

# CITY OF THORNTON CANDIDATE BRIEFING

Thursday  
December 19, 2024

6:00 P.M.

Training Room

1. Welcome and Introductions – *Kristen Rosenbaum, City Clerk*
2. Election Guidelines (Estimated 20 Minutes) – *Kristen Rosenbaum, City Clerk*
3. Sign Code (Estimated 15 Minutes) – *Mike Hankinson, Code Compliance Supervisor*
4. Legal Overview (Estimated 30 Minutes) – *Tami Yellico, City Attorney*
5. Questions and Answers (Estimated 30 Minutes)
6. Adjournment

Additional information in the Candidate Briefing packet:

- City Council Appointments to Outside Boards and Committees Overview
- Description of City Services by Department
- Ward 1 Map
- Current Projects map
- CML Municipal Candidates Guide



CITY OF  
**THORNTON**

# 2025 Special Election Candidate Briefing

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December 19, 2024

# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Election Guidelines
- Sign Code
- Legal Overview

# City Council Candidacy

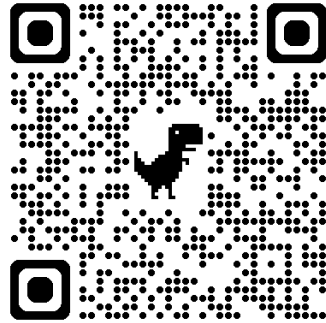
## Eligibility – City Charter 4.4

- U.S. Citizen
- At least 25 years of age
- Registered elector
- Resident of Thornton and of appropriate Ward for 12 consecutive months
  - Exception for annexed property or when reapportionment occurs
- Not convicted of a felony
- Does not hold another elected position in government

# Nomination Petitions

*C.R.S. 31-10-302*

- Petitions will be available December 24, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. in the Clerk's office or online at <https://www.thorntonco.gov/government/mayor-council/elections-voter-information>



- Petitions must be returned by 5:00 p.m. on January 13, 2025
- Casting of lots (drawing of names) by the Election Commission on Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.
- Ballot certified on January 23, 2023

# Nomination Petitions

## Petition requirements

- All petition pages need to be turned in at the same time
- Before circulating completely fill out top portion of petition



## **MARCH 25, 2025 SPECIAL ELECTION NOMINATION PETITION**

**May be circulated December 24, 2024 through January 13, 2025 Only**

**THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS BOX MUST BE FILLED OUT PRIOR TO CIRCULATING THE PETITION**

TO: Kristen Rosenbaum, City Clerk, City of Thornton, 9500 Civic Center Drive, Thornton, CO 80229:

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name of candidate) who resides at \_\_\_\_\_, (street address) in the City of Thornton, Colorado hereby petition to be a candidate for the office of City Council in Ward 1 to be voted at the Special Municipal Election to be held March 25, 2025.

### SIGNATURES OF PETITIONERS

	Date	Signature	Printed Name	Address Number and Street	City	County
1.						
2.						
3.						

# Nomination Petitions

## Signature Requirements

- At least 25 registered electors who reside within Ward 1
  - No one can sign more than one petition
- Elector must date, sign, and completely fill out name, address, City, and County
  - Ditto marks are not accepted
  - Elector can only sign for themselves
    - *Exception: Another registered elector can assist but cannot be the petition circulator and cannot assist more than one person.*

### SIGNATURES OF PETITIONERS

	Date	Signature	Printed Name	Address Number and Street	City	County
1.						
2.						

# Nomination Petitions

- Circulator needs to initial pages 1-2.

16.					
# of signatures on this page		<b>Circulator's Initials</b>		# of VALID signatures on this page	

- Circulator needs to sign and notarize second page of each petition after circulating but before submitting to the Clerk's office

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## AFFIDAVIT OF CIRCULATOR

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name of circulator) hereby certify that I circulated this petition and that each signature is the signature of the person whose name it purports to be and that each signer has stated that he/she is a registered elector of Thornton and of Ward 1 for which this nomination is made.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Circulator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Subscribed and sworn before me in the County of \_\_\_\_\_, State of Colorado, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Notary's official signature)

(Notary Stamp)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Commission Expiration)



# Nomination Petitions

## ACCEPTANCE OF NOMINATION

I, the undersigned, being first duly sworn, depose and state that:

- I am a citizen of the United States.
- I am at least twenty-five years of age.
- I have been a resident of Ward 1, of the City of Thornton for twelve consecutive months immediately preceding the election.
- I am a registered elector.
- I have never been convicted of a felony.
- I am aware that, if elected, I cannot hold another elected position in government.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name of candidate), hereby accept the nomination tendered me by the foregoing petitioners for the office of Ward 1 for the remainder of the term which was vacated on November 27, 2024.

