

Restore the Balance

Seven political principles to guide political conduct

We must do more than simply be against extremism. We must embrace an alternative set of political principles. We believe these seven principles should guide us.

- **We believe** that political parties should vigorously compete over values, principles, and ideas, but also find common ground to solve problems and pass needed legislation. Gridlock is not an option.
- **We believe** facts, supported by irrefutable evidence, are the basis for what to believe and how to act. No civilization can endure when its citizens believe there is no such thing as objective facts or truths.
- **We believe** that no one has a monopoly on the best public policy proposals. That means the ability to listen to and understand both sides of a debate are a prerequisite to finding practical solutions.
- **We believe** public interest must come before party interest. This means putting what is right ahead of loyalty to a party or an individual party leader.
- **We believe** that problem-solving is more important than fund-raising. Extremists line their pockets then use the funds to amplify division instead of producing solutions.
- **We believe** citizens should be free to run for office or volunteer to support the candidate of their choice without being threatened or harassed. Extremism uses intimidation because it cannot stand up to independent, open-minded thinking. Instead, it relies on the mentality of the mob.
- **We believe** it is time to expect citizens to embrace individual responsibility. Extremists always talk about “freedom,” but never mention the responsibility to the community that comes with it.

Candidate Questionnaire
Grand Junction City Council

1. What qualifications and experience do you have that can give voters confidence that you should be a member of the Grand Junction City Council? Please be specific.

While I have extensive experience serving on a state wide Board of Directors, and as its past president; running a small business on a budget, and serving on Mesa County planning commission; I think the most important qualification is being an active and engaged citizen of the City Of Grand Junction, and being willing to serve my community.

2. By now, you have read and considered the seven political principles we feel should guide political conduct in Western Colorado.

- a. Do you endorse each of the seven principles Restore the Balance feels should guide political conduct in Western Colorado?

While I commend your organization for developing principles for elections and are looking for more balance in politics, I am running my own campaign and I live my life by my own principles

- b. If you endorse them all, please explain how you will work to execute these principles.
- c. If there are one or more principles you do not endorse, please identify them and explain why.

3. It is important to let people know that you put the public interest first. In looking back over the past year, are there any decisions the Grand Junction City Council has made that you do not agree with? If yes, how would you have changed them?

I believe it was mistakenly shortsighted for city Council to attempt to put the burden of funding affordable housing on the backs of a small group of local homeowners and investors that operate in the short term rental space. It's evident that the voters would agree as these measures were defeated in November.

I also think the orchard mesa pool situation could've been handled much better. I think the school districts original offer of giving the building and the land in addition to another piece of property to the city was a good offer and should've been considered more seriously. There are ways to save the pool that council doesn't seem to want to consider.

4. In the aftermath of the January 6th insurrection, studies and security experts are citing increased risks to local governments from extremist groups who now target meetings of city councils and school boards for potential violent protests and demonstrations around false election fraud and conspiracy theories.

- d. How would you as a local government official push back against those who are undermining public confidence in free and fair elections?

I don't see what January 6th has to do with our city Council campaign. I would like clarification on what studies and security experts you are citing. To the question of pushing back, the best defense against bad ideas, are better ideas. These should be debated, perhaps vociferously in the public forum. If our community has concerns around election integrity, they should not be gaslit or called conspiracy theorists. We all want free and fair elections and this is an important conversation we should all encourage.

- e. What should be done to protect elected officials and the public from those using harassment to stop civil engagement and the exercise of democratic processes?

City council and school board meetings already have security present. I have not observed any civil engagement quelled by harassment in our community.

5. The City of Grand Junction Charter provides that council elections are to be non-partisan. What do you think about local political party organizations supporting or opposing council candidates? Will you reject political party endorsements and/or direct contributions to your campaign from political parties; why or why not?

Political organizations are within their right to make donations to candidates that align with their values and principles. The teachers union endorses and donates to school board candidates each election cycle and has done so for decades. Based on national data, these unions donate almost exclusively to Democrats. I think candidates should win elections based on the best ideas and principles, solutions to problems and their willingness to serve their community. All city council candidates are running their own race, without the label of a political party.

