Official election groups

These are groups that have registered with the city to campaign on behalf of certain candidates and issues, or in opposition to certain ballot measures. They must disclose organizing officers as well as financial donations and expenditures.

Better Boulder
This group, formed in 2013, is focused on growth and development, and it is unabashedly pro-density as a way to link land use/housing, transportation and climate change and advocates. Better Boulder also has a heavy pro-bike element, counting cycling advocates among its leaders. Its board of directors and leadership team also includes representatives from the Boulder Chamber of Commerce, Boulder Area Realtors Association and former local elected officials.

Endorsed
- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams
- Yes on 300 (Bedrooms Are For People)
- No on 302 (Let the Voters Decide on CU South Annexation)

Monies raised: $1,120
Monies spent: $1,083.68
As of Sept. 21

Boulder is for People
This group was formed by the organizers of Bedrooms Are For People, which successfully placed a petition on the 2021 ballot to amend the city's occupancy limits. While Bedrooms is an issue campaign, Boulder is for People is an [unofficial candidate committee](.).

Endorsed
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams
- Lauren Folkerts

Monies raised: $3,245
Monies spent: $1,734.95
As of Sept. 21
Boulder Progressives

The Progressives formed ahead of the 2019 elections. They seek to link land use (housing), transportation and climate change and embrace density as a way to accomplish the city's goals on all three. They also have a platform heavy on social justice issues (homelessness, police oversight and racial diversity) and issues of governance and inclusion, including bringing renters into the government decision-making process.

Endorsed
- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams
- Yes on 300 (Bedrooms Are For People)
- No on 302 (Let the Voters Decide on CU South Annexation)

Monies raised: $2,942.34
Monies spent: $2,420.16
As of Sept. 21

The Coalition
This group is actually made up of several others: Better Boulder, Open Boulder, Boulder is For People, United Campus Workers Colorado, South Boulder Creek Action Group and Boulder Progressives. It formed ahead of the 2019 election; its membership expanded to include two new groups this year (Boulder is for People and UCW.)

Endorsed
- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams

Monies raised: $4,825
Monies spent: $2,313.64
As of Sept. 21

FRWRD Boulder
"Forward Boulder is a community alliance that seeks to move beyond divisive politics to address the challenges of public safety, housing and growth, and climate change. Forward Boulder knows we are better together."

A newly formed group this year, not much is known about FRWRD Boulder. Their main issues appear to be housing/growth and support for open space, with an added focus on police support and removal of homeless encampments. FRWRD's origins are opaque. The group does not provide any names or contact information on their website. Official election filings reveal two

officers: Hernan Villanueva, a [member of the Environmental Advisory Board](#), and Greg Ekrem, who [opposed a project downtown](#) to provide housing to homeless youth who had aged out of the foster system. Campaign finance records show that many stalwarts of the slow-growth movement are donors, as are several active members of Safer Boulder.

Endorsed
- Steven Rosenblum
- Tara Winer
- Mark Wallach
- Michael Christy

Monies raised: $10,725
Monies spent: $1,355.54
As of Sept. 21

Sierra Club Colorado - Indian Peaks Group
Sierra Club is an environmentally focused organization; the Indian Peaks group is a local chapter of the national Sierra Club that endorses city council candidates and sometimes takes positions on local ballot issues. They have formed an [unofficial candidate committee](#) and a [ballot measure committee](#) for this election.

Endorsed
- David Takahashi
- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams
- Yes on 300 (Bedrooms Are For People)
- Yes on 301 (Humane Clothing Act)
- No on 302 (Let the Voters Decide on CU South Annexation)

Monies raised: $0
Monies spent: $0
As of Sept. 21

United Campus Workers Colorado
UCW is a union for employees of the University of Colorado system. This year, the group joined The Coalition and formed an [unofficial candidate committee](#).

Endorsed
- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer

- Dan Williams

Monies raised: $0
Monies spent: $0
As of Sept. 21

Political groups

These are groups which engage in political activities such as endorsing candidates but who are not officially registered with the city as candidate or issue committees. These groups may still donate to specific candidates or causes. When applicable, financial contributions have been noted.

Citizens for Sanitas
Citizens for Sanitas formed in opposition to the redevelopment of 311 Mapleton, a former hospital campus, into a senior living community. They have not been active since its approval in 2018.

Endorsed
- Tara Winer
- Michael Christy

Open Boulder
This group formed in 2014. Two of Open's current leaders have connections to the outdoor industry; another is a former city council candidate (Mark McIntyre). Open Boulder's website lists its priorities as open space access and government transparency. The group itself has advocated for increased access to open space by residents, including some controversial connection trails, and for improved access for bikes, in particular.

John Spitzer, a PLAN board member, filed an election complaint against Open Boulder for its campaign materials in 2017. The complaint was dismissed, but a campaign working group — which several Open Boulder supporters participated in — changed Boulder's election rules to disallow the type of campaign materials that were distributed by the group.