Signature of Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Residence Address \_\_\_\_\_

Subscribed and sworn before me in the County of _____, State of Colorado, this day of _____.	
_____ (Notary's official signature)	(Notary Stamp)
_____ (Commission Expiration)	

**PLEASE INDICATE BELOW THE WAY YOU WISH YOUR NAME TO APPEAR ON THE BALLOT. NO DEGREE OR TITLE IS PERMITTED. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.**



\_\_\_\_\_  
**PRINT NAME HERE**

- Candidates only need to fill in one “Acceptance of Nomination”
- Fill out how you want your name to appear on the ballot
  - Quotation marks are allowed but not parenthesis

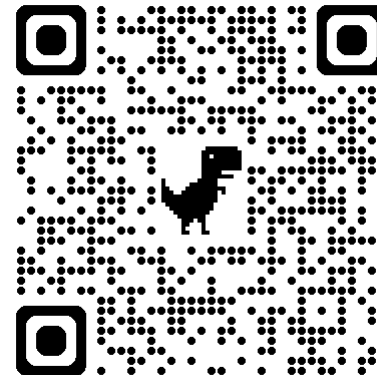
# Nomination Petitions

## Sufficient Petitions

- Candidates will be notified concerning sufficiency of their petition

# Campaign Finance

- Resources
  - City Charter, Chapter III – Elections.
  - City Code, Article VI – Elections.
  - Colorado Constitution, Article XXVIII
  - Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 1, Article 45
- Colorado Secretary of State's Office, [www.sos.state.co.us](http://www.sos.state.co.us)
- City's Election Website – <https://www.thorntonco.gov/government/mayor-council/elections-voter-information>
- City of Thornton's Electronic Reporting - <https://candidatemanager.thorntonco.gov/>



# Campaign Finance

## Who needs to file with the City Clerk?

- All local candidates
- All local committees (Candidate, Political, Small Donor, Issue)
- All committees contributing to a local candidate

# Campaign Finance

## What needs to be filed with the City Clerk?

- **Candidate Affidavit**
  - Within 10 days of becoming a candidate
- **Candidate Committee Registration**
  - Must be submitted prior to accepting any contributions
  - Each candidate may only have one candidate committee
- **Candidate Committee Reports**
- **Statement of Personal Expenditure by a Candidate**
  - Has not received contributions but has made expenditures of personal funds

“A person is a candidate for election if the person has publicly announced an intention to seek election to public office or retention of a judicial office and thereafter has received a contribution or made an expenditure in support of the candidacy.” - *Colorado Constitution, Article XXVIII, Section 2*

- **Candidate Statement of Non-Receipt of Contributions or Non-Expenditure of Funds**
  - Candidates who do not have a committee and have not received contributions or made expenditures

# Campaign Finance

## Contributions

*Anything of value given, directly or indirectly to a candidate committee*

- Bank Accounts
  - All contributions received must be deposited and maintained in a separate account which must include the name of the committee
- Limits
  - Limit of \$400, per election, of aggregate contributions from any one person, including a political party and excluding a small donor committee
  - Limit of \$4,000, per election, in aggregate contributions from any one small donor committee
- Reporting requirements
  - Contributions of \$20, including in-kind, or more must be itemized
  - Contributions of \$100 or more, including in-kind, must also include occupation and employer of the contributor
  - Political committees and small donor committees that contribute to your campaign must also file a report with the City Clerk (a copy of the report submitted to the SOS is sufficient)
- Prohibitions
  - Cash or coin exceeding \$100
  - A person acting as a conduit for contributions to a committee
  - Anonymous contributions of \$20 or more
  - Making a contribution with the expectation of being reimbursed
  - Contributions from another candidate committee

# Campaign Finance

## Expenditures

*Money an individual or committee spends and occurs when it is made, obligated, or a contract established*

- Reporting requirements
  - All expenditures of \$20 or more must be itemized
  - Reimbursements by the campaign to candidates, staff, and volunteers
- Prohibitions
  - \$100 in cash or coin in any single expenditure

# Campaign Finance

## When do reports need to be filed?

Report	Due	Reporting Period
90 days prior	December 26, 2024	Date of first expenditure or contribution – December 20, 2024
60 days prior	January 24, 2025	December 21, 2024 – January 19, 2025
30 days prior	February 24, 2025	January 20, 2025 – February 19, 2025
15 days prior	March 10, 2025	February 20, 2025 – March 5, 2025
30 days after	April 24, 2025	March 6, 2025 – April 19, 2025

- Reports can be filed electronically provided the report has been signed by the Candidate or Registered Agent
- Annually on March 1 (unless 1<sup>st</sup> falls on Saturday, Sunday, or holiday) until committee is terminated
- Reports will be published on the City's website the next business day after the report is due



# Campaign Finance

## Late and Incomplete Filings

- Penalty for past due reports
  - \$50 per day, including weekends and holidays for every day a report remains outstanding beyond the due date
- Registered Agent or Candidate will have 30 days from the date the notice is received to file an amended report

# Campaign Finance

## Terminating a Candidate Committee

- Must file a zero report to terminate
- Cannot have outstanding debt
- For a candidate not elected, the committee must be terminated within one year following the election, unless there is a campaign finance complaint against the committee
- For a candidate elected, the committee must be terminated within one year following the date the candidate leaves office, unless there is a campaign finance complaint against the committee
- Unexpended contributions can be donated to:
  - Political party
  - Another candidate committee established by the same candidate (councilmember now running for Mayor)
  - Recognized charitable non-profit
  - Returned to contributors

# **Sign Code Regulations**

# Legal Overview

# Legal Overview Agenda

1. Home Rule Authority
2. Roles of City Manager, City Attorney & Council
3. Quasi-judicial duties
4. Open meetings/Open records

# Home Rule Authority

- The State Constitution grants home rule cities the –
  - “full right of self-government in both local and municipal matters...”
- *Colorado Constitution, Art. XX, Sec.6*

# Home Rule Authority

## *Continued*

- The Colorado Supreme Court expressly stated that:
  - “a home-rule city is not inferior to the General Assembly with respect to local and municipal matters”

*Bd. of County Comm'rs v. City of Thornton*, 629 P.2d 605, 609 (Colo. 1981)

