Taishya Adams

Open Space: 1. This fall, Boulder citizens are being asked to approve a $400 million bond issue to pay for backlogged maintenance on rec centers and fire/police facilities. Unaccounted for in this funding source is about a $30 million backlog of deferred maintenance of Open Space and Mountain Park trails. What priority would you place on addressing this backlog and where should the funds come from? Are there policies that should be passed to prevent future trail maintenance backlogs?	"Shall City of Boulder debt be increased up to $400,000,000, with a maximum repayment cost up to $650,000,000, and shall city taxes be increased up to $32,500,000 annually for the purpose of financing the construction, renovation, or replacement of community recreation, safety infrastructure, and other capital projects, such as:" I acknowledge that there are facilities that need to be repaired like the South Boulder Recreation Center and the two fire stations. I acknowledge that past councils and city staff did not allocate sufficient funds for deferred maintainance. I acknowledge that the current police station is falling apart. For these reasons, I initially supported the bond. However, after more community outreach and closer look as the 'such as' being proposed, I can not longer support this bond measure at this time. I believe there was not sufficient community outreach, direction, and approval. I believe this bond measure would exacerbate continued financial constraint on residential and commercial property owners. I also believe it will erode public trust as there has been no community member, family, or business owner that advocates for this bond measure. The other critical input for this decision is learning that the financial projections leaned solely on the 'current trends' scenerio for our water portfolio provided by the Water Department on July 2025 upon my request. There are four projections each with a 25% probability. Neither the 'stressed' or the 'severe' options were considered. I do recommend revising, updating the financial scenerios, and prioritizing the list for community consideration and discussion. We are in a polycrisis of epic measures. The time is now to root all our decisions in realities of today and tomorrow.
Open Space: 2. What level of wildfire mitigation funding should be the responsibility of Open Space and Mountain Parks?	We must break away from piecemeal climate resilience funding and build a comprehensive climate resilience response plan. This plan must include wildfire mitigation as well as evacuation, recovery, and possibility relocation. We know from wildlire and climate experts that mitigation alone will not be enough. We know more intense wildfires are on the horizon. So too is extreme heat that disproportionately affects the east side of our community. We know that more energy disruptions are on the horizon. We know that water constaints are on the increase. We know that the amount of funding available is not sufficient for the 3,000 homes in WUI one. We know that it will take 40 years to mitigate all the WUI homes with the current levels of funding. We

	know that this is not fast enough. We must build more resilience by buliding another public enterprise like our water utilities for renewable energy. This will help support declining sales and property tax revenue as well as federal funding withdraws. We also need to co-create a revolving loan fund in collaboration with local banks for private property owners to access low interest loans to accelerate home hardening.
Wildfire Mitigation: 3. Given our high risk from wildfires and limited resources, what 2 or 3 measures should Council prioritize in the city's code, staffing and financial resources, and the council bully pulpit ? Who should be responsible and where should the money come from?	We know that the amount of funding available is not sufficient for the 3,000 homes in WUI one. We know that it will take 40 years to mitigate all the WUI homes with the current levels of funding. We know that is not fast enough. We must build more resilience by buliding another public enterprise like our water utilities for renewable energy. This will help support declining sales and property tax revenue as well as federal funding withdraws. We also need to co-create a revolving loan fund in collaboration with local banks for private property owners to access low interest loans to accelerate home hardening. I would advocate that all homes in WUI I be required to begin wildfire hardening efforts withing 3 years. I would require wildfire hardening to obtain a rental license of any kind. I would also advocate not to authorize Area III for middle income housing. That area is right next to WUI II and has two dots of WUI II within its current area along with intense level of wildfire heat. Instead, I would advocate for the return of those lands to the Northern Arapaho and Northern Cheyenne, both of whom have expressed interest in returning to the unseeded ancestral homelands. These Tribes can offer demonstration sites for low impact sustainable housing.
Environment and Climate Change: 4. What is your understanding of the reliability of Boulder’s long term water supply? Do you view it as prudent to carefully match the demand for more development with the ability to provide water into the future? What concerns, if any, do you have about this?	As a former commission for Colorado Parks and Wildlife and graduate of the 5-month Water Education Colorado Water Fluency course, I have a strong understanding of Boulder's long term water supply. As Mayor, I will center that knowing as well as the many relationships gained to guide policy making and resource allocation. I asked and was approved for the Water Supply study session in 2025. This was a first in many years of piece meal policy making (e.g. water for landscaping) and was used to inform the BVCP update. It is critical that we match demand for more development with the water support as well as the state demographers population estimates. My concern continues to be that the staff uses 'current trends' for their development recommendations when we know there is only a 25% probability that that scenerio will occur. We also do not consider water supply in our finanical forecasting for sales tax revenue.

