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NEWS RELEASE

Colorado Municipal League releases fall municipal election preview

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Thursday, October 3, 2024, Denver, Colo. – On Nov. 5, voters in at least 70 cities and towns across Colorado will consider local candidates and/or ballot measures in municipal elections. Only 30 of these elections are regularly scheduled; 40 municipalities are holding special elections for constituents to vote on initiated and referred ballot measures. More than 115 municipal ballot issues and questions will be considered across the state. At least seven municipalities canceled their regular elections.

Ballot measures being considered by voters include:

Tax and bond issues

Sales and use tax increases will be considered in:

- Cañon City – through 2050 to fund the construction and maintenance of a community recreation pool
- Castle Rock – for public safety, including additional police and fire personnel
- Denver – one tax increase for health and hospital authority services and a separate tax increase for affordable housing
- Fort Lupton – for law enforcement, including additional police personnel and equipment
- Leadville – for an aquatics center
- Loveland – for any municipal purpose, including services and infrastructure
- Mead – for public safety, including additional police officers and equipment
- Merino – for the health, safety, and welfare of residents
- Olathe – for law enforcement, transportation and road improvements, and maintenance of existing infrastructure
- Palisade – for capital infrastructure projects and emergency services
- Severance – for transportation facilities and infrastructure
- Superior – for capital projects, including streets, swimming pools, and parks and playgrounds, in conjunction with authorization for a \$20 million increase in debt

Sales and use tax extensions will be on the ballot in:

- Aspen – 20-year extension for affordable housing and day care
- Colorado Springs – 10-year extension for road repairs and improvements
- Fort Collins – 20-year extension for street maintenance
- Greeley – extension of the city's sales tax on food, until repealed by voters or city council, to fund capital improvement projects
- Longmont – indefinite extension for open space purposes

New lodging taxes will be considered in:

- Gypsum – for roads, parks and recreation, special events, and other uses
- Hudson – for parks and recreational facilities and services
- Hot Sulphur Springs – for projects and services addressing visitor impacts and other municipal purposes
- Keystone – for capital infrastructure projects and public safety
- Kiowa – for streets and capital improvements
- Minturn – short-term rental excise tax to fund community projects and services addressing visitor impacts
- Monument – for lodging tax administration and parks
- Yuma – for general governmental purposes

Lodging tax increases will be on the ballot in:

- Black Hawk – for resort destination development opportunities
- Montrose – for streets, childcare, affordable housing, tourism promotion, and public transit
- Mt. Crested Butte – increasing existing short-term rental excise tax to fund community housing

Other taxes issues include:

- Aspen – extension of the city's real estate transfer tax through 2060
- Aspen – recategorizing and lowering a tax on motor vehicles sold, registered, and used in the city as a use tax with the revenue to be used for maintenance of roads, bridges, and other transit related infrastructure
- Avon – establishing a use tax on construction materials for projects exceeding \$125,000 to fund community housing
- Hot Sulphur Springs – use tax on construction materials to fund any municipal purpose
- Woodland Park – repealing a sales tax, the proceeds of which are turned over to the Woodland Park School District each year

Revenue retention and debt

Keystone will ask voters to allow the town to retain and spend all revenue collected from all sources, including taxes and grants. Loveland will request authority to retain and spend all revenues collected for a 12-year period to fund police and fire, as well as construction and maintenance of streets and parks.

The following municipalities will seek authorization to increase municipal debt:

- Englewood – up to \$41.5 million for improvements to parks and recreation facilities to be paid through an increase in property tax revenue up to \$4 million annually
- Greeley – up to \$65 million for transportation projects

- Superior – up to \$20 million for capital projects, including streets, swimming pools, and parks and playgrounds to be paid off, in part, by a sales and use tax increase

Election changes

Voters in De Beque, Oak Creek, and Wellington will decide whether to move their regularly scheduled elections to November of even-numbered years.

Governance

Gilcrest will ask voters to eliminate term limits for the town's elected officials.

Publication requirements

To save money on publication costs, Elizabeth and Fort Morgan will request authorization to publish ordinances by title only in the newspaper, provided the ordinances are published in full on the municipalities' websites.

Dacono, Fort Lupton, and La Salle will ask voters for approval to publish financial information relating to payment of bills, contracts awarded, and rebates allowed on municipal websites rather than newspapers.

Marijuana

In two separate measures, Alamosa residents will decide whether to authorize medical marijuana sales and an associated 2% sales tax, as well as recreational marijuana sales and an associated 5% sales tax.

Colorado Springs residents will vote on a charter amendment that would prohibit retail marijuana establishments within city limits, as well as a separate initiated measure that would limit, but not prohibit, the operation of retail marijuana establishments.

Erie will ask voters to authorize a 5% excise tax on retail marijuana sales.

Fort Lupton voters will decide whether the city should allow operation of a limited number of marijuana establishments within specific zoning districts. Residents will also vote on whether the city should levy a 1.5% excise tax on unprocessed retail marijuana.

