

March 4, 2025

Dear Ms. Gonzales,

Restore the Balance is a movement of deeply concerned citizens (we are a 501(c)4 organization) that educates the public about the danger political extremism poses to a healthy democracy. We urge citizens to learn about candidates running for public office and to support those who best put public interest first and work to bring citizens together, regardless of political party.

To help citizens learn about candidates, we have created a questionnaire for you and your opponents running for Durango City Council. We will share your responses, question by question, along with those of your opponent with our 2,900 members and supporters on our website.

We will also share them with various media outlets which we believe will help citizens make the best decision about whom to support. We have provided you with a set of seven political principles we believe should guide political conduct in Durango. Please review them carefully. One of our questions will be about these seven principles.

Please have your answers completed and sent to rtblaplatacounty@gmail.com by next Monday, March 10, 2024. Please meet the deadline. Restore the Balance strives to educate voters about your views toward public service, and toward important issues. It would be a disservice for the public to see only your opponent's policies and not yours.

Thank you for your participation. If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the process, please send them to me at rtblaplatacounty@gmail.com

Thank you,

David Tanaka
Restore the Balance

Restore the Balance

Seven political principles to guide political conduct

We must do more than simply be against extremism. We must act against it whenever we can. We embrace the following set of principles to govern political conduct by candidates and citizens alike. **WE BELIEVE:**

1. Political parties, citizens and elected officials should vigorously compete over values, principles, and ideas, but must also find common ground to solve problems and pass needed legislation.
2. Facts, supported by objectively examined evidence, are the basis for what to believe and how to act.
3. No one person or political party has a monopoly on the best public policy proposals; communication and good faith negotiations are essential to the legislative process.
4. The public interest must come before party interests, for voters and elected officials alike.
5. Extremists of all kinds attract supporters and money by appealing to fears and resentments, amplifying divisions instead of truly addressing problems.
6. Citizens should be free to run for or hold office without being threatened or harassed.
7. Citizens may certainly exercise their personal freedoms, but they may not ignore their personal responsibilities to the community at large.

Candidate Questionnaire For Durango City Council

1. Why are you running for Durango City Council? What qualifications do you bring?
I believe that local government has the ability to impact lives everyday. We can work together to see our vision come to reality. I served for 8 years as a council member in San Antonio. I was Chair of the mayor's housing commission. I am currently on the board of Local First and the Alliance
2. Do you agree with the seven principles Restore the Balance feels should guide political conduct in Colorado? If you do not agree with one or more of these principles, please identify and explain why.

Yes. I agree.

3. How will you support the Durango City Council's strategic plan objective to "Foster strong community group partnerships through effective communication and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusivity efforts while focusing on increased accessibility of services for underserved communities?"

I would reinstate the advisory boards that were dissolved by the previous council and create my own "kitchen cabinet" when complicated issues arise. *I would also like to see more neighborhood associations.*

4. If elected, what actions will you take to help find common ground with your fellow elected officials?

It starts with trust and open communication. I would schedule monthly coffee and lunches and then extend it to city staff.

5.

6. If elected, how will you listen to and represent the concerns of constituents who don't agree with you?

It's normal to have disagreements with people in political settings but we often can find something to agree upon then begin from there. We all love Durango and want what is best for our community.

7. What do you perceive as the top three issues facing Durango that you propose to address, and how would you address those issues if elected?

Housing affordability, transportation and deferred maintenance. The majority of what the council does is oversee existing streets, parks, and facilities. The council is doing a fine job addressing workforce housing but a different approach is needed for the unhoused. I would like to see a greater emphasis on the most vulnerable. I would support more investment in frequent transit.

8. Multiple individuals were convicted by our judicial system for their illegal activities on January 6th. Do you support the president's action to commute sentences for specific individuals and the full and complete pardon of all other participants?

9. NO!!

10. Is there a current policy, platform plank(s), or pieces of legislation that the Durango City Council has endorsed or supported that you disagree with? Why?

I disagree with the decision to silence people coming to speak on a variety of issues because people need a platform to express their opinions. I disagree with the censure of Olivier Bosemans because it seems political retribution so close to an election. I disagree with how unhoused people are treated. It was inhumane.