

# Benita Duran

# 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 \*

benita4boulder@benitaduran.com

Candidate Name \*

Benita Duran

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

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

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

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.

### 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

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.

#### 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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