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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Colorado Municipal League releases fall municipal election preview

Oct. 9, 2019, Denver, CO – On November 5, electors in nearly 80 cities and towns across Colorado will have their say on a combined total of more than 100 municipal tax issues and other questions, in addition to the many decisions they will make regarding state, county and district concerns. Voters in two-thirds of these municipalities will also vote on their elected officials.

Ballot questions being considered by voters include:

Tax and bond issues

Sales tax questions on the ballot include:

- Center – for the general fund;
- Monte Vista and Westcliffe – for capital projects;
- Alamosa and Fountain – for roads;
- Mead – for roads, includes a request for \$21 million in debt authority;
- Loveland – one question to fund community improvement projects, and one question to fund a community recreation center;
- Longmont – for a new recreation center with pool and ice rink, includes request for \$45.5 million in debt authority;
- Fort Lupton and Manitou Springs – for culture, recreation, and the arts; and
- Frederick and Montrose – to fund public safety

Tobacco tax questions will be on the ballot in Crested Butte, Glenwood Springs, New Castle and Vail, while Boulder is requesting a tax on tobacco vaping products.

Several municipalities are requesting sales tax extensions for a variety of uses, including:

- Boulder – for open space;
- Colorado Springs, Longmont, and Rocky Ford – for transportation improvements;
- Fort Lupton – for recreation facilities and park improvements;
- Nucla – for the provision of medical services; and
- Trinidad – for capital projects.

Property tax questions on the ballot include:

- New Castle – a mill levy extension for public safety and parks;
- Steamboat Springs – an increase for emergency services; and
- Rockvale – an increase for public safety needs.

Rico is requesting a property tax increase, along with \$3 million in debt authority, to finance a wastewater treatment plant. Rico is also asking if the town should be included of the San Miguel Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), which would entail adding both the property tax and the sales tax associated with inclusion in the authority.

In addition, Basalt is asking its voters to set the mill levy at a rate that matches its most recent amount levied.

Mountain View is seeking a tax on short term rentals. Mt. Crested Butte and Telluride, whose question includes authorization for up to \$9.9 million in debt, are asking for a short term rental tax as well, in order to fund affordable housing programs.

Other tax requests include:

- Black Hawk – an increase to the device tax;
- Fort Lupton – lodging tax; and
- Parker – an excise tax on new residential development.

Debt authority is being requested by:

- Boulder - \$10 million for a middle-income housing program;
- Grand Junction - \$70 million for transportation improvements;
- Sterling - \$37 million for wastewater system capital improvements; and
- Telluride - \$7.4 million for wastewater treatment plant capital improvements.

Revenue Retention

Colorado Springs is requesting permission to retain excess revenue from the 2018 fiscal year for parks and recreation improvements. Aspen is asking to retain all revenues from their 2017 tobacco tax, provided the funds continue to be spent on voter-approved purposes, and Louisville is asking to retain all revenues from their 2016 sales and use tax increase, to use for operating and maintenance expenses at their recreation center. Manitou Springs is requesting permission to retain the excess revenue remaining in a fund for downtown public improvements, and expend it on prior-approved purposes.

Historically, municipalities have passed a majority of the TABOR-related questions that have been asked, with a 61% approval rate of tax questions, 69% approval rate for debt questions, and 86% approval rate for revenue retention questions since voter approval was first required in 1993.

Sports Betting

As stipulated by House Bill 19-1327, Black Hawk, Central City, and Cripple Creek each have a question on their ballot requesting authorization of sports betting, provided that sports betting is also concurrently authorized at the statewide election.

Governance

Eagle voters will decide whether to form a home rule charter commission, as well as the commissioners that would serve if the voters approve the commission.

Nucla is asking to reduce the number of trustees from six to four. Iliff voters will consider eliminating term limits for their elected officials, and Parker voters have the option to implement a lifetime limit of four terms. Mountain View has a question that would implement a three-term limit on the mayor.

Voters in Brighton will decide whether to recall the mayor.

Broadband

Municipalities seeking approval to provide broadband service or partner with the private sector to provide that service include Edgewater, Greenwood Village, Lakewood, Mead, Parker and Rico.

Marijuana

Mead voters will decide whether to allow medical marijuana businesses and retail marijuana establishments, while Center and Loveland's questions include allowing cultivation, manufacturing and testing in addition to sales.

Craig has split the decision about retail marijuana into two questions: the first would allow retail sales, and the second would allow cultivation, manufacturing, testing and storage.

Alamosa has an initiative on the ballot that would ban outdoor growing of personal marijuana.

Louisville is asking voters to permit retail marijuana cultivation facilities within the city's industrial zones, as long as voters also approve a retail marijuana cultivation facility excise tax in a separate question.

Marijuana taxes are also being considered in Craig, Las Animas and Loveland.

Publication Requirements

To save money on publication costs, Cripple Creek, Rockvale, and Williamsburg are requesting authorization to no longer publish the bills list or contracts awarded, with Cripple Creek also seeking permission to publish ordinances by title rather than in full.

Election Changes

Holyoke is asking their voters to move their regular town elections to November of even-numbered years, while Craig is requesting a move to November of odd years.

Lafayette has two possible election changes on the ballot, with the first to adjust initiative and referendum procedures, and the other making changes to the city recall process, as well as a question about the process to fill vacancies on city council.

Charter Amendments

Denver, Northglenn and Parker are asking their voters to eliminate, clarify or otherwise update various provisions of their home rule charter.

Other possible Denver charter amendments include creating a Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, making changes to fire department personnel and adding residency requirements for elected officials.

Trinidad voters will decide whether to amend their charter to include the municipal landfill as an enterprise.

Other issues

Other issues to be decided include:

- Delta – grant a natural gas franchise to Black Hills Energy.
- Glendale - eliminate surety bond requirements for elected officials, and a second question to expand the radius within which the city manager must live.
- Grand Junction – allow for leases in business park for up to 99 years.
- Lakewood – authorization to contract with waste haulers.
- Longmont – allow for leases of city property for up to 30 years.
- Meeker – continuation of fluoridation of water.
- Mountain View – amend the process for increasing compensation of the mayor.
- Wheat Ridge – referendum on a rezoning ordinance.

CML wishes to thank the city and town clerks who assisted CML staff in compiling this election data.

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 www.cml.org or call 303-831-6411.

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