



NEWS RELEASE

Colorado Municipal League releases fall municipal election preview

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Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2023, Denver, Colo. – On Nov. 7, voters in at least 70 cities and towns across Colorado will consider local candidates and ballot measures as part of the general election. At least 20 municipalities will vote solely on candidates, while many more will vote on initiated and referred ballot issues and questions. More than 75 municipal ballot measures are being considered across the state.

Ballot issues and questions being considered by voters include:

Tax and bond issues

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

- Brighton – for supporting public safety, including additional police officers and equipment
- Castle Pines – for street improvements and maintenance
- Cripple Creek – for continuation and expansion of vocational education programs
- Fort Collins – for maintaining and upgrading parks and recreation facilities and the transit system, and for programs related to pollution reduction, renewable energy and sustainability
- Fountain – to expand the boundaries of the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority to include the city and to contribute funds through a tax increase
- La Junta – for the general fund
- Louisville – for acquisition and maintenance of open space, to mitigate fire risk on such lands and to extend a 2012 sales tax to be divided between separate parks and open space funds
- Loveland – for fire protection services
- Rifle – for street and sidewalk improvements and maintenance

Boulder is requesting an extension of its sales and use tax to fund arts, culture and heritage, as well as the general fund.

Frederick is seeking authority to utilize a pre-existing sales and use tax that helps fund open space, to also fund the construction, acquisition and maintenance of parks, trails and related amenities.

Property tax mill levy increases will be on the ballot in:

- Castle Pines – for park, recreation, trail and open space amenities

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- Fort Collins – for funding affordable housing
- Golden – for capital needs and operational costs of the Golden Fire Department

Longmont is asking residents to approve three property and sales tax increases. One ballot measure seeks a mill levy increase for a new library and a sales tax increase to fund library maintenance and operations. A second measure seeks a mill levy increase for construction of an arts and entertainment center and a sales tax increase to fund the center’s maintenance and operations. A third ballot measure seeks a mill levy increase to fund construction of multiple recreation facilities, as well as affordable housing in partnership with the YMCA, and a sales tax increase to fund the maintenance and operation of one of those facilities.

Lodging taxes will be considered in:

- Pueblo – for affordable childcare programs
- Ridgway – for tourism promotion, economic development, affordable and workforce housing, childcare and programs to facilitate home ownership
- Salida – solely levied on short-term rentals for funding affordable housing, in addition to imposing an annual license fee

Other tax issues include:

- Avon – a use tax on construction materials to fund any municipal purpose
- Steamboat Springs – a question asking residents to allocate revenues from the city’s preexisting public accommodations tax to improve amenities that will enhance community identity, environmental sustainability and economic health, to acquire property for parks and open space, and to preserve the city’s natural resources
- Wheat Ridge – seeking authority to increase debt up to \$75 million and approval to extend the city’s sales and use tax to fund sidewalk, bike lane and street improvements

Revenue retention

The following municipalities will be requesting authority to retain and spend all revenues collected from previously approved taxes:

- Golden – to retain and expend all revenues from the 2022 lodging tax for addressing visitor impacts and funding community projects and capital improvements
- Littleton – to retain and expend all revenues from the 2022 sales and use tax for street and sidewalk maintenance and traffic solutions
- Telluride – to retain and expend all revenues from the 2021 lodging tax to fund tourism, manage the effects of tourism and fund other town purposes such as affordable housing and transportation

The following municipalities will be requesting authority to retain and spend all revenues collected from all sources:

- Loveland — for a 12-year period to fund police and fire, streets, parks and affordable housing construction and maintenance
- Idaho Springs – for 2023 and each subsequent year

Colorado Springs is requesting authority to retain \$4.75 million of 2022 revenues for acquiring property and constructing a training facility for the Colorado Springs Police Department.

Home rule

Erie voters will decide whether to adopt a proposed home rule charter and, if approved, whether to amend the new charter's provision on council compensation.