Littleton will ask voters to increase the city's special tax on retail marijuana sales by 4% to fund public safety and homelessness prevention.

Loveland will ask residents to authorize medical and retail marijuana sales. The measure is contingent on voters passing a 5% excise tax on retail marijuana sales.

Mead voters will decide whether to authorize medical and retail marijuana in specific districts.

Sterling will ask voters to approve a 5% excise tax on retail and medical marijuana sales to fund marijuana administration and general purposes.

Charter amendments

Various charter amendments will appear on the ballot in home rule municipalities across the state:

- Boulder – three charter amendments conforming city council executive session procedures with state statute, clarifying criteria for board and commission members, and setting compensation for mayor and city council
- Broomfield – seven proposed amendments that adopt Title 1, Colorado Revised Statutes, to govern elections and change terminology, limiting mayor and councilmembers to no more than three consecutive terms of office, extending the mayoral term length from two to four years, permitting council to approve rezonings and other land use cases by resolution, providing for publication of ordinances online, updating language around the Personnel Merit System, and modernizing language regarding the city and county attorney
- Cherry Hills Village – a charter amendment relating to the management and protection of Quincy Farm, and a competing citizen-initiated charter amendment and related referred advisory question regarding property tax
- Craig – modifying local campaign finance limits to require a local post-election filing and to follow the Fair Campaign Practices Act
- Dacono – amendments changing governance structure to a council-manager form of government, conforming municipal court maximum penalties with state statute
- Denver – five charter amendments adding the Agency of Human Rights and Community Partnerships as a cabinet department, removing a requirement that police officers and firefighters be United States citizens, establishing collective bargaining for non-supervisory city employees, allowing binding arbitration between the city and firefighters during an impasse in collective bargaining, and establishing non-discretionary adjustments to city council salaries
- Dillon – conforming referendum and recall petition signature requirements with the Colorado Constitution
- Englewood – amendments to directly elect the city’s mayor and remove an at-large council position, and establishing a supermajority requirement to fill a council vacancy by appointment
- Fort Collins – amendments modernizing charter language regarding elections, updating language regarding recall petitions and elections, and modernizing language regarding initiative and referendum processes
- Greeley – amendments allowing police sergeants to be included in collective bargaining and modernizing terms regarding finance operations
- Loveland – amendments reducing to a majority of the number of city council votes required to appoint and remove a city manager and city attorney
- Monument – permitting the town manager to reside outside of town boundaries
- Morrison – amending processes around filling board vacancies
- Mountain View – amendments changing governance structure to a council-manager form of government, adding language on the adoption of emergency ordinances
- Pueblo – four charter amendments removing maximum penalty provisions from the city charter and permitting the city council to establish maximum penalties consistent with state statute, extending the timelines for recall petition review and elections, modernizing election provisions, and modernizing terms and technology relating to emergency ordinances, vacancies, publication of ordinances and notices, city attorney residency requirements, compulsory retirement, and other matters referenced within its charter
- Thornton – requiring a special election to fill council vacancies for offices with more than one year remaining in the term

- Wheat Ridge – modernizing language and clarifying ambiguities in the city’s charter and conforming to changes in Colorado law, establishing maximum height limits for Lutheran Legacy Campus

Other issues

- Aurora – repealing the city’s restricted dog breed ban
- Black Hawk – approving a cost sharing agreement with Gilpin County to help operate the Gilpin County Community Center
- Dacono – authorizing increases to mayor and councilmember compensation
- Denver – adopting an ordinance prohibiting the manufacture, distribution, display, sale, or trade of fur products and adopting an ordinance prohibiting slaughterhouses within city limits
- Dillon – approving a planned unit development
- Fraser – approving formation of Fraser Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and a separate question increasing debt by up to \$25 million on behalf of the DDA
- Idaho Springs – authorizing a land swap for the purpose of aligning Virginia Canyon Mountain Park with Gilson Gulch
- Lafayette – engaging in collective bargaining with police officers
- Lyons – requiring a vote of citizens to annex certain properties less than five acres
- Walsenburg – asking whether the city should establish a trash and recycling collection and disposal system

Housing

Municipalities across the state will seek funding for affordable housing through tax questions discussed previously. In addition, Snowmass Village will seek approval to construct a new workforce housing project consisting of up to 79 units at a cost of up to \$86 million paid from tourism tax revenues, rental income, grants, and other contributions.

Upcoming elections

The City of Superior will hold a special election on Dec. 10 to ask voters to approve the home rule charter submitted by the charter commission.

Not all ballots were available at the time of publication. Any ballot questions not included in this press release will be included in the post-election summary. Colorado Municipal League thanks the municipal clerks who assisted CML staff in compiling this election information.

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Colorado Municipal League (CML) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established in 1923 and represents the interests of 271 cities and towns. For more information on CML, please visit cml.org, call 303-831-6411, or stay connected on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).