



COLORADO  
MUNICIPAL  
LEAGUE

## NEWS RELEASE

# Municipalities across Colorado vote on candidates, ballot measures

**Contact:** Kevin Bommer, executive director, [kbommer@cml.org](mailto:kbommer@cml.org), (303) 562-0442; Rachel Woolworth, municipal research analyst, [rwoolworth@cml.org](mailto:rwoolworth@cml.org)

**Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024, Denver, Colo.** – On Nov. 5, voters in at least 84 cities and towns across Colorado considered local candidates and/or ballot measures in municipal elections. Only 30 of these elections were regularly scheduled; 55 municipalities held special elections for constituents to vote on initiated and referred ballot measures. More than 120 municipal ballot issues and questions were considered across the state. At least seven municipalities canceled their regular elections.

The following results are unofficial and subject to change.

### Tax and bond issues

Sales and use tax increases passed 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
- **Crook** – for health, safety, and welfare of residents
- **Denver** – for health and hospital authority services
- **Glenwood Springs** – through 2044 for repair and maintenance of streets and underground utilities, including water and sewer
- **Leadville** – for an aquatics center
- **Superior** – for capital projects, including streets, swimming pools, and parks and playgrounds, in conjunction with authorization for a \$20 million increase in debt

A sales and use tax increase to fund public safety in **Mead** was ahead by 12 votes at time of publication.

Sales and use tax increases failed in:

- **Denver** – for affordable housing
- **Fort Lupton** – for law enforcement, including additional police personnel and equipment
- **Fowler** – for law enforcement, road and bridge, and the municipal golf course
- **Loveland** – for any municipal purpose, including services and infrastructure

- **Olathe** – for law enforcement, transportation and road improvements, and maintenance of existing infrastructure
- **Palisade** – for capital infrastructure projects and emergency services
- **Parachute** – for streets, utilities, infrastructure, parks, and other public improvements
- **Poncha Springs** – for general government purposes
- **Severance** – for transportation facilities and infrastructure
- **Springfield** – for general government expenses
- **Westminster** – for fire services, including personnel and facilities

Sales and use tax extensions passed 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

Lodging tax increases passed in:

- **Black Hawk** – for resort destination development opportunities
- **Keystone** – for capital infrastructure projects and public safety
- **Minturn** – short-term rental excise tax to fund community projects and services addressing visitor impacts
- **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
- **Trinidad** – for community projects

A measure creating a lodging tax in **Hot Sulphur Springs** to fund projects and services addressing visitor impacts, as well as other municipal purposes, was ahead by 10 votes at time of publication.

Lodging tax increases failed in:

- **Gypsum** – for roads, parks and recreation, special events, and other uses
- **Hudson** – for parks and recreational facilities and services
- **Kiowa** – for streets and capital improvements
- **Monument** – for lodging tax administration and parks
- **Yuma** – for general governmental purposes

Other tax issues:

In **Aspen**, voters passed two measures extending the city's real estate transfer tax through 2060 and 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** voters narrowly passed a measure establishing a use tax on construction materials for projects exceeding \$125,000 to fund community housing.

In **Hot Sulphur Springs**, voters rejected a use tax on construction materials to fund any municipal purpose.

**Woodland Park** voters rejected a measure to repeal a sales tax that helps fund the Woodland Park School District.

### **Revenue retention and debt**

**Keystone** voters granted the town authority to retain and spend all revenue collected from all sources, including taxes and grants. In **Lakewood**, residents authorized the city to retain and spend all revenue collected from all sources to fund parks, recreation, and open space; public safety; and maintenance of streets, sidewalks, paths, and infrastructure. **Loveland** voters authorized the city's request 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.

Voters in the following municipalities approved measures seeking 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**, **Fraser**, and **Oak Creek** passed measures authorizing their municipalities to move regular elections to November of even-numbered years. **Wellington** voters rejected a measure to change its regular election to November of even-numbered years.

### **Governance**

In **Gilcrest**, voters rejected a measure to eliminate term limits for the town's elected officials.

### **Publication requirements**

To save money on publication costs, **Elizabeth** and **Fort Morgan** granted their municipal governments 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** voters passed measures authorizing their municipal governments 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 rejected authorizing medical marijuana sales and an associated 2% sales tax, as well as recreational marijuana sales and an associated 5% sales tax.