Governance: 5. How do you see your responsibility as a council member versus the responsibilities of the City Manager and city staff?	The City Manager and City Staff work at the pleasure of the City Council. Council members (and the mayor) in turn, work at the pleasure of our constituents. The City Manager is hired by the whole body of the council and can only be removed by the same. Yet our current council employee evaluation process is weak. An annual evaluation that purports to be 360 does not include any feedback from council boards and commissions as well as the public. In addition, there is no process to submit and hear complaints beyond the annual check in. There is no annual report of the findings whether strengths or growth areas. There are no council level report beyond verbal discussions with the two council representatives who implement the council employee evaluation. There is no mitigation of identified growth areas. This past year, I shared three critical areas whre the City Manager did not exceed expectations: (1) budget process which we all agreed would bring in council members sooner than previous years. Here we are with the same timeline as before. (2) the Boulder Police Oversight Panel policy recommednations has continued to get complaints current/former BPOP members as well as community members with several providing evidence of Independent Monitor lying and changes in policy without proper community engagement. (3) city investment portfolio which a community member provided evidence of several companies that break out existing policy on not investing in private prisons and fossil fuels. There are many other areas where our city manager has excelled but we cannot expect strong implementation without strong oversight. Trust cannot be built without transparency. City Manager decisions are insulated from direct public input and dissent most of the time. Under the current Municipal Code, the city manager can, for example and at will, create whole new departments with very little direct oversight. I recommend that we revisit and revise City Manager position description and oversight to allow more meaningful quarterly check ins, a true annual 360 degree review, and public reporting on key findings/remediation. There is more accountablity for minimum wage workers than there are for our highest paid employees.
Governance: 6. As a council member, what basic considerations will you apply to your appointments to city Boards and Commissions? And what value would you place on advice to the council from those boards and commissions?	I have served on nonprofit and state level boards and commissioners for decades. I also have served as a governance trainer on board structure, oversight, and evaluation for several national organizations. During that time, I learned and experienced approaches and practices that I use to inform decision making for the city's Boards and Commissions. I typically begin with the purpose of the specific board/commission to ensure that the skills needed are present. One lived and learned qualifications are

	satisfied, I then look to geographic considerations ensuring that there is geographic diversity. The next level is generational. We are stronger with viewpoints from older Boulderites as well as younger ones. Diversity of thought is also critical. We are not benefitted by echo chambers. Additional considerations include a variety of marginalized identifies including race/ethnicity and people with disabilities. The other critcal consideration is a different in socioeconomic experiences. Having people who have lived in permanently affordable housing makes for strong decisions by Boulder Housing Partners. As Mayor, I believe it is critical to cross pollinate and ensure that the city's boards and commissions are not soley serving as advisors to staff but also to the council directly. More interaction could look like bi-annual board/commission meetings, community townhalls, neighborhood assemblies. We have lots of ways to ensure that the community members who are appointed feel seen, valued, and heard beyond the planning board.
City Finances: 7. How do you see the Council's responsibility in setting and reviewing the budget? What changes in process or budget allocations you would actively pursue if you were elected and explain why?	It is the council's responsiility to set and reguarly manage the budget. I was hopeful that by adding a fiscal note last year, our council would have more financial information to inform decisions. That has not been the case. There has been no meeting with council about expectation, minimum requires, and evaluation of the fiscal note. There is minimual information about budget projections for critical departmental plans including the Climate Action Plan or the Arts Blueprint. A list of activites is not a plan. Plans should include goals, strategies, timelines, milestones, measure of success, and budget projections. As Mayor, I would actively pursue moving to a two year budget process as well as project level budget versus actuals in our staff memos.
City Finances: 8. A citizen group has developed a proposal for the city to hire a Performance Auditor (different than a financial auditor) plus a small supporting staff and an Audit Committee that would report to City Council, with funding in the 2027 budget? Do you support this proposal? Would you make it a high priority for 2027?	Good governance has been a central concern since arriving on Council. The city has no director of research and evaluation which has resulted in data splintered and spread out. Very difficult to make apples to apples comparisons. If a Performance Auditor were hired tomorrow most of their job would be to gather incomplete data from many parts of the city government for some time before they're even available to audit the performance of any programs. It's not that performance of city programs do not need to be audited, they do. I believe the issue is broader than one staff member and committee, there is a cultural transformation that needs occur about how we evaluate project and program performance. I used to work with the