In Superior, voters will decide whether to form a home rule charter commission.

Governance

Las Animas residents will decide in separate questions whether to make the city clerk and city treasurer appointive rather than elected positions.

Mt. Crested Butte is asking voters to extend consecutive term limits for councilmembers to three terms.

Marijuana

Sterling is asking residents to authorize medical and retail marijuana, and a separate contingent question authorizing a 5% tax on retail marijuana sales.

Lochbuie is asking residents whether they support marijuana sales.

Election changes

Evans is asking voters to move their regular election from April in even-numbered years to November in even-numbered years.

Westminster is asking voters whether the city should propose electing some or all councilmembers from geographic wards rather than at-large.

Charter amendments

Several charter amendments are on the ballot in home rule municipalities across the state.

- Boulder – amendments relating to signatures on nominating petitions, timing requirements relating to the powers of initiative, referendum and recall, referring to state law for initiated charter amendments
- Commerce City – allowing publishing of legal notices on the city's website
- Craig – amendments to change the makeup of city council to select a council president from among the council in lieu of an elected mayor and to authorize the city manager to grant revocable permits for franchises and public utilities
- Dacono – amendments requiring council to appoint and remove appointed city officers by resolution and setting city manager employment expectations, incorporating an "Open Government Policy" for the council, amending provisions relating to new councilmembers taking office and the appointment of a mayor pro-tem
- Englewood – amendments relating to provisions regarding initiative, referendum and recall of elected officials, authority to approve subdivision plats and authority to approve contracts and land conveyances
- Fort Collins – amending qualifications for elective office to replace the general prohibition against convicted felons holding elective office, clarifying language around the referendum and petition process, removing residency requirements for certain city employees from the charter
- Golden – replacing terms used to describe city officers with generally applicable terms

- Greeley – amending provisions relating to positions eligible for collective bargaining in the police and fire departments
- Loveland – prohibiting taxes or fees on the retail sale of human food for home consumption, requiring voter ratification of certain urban renewal plans
- Parker – amendments concerning powers of the council, organization of municipal government, swearing in of police officers, and gifts and donations
- Steamboat Springs – extending the deadline for the city’s independent audit
- Telluride – conforming the charter’s definition of “qualified elector” with state law
- Westminster – amendments clarifying budget and contracting procedures, allowing publishing of legal notices on city website

Other issues

- Boulder – an initiated ordinance asking voters if the city should prioritize the removal of certain prohibited items on city property near school property or sidewalks
- Brush and Sterling – asking voters whether keeping backyard chickens should be permitted
- Commerce City – asking voters whether the council should authorize keeping chickens, ducks and bees in backyards
- Dacono – requesting to be included in the High Plains Library District
- Dolores – authorizing the publication of ordinances by title only, authorizing a property donation to Dolores Fire Protection District
- Steamboat Springs – increasing council compensation, allocating 75% of short-term rental tax revenues through 2042 to the Yampa Valley Housing Authority for affordable and attainable housing at Brown Ranch

Housing

Municipalities across the state are seeking funding for affordable and workforce housing initiatives in a variety of ways. The ballot measures highlighted below are explained earlier in this press release.

Ridgway and Salida are asking voters to increase their lodging tax while Telluride is asking for authority to retain and expend all revenues from the town’s 2021 lodging tax, all to fund affordable housing, among other objectives.

Fort Collins is asking voters to increase property tax while Longmont is asking voters to increase property and sales tax, both to support affordable housing.

Steamboat Springs is asking voters to allocate 75% of the city’s short-term rental tax revenues to the Yampa Valley Housing Authority through 2042 for affordable and attainable housing at Brown Ranch.

Note

Not all ballots were available at the time of publication. Any questions not included in this press release will be included in the post-election summary. CML thanks the city, town and county 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 270 cities and towns. For more information on the Colorado Municipal League, please visit cml.org, call 303-831-6411 or stay connected on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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