Endorsed
- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams
- Yes on 300 (Bedrooms Are For People)

- No on 302 (Let the Voters Decide on CU South Annexation)

PLAN-Boulder County
PLAN is Boulder's oldest currently operating political group and responsible for some of the city's most iconic and innovative policies, including the Blue Line (the point in the foothills above which the city will not provide water and sewer services) and the open space program. PLAN is firmly in the slow-growth camp, rejecting density and opposing most major developments. For decades, PLAN-endorsed candidates have held the majority of seats on council and several influential boards and commissions.

PLAN contributed $1,000 to the Save CU South issue committee, according to campaign finance records.

Endorsed
- Steven Rosenblum
- Tara Winer
- Mark Wallach
- Michael Christy
- No on 300 (Bedrooms Are For People)
- Yes on 302 (Let the Voters Decide on Annexation of CU South)

Think Boulder
Think Boulder formed in opposition to the redevelopment of the former BCH hospital campus on Broadway, referred to as Alpine-Balsam. They have been relatively inactive since [circulating flyers and a petition](#) in 2019 to advocate for low-density development. The project has not been a major part of city council's agenda since that time.

Endorsed
- Steven Rosenblum
- Tara Winer
- Mark Wallach
- Michael Christy

Together4Boulder
T4B, as it's often referred to, was [formed ahead of the 2017 elections](#). The group's leadership is not publicized; it doesn't, for instance, list chairpersons or board members on its website as PLAN does, and it wouldn't disclose to the *Daily Camera* who its supporters were when it formed. Election filings from 2019 show its leaders as Susan Lambert (chair) and Karen Sandburg (treasurer). T4B advocates for slow-growth policies such as lower height limits and has opposed the Gross Dam expansion. The group also [financially advocated for the municipalization](#) effort. They are more outspoken against developers than PLAN, and more critical of pro-density proponents, often painting opposing views as being influenced [by monied interests in literature](#).

Endorsed

- Steven Rosenblum
- Tara Winer
- Mark Wallach
- Michael Christy

Safer Boulder

Safer Boulder formed in 2019, coalescing around the issue of homeless encampments in public spaces. Members circulated a petition advocating for the removal of camps. A focus on homelessness evolved into support for the police in the wake of calls to reallocate spending on cops, and public safety in general.

Endorsed

- Steven Rosenblum
- Tara Winer
- Mark Wallach
- Michael Christy

Issue-specific

Save CU South/Save South Boulder

While these are two distinct groups, their leadership overlaps. Save CU South technically formed this year as an issue committee; Save SoBo has been around for several years. Organizers, which includes PLAN leadership, oppose development of the CU South property into an eventual southern campus for the University of Colorado. They have been heavily involved in the flood mitigation and annexation process, and in 2021 successfully sponsored a petition that would substitute the city and CU-negotiated annexation agreement with new terms.

Monies raised: $7,996
Monies spent: $2,750.92
As of Sept. 21

Save South Boulder as an organization contributed $1,000 to this issue committee, according to campaign finance records

South Boulder Creek Action Group

SBCAC formed ahead of the 2019 election. They are primarily residents of Frasier Meadows and the neighborhoods in south Boulder surrounding the CU-owned site where the city hopes to do flood mitigation. Though their issue is flood mitigation, they joined the Coalition, which has a broader focus.

Endorsed

- Lauren Folkerts
- Matt Benjamin
- Dr. Nicole Speer
- Dan Williams
- Yes on 300 (Bedrooms Are For People)
- No on 302 (Let the Voters Decide on CU South Annexation)

What are slates, anyway?

Candidates for Boulder city council tend to fall into one of two "camps" that mimic the U.S. two-party system of Democrats and Republicans (though city council races are nonpartisan).

A number of candidates will be endorsed by a particular set of political groups, while another set of candidates will be endorsed by a different set of political groups. Independent candidates are ones that typically do not earn endorsement from either camp, and they tend to struggle to be elected.

This has been standard for the last few elections at least. The Coalition was the first to really formalize this divide by coalescing into a bloc that interviews and endorses candidates as a sole entity. Each member group gets to vote during that process.

Candidates typically split on growth and development, falling into the slow-growth camp (led by PLAN-Boulder) or a more pro-density camp. The 2021 election, however, was a bit different.

There are still two slates — Williams, Speer, Folkerts and Benjamin on the Coalition ticket; Winer, Wallach, Rosenblum, Christy on the other, with Decalo earning a lone endorsement from PLAN — but the division over development is not as stark as in past years. All candidates recognize the need for additional housing (though they differ in their views on where it should go and how to add it) but those backed by traditionally slow-growth groups aren't necessarily attached to traditional slow-growth ideals.

The Winer-Wallach-Rosenblum-Christy group might more appropriately be called the Yates slate. Councilman Bob Yates was the first to endorse them as a set (along with The Coalition's Matt Benjamin as a crossover candidate) and they all mirror Yates' centrist pitch for moderate change, calls for civility and an end to divisiveness and criticisms of the slates themselves.

Homelessness is perhaps the starkest dividing line among the candidates in this election, separating those who support the camping ban and removal of encampments (Yates slate) and those who don't (Coalition candidates). It was Yates' homeless policies that prevented Boulder Progressives from endorsing him in 2019; their vote kept The Coalition from doing so, though other member groups backed Yates.