



Every election cycle, Carrizozo Works, Inc. (CWI) sends a questionnaire to candidates running in contested races in Carrizozo. Since CWI is a 501(c)(3), we are prohibited from endorsing or lobbying for any political cause or individual. The board of CWI feels it is important that voters have the opportunity to get to know the people who will soon serve in elected positions. To that end, questions were vetted by the board in the hope that they will give an overall impression of the candidates. The questionnaire is made up of the same questions in the same order and was sent to the candidates through SurveyMonkey.com. The answers were then copied and pasted into Word, saved as a PDF. No corrections or alterations of any kind were made.

Since the school board has two incumbents running for two positions, CWI decided not to do a questionnaire for that position.

Here are the questions and answers from the three people running for trustee in the order and spelling of name on the ballot.

Thank you to the candidates for taking the time and effort to do this questionnaire.

Mital Jagdishbhai Bhakta

1) Why do you want to be a trustee?

I'm running again because service isn't a title, it's a responsibility. As trustee, I've focused on actions that matter: accountability, safety, and local growth. I want to continue earning trust through decisions that make our town proud today and stronger tomorrow.

2) What qualities and experience do you bring to the position?

I bring two years of hands-on trustee experience, a record of responsible decision-making, and the ability to turn discussion into results. My background in business management has taught me fiscal discipline, transparency, and teamwork. I believe in steady progress, clear communication, and earning trust through action, not promises.

3) What organizations or associations do you belong to?

I'm an active member of the Carrizozo Chamber of Commerce and the Methodist Church cantata program. I also take part in local pickleball activities, community events, and volunteer cleanup efforts. Staying involved keeps me connected to the people and values that make Carrizozo a strong and caring town.

4) How do you see the relationship between the mayor and the trustees?

I believe the relationship between the mayor and trustees should be built on mutual respect, open communication, and shared goals for the town's success. I've valued the mayor's support and teamwork during my term, especially through collaboration with the Southeastern Economic Development District of New Mexico. Together, we can continue making thoughtful, united decisions for our community.

5) What are the 3 top issues the Town of Carrizozo face?

Our town's top priorities are strengthening local business, improving infrastructure, and creating a more vibrant, united community. Carrizozo has the heart and potential to grow, we just need consistent leadership that listens, plans, and delivers. My focus is turning small ideas into lasting progress our town can be proud of.

6) Do you think our main street/downtown is healthy and successful? If not, what would you do to change that?

Main Street has improved, but it's not yet as vibrant as it could be. I'd like to see more small-business support, storefront revitalization, and community events that draw residents and visitors downtown. With consistent effort and collaboration, we can make Carrizozo's Main Street truly thrive.

7) If you could change one thing in our zoning code, what would it be and why?

I'd modernize our zoning code to welcome new businesses and housing while preserving our town's charm. By working with regional partners and promoting Carrizozo's strengths, we can attract investment, create local jobs, and give families more reasons to live, work, and grow right here at home.

8) How do you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process in our town?

I plan to keep residents actively involved through open communication, public input meetings. Listening to concerns before decisions are made builds trust and better results. Everyone deserves a voice in shaping Carrizozo's future, and I'll work to make sure every voice is heard.

9) If elected, what three steps would you take to put our city on a firmer financial footing?

First, ensure every dollar is spent responsibly and transparently. Second, strengthen local business partnerships to grow our tax base. Third, pursue state and regional grants for infrastructure and community projects. Fiscal discipline and smart growth will keep Carrizozo on solid financial ground.

10) Is there anything you'd like to add?

Serving Carrizozo has been an honor, and I'm grateful for the trust our community has placed in me. I'm running again to keep that trust through honesty, hard work, and results. Together, we

can continue building a town that reflects our shared pride, strong values, and hope for a better future.

Damian Edmund Luna

1) Why do you want to be a trustee?

I want to continue being trustee for my community because the people that are here deserve to have their voices heard and needs fulfilled

2) What qualities and experience do you bring to the position?

I bring 2 years of experience to the position with my last 2 yrs being on the board.

3) What organizations or associations do you belong to?

I belong to the CERT program as well as being the Fire Chief for Carrizozo.

4) How do you see the relationship between the mayor and the trustees?

I see the relationship between the board and mayor as a well oiled machine helping each other and our community

5) What are the 3 top issues the Town of Carrizozo face?

1. Roads 2 economic development in the town 3. Getting a GRT committee together

6) Do you think our main street/downtown is healthy and successful? If not, what would you do to change that?

It is healthy to a point but needs work. Help trying to promote local business

7) If you could change one thing in our zoning code, what would it be and why?

I believe that the zoning codes are better now after working on them for the last two years

8) How do you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process in our town?

By going door to door and getting the input from them

9) If elected, what three steps would you take to put our city on a firmer financial footing?

1 having a GRT committee 2. Getting businesses interested in coming to Carrizozo. 3. Fix all infrastructures for all needs of new businesses

10) Is there anything you'd like to add?

Thank you for allowing me to be part of the current board and for the possibilities of continuing to be part of it. Carrizozo has been my home and I'm very grateful to be allowed to have the

opportunity to stay on the board if the residents will allow me to stay. Carrizozo definitely deserves to have their voices heard and someone who is willing and dedicated to do their absolute best for the community of Carrizozo. Thank you Carrizozo for the support and encouragement to continue this journey.

Henrietta Sissy R Griego

1) Why do you want to be a trustee?

Represent the community and help Carrizozo to continue to progress in a positive way

2) What qualities and experience do you bring to the position?

I am a lifelong resident; I served on the Carrizozo School Board for 8 yrs, served on the new horizon board and I am a active member of Saint Rita Catholic Church.

3) What organizations or associations do you belong to?

I recently joined Carrizozo Chamber of Commerce and intent to join the women's club as well as the Historical Society

4) How do you see the relationship between the mayor and the trustees?

The relationship hinges on the mutual respect and open commutation. When a mayor shares information transparently and involves trustees in planning, trustees are likely to support initiatives and trust leadership

5) What are the 3 top issues the Town of Carrizozo face?

Create a lodger's tax committee needs to be established so the town can grant lodgers tax as requested. We need to increase law enforcement. Explore the possibility of installing a splash pad in place of the swimming pool.

6) Do you think our main street/downtown is healthy and successful? If not, what would you do to change that?

Yes, I think the streets and downtown look great. We just need to continue to maintain both

7) If you could change one thing in our zoning code, what would it be and why?

Clarify the existing ordinance as to the age and condition of manufactured homes and move forward from there. The ordinance needs to be reviewed, finalized and inforced

8) How do you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process in our town?

Personally invite the residents to the town hall meeting and encourage the input, If they are unable to attend keep them informed of our town government, also make my self available if they would like to discuss any issures.

9) If elected, what three steps would you take to put our city on a firmer financial footing?

Check and balances for spending which would involve manager of each department such as park and rec. road construction etc. Conduct a independent audit. Set spending amount which would require approval by the head of department and mayor larger sums require approval by the trustees.

10) Is there anything you'd like to add?

Respondent skipped this question