



Boulder County DSA Voter Guide 2025 Boulder County Elections

Boulder County DSA is a local chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, the largest socialist organization in the US. We are a “big tent” organization: our members come from many backgrounds with many points of view, but we all agree on one thing—**unchecked capitalism has created a society that puts corporate profit above human rights, and we are committed to changing that through direct, grassroots action.**

Special thank you to all Boulder County DSA members who contributed their votes, time, and labor to this project. Without your tireless volunteer efforts, this guide would not be possible.

For each of the major issues discussed in this election we would like to see candidates who align with us on the following ideals:

Anti-capitalism: We believe that the economy and society should be run democratically to meet the needs of all people, not to make profits for a few. We do not support policies that expand control by private business owners or that allow the exploitation of workers or the environment. Further, we believe in the inalienable right of workers to form and organize unions, and believe that the working class is strongest when it is organized.

Environment: We recognize that the largest contributors to climate change are corporations and that meaningful progress can only be achieved by rapid divestment and strong opposition to oil and gas companies.

Human rights: We believe it is unacceptable for any of our fellow Boulder County residents to go hungry or be denied shelter. We also stand firmly against discrimination that inflicts harassment and violence upon people on the basis of their racial identity, culture, gender identity, sexual preference, ability, religion, immigration status, economic status, or housing status.

Law enforcement: We believe that the function of the police is not to protect and serve; it is to restrain and subjugate. Capitalism breeds contradictions, and the police resolve these contradictions through violence. We believe that the police ultimately exist to deploy violence against the working class and we work for a future in which police budgets are drastically reduced and do not deploy violence against society's most vulnerable people, particularly those experiencing homelessness.

Thank you to all candidates who answered our questionnaire.

Election Day is November 4, 2025.

Boulder County DSA Endorsements

City of Boulder City Council Candidates

***Lauren Folkerts*- Recommend: YES**

Endorsed

Lauren Folkerts is an incumbent Boulder City Council member and current Mayor Pro Tem. Folkerts is an architect who uses her expertise to ensure Boulder builds housing that is more accessible, inclusive, sustainable, and affordable for all.

During her time on Council, Folkerts has:

- ✓ Led the campaign that raised Boulder's minimum wage
- ✓ Passed a first-in-the-nation embodied carbon building code for new construction
- ✓ Voted for City Council to discuss divestment from companies involved with the genocide in Gaza.

Folkerts is a progressive leader who:

- ✗ Opposes TABOR
 - ✗ Opposes the state's ban on rent control
 - ✗ Opposes Boulder's camping ban
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- + Supports zoning reforms to make Boulder more walkable, bike-friendly, and transit-rich.
 - + Supports ensuring equity and sustainability are embedded in every city plan.
 - + Supports improving protections for renters.
 - + Supports expanding ranked-choice voting to all Council seats.

Local Offices - City of Boulder

Recommendations shall be color coded to allow for a quick read:

YES, **NO**, and **NEUTRAL**

City Council Candidates

Matt Benjamin- **Recommend: NO**

Matt Benjamin is an incumbent and is focused on housing (emphasizing the “missing middle-income”), wildfire resiliency, and economic vitality. Benjamin supported increasing Boulder’s minimum wage, but opposed a further increase to match Denver’s and supports decreasing the tipped minimum wage. He voted against the City Council discussing or divesting from companies profiting off the genocide in Gaza.

Lauren Folkerts- **Endorsed**, see Page 1.

Rachel Rose Isaacson- **Recommend: YES**

Rachel Rose Isaacson is a barista at South Side Walnut Cafe, Gen-Z, and a renter. Isaacson’s top issue is climate resiliency. She opposes Boulder’s camping ban and believes in a preventative approach to homelessness by increasing “truly” affordable housing and providing more mental health services.

Rob Kaplan- **Recommend: NO**

Rob Kaplan is a former firefighter of 18 years whose first priority is fire resilience. Kaplan supports making Boulder more affordable through housing and zoning changes, but supports TABOR. He also is an advocate for the Boulder Police Department and their expanding budget. Kaplan is endorsed by current council members Tara Winer, Tina Marquis, and Mark Wallach.