6. In the wake of the recent Orchard Mesa Pool controversy, the question of resolving multi-jurisdictional conflict has arisen.

- f. What are your feelings regarding intergovernmental cooperation in the Grand Valley on this or other issues?

I don't think the orchard mesa pool agreement should've ever taken place between the three entities. Based on results, it has proven to have been a bad idea as maintenance and capital improvements did not take place as originally agreed to. There may be a place for intergovernmental agreements, such as the Persigo agreement, but these can often times become complicated. If such agreements should happen, they should be spelled out in writing, revisited every few years and done so in public.

- g. What approach would you take in dealing with intergovernmental relations and resolving intergovernmental conflicts?

These agreements and resolutions should be done in the light of day, and as publicly as possible

- h. How would you protect Grand Junction's interests while still serving the most people in the most efficient and cost-effective way?

This is by definition, the job of city Council. These things are not mutually exclusive. We should look for ways to serve every citizen in our city, and do so efficiently and on budget. This is in the best interest of our city.

7. Homelessness and affordable housing have been identified as problems in Grand Junction that affect large segments of our City's population; including young people, families and the elderly. What actions do you think the City should take to address these problems?

Homelessness and affordable housing are very complicated and nuanced problems in our community. I've spent a bit of time lately meeting with community leaders that offer services and solutions to our homeless and unhoused community. They are doing a great job. While there could be more work done in this space and possibly better collaboration, it seems like the faith based and nonprofit community is doing a better job than a municipality ever could. Affordable and attainable housing is just as complicated. I'm not a fan of city government getting into the housing business. Nonprofits, through grants, could explore community land trusts, also reducing the cost of land to developers. We should look at ways to make development easier, more efficient and less burdensome. Our cities TCP fees and Fire, Police, Parks and Rec fees are higher than ever. Reducing these fees could help make housing more affordable. We can also look at more attainable housing such as planning and development around mobile homes and modulars. It is also possible that the best options for affordable housing in our community may be in the county, and not the city. The county is looking at affordable housing plans for Clifton and Whitewater that are interesting and may was the burden of affordable/attainable housing in our community.

8. Economic development is listed as one of Grand Junction's strategic priorities. According to the City's 2023 adopted budget summary, economic development spending will constitute 8% (\$19.5 million) of the total combined budget.

- i. What means would you utilize to evaluate the merit and effectiveness of the city's economic development strategy?"

Results and data would be the best metric for evaluation. Also, requiring our community economic development partners to report back to Council yearly on the cities ROI.

- j. What steps would you take to determine that the level of funding for the city's economic development strategy is appropriate or should be increased or decreased?

Again, it would be based on results. If we're not getting the return on investment that we would expect, then we need to reevaluate those economic development partnerships and strategies.

- k. If elected, how would you ensure that funding the city's economic development strategy is fair to new businesses, existing businesses, taxpayers who are not business owners, as well as well as pro-growth and no-growth interests?

Economic development is beneficial to all citizens within our city as it creates new jobs and better jobs. It increases tax revenue into the city, which then helps support infrastructure, public safety, and more. Many of the local organizations that work in the economic development space have access to grants and statewide programs that help offset taxes, and business growth and can be matched fairly to the right businesses.

9. Are there City expenditures that you think could be reduced without sacrificing City residents' quality of life or fiscal responsibility? Are there City expenditures that you think should be increased?

All city expenditures should be examined on their merit and cost effectiveness. This also speaks to the job and role of municipal government. It's important that the government stays in its lane and does not compete with the private sector as some of these jobs could be performed more efficiently and to better quality by local businesses.

10. What do you feel are three OTHER important issues and or concerns facing the City of Grand Junction and what solutions do you have in mind?

I am concerned about the increases in fees that developers are facing, as well as new ordinances and regulations. It's becoming more complicated, cumbersome, and burdensome to do business and develop housing in the city. The new incoming city Council should look at ways to roll back some of these fees, and find ways to create better efficiencies for planning and development in the city.