# CHARTER – Duties of City Manager

(continued)

## General Administrative Organization

- City Manager
  - Appointed by City Council
  - Chief administrative officer
  - Responsible to Council for efficient administration of all departments except the City Attorney's Office



# CHARTER – City Attorney Duties

(continued)

- City Attorney
  - Legal advisor for City Council
  - Charter separates the City Attorney's department from the City Manager's
  - Advises Officers, Department and Boards & Commissions
  - Prepares or reviews all ordinances, contracts, bonds and other written instruments
  - Hires special counsel for assistance
  - Manages all legal claims made by the City and against the City

# Three Major Roles of Council:

Administrative

Legislative

Quasi-Judicial

# CHARTER – Administrative Duties of Council

- Approve an annual budget
- Power to make contracts
- Approve intergovernmental contracts
- Appoint City Manager, City Attorney and Municipal Court Judge
- Approve pay plan
- Approve union contracts

# CHARTER – Council’s Legislative Role

- Ordinances in many subjects
  - Development Code (e.g., citywide zoning districts)
  - Building Code
  - Sign Code
  - Finance and Taxation
  - Licenses, Permits and Businesses
  - Parks and Recreation
  - Health, Sanitation, Police Powers

# Council's Quasi-Judicial Role

Public Hearings to decide individualized applications.

These decisions impact applicants and can be subject to legal challenge in District Court.

Because the Council is essentially serving in a judge-like role, certain procedures have to be followed and other activities must be prevented.

*See also* Thornton City Code Section 2-197

# Public Hearings

1. Promote fairness to all sides, opportunity for comment
2. Evidence entered during the hearing process
3. Ex parte communications not permitted – the decision of Council must be supported by the evidence on record at the public hearing

# Examples

- Development Applications
  - Rezoning
  - Conceptual Site Plans
- Amendments to Chapter 18 require public hearings
- A public hearing is required on the proposed budget
- Oil and gas permits and marijuana businesses

# Conflicts of Interest

- Elected and appointed officials of the City must recuse themselves from discussing and voting on matters in which they have a conflict of interest.
- Actual conflicts – financial interest, more than an interest shared by the common public
- Perceived conflicts – should also be avoided
- *See also* Thornton City Code Section 2-192



# Open Meetings Law

- Official business must be conducted at either a special or regular meeting. (Council Chambers)
- Planning sessions and Council updates are working sessions, allow for more questions and discussion.
- All meetings of 3 or more members of Council conducting business are open meetings at which the public may attend and which must be noticed 24 hours in advance.

# Open Records Law

- The Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) provides that all public records be open for inspection at reasonable times. C.R.S. 24-72-201 to 206.
- As an elected official the safest assumption is that any email, text or written document discussing public business is subject to the open records law.
- Consider whether you are comfortable with the newspaper reading or publishing your email or other communication?

**Questions?**

## CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

### DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The City Manager is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the City Council. The City Manager is the chief executive officer of the City. The responsibilities of the City Manager's Office are to carry out the policies of City Council; implement City Council's vision, goals and objectives; develop and recommend policy solutions to community problems; and plan and develop new programs to meet the future needs of the City.

### CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The City Clerk is responsible for managing the official records of the City and providing information to the public. City Clerk functions include: reviewing, compiling, and publishing documents submitted for City Council, Thornton Development Authority, Thornton Arts, Sciences and Humanities Council, General Improvement District, and Thornton Emergency Telephone Service Authority (E-911) meetings; serving as the primary support for the Local Licensing Authority and Election Commission; preparing packets, agendas and minutes for such meetings; recording proceedings of City Council; administering City elections; administering liquor, marijuana, and other miscellaneous licensing; serving as a Passport Acceptance Facility; coordinating the recruitment process for the City's boards and commissions; providing primary notary services to the public and other departments; and coordinating the approval of the City Charter amendments, subsequent printing of the Charter, and Code amendments.

### COMMUNICATIONS

Communications produces information for citizens and community partner organizations regarding City programs, projects, events and policies, as well as Council activities and initiatives. Communications manages and produces: publications such as the City Voice newspaper; programming for the City's government access Cable Channel 8; the televising and Web streaming of City Council meetings; the City's Web page; and collateral communication materials such as brochures, bus shelter posters, and video presentations for the City as a whole and for specific departments. Communications also produces weekly electronic newsletters and administers the City's social media Web presences to keep City employees and citizens informed about City matters. Communications also handles media relations issues and communications in the event of citywide emergency situations.

### HUMAN RESOURCES

Human Resources is responsible for recruitment and selection of employees; classification and compensation analysis; processing payroll, administering employee policies, directives, and employment law; managing employee benefit programs; and

maintaining effective communications with employees at all levels of the organization.

### MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET OFFICE

The Office of Management and Budget is responsible for coordinating the annual operating and five-year capital budget process for the City. This group provides policy and resource management information and research to support the City Manager, City Council, and management staff. The Management and Budget Office coordinates the City policy planning and corporate reporting processes, including the Annual Budget Book, Annual Accomplishments Report, and the Monthly Financial Report (in collaboration with the Finance Department). In addition, the division implements reviews of departmental levels of service, tracks performance measures, and analyzes comparative benchmarking data. The division also provides policy staff support to the Mayor and Council representing the City on various outside boards and commissions. Finally, the Office of Management and Budget coordinates federal and state legislative efforts.

# CITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

City Development is responsible for guiding the current and future growth of the City. The Department provides the following services: providing information to the public; managing development processes; promoting and regulating development in the City; enforcing compliance with codes and ordinances; reviewing and approving development applications; administering and amending the codes and ordinances related to development; developing and maintaining GIS databases and web applications; and maintaining standardized maps.

## LONG RANGE PLANNING DIVISION

The Long Range Planning Division is responsible for maintaining, updating and implementing the Comprehensive Plan; preparing area plans and growth documents; providing professional and analytical support on other local and regional issues, and maintaining statistical data for the City. This Division also reviews and processes Metropolitan Districts, Metropolitan District Intergovernmental Agreements, and some Development Code amendments and updates.

## CURRENT PLANNING DIVISION

The Current Planning Division is responsible for the coordination of many development review functions for the City including annexations, zone change requests, conceptual site plans, subdivisions, development permits, and landscape architecture. Current Planning works with developers, residents, and other staff to address issues and prepare development projects for public hearings. Current Planning staff is the primary liaison with the Development Permits and Appeals Board and also processes Development Code amendments and updates.

## DEVELOPMENT ENGINEERING DIVISION

The Development Engineering Division includes two areas: engineering and inspection. The Division provides plan reviews and inspections for infrastructure improvements for commercial and residential projects or any project completed by a developer. Infrastructure improvements include water, sanitary sewer, curb and gutter, paving, drainage within public and private rights-of-way, and parks. This division also issues construction and traffic control permits for development projects.

## BUILDING INSPECTION DIVISION

The Building Inspection Division is responsible for the plan review, permit issuance and inspection of new construction projects and remodel of existing structures throughout the City. The Division ensures the City's standards and codes for safety, health, and public welfare are implemented and maintained by regulating and controlling the design,

construction, quality of materials, use and occupancy, and location of all buildings and structures. The division provides for the issuance of all building-related permits and associated inspections.

### CODE COMPLIANCE DIVISION

The Code Compliance Division works to preserve, stabilize, or revitalize the community neighborhoods through cooperation and collaboration with residents, local resource organizations, and other City departments. The Code Compliance Division is responsible for enforcing City ordinances on development regulations, and outside property maintenance issues, such as junk, litter, and outside storage. Code Compliance also operates the City's free graffiti removal programs.

### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

The Regional Transportation Division initiates and coordinates mid- and long-range local and regional transportation planning projects. This includes updating the City's Transportation and Mobility Master Plan; monitoring state and federal transportation trends and legislation; coordinating and serving on working groups and committees with the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG); coordinating with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) regarding bus and rail service; coordinating with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) on issues relative to the City and region; and coordinating and participating in regional transportation groups such as the North Area Transportation Alliance (NATA), Smart Commute Metro North, I-25 North Coalition and Highway 7 Coalition.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Economic Development is responsible for managing programs and policies that expand economic opportunity for residents and businesses in the City of Thornton, while building the local tax base. This is done through the attraction, retention and growth of businesses with the goal of creating quality jobs and increasing the City's retail base. In early 2011, City Council restructured Economic Development to specifically focus on primary employment attraction, retention, and expansion as well as retail development, redevelopment, and small business support. The department has a staff of eight full time and one contract employee, this includes the Director, the Marketing Administrator, the Executive Assistant, Alliance Business Outreach Specialists in addition to the administrators for each of our four focus areas. Our web page can be found at [www.businessinthornton.com](http://www.businessinthornton.com).

## PRIMARY EMPLOYMENT ATTRACTION, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION

Primary Employers are those whose markets are predominantly not local; they sell their products and services nationally and internationally, outside of the metro Denver region. This is important because these products and services are typically of a specialized nature, demanding higher skill sets and education. As such, they typically command higher wages and benefits and better economic opportunity for residents. Because their markets are external, they bring new money into the community, which is then circulated by businesses with local markets. The City has been historically under-served in primary employment, however in recent years, the number of primary jobs has grown dramatically.

## RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

Retail sales taxes typically represent about 65% of general fund revenues for local governments in Colorado. As such, their activity is important to the economic health of the City. The department's goals include providing an increased range of goods and services to support our residents, but to also draw shoppers from outside the community to encourage them to spend their money in Thornton. While retail wage levels are not as high, their benefits to the health of the City budget are critical. City staff works to both recruit and retain retail businesses. In recent years, the City has been able to attract several regional retailers to build new construction projects including the Simon Premium Outlets, Top Golf, Chicken N' Pickle, Billy Burch restaurant, K1 Speed, Main Event and the new large format King Soopers Marketplace. In addition, there have been significant efforts to fill vacancies in large retail centers resulting in the recruitment of Gordon Foods in the former K-Mart building, Malibu Jacks and the Picklr occupying space in Thornton Town Center, and Living Spaces opening in the former Sears Grand building.



## REDEVELOPMENT

The Redevelopment departmental responsibility includes working to revitalize areas of the City with development or redevelopment challenges such as blight and underutilization. There are three urban renewal areas (URAs) in Thornton including the South Thornton URA (includes most commercial areas south of 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue), the North Washington Street Corridor URA (includes the Larkridge development, generally bounded by Highway 7, 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue, I-25 and Washington Street), and the East 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue URA (The Grove development). Significant progress in redevelopment includes acquisition, tenant relocation, demolition and community reuse visioning at the Thornton Shopping Center, with major efforts in environmental cleanup continuing into 2025. In addition, Council has approved a plan to make significant public improvements to Washington Street between Eppinger and 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue and funded a pilot grant program aimed at improving facades, signage and landscaping in the area.

## LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Thornton's small business support services have evolved and grown tremendously in recent years. Focused on enhancing the success of local business owners, the City has implemented several opportunities for small businesses to utilize.

Opened in 2020, the Alliance Business Assistance Center is an alliance of private, public and non-profit resource providers joined together under one roof to help local businesses start, grow, and thrive. Here, business owners from across Metro Denver are able to make use of the free and bilingual services such as meeting and co-working space, business and legal consulting and technical assistance, workshops, access to capital, site selection assistance, and networking events.

Exclusive to Thornton businesses are grant programs, a Small Business Task Force, marketing support, the Thornton Area Business Safety (TABS) program, and ribbon cutting events.

# FINANCE DEPARTMENT

## DESCRIPTION OF DEPARTMENT

The Finance Department is responsible for the administration of all financial record keeping and reporting functions required by the City Charter. There are three divisions within Finance: Accounting & Finance, Sales & Use Tax, and Utility Billing. Each division has its own role in the Department's overall mission of supporting a financially responsible and self-sustaining City.

## ACCOUNTING & FINANCE

The purpose of the Accounting & Finance Department is to aid in the proper stewardship of City resources and maintain long term financial sustainability. The Department is responsible for revenue forecasting; long-term financial planning; accounts payable; collecting, analyzing, and reporting financial data to City management, creditors, and the general public; as well as investment and debt management.

## SALES & TAX

The purpose of the Sales & Use Tax Department is to ensure compliance with Thornton tax code and monitor and collect revenues for the City. This is done through providing Thornton Taxpayers excellent service by helping them understand our tax laws and filing requirements by applying these laws accurately and fairly.

## UTILITY BILLING

The purpose of the Utility Billing Department is to manage the billing and collections for the water, sewer, stormwater, and sanitation utilities. The department ensures accurate and timely billing and collections of utility charges while providing exceptional customer service.

# FIRE DEPARTMENT

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Fire Department is responsible for all the life safety emergencies within our community, including all types of fires, technical rescue, hazardous materials, and emergency medical services (EMS). The Thornton Fire Department has automatic and mutual aid agreements with our neighboring jurisdictions for them to assist us and for us to assist them when additional resources are needed. The department is comprised of five divisions: Fire Administration, Emergency Operations, EMS and Ambulance Services, Fire Training, and Fire Prevention. The department currently has seven fire stations, with an eighth fire station scheduled to open in 2025.

## FIRE ADMINISTRATION

This division includes the Fire Chief, the Deputy Chief of Administrative Operations, the Assistant Chief of Planning, Emergency Management, and respective support staff. The Fire Chief oversees the department's organization, budget, planning, operations, ambulance service, and fire prevention efforts. The Deputy Chief of Administrative Operations provides budget implementation and tracking, planning and logistical needs including purchasing, and emergency management oversight.

## EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

The Deputy Chief of Operations supervises the Emergency Operations Division. The division is comprised of the frontline personnel (firefighter/EMTs, paramedics, engineers, company officers, assistant chief of training, assistant chief of EMS, assistant chief of logistics and special operations, and the shift battalion chiefs) that respond to all hazard emergencies including fire and EMS. This division is staffed by the firefighters who respond on the engines, ladder truck, and ambulances on a 24-hour a day basis. The services they provide include fire suppression, emergency medical responses, wildland firefighting, hazardous materials mitigation, technical rescue operations that may include water, high and low angle, confined spaces, collapse, and vehicle extrication. These specialty teams are overseen by the assistant chief of logistics and special operations who also oversees the department's health and safety program.

## TRAINING SERVICES

The Assistant Chief of Training supervises this division. The Assistant Chief of Training reports to the Deputy Chief of Operations to coordinate Fire Department training needs. The division coordinates all of the internal and external departmental training, outside training, new recruit training and the annual firefighting academy.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND AMBULANCE SERVICES

The Thornton Fire Department provides emergency medical services (EMS) at the advanced life support (ALS) level using fully trained and certified paramedics. They also operate full-service ambulances, staffed with cross-trained firefighter/paramedics, who have dual responsibilities of fire suppression and medical duties. Over 70% of the calls responded to by the department annually are emergency medical calls. The Assistant Chief of EMS reports to the Chief of Operations to coordinate the medical training, serves as the liaison to the department's Medical Director, supervises the shift Safety and Medical officers (SAM), oversees the medical billing operation, and chairs various EMS and quality assurance committees.

## FIRE PREVENTION

The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for reviewing all building plans for new businesses in the community with respect to fire protection elements. It also oversees all building inspections, with respect to fire protection elements, which include schools, as well as new construction and remodels. This division works diligently to prevent fires and harm to our citizens, as well as assuring that all the buildings constructed in the community are the safest possible. The Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention (Fire Marshal) oversees this division and its staff of Fire Protection Specialists. Prevention also includes the Public Education/Information Office that delivers life safety education programs to the community. This office hosts the annual Citizens' Fire Academy, and the Hook and Ladder Academy for high school students. Additionally, this division oversees the fire investigations program as well as counsels youth in need of help through the juvenile fire-setter diversion program.

# INFRASTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Infrastructure Department is responsible for the water utility in addition to a variety of public works services. A staff of roughly 220 employees plan, operate, and maintain the City's infrastructure, which includes the transportation system including streets and traffic systems, stormwater or drainage systems, water and wastewater systems; residential solid waste collection and recycling services; and the procurement, operation, and treatment of the City's water supply. The functional areas within the Infrastructure Department include Street Operations, Traffic Engineering and Operations, Environmental Services, Utilities Operations, Water Treatment and Quality, Water Resources, Engineering Services, and the Thornton Water Project Team.

## STREET OPERATIONS DIVISION

The Street Operations Division maintains the City's street and drainage systems. The primary programs are street rehabilitation and maintenance, concrete replacement, snow removal, street sweeping, unimproved road grading, drainageway and detention pond debris removal, and storm sewer flushing.

## TRAFFIC ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS DIVISION

The Traffic Engineering and Operations Division provides engineering services related to the safe and efficient movement of people through the City and maintenance of traffic control devices. Primary programs are the design, operation, and maintenance of traffic signals, signs, pavement markings, and streetlights; preparation of traffic studies; coordination of the iwatch™ Speed Awareness Program; and coordination of the Residential Collector Speed Reduction Program. The division also coordinates with school districts for school routes and zones.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

The Environmental Services Division is responsible for providing customers with a convenient, efficient, economical, and dependable integrated solid waste management system. Components of the collection service include weekly trash collection, semi-monthly recycle collection, and various special collection programs.

## UTILITIES OPERATIONS DIVISION

The Utilities Operations Division is responsible for maintenance and repairs of the water distribution system, sanitary sewer collection system, meter reading and

meter maintenance functions, operation and maintenance of pump stations, water tanks, and sewage lift stations. Thornton contracts with Metro Wastewater for the treatment of the City's wastewater.

### WATER TREATMENT & QUALITY DIVISION

Water Treatment is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Thornton and Wes Brown Water Treatment Plants, operation of the water distribution system, and maintenance of the City's electronic control system for all water, wastewater, and raw water-related infrastructure.

Water Quality is responsible for monitoring the quality of water from its origins in the mountains all the way to the customers' homes. Water Quality maintains an extensive laboratory to conduct accurate monitoring and to ensure potable water meets all state and federal drinking water requirements and to assist with periodic compliance testing of wastewater discharges.

### WATER RESOURCES DIVISION

The Water Resources Division manages, operates, maintains, and accounts for the City's raw water systems and water rights in the water basins from which the City draws water for its potable water supply. The division is responsible for the acquisition and protection of raw water resources and coordinates associated adjudication efforts. The Water Resources Division identifies and pursues opportunities to develop cost-effective alternative water supplies, encourages reduced water consumption throughout the community through implementation of water conservation programs, and promotes school-based education programs. The division operates and maintains the City's reservoirs and non-potable irrigation supply systems. The Water Resources Division also manages the farms and water rights in Weld and Larimer Counties that were purchased by the City in the mid-1980s. This division creates and manages leases with farmers, and undertakes other duties related to managing large amounts of farmland and preparing the farmland for removal of water for use in Thornton.

The division is also responsible for the acquisition, disposition, and inventory of City-owned real estate, including water and mineral rights. Further, the division oversees the writing and execution of real estate related policies.

### ENGINEERING SERVICES DIVISION

The Engineering Services Division manages the design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the Capital Improvement Program pertaining to the City's infrastructure (streets, drainage, water, sewer, traffic), and provides surveying support to all divisions within the Infrastructure Department. Additional responsibilities of the division include construction management of the street rehabilitation program, coordinating the federally mandated stormwater

management program, performing utility locates, issuing right-of-way permits for construction, and floodplain management.

### THORNTON WATER PROJECT DIVISION

The Thornton Water Project Division is responsible for the implementation of the water supply project to convey the City's Poudre Basin water rights for use in the City. The division directs consultants and contractors in the permitting, rights-of-way acquisition, design, procurement, and construction of the pipeline and associated facilities necessary to deliver the water to Thornton. The division also directs the communications and outreach efforts associated with the Project.

# MANAGEMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

## DESCRIPTION OF DEPARTMENT

The Management Services Department is responsible for providing internal support to all City Departments. Nine Divisions exist within Management Services, each with their own role in the Department's overall mission of supporting the City's daily operations and services to help keep them running as efficiently as possible. The support areas that make up these Divisions include: Risk Management, Information Technology, GIS, Contract Administration, Purchasing, Building Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, and Custodial Services. The Department also manages the operations of the Municipal Court.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The mission of the City of Thornton's Risk Management Division is to manage the City's risk management and self-insurance programs to protect the City's financial and operational assets. Risk Management is responsible for evaluating risk exposures throughout the City and coordinating ways to transfer and manage the exposures via contractual agreements or through insurance coverages. Risk Management works with insurance brokers and pool administrators to negotiate the best terms, conditions, and premiums for nine lines of insurance. Risk Management manages a Workers' Compensation self-insurance program. Risk Management manages insurance claims internally or through partners and works directly with the City Attorney's Office on lawsuits against the City. Risk Management is responsible for citywide employee safety training and programs including overseeing the City-wide Safety Committee. Risk Management is responsible for managing over 600 Certificates of Insurance from contractors throughout the City. Finally, Risk Management is responsible for the city's overall ADA compliance.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Technology provides the technology services for all City operations. Responsibilities include acquisition, implementation, support, and ongoing maintenance for computers, servers, mobile devices, network connectivity and voice systems for all City departments. From a strategic perspective, Information Technology works closely with City departments to match technology tools to business needs to improve efficiency and effectiveness of day-to-day operations.