Max Lord- **Recommend: Neutral**

Max Lord owns a construction business in Boulder, Hammer and Driver. He is focused on environmental protection, wildfire resilience, homelessness, and housing affordability. Lord has worked with Bridge House and believes that Boulder needs to provide more resources to combat homelessness like mental health facilities, and make it easier to build affordable housing by changing the city’s land-use and zoning policies.

Montserrat Palacios- **Recommend: Neutral**

Montserrat Palacios is a Boulder community advocate and art professional. She supports enforcing Boulder's camping ban and anti-homeless enforcement, but also supports raising Boulder's minimum wage to match Boulder County's (\$25) by 2030 goal and does not support the tipped minimum wage credit. Palacios' top issues are housing, affordability, and homelessness.

Jenny Robbins- **Recommend: NO**

Jenny Robbins is the chair of the Parks and Rec Advisory Board and previously ran for City Council in 2023 (unsuccessfully). She supported that year's ballot measure to increase policing of Boulder's unhoused community (Measure 302). Robbins supports TABOR and opposes allowing multi-family housing in single-family neighborhoods.

Aaron Stone- **Recommend: Neutral**

Aaron Stone is a computer engineer who supports public engagement, maintaining Boulder's infrastructure, and has expressed support for creating a designated camping area near Boulder's walking mall where unhoused people can access laundry, shower, and mental health services. Stone is running explicitly on a pro-Palestine platform and supports divestment from companies supporting the genocide in Gaza.

Rob Smoke- **Recommend: Neutral**

Robert Smoke is running explicitly on a pro-Palestine platform: to have Boulder divest from companies supporting the genocide in Gaza.

Nicole Speer- **Recommend: YES**

Nicole Speer is an incumbent and was endorsed by Boulder County DSA in 2023. She supports improving workers' and renters' rights, compassionate approaches to homelessness, and proactive measures to combat federal overreach. Speer supported raising Boulder's minimum wage and eliminating occupancy limits. She does not support the city engaging in international affairs, including divesting from companies profiting off genocide in Gaza. Though Speer has in the past been a member of Boulder County DSA, she chose to leave the chapter as a result of its commitment to anti-Zionism, in the context of the genocide in Gaza.

Mark Wallach- **Recommend: NO**

Mark Wallach is an incumbent and running for his third term. He prioritizes fiscal discipline and wildfire resilience, and supports housing affordability and decommissioning the Boulder Airport. Wallach also supports enforcing Boulder's camping ban and opposed Boulder's minimum wage increase. He is proudly nonideological.

Local Offices - City of Lafayette

City Council Candidates

Luke Arrington- Recommend: **Neutral**

Luke Arrington has a background in commercial real estate development and sat on the Lafayette Open Space Advisory Board and Lafayette Urban Renewal Authority. He is focused on bringing fresh ideas, transparency, and a commitment to Lafayette's progress to his time on Council. There is limited information currently available on his campaign website.

Kyle Beaulieu- Recommend: **YES**

Kyle Beaulieu is a public policy and national security professional. He has a broad policy platform, including creating more affordable housing options through zoning reform and enabling diverse housing, expanding public transit and pedestrian infrastructure, removing burdens for small business owners, navigating federal uncertainty (including cuts to Medicare/Medicaid), and adopting ranked choice voting.

Josh Beryl- Recommend: **Neutral**

Josh Beryl is a former high school teacher and union member who is running on a platform of supporting workers' quality of life over corporate interests, keeping Lafayette residents safe, and maintaining the city's quality of life.

Crystal Gallegos- Recommend: **Neutral**

Crystal Gallegos is an incumbent and public education professional. She is focused on responsible growth and protecting open space, supporting and attracting small businesses, maintaining Longmont's character, and housing affordability.

