2026 PLAN-Boulder County Candidate Questionnaire

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Candidate for Mayor of Boulder

1. Open Space Maintenance

Boulder’s open space is one of the things that makes Boulder special, and maintaining what we already have should be a high priority. A $30 million maintenance backlog should not be allowed to quietly grow until taxpayers are eventually presented with another enormous bill.

Before looking for a new tax, I would first identify where the existing Open Space and Mountain Parks budget is going, prioritize critical trail maintenance, and look for savings elsewhere in the city budget. Going forward, I would support a more disciplined maintenance schedule with publicly reported condition assessments so residents can see whether we are keeping up with our infrastructure before a backlog becomes a crisis.

2. Wildfire Mitigation Funding

Wildfire mitigation is a core public-safety responsibility in Boulder. Open Space and Mountain Parks should fund mitigation directly related to the land it manages, but wildfire does not respect departmental boundaries. The broader burden should be shared across the city rather than forcing OSMP to absorb costs that properly belong to citywide public safety.

I have proposed generating additional revenue from large corporate rental portfolios and directing a portion of that money toward wildfire prevention. I would rather ask large companies profiting heavily from Boulder’s housing market to contribute more before asking ordinary Boulder residents for another tax increase.

3. Wildfire Mitigation Priorities

I would prioritize three things: strategic fuels reduction in the highest-risk areas, defensible-space and home-hardening efforts in vulnerable neighborhoods, and maintaining the personnel and equipment necessary to respond quickly when fires occur.

Boulder should use data to determine where intervention will have the greatest impact rather than trying to treat every acre equally. The city, OSMP, Boulder Fire-Rescue and property owners all have responsibilities here. I would also dedicate part of the additional revenue from my proposed tiered dwelling-unit excise tax on large corporate rental portfolios toward wildfire prevention.

4. Water Supply and Development

Boulder has spent decades building a strong water system, but I don't think that gives us permission to treat water as unlimited.

Yes, development should be carefully matched with our ability to provide water reliably over the long term, particularly as drought and climate conditions become less predictable. I support creating more housing and making Boulder more affordable, but growth has to make sense for the people who actually live here and for the physical limits of the city.

My approach to development is not “growth at all costs” or “no growth at all.” We should ask whether a proposal makes Boulder more affordable, whether the infrastructure can support it, and whether it preserves the things that make people want to live here in the first place.

5. Council vs. City Manager and Staff

Council's job is to decide what the city should accomplish. The City Manager and professional staff should determine how to administer those policies effectively.

But delegation cannot become a lack of accountability. Council sets policy, approves the budget, asks difficult questions and evaluates whether the results residents were promised are actually being delivered. The City Manager runs day-to-day operations and manages staff.

I don't want councilmembers micromanaging city employees, but I also don't believe elected officials should simply defer to staff because an issue is complicated. Ultimately, voters elect us to make decisions and hold the organization accountable.

6. Boards and Commissions

I would look for competence, independence, relevant experience and a genuine willingness to listen to people who disagree with them.

Boards and commissions should not become ideological echo chambers. Boulder benefits when people with different backgrounds and perspectives are actually in the room.

Their recommendations should carry substantial weight because members spend considerable time studying issues, but they are advisory bodies. Council still has the responsibility to evaluate their recommendations, explain its reasoning and make the final decision.

7. City Budget

The budget is one of Council's most important responsibilities because it is where political promises become actual priorities.

I want Boulder to become much more focused on measurable outcomes. Before asking residents for more money, we should be able to explain what we currently spend, what residents receive for that spending and whether programs are producing the results they were created to produce.

I would push for clearer public reporting, stronger performance metrics and greater prioritization of basic city responsibilities: public safety, infrastructure, wildfire prevention, open space maintenance and the services residents use every day.

8. Performance Auditor

Yes. I support establishing an independent Performance Auditor and Audit Committee reporting to City Council, and I would make it a high priority for 2027.

This fits directly with one of the central ideas of my campaign: before Boulder asks taxpayers for hundreds of millions of dollars more, we should know exactly what we're paying for.

