

2026 Boulder City Council/Mayor Questionnaire

Thank you for your willingness to run for office in our city. It's a significant commitment, and we at Open Boulder are grateful. Thank you also for responding to the Open Boulder questionnaire, which will be used for endorsement decisions. This is due on **5 PM on Sunday, August 30**. This gives our board time to review your answers before the forum on September 2. The questions are built around Open Boulder's core priorities:

1. Good governance
2. Financial responsibility, accountability, and transparency
3. Community safety and emergency preparedness
4. Community vibrancy and affordability

Note: we have also provided a Word version that you can use to prepare your responses in advance. Thank you!

The respondent's email (**jamesongoldstein16@gmail.com**) was recorded on submission of this form.

What is your full name *

Jameson Goldstein

Why are you running for City Council or Mayor? *

I'm running because I love Boulder, but I think City Hall needs to do a better job focusing on the fundamentals. Boulder should be affordable, safe, easy to do business in, and capable of maintaining the infrastructure residents already pay for. I also think younger residents deserve a meaningful voice in decisions we will live with for decades.

Council-Manager Form of Government *

City Council candidates often campaign on changes they would like to make, but accomplishing those goals requires working within Boulder's Council-Manager form of government. How do you understand the respective roles of Council, the Mayor, the City Manager, and City staff? Using one of your priorities as an example, walk us through how you would work within that structure to move it forward, build support, and ultimately get it implemented. For Mayoral candidates, please answer accordingly.

Council sets policy and the budget, while the City Manager and staff are responsible for actually implementing those decisions. The Mayor's job is to set priorities, build consensus, and make sure those priorities do not disappear into bureaucracy.

For example, I want a comprehensive audit of Boulder's infrastructure backlog. Council should establish the goal and require clear reporting, while the City Manager and staff determine how the work gets done.

Council's Role in the Budget *

How do you see Council's responsibility in setting and reviewing the budget? Are there changes in the budget process or in budget allocations that you would actively pursue if elected? Why?

Council has an obligation to know where taxpayer money is going and whether residents are actually getting results from it. I want Boulder to audit the gap between the infrastructure work we need done and the money currently available to do it, then prioritize essential services accordingly.

My basic philosophy is simple: fix the fundamentals before launching new spending.

Ordinance 8758 / Bond Measure *

Do you support Ordinance 8758 and the associated bond issuance on the November ballot?

☐ Yes

☒ No

For Ordinance 8758, please explain your position. For incumbents who voted to place Ordinance 8758 on the ballot: Has your position changed since that vote? Why or why not? *

I support many of the projects themselves. I want the city to first establish what is essential, what it costs, and why existing revenues are not covering it.

Ordinance 8762 / Debt Limit *

Do you support Ordinance 8762 and the associated increase to the City of Boulder general obligation (GO) debt limit on the November ballot?

☐ Yes

☒ No

Ordinance 8762 / Debt Limit *

Approximately what do you believe is the dollar value of the 3% of *assessed valuation* limit on City of Boulder indebtedness currently in effect (e.g., what is the current Charter limit on the amount of GO debt the city can issue)?

Approximately what do you believe is the dollar value of the 3% of *actual valuation* limit on City of Boulder indebtedness that is proposed in Ord 8762 (e.g., what is the proposed Charter limit on the amount of GO debt the city can issue)?

Please explain your position, including your understanding of how changing the debt limit from 3% of assessed valuation to 3% of actual valuation would affect the City's borrowing capacity.

Using Boulder County's 2025 valuations, the existing 3% limit on assessed value is approximately \$151 million. Changing the calculation to 3% of actual property value would put the limit at roughly \$1.55 billion—more than ten times as high.

I understand that increasing the limit does not itself issue that debt, but that is still an enormous expansion of the city's borrowing capacity. I would rather audit our long-term infrastructure needs and finances before making a change of that magnitude. The city confirms that Ordinance 8762 would shift the limit from assessed to actual property value and therefore substantially increase borrowing capacity.

Alpine-Balsam / Project Oversight

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Have you followed the costs associated with Alpine-Balsam? When the cost of a major city project significantly exceeds its budget, what role should Council play in understanding the causes, overseeing the response, and determining whether changes in management or process are warranted? Are there changes you would make to the way Council oversees major capital projects, or to its oversight of Alpine-Balsam in particular?

Yes. When a project significantly exceeds its original budget, Council should demand a clear explanation of what changed, why it changed, who approved it, and what taxpayers received for the additional money.

Major projects should have regular public cost and schedule reporting. If something goes substantially off track, Council should investigate it rather than simply approving the next expenditure.

Administrative Costs Charged to Dedicated Taxes

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Boulder voters have approved dedicated taxes for purposes such as Open Space, Transportation, and the Arts. A portion of these revenues may be used to cover shared administrative costs such as HR, legal, and accounting. Do you believe these funds are being used effectively and consistently with the purposes voters approved them for? Why or why not? Please provide an example. What, if anything, would you change to strengthen accountability and public confidence in how these funds are used?

I think the larger problem is transparency. If voters approve a tax for transportation, open space, or another specific purpose, they should be able to easily see how much is going directly toward that purpose and how much is being charged for administration.

Administrative expenses should be clearly itemized and regularly audited. Dedicated taxes should not become a convenient place to hide unrelated overhead.

Wildfire



Given Boulder's wildfire risk and limited resources, what two or three wildfire mitigation or preparedness measures should Council prioritize? What role should the City play, and how should those priorities be funded?

Boulder should prioritize wildfire mitigation and home hardening, defensible space, and evacuation planning. We also need to make sure our fire department has the equipment and infrastructure necessary to respond quickly.

Wildfire preparedness is a core public-safety responsibility and should be treated as such when we prioritize the existing budget.

Downtown



Council recently rejected the formation of a Downtown Development Authority. What do you see as the most important opportunities or challenges facing downtown Boulder, and what actions, efforts or initiatives would you suggest to address them?

I want Boulder to become one of the easiest high-values cities in Colorado to do business in.

That means faster permitting, fewer unnecessary regulatory delays, a clean and safe downtown, and policies that make it easier for locally owned businesses to open and survive. Downtown works when residents actually want to spend time there, not simply when City Hall creates another program for it.

Performance Auditor



An Open Boulder-affiliated committee has proposed that the City establish a Performance Auditor (different from a financial auditor), supported by a small office reporting to City Council and a resident-based Audit Committee, beginning in the 2027 budget. Do you support or oppose this proposal? Please explain why or why not?

A truly independent Performance Auditor is directly in line with what I want to bring to City Hall. Residents should know whether programs are accomplishing what they were created to accomplish and whether their money is being spent efficiently.

The goal should not be auditing for the sake of auditing. It should be identifying waste, measuring results, and redirecting resources toward things Boulder actually needs.

Question for Mayoral candidates only: Council Agendas and Prioritization



How should the Mayor approach setting and prioritizing Council agendas? Do you believe the current process effectively advances community priorities? If elected, what, if anything, would you change?

The Mayor should keep Council focused on a manageable number of priorities and make sure important issues actually move toward a decision.

I would focus agendas heavily on affordability, infrastructure, public safety, transportation, and economic vitality, with clear timelines and follow-up. Boulder does not suffer from a shortage of ideas. The bigger problem is turning ideas into measurable results.

I think the No on 8758 / No on 8762 answers are the two that most strongly commit you to a new position. They fit your existing “audit first / fundamentals first” platform very well, but I’d make sure you actually want to oppose those measures before submitting the form.

This form was created inside of Open Boulder Foundation.

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