Adam Gianola- Recommend: **YES**

Adam Gianola is a small business attorney and helped develop Lafayette's 2024 Climate Action Plan as a Sustainability & Resilience Advisory Board member. He is focused on improving transportation and mobility, supporting small businesses, climate resilience, and affordability, and supports increasing Boulder County's minimum wage to a living wage in collaboration with other municipalities.

Rob Glenn- **Recommend:** **Neutral**

Rob Glenn is a realtor and property manager. He is focused on revitalizing underused spaces, supporting small businesses, expanding housing options, and fostering a community that values inclusivity, diversity, and environmental responsibility.

Annmarie Jensen- **Recommend:** **YES**

Annmarie Jensen is public policy advocate and founder of the East County Housing Opportunity Coalition. She is focused on ensuring Lafayette achieves its greenhouse gas reductions targets, creating affordable housing, expanding transit and pedestrian infrastructure, supporting an equitable economy, and stewarding Lafayette's outdoor spaces.

Eric Ryant- **Recommend:** **NO**

Eric Ryant is a small business owner and licensed general contractor. His priorities include preserving Old Town Lafayette, managing municipal growth slowly, managing traffic congestion, supporting small businesses by expanding support programs, exploring affordable housing, protecting open space and promoting bike/pedestrian infrastructure, and fiscal responsibility.

Saul Tapia Vega- **Recommend:** **YES**

Saul Tapia Vega is an incumbent and member of several cultural and policy advisory boards. He is running on a platform of sustainability and environmental resilience, responsible growth, representation and inclusion (including for those who have been historically underrepresented), housing and childcare affordability, and supporting local businesses.

Michael Watson- **Recommend:** **Neutral**

Michael Watson is a computer scientist and U.S. Navy veteran, and believes the primary issue facing America is the partisan divide. He is focused on energy efficiency, preserving an expanding open space, supporting small businesses, disaster preparedness, ensuring access to healthy foods by strengthening partnerships with local farms, and broadening the community's access to fitness activities.

Local Offices - City of Longmont

Mayoral Candidates

Diane Crist- Recommend: **NO**

Diane Crist is a current Longmont City Councilmember and a former Longmont Transportation Advisory Board member. Crist is a strong proponent of small businesses and is focused on transportation, housing, business development, and community services. Crist voted in favor of an ordinance that would have banned sitting and lying in public in Longmont, which did not pass.

Shakeel Dalal- Recommend: **YES**

Shakeel Dalal is the co-founder and former president of LAUNCH Longmont Housing. His priorities include housing, focused on updating zoning laws to legalize townhomes for everyone and streamlining the development process. Dalal is also focused on supporting small businesses, creating safer streets through car alternatives, fighting corporate interests, responsive government, and positive sum environmental policies. Dalal supports a living wage of \$26.18, and would seek to raise Longmont's minimum wage if elected.

Susie Hidalgo-Fahring- Recommend: **Neutral**

Susie Hidalgo-Fahring is current Longmont City Councilmember and Mayor Pro-tem. Hidalgo-Fahring's priorities include affordable housing, prioritizing pedestrian transportation safety, improving Longmont's RTD access, upgrading Longmont's social infrastructure like parks and the library, supporting Longmont's small businesses, strengthening mental health and rehabilitation services through additional funding, and protecting Longmont's Open Space and environment.

Sarah Levison- Recommend: **Neutral**

Sarah Levison is a former Longmont City Councilmember and long-time community advocate. Her priorities include ending the city tax on food, creating a budget that reflects Longmont's values, measured growth, supporting local businesses, transparent government, and reducing street congestion.

At-Large City Council Candidates

Steve Altschuler- Recommend: **NO**

Steve Altschuler is a fiscal and social conservative who is focused on reducing taxes and implementing fiscal austerity in Longmont. Altschuler is focused on

reducing crime, improving road conditions, creating safer schools (by hiring armed veterans or retired police officers), and managing homelessness through an ordinance requiring unhoused people and their belongings to be at least 100 feet from businesses and 100 feet from schools.

Alex Kalkhofer- **Recommend: Neutral**

Alex Kalkhofer is a long-time Longmont resident and community volunteer. Kalkhofer is focused on housing affordability and creating “missing middle” homes, smart transportation, small business vitality, and traffic congestion control.

