement respectfully, like I did as a civil trial lawyer for over 30 years.

AI Disclosure *

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☐ Yes

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Taishya Adams

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

Taishya Adams

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

Do you believe Boulder needs a significant new strategy or investment tool to strengthen these commercial districts? If you support reconsideration of a DDA, explain why. If you do not, what specific alternative tools, investments or strategies would you support to spur economic development and ensure the long-term economic vitality of these areas?

Maximum: 200 words

The City of Boulder is in the midst of an polycrisis where climate chaos, geopolitical strife, and economic downturn will require new strategy and investment tools. Though DDA's have been successful in other cities, a DDA will do little to address unprecedented landscape we are in now.

Why? Because the DDA is based on property and sales tax. Property taxes continue to raise leaving people 'house rich and cash poor.' Sales tax is also declining. Not to mention the impact to restricted funds that voters would not be allowed to vote upon for the DDA formation. The City must innovate by co-developing new tools, investments and strategies to meet this moment not only to weather the short term catastrophe but support long-term economic vitality.

Commercial vacancy tax for egregious empty storefronts of over 10 years is a start. Revisiting permitting and removing bureaucratic barriers is another. City of Boulder must consider ways to own energy infrastructure and better leverage agricultural portfolio. We must increase housing options downtown as well. Perhaps the city can explore municipally owned subsidized housing so working families and people can live downtown on 2nd floors.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

As Mayor, I continue to be committed to public safety for all including businesses. This means staffing officers on the streets not supervisors in offices. I also will continue to advocate for regular reporting at city meetings not just dashboards online. We must invest in boots on the ground as well as more downtown evening activation. We also must invest in the evidenced based prevention measures that work in collaboration with our Boulder cities and the county.

The City of Boulder cannot continue the lions share of homelessness response and support. Another pathway is to collaborate with the county and surrounding cities for more shelters and day centers outside of the City of Boulder.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

Decisions made by City Council can have significant financial and operational impacts on local businesses. Business owners and employees often participate in public meetings, surveys, working groups and other engagement opportunities, yet there can be frustration when they feel their input has not meaningfully influenced the final decision.

If elected, how will you personally engage with Boulder's business community? What can business owners expect from you in terms of accessibility, communication and listening, particularly if you disagree with them? Please describe the specific practices or commitments you would make to ensure the business community has an ongoing and meaningful voice in City decision-making.

Maximum: 200 words

As Mayor, I would host monthly business town hall and meetings in collaboration with the Boulder Chamber, Latino Chamber of Boulder, Downtown Partnerships, and Visit Boulder. Though these groups have city councilmembers serving on their boards, there is zero whole council reporting or feedback. This lack of transparency and collaboration allows for silos that makes us lean too heavily on public engagement versus collective activation.

We need regular communications and data on impacts from current city policy and co-creation of future policies. Together we must mitigate the local-global economic headwinds and create pathways for long term sustainability. I would also look for more business participation on the city's boards and commissions.

AI Disclosure *

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☐ Yes

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Tara Winer

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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Email *

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Candidate Name *

Tara Winer

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

The recent proposal to create a Downtown Development Authority was intended to provide a long-term tool for investment and economic development in Downtown Boulder, University Hill and the Civic Area. While the proposal did not advance to voters this year, the economic challenges that prompted the discussion remain.

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Maximum: 200 words

Yes, we do need a new tool to strengthen our commercial districts. That is why I support reconsideration of DDA 2.0. I did my own homework and called mayors and council members in cities that had formed one, and everyone loves their DDA. Denver used TIF to turn Union Station into one of the city's most successful revitalizations. Fort Collins' DDA helped turn its mediocre downtown into a successful one. Lafayette focused its DDA on helping small businesses with matching grants, which made a huge impact. TIF financing is a great way to bring forth new and exciting projects and public-private partnerships, keep streets clean, and help small businesses.