A financial audit can tell us whether money was accounted for correctly. A performance audit asks the equally important question of whether taxpayers are getting good results for that money. Boulder should be willing to ask both.

9. $400 Million Recreation and Safety Bond

I do not support the bond as currently proposed.

The city has identified hundreds of millions of dollars in deferred maintenance, but before Boulder asks taxpayers to write what is effectively a $400 million check — with substantially more ultimately repaid through the bond issuance — residents deserve a clear, independently scrutinized accounting of exactly what they are buying and why these maintenance obligations accumulated in the first place.

I am not opposed to investing in recreation centers, police and fire facilities. Those are important public assets. I am opposed to treating a massive new debt authorization as the first solution before thoroughly auditing the underlying costs, prioritizing projects and examining alternatives.

If an independent review demonstrates that particular projects are necessary and that debt is the most responsible way to fund them, then make that case to voters with the numbers attached. Accountability should come before the check.

10. Public Safety

People should be able to walk downtown, use our parks and trails, operate a business and live in their neighborhoods without feeling unsafe.

I would prioritize adequately staffing police and fire services, improving our response to repeat criminal behavior and making sure behavioral-health and homelessness resources are focused on interventions that actually produce results.

At the same time, public safety cannot become an excuse for unlimited surveillance. I strongly oppose Boulder's use of private Flock cameras and warrantless location tracking. We can fund police, firefighters and effective public-safety tools without surrendering Fourth Amendment protections to private companies.

Safety and civil liberties are not mutually exclusive.

11. Downtown Boulder

Downtown has to feel safe, active and worth visiting.

I would focus on public safety and cleanliness, reducing unnecessary barriers for local businesses, speeding up permitting and making it easier for vacant commercial spaces to become productive again. I also want a stronger relationship between CU, Boulder's research institutions, entrepreneurs and downtown businesses.

We should judge economic-development programs by outcomes: Are storefronts occupied? Are local jobs being created? Are people spending time downtown?

Boulder should remain weird, independent and locally driven. We shouldn't solve downtown's problems by trying to turn it into another generic commercial district.

12. In-Commuters and Transportation

The fact that so many people work in Boulder but cannot afford to live here is both a transportation problem and an affordability problem.

We should improve regional transit, make bus service more practical for commuters and continue building safe bike and pedestrian connections where they make sense. Employers and neighboring communities should be partners in reducing single-occupancy commuting.

But transportation policy also has to acknowledge reality: many people still need to drive. I don't support trying to force people out of their cars by simply making driving more expensive or inconvenient before a realistic alternative exists.

The goal should be to make other options good enough that people choose them.

13. Role of the Mayor

Under Boulder's system, the mayor is still one vote on a nine-member council. I don't think the answer is pretending the mayor has executive powers that the Charter doesn't provide.

The mayor's additional power is leadership.

The mayor sets a tone, helps organize council around priorities, communicates those priorities to the public and can bring people who disagree into the same conversation. I would use that position to start with the outcome, not the faction. If somebody I disagree with has a good idea or amendment, I want it on the table.

Within the Charter, I would make the mayor's role more effective by creating clearer council priorities, pushing for measurable public goals and regularly communicating progress to residents. Boulder politics should be less about which side proposed something and more about whether it works.

14. City Manager and Mayor

The Mayor and City Manager should have a professional relationship built on clearly defined roles and accountability.

The City Manager runs the organization. The Mayor does not.

But the Mayor and Council are elected by the public to establish policy and priorities, approve the budget and evaluate the City Manager's performance. That means the relationship should involve both trust and scrutiny.

I would expect the City Manager to give Council accurate information, raise problems early and execute the policies Council adopts. In return, the Mayor should respect the Manager's responsibility to manage staff and city operations without political micromanagement.

The healthiest relationship is neither adversarial nor deferential. It is one where responsibilities are clear, questions are welcomed, results are measurable and everyone remembers that ultimately we work for the people of Boulder.