John Lembke- **Recommend: Neutral**

A self-described “libertarian socialist”, Lembke’s priorities include implementing a land value tax and adopting ranked-choice voting in Longmont. Lembke believes homelessness can be reduced by making housing cheaper and more accessible, and supports changing zoning laws to build diverse forms of housing.

Jake Marsing- **Recommend: YES**

Jake Marsing is a community advocate and social studies teacher, and is running on a platform of “Longmont for Everybody” focused on making Longmont affordable and accessible for all. Marsing’s priorities include housing affordability, climate preparedness, early childhood education, supporting a living wage, transportation, protecting the immigrant community, and compassionately addressing homelessness.

Crystal Prieto- **Recommend: YES**

Crystal Prieto is a working-class Longmont resident, case worker, and community activist. She is focused on affordability and cost of living, particularly housing and healthcare, and wants to improve Longmont’s safety net for low-income families and working people.

Riegan Sage- **Recommend: Neutral**

Riegan Sage is focused on housing affordability, tourism, agriculture, transportation, energy, and adopting new metrics to determine policy success. Sage is focused on supporting small businesses and wants to guard against urban sprawl.

Ward 2 City Council Candidates

Matthew Popkin- **Recommend:** **YES**

Matthew Popkin is the incumbent Ward 2 City Councilmember and a reliable progressive. He is running on a platform of managing how and where Longmont grows, increasing affordability by creating a bus service from Longmont to DIA, and preparing Longmont for a resilient future by expanding the city's public safety programs.

Teresa Simpkins- **Recommend:** **NO**

Tersa Simpkins is a small business advocate and former municipal employee. Simpkins is heavily focused on supporting small businesses, managing Longmont's growth, and opposes the development of the Kanemoto Subdivision project. Simpkins is endorsed by the Boulder County Republicans, though she did not seek nor was informed of the endorsement before it was released.

Local Offices - City of Louisville

City Council Candidates

Ward 1 Candidates

Josh Cooperman- **Recommend:** **YES**

Josh Cooperman is an incumbent and is focused on environmental sustainability, investing in pedestrian and bike infrastructure, supporting business growth, and revitalizing downtown Louisville. He supported efforts to expand housing options like ADUs, eliminate parking minimums, and preserve historic sites.

Denise Montagu- **Recommend:** **NO**

Denise Montagu is a former Thompson School Board Member and former social worker. She is focused on supporting the business community and fostering a vibrant economy, supports mixed housing options to support "attainable housing," and wants sustainability efforts that are "business-conscious."

Ward 2

Judi Kern- **Recommend:** **YES**

Judi Kern is an incumbent who is focused on resident concerns, infrastructure improvements, and voting against community projects that pose safety for residents. She has also championed community safety and disaster preparedness, while securing progress on long-standing issues like speedbumps and medians.

Ward 3- Recommend: YES

Dietrich Hoeffner

Dietrich Hoeffner is an incumbent and attorney. Hoeffner is focused on climate preparedness, housing affordability, and infrastructure improvements.

Boulder Valley School District Candidates

Jeffrey Anderson- District E- Recommend: Neutral

Jeffrey Anderson is a data scientist at NCAR and co-chair of BVSD's Long Range Advisory Committee. He is focused on using data effectively and ethically to improve BVSD's understanding of student and staff needs, and supports doing more to support students' mental and behavioral health needs.

Deann Bucher- District E- Recommend: YES

Deann Bucher is a longtime BVSD educator and education professional. She is focused on supporting educators with quality professional development opportunities to improve retention, sustaining and strengthening BVSD's high academic standards, promoting inclusive and equitable learning environments, and ensuring comprehensive support for students and families. Bucher would be the first openly gay member elected to BVSD School Board.

Nicole Rajpal- District B- Recommend: YES

Nicole Rajpal is the incumbent District B Board member and current Board president. She is focused on improving students' opportunities and outcomes, supporting student and staff wellbeing and belonging, and making informed, evidence-based decisions. Rajpal wants BVSD to continue doing excellent work and avoid legal fights with the federal government.