I.T.'s mission is to provide state-of-the-art technology solutions coupled with superior customer service. The City of Thornton IT Division enables City departments to deliver high quality, reliable and cost-effective services to the community by providing the best technology service offerings to staff through innovative leadership and planning.



The GIS division (Geographic Information System division) within Thornton is responsible for managing and utilizing spatial and geographic data to support various City planning, infrastructure, and public service functions. GIS technology involves mapping and analyzing data related to locations and geographic features. We support the City by creating maps and web applications that can provide senior staff with the metrics needed to make data-driven decisions that can benefit residents as well as streamline City operations.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services provides administrative support, supervision, and guidance to the following divisions: Contract Administration, Purchasing, Building Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, and Custodial Maintenance. Support Services is also responsible for the project management of all City building construction efforts.

The Contract Administration Division and Purchasing Division are responsible for: bidding, negotiating, and administration of all contracts related to capital construction and related professional services; monitoring and negotiating changes to existing contracts; coordinating financial aspects of those changes with Budget Office staff; and enforcing equity and transparency, through open-market competition as directed by the City Purchasing Ordinance. The Purchasing Division also provides centralized purchasing of commodities and capital equipment needed for City operations; solicits proposals; negotiates and administers all contracts for non-professional services; disposes of all surplus or obsolete material and equipment; and administers the city-wide Procurement Card program.

The Building Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, and Custodial Maintenance Divisions are responsible for coordinating and performing general maintenance and repair for all City buildings, coordinating remodeling or new construction work required at any City building, overseeing all work performed by the City's fleet maintenance contractor, and providing oversight of fleet needs from origin to disposal.

## MUNICIPAL COURT

City Council appoints a Presiding Municipal Court Judge and Associate Judges who preside over the City's Municipal Court. The Court has the jurisdiction to hear and determine all matters outlined in Thornton's City Charter and adopted ordinances. City Council establishes the costs and fees levied by the Municipal Court based on recommendations by the Presiding Judge.

The Municipal Court staff processes all summons and complaints, schedules arraignments and trials, and coordinates dates and times with involved parties. The Court receives assessed fines and fees and administers payments to jurors and witnesses. The Court Manager is responsible for all records of the Court.

# PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide array of activities and programs to meet the parks, recreation and community service needs of the City of Thornton. The areas which make up the Parks and Recreation Department include Parks and Planning, Recreation (Golf), Active Adults, Arts and Culture, Volunteerism and Community Connections (Human Services).

## PARKS AND PLANNING DIVISION

The Parks Division is responsible for the general maintenance of all parks, trails, open space, civic building landscaping, City-owned vacant land and undeveloped rights-of-way. Responsibilities include, but not limited to, turf management; irrigation; mowing; Naturally Thornton (bluegrass conversions) and amenity maintenance of pavilions, playgrounds, ball fields, tennis, and basketball courts, in-line hockey rinks, and skate parks. This division provides all landscape maintenance for developed medians and streetscapes throughout the city as well as manages lakes, fishing facilities, and oversees all urban forestry programs. The division plays a significant role in the setup and operations of all City sponsored festivals and special events.

The Planning Division is responsible for working with the Parks and Open Space Advisory Commission in the creation and implementation of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The division is also responsible for the design and construction management of the capital improvement projects for the Parks and Recreation Department and for applying for outside grant funding toward related projects.

## RECREATION DIVISION

The Recreation Division manages and oversees the Trail Winds and Carpenter Recreation centers, two full-service recreation facilities. These exquisitely maintained buildings offer an impressive variety of amenities which include state of the art fitness equipment, full size gymnasiums, indoor pools, sauna and steam, locker rooms, exercise studios, multi-purpose rooms, racquet ball courts, a climbing wall, meeting rooms, party rooms and childcare. The Thornton Community Center (rebuilt in 2023/2024), which is home to the Youth and Teen Center and Boxing Club, will replace the original center build in the 70's. In addition, the division manages other community facilities including the Thorncreek Golf Course, 3 skate parks, the Riverwalk batting cages and ballfields, two outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts, pickle ball courts, the boathouse and carousel, and a plethora of City-owned park facilities.

The division coordinates programs and activities which include teen nights, an extensive swim lesson program, youth and adult swim teams, a preschool and gymnastics program, girls' softball, youth tennis and track programs, fitness classes, personal training, community walks and an Adaptive and Inclusive program for all ages. The Recreation Division also offers some general interest classes, such as cooking, pottery and beginning line dancing, as well as adult sports leagues (basketball and softball). Additionally, the Recreation Division oversees the coordination of a variety of annual special events that include the 4th of July Celebration, the Easter Egg Scramble, Lions Club Relays, Trunk or Treat, Paws for a Dip, as well as the three major annual community festivals (Thorntonfest, Harvest Fest, and WinterFest) attracting over 200,000 participants.

### THORNTON ACTIVE ADULT DIVISION

The Thornton Active Adult Center and Active Adult Wing at Trail Winds Recreation Center serves active adults focusing on the 62+ population, providing opportunities to thrive and grow through the aging process. By encouraging community engagement, active older adults are able to continuously learn, achieve, and age well.

The division works with the Council-appointed Thornton Active Adult Board to make recommendations to City Council on various active adult issues. The center, in conjunction with community partnerships, provides a broad range of activities and services for active adults that includes adult enrichment, fitness and health programming, a meal program, outdoor recreation, wellness services, and intergenerational programming opportunities. The division also works to provide enrichment programming for active adults over 18.

