

Aquiles La Grave

2026 Mayoral and City Council Candidate Questions

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

In addition to the questions you will be asked during the Roundtable, the Downtown Boulder Partnership is asking each candidate to provide written responses to three questions important to the Downtown Boulder and University Hill business communities.

DEADLINE: Monday, September 21, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

Responses are limited to **200 words per question**.

Your responses will be reproduced as submitted and distributed to attendees at the Candidate Roundtable. They may also be shared electronically with the broader Downtown Boulder and University Hill business communities.

Please review your responses carefully before submitting. Downtown Boulder Partnership will not edit candidate responses for content, grammar or length. Responses exceeding the 200-word limit may be truncated at 200 words.

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 *

aquiles@boulder.vote

Candidate Name *

Aquiles La Grave

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

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.

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

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

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

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?

☐ Yes

☒ No

AI Use Disclosure

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

Final Acknowledgement

I have reviewed my responses and understand that they may be reproduced and distributed as submitted. I understand that responses are limited to 200 words per question and that Downtown Boulder Partnership may truncate responses that exceed the stated word limit. I understand that my responses need to be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, September 21, 2026 to be included in the packet that will be handed out to attendees and posted on the Downtown Boulder Partnership website.

By checking the box below, I confirm that I have read and agree to the Final Acknowledgment above. *

☒ Confirm

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