Ana Temu Otting- District F- Recommend: YES

Ana Temu Otting is a community organizer, small business owner, and public policy professional. She is focused on supporting strong public schools, listening to communities and families, ethical student data use, transparent budgeting, and creating real equity in schools.

Ballot Measures

Recommendations shall be color coded to allow for a quick read:

YES, **NO**, and **NEUTRAL**

State Ballot Measures

Proposition LL: TABOR Override for School Meals- Recommend: YES

Allows the existing Colorado Health School Meals for All Program to keep and spend revenue that is collected above the limit set under TABOR. Prop LL will increase the Program's revenue by about \$19M.

Proposition MM: Increase State Taxes for Healthy School Meals for All Program- Recommend: YES

Increases state income taxes for households earning \$300,000 or more annually. The increased tax revenue will fund free meals to all public school students and fund grant programs previously approved by voters that haven't been implemented. Revenue from MM will also support Colorado's SNAP program.

Boulder County

Ballot Measures

Ballot Issue 1A- Open Space Sales and Use Tax Extension- Recommend: **YES**

Extends the County's existing 0.15% Open Space sales and use tax in perpetuity for the purposes of acquiring, improving, managing, and maintaining open space lands and other space property interests. While sales taxes are a regressive funding mechanism, this tax extension will provide additional necessary wildfire mitigation and water security improvements.

Ballot Issue 1B- Mental and Behavioral Health Sales and Use Tax- **Recommend: YES**

Creates a 0.15% sales and use tax for the next three years to provide mental health, suicide prevention and intervention, substance abuse, resource navigation, and treatment services for unhoused people. The tax would generate an estimated \$13.8M in 2026, and would cover both county programs and grants to private providers. While sales taxes are a regressive funding mechanism, Boulder County faces acute mental and behavioral health needs that need urgent funding through means available.

City of Boulder

Local Ballot Measures

Ballot Issue 2A- Community, Culture, Resilience, and Safety (CCRS) Tax Extension- Recommend: *YES*

Extends an existing 0.30% Community, Culture, Resilience, and Safety (CCRS) sales and use tax, which currently generates about \$15M annually. While sales taxes are a regressive funding mechanism, this tax extension will support vital Boulder public infrastructure updates and maintenance backlogs for roads, parks, civic buildings, and recreation centers.

Ballot Issue 2B- CCRS Debt Capacity Increase- Recommend: *YES*

Authorizes the increase of debt to build and maintain Boulder's capital improvements, increasing Boulder's debt capacity to \$110M from roughly \$26M. Funding will support the city's backlog of infrastructure maintenance needs and will only advance if Issue 2A passes.

City of Lafayette
Local Ballot Measures

Ballot Issue 2C- Funding Recreation Center Improvements, A New Civic Center, and Service Center Improvements- Recommend: YES

Increases city property taxes up to \$6M annually for the purposes of renovating the recreation center, building a new civic center, and renovating and repairing the Parks and Public Works Service Center. It will also support the sustainability of key city services like snow plowing, street maintenance, and open spaces.

City of Louisville
Local Ballot Measures

Measure 300: “Rezoning for Affordability”- Recommend: NO

Prohibits Louisville from residential building within the Centennial Valley, Redtail Ridge, and Avista Adventist Hospital areas unless 30% of any new homes built within those areas are affordable for households at 80% of the area median income. While this measure sounds promising, it prohibits residential mixed use development and has the impact of forcing developers to either sell their homes at a loss, increase the price of the other 70% of homes, or not build housing at all. Louisville already has a 12% inclusionary zoning requirement and allows developers to pay cash-in-lieu of building affordable units.

Measure 301: “Development Pays its Own Way”- Recommend: NO

Imposes new impact fees for capital facilities like the library, municipal buildings, and affordable housing. The library, capital facilities, transportation capital facilities, and parks and trails capital facilities are already subject to impact fees.