**Colorado Springs** voters approved an initiated ordinance allowing the operation of retail marijuana establishments. Residents rejected a separate charter amendment prohibiting retail marijuana establishments within city limits.

In **Erie**, voters passed a 5% excise tax on retail marijuana sales.

**Fort Lupton** voters clarified that the city should allow operation of a limited number of marijuana establishments within specific zoning districts. Residents also supported the city levying a 1.5% excise tax on unprocessed retail marijuana.

In **Littleton**, voters passed a measure increasing the city's special tax on retail marijuana sales by 4% to fund public safety and homelessness prevention.

**Loveland** residents approved medical and retail marijuana sales, as well as a 5% excise tax on retail marijuana sales.

**Mead** voters rejected a measure to authorize medical and retail marijuana sales in specific districts.

In **Sterling**, voters narrowly approved a 5% excise tax on retail and medical marijuana sales to fund marijuana administration and general purposes.

### **Charter amendments**

- **Boulder** – approved 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** – approved six amendments that adopt Title 1 of the Colorado Revised Statutes to govern elections and change terminology, limiting mayor and councilmembers to no more than three consecutive terms of office, 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, and rejected one amendment extending the mayoral term length from two to four years
- **Cherry Hills Village** – rejected a charter amendment relating to the management and protection of Quincy Farm, a competing citizen-initiated charter amendment, and related referred advisory question regarding property tax
- **Craig** – approved modifying local campaign finance limits to require a local post-election filing and to follow the Fair Campaign Practices Act
- **Dacono** – approved an amendment to allow penalties for municipal code violations to be set by ordinance, subject to limits for municipal violations in state statute, and narrowly rejected an amendment changing governance structure to a council-manager form of government
- **Denver** – approved 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

- **Englewood** – approved 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** – approved amendments modernizing charter language regarding elections, updating language regarding recall petitions and elections, and modernizing language regarding initiative and referendum processes
- **Greeley** – approved amendments allowing police sergeants to be included in collective bargaining and modernizing terms regarding finance operations
- **Loveland** – rejected amendments reducing to a majority of the number of city council votes required to appoint and remove a city manager and city attorney
- **Monument** – approved an amendment permitting the town manager to reside outside of town boundaries
- **Morrison** – approved amending processes around filling board vacancies
- **Mountain View** – approved an amendment adding language on the adoption of emergency ordinances and rejected an amendment changing governance structure to a council-manager form of government
- **Pueblo** – approved two charter amendments removing maximum penalty provisions from the city charter and permitting the city council to establish maximum penalties consistent with state statute and extending the timelines for recall petition review and elections, and rejected two amendments 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** – approved requiring a special election to fill council vacancies for offices with more than one year remaining in the term
- **Westminster** – rejected an amendment creating a geographic ward system for elections
- **Wheat Ridge** – approved amendments modernizing language and clarifying ambiguities in the city’s charter and conforming to changes in Colorado law, and establishing maximum height limits for Lutheran Legacy Campus

### Other issues

**Aurora** voters agreed to a repeal of the city’s restricted dog breed ban.

Voters in **Black Hawk** approved a cost sharing agreement with Gilpin County to help operate the Gilpin County Community Center.

A measure to increase mayor and councilmember compensation failed in **Dacono**.

In **Denver**, voters rejected an ordinance prohibiting the manufacture, distribution, display, sale, or trade of fur products. Voters also rejected an ordinance prohibiting slaughterhouses within city limits.

**Idaho Springs** voters approved a land swap for the purpose of aligning Virginia Canyon Mountain Park with Gilson Gulch.

**Lafayette** residents directed the city to establish a collective bargaining ordinance for police officers.

**Lyons** voters passed a measure to require a vote of citizens to annex certain properties of less than five acres.

In **Paonia**, voters authorized the town to continue a fund, paid via utility billing, for the construction and maintenance of sidewalks.

**Walsenburg** residents declined to establish a trash and recycling collection and disposal system.

### **Housing**

Voters in municipalities across the state supported funding for affordable housing through tax questions discussed previously. In addition, **Snowmass Village** voters approved construction of 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.

The Colorado Municipal League thanks the municipal clerks who assisted CML staff in compiling this election information.

###

*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](http://cml.org), call 303-831-6411, or stay connected on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#).*