

Ryan Schuchard

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 *

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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

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

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

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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