

Rachel Rose Isaacson

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 *

contact@RachelRose4Boulder.com

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

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 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 *

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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