	American Institutes for Reseach. While there, I served as a consultant to the Minnesota Department of Education. During that time, they were transitioning their entire accountability framework. Thankfully, they had a strong research and evaluation team that answered to the auditor and committees. Centralizing research and evaluation must go hand in hand with a city performance auditor. The citizens are correct to be concerned and I believe that with a revisit of the role and responsibilities of the City Manager, securing an independent auditor as a council employee is going to move us in the right direction but not alone.
City Finances: 9. Do you support the $400 million tax measure and associated bond issuance that will total $650 million, known as the Recreation and Safety Bond, to address deferred maintenance of seven city buildings that will be on the ballot in November? Why or why not? For incumbents. Has your position changed, and how?	The Municipal Building has horse hair insulation and the temperature control issues at the fleet maintenance shop are real. The fact that we have a state of the art e-fire truck and two fire stations falling apart is also true. All of these issues need to be address and I do believe that bonds are the way to get there. However, the current package does not meet the needs or approval of our community. We need to take more time to ensure that what has been identified is prioritized. We also need to add the budget projections in response to the escalating cost of construction, enviornmental realities and constraints. A lot of these measures are for worker safety and building efficiency but without thorough vetting and community approval, they will not meet our needs. Due to more extension community input and climate concerns, I have changed my position. The vehicle is right, the package is not.
Public Safety: 10. How do you view the city's current state of public safety? What 2 or 3 specific things do you think council needs to change?	Who's safety are we talking about? Our crime database shows that crime is down. Though we have seen an increase in drug use in public places and unhoused encampments. The best available science indicates that more police is not the answer. We know that treatment, permanently affordable housing, and meaningful employment lead to reductions in substance abuse and homelessness. Treatment > imprisonment. Verified results by national and international models demonstrate many strategies that work better than just utilizing law enforcement to penalize the citizenry. Locally, looking at Denver's Housing to Health project provides a working model (even if pre-current admin) of a public/private partnership that provided success for reducing homelessness. Mass surveilance (Flock, Axon) damages public trust and creates further division between law enforcement and the

	citizenry (and also has very tenuous success) and should be abandoned. Splintered and incomplete data for evaluation can also be highlighted here.
Business: 11.What is your view of the issues facing downtown and what would you advocate to address these issues?	Costs are high, for sure. Everyone is suffering that right now and our downtown businesses, especially the locally owned ones, are no exception to that. Commercial vacancies do not help especially those that have been empty for more than 5 years. We must pursue a commercial vacancy tax on those property owners who have empty store fronts. We need to do a deeper analysis to determine the number of years vacant. We also need to support commerical to residential transition. We need more people living and working downtown. In addition, we must identify more immediate relief (e.g. local, city driven food from city-owned farmland) for these businesses so our downtown doesn't lose the unique quality that makes it a destination. We do not need more national chains where the benefit leaves our community after the initial sales tax. We need moeny to circulate within out community.
Transportation: 12.What would you advocate for to address the huge number of in-commuters driving in to Boulder to access their jobs?	RTD Eco passes are relatively affordable and is one of the ways that CU Boulder reduces commuter traffic. Right now, we only provide Eco passes to those who are employed full time. For most service workers, that is not the case. We need to explore the possiblity of free busses from outlying park and rides might be a good pitch here. But, overall, the city can't house the number of people we need to keep businesses running give the cost of housing. This requires deeper investment in permanently affordable housing. All of these are band-aids until we address making housing affordable for the workers that work in Boulder.
Questions for Mayoral Candidates: 13.What is your view of the role of Mayor versus the role of the council members? What changes would you propose to improve the role of the Mayor without going beyond the limitations in the Charter?	Currently, the Mayor role is undefined and ceremonial. Now that the city has an elected mayor, I believe the role needs to evolve towards stronger vision, accountability to councilmembers, boards/commission, community members, business. The Mayor is a team captain who needs to hold the line of our policies, build bridges across community, speak truth even when its not convenience, and ensure that we are 'walking our talk' on sustainability, equity, and resilience. This could look like more regular townhalls, public meetings, transparency with council representating the city on other boards/commissions. As Mayor, I will be soliciting other ideas and trying out new ways to repair and strengthen relationships between and across community. I would also like to reactivate public in person Council Agenda Committee meetings on a monthly basis.

Questions for Mayoral Candidates: 14.What is your view of the relationship between the City Manager and the Mayor?	In my opinion, the City Manager has a lot of the power that a Mayor would usually have. Right now, the Mayor serves as an advisor to the City Manager as opposed to direct supervisor. The Mayor is now an elected position with a public mandate. The Mayor must hold the City Manager and all Council employees accountable through ongoing transparent oversight, reporting, and public/council input. Direct, not advise.