DDA 2.0 does need to bring all the naysayers on board, like the Open Space constituency and the Transportation advocates. We also need better outreach to the Library Trustees and the County Commissioners. Having buy-in from most of the Boulder community will be helpful for the success of the DDA.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

Maximum: 200 words

Businesses should be able to expect commercial districts that are inviting, safe, well-landscaped, and as clean as a city can reasonably keep them. That is why we have downtown ambassadors, urban rangers, and BPD. However, they have to cover a large area. This is why partnering with businesses matters: they are often the first to notice when a block needs extra attention, and they can flag it for the city. Still, cities only have so much money and so much capacity, since they are responsible for the entire city, not just one commercial district. That is part of why I appreciate what the DBP and the BID already do, and why I think a DDA would help. We would have more resources.

When it comes to drug use and disruptive behavior, CO state law is limited. There is no jail time unless it's a serious crime. Also, CO has limited resources for mental health disorders and drug addiction. And, the Boulder County jail is full, except for serious offenders. That is why we need to keep spaces activated and continue to work together with who we have to keep Boulder safe and clean.

3. Communication & Engagement with the Business Community

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Maximum: 200 words

If you know me at all, you know how accessible I am. I am always available to listen and to try to solve problems that are within my purview. I give out my cell phone number to all constituents, including the business community. It is 609-707-8385. On the larger problems that need larger-scale solutions, I need to get four other council members to agree with me for any meaningful change. That is why it is important for the business community to continue to reach out to all council members and to take the time to create allies, of which I am one. Let's not give up!

AI Disclosure *

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☒ Yes

☐ No

AI Use Disclosure

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First, I put my ideas down in my own words. Then I asked Claude to fix my grammar and sentence structure. They I asked Claude how many words each of my responses were. They I rewrote anything that didn't sound like me and removed those annoying em-dashes.

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Tina Marquis

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Email *

tinaforboulder@gmail.com

Candidate Name *

Tina Marquis

Office Sought *



Mayor



Council Member

1. Economic Vitality: Tools to Spur Economic Vitality

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Maximum: 200 words

I made extensive comments about the DDA at the council meeting when I voted against the DDA. The need to spur economic development still exists. If we decide to pursue a DDA again, there needs to be proactive engagement with the special taxing districts and boards related to dedicated funds. During this process, we need to better define the pain points and benefits of a DDA, provide a clearer vision of what the DDA will do, and explain why other tools and the city aren't able to create the outcomes we want.

Simultaneously, we need to make sure Sundance is a success. While it is only two weeks long, the city will benefit all year as we grow our creative economy. In addition, we can use our learnings from Sundance to support other large scale events, bringing new visitors to Boulder. Separately, we are opening up the RFP for the East bookend redevelopment along with the permanent farmer's market, transforming and activating this area. City council and the business community are a part of this revitalization project, particularly how it can complement, not compete, with the Downtown and the Hill.

2. Public Safety & the Business Environment

Boulder businesses continue to raise concerns about public safety, illegal drug activity and disruptive behaviors in public spaces. These issues can affect employees, customers, visitors and the day-to-day ability of businesses to operate successfully.

What do you believe businesses should reasonably expect from the City when it comes to maintaining safe and welcoming commercial districts? What specific actions or approaches would you support to address these concerns while balancing the needs and rights of everyone in our community?

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When I first ran three years ago, public safety was perhaps the biggest issue during the campaign. Just last month, we received promising data from our July point-in-time count, showing the largest decrease in unsheltered homeless since 2023. We are making progress on public safety and the downtown experience but need to keep up our work. Specifically, we need to continue to implement the priorities identified in the Clutch report on homelessness, which balance caring for people who are experiencing hardship while making our public spaces more welcoming. I specifically have asked for more information during this budgeting cycle about the investment we are making in the homelessness priorities as well as the re-imagine policing plan. I also am supporting the continued allocation of funding to the Downtown Ambassador program. Finally, our city council continues to advocate to the County and the state for more funding and resources to help people with issues around mental health and addiction.

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Maximum: 200 words

In general, I try to be accessible to all constituents through email, phone or in-person meetings, though recognize there are times when I cannot respond to all requests in a short window. After the DDA vote I made, which disappointed many in the downtown and Hill communities, I have connected with a handful of people interested in talking about how to move forward. I also meet with John Tayer regularly to keep up to date with concerns in the business community. I also meet regularly with members of the development community to understand the impact of our permitting and review timelines to commercial projects, both downtown and throughout the city. I intend to maintain these open lines of communication.

AI Disclosure *

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