### ARTS AND CULTURE

The Arts and Culture Division was established in 2006 to offer community-based programs and year-round events in partnership with other City departments and nonprofit organizations. The Arts and Culture division mission is to engage and celebrate a creative community that welcomes all forms of culture expression. The division develops and presents art classes, camps, annual concert series and cultural events, exhibits and public art with funding provided by the City, Adams County, and the Scientific Cultural and Facilities District (SCFD). Arts and Culture staff also serve as liaisons for the Thornton Arts, Sciences and Humanities Council (TASHCO) with Thornton City Council, City management and City services, and provide year-round administrative, financial, and logistical support for TASHCO-sponsored public art projects, community events, and monthly board meetings.

## VOLUNTEERISM

The volunteer program is based in the Administration division of the department and works with division managers to identify beneficial volunteer projects and opportunities for individuals and groups. Community service volunteers assist the city's lower income community and seniors through the Snowbuster and Yardbuster programs. Other initiatives include major community projects pulling in hundreds of volunteers for specific initiatives.

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Community Connections is Thornton's neighborhood resource center. English-Spanish bilingual team members work to understand the diverse needs of Thornton neighbors and provide heartfelt service in connecting them to opportunities for employment, housing, home repairs, health, financial assistance, food access, education and beyond. Staff champion and facilitate the development of affordable and workforce housing and oversee Thornton's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) and homelessness initiatives. The Community Connections team is responsible for Thornton's outreach to schools, faith-based organizations, housing communities, nonprofit service providers, government partners, and the larger community, sharing information and available supports. The division lifts nonprofit allies through financial awards from federal and City sources and builds collaboration through hosting farmers markets, holiday programming, community gardens, and educational classes. Community Connections offers free wi-fi, equipment lending, and access to private and shared workspaces. Together the Community Connections team is meeting the mission of enhancing lives through connection.

# POLICE DEPARTMENT

## DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Thornton Police Department's major objectives include crime prevention, safe public spaces, and traffic safety. These objectives are achieved through neighborhood patrol, investigations, partnerships, and community engagement.

## MISSION

To serve and protect in partnership with the community, working to reduce crime and disorder, while providing the highest quality police services.

## VISION

A safe and prosperous City served by a police department recognized as the standard of excellence.

## CORE VALUES

The police department's core values establish the guiding principles that are the standards of behavior and performance by which we achieve our mission and vision. The activities of the department, awards, promotions, and strategies will be grounded in the mission, vision, and core values.

- Integrity
- Leadership
- Service
- Teamwork
- Accountability
- Safety

## Office of the Chief

The department is guided by the **Office of the Chief of Police**, which is responsible for executive leadership, strategy, intergovernmental relations, and management of special projects. The functions and units assigned to the Office of the Chief include Budget and Grants Administration, Media and Community Engagement, and Policy and Planning. The chief of police and deputy chiefs are responsible and accountable for the efficient operations of the department's two Bureaus: Operations Bureau (Patrol, Criminal Investigations), and Administration Bureau.

The **Patrol Division** provides a highly visible presence, forging partnerships, responding to calls for service, and engaging the community at events, regular neighborhood safety meetings, and through information campaigns. The Patrol Division has two district stations: District One, which is located at police headquarters, and District Two, located at the Fossil Ridge Public Safety Center. Among other units and functions, Patrol consists of the following:

- Neighborhood Patrol
- Co-Responder Team
- Traffic Enforcement
- Animal Control
- SWAT
- Traffic Investigations
- Youth Services (SRO)
- K9 Service Dogs
- Crisis Negotiations

The **Criminal Investigation Division (CID)**, also known as the Detective Division, supports the efforts of Patrol by conducting investigations and follow-up on major cases, including homicides, shootings, serious assaults, robberies, burglaries, and other incidents as assigned. CID investigators also participate in local and federal task forces that focus on violent crime, aggravated robberies, white collar crime, and narcotics trafficking. The major units within the division include Crimes Against Persons, Property Crime, and the Victims Services Unit.

The **Administration Division** supports department operations and manages risk and liability through training and active accountability measures. The Administration Division plays a vital role in the department's success and includes:

#### Support Services

- Emergency Communications/911
- Records Management
- Property and Evidence Warehouse
- Vehicle Services
- Field Technology

#### Professional Standards

- Training Unit
- Internal Affairs
- Audits and Inspections
- Accreditation
- Recruiting

## MAJOR PROJECTS

In 2024, the police department's training unit became state-certified by Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to conduct basic police certification for individuals interested in entering a law enforcement career. The inaugural class for Thornton PD's first ever state-certified police academy is set to kick off in April of 2025.

Additionally, phase two of the training center (firearms range) opened in October 2024, which is highly beneficial, allowing officers to train on critical job functions while being able to stay within the city.

CITY COUNCIL  
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS  
Descriptions

**ADAMS COUNTY REGIONAL ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP (AC-REP)** – AC-REP is a private, nonprofit economic development business organization, that serves the Greater Adams County region with more than 10,000 companies and just over half a million residents. AC-REP is working to write the next chapter for the area by amplifying its unique business story, championing real estate developments, and focusing on new infrastructure. AC-REP empowers its members and community leaders to promote and expand economic opportunity in the entire region. The Board employs a professional staff to carry out its policies and accomplish its goals. AC-REP’s Mission is to champion the businesses of the Greater Adams County Region — giving them a voice by supporting innovation, forging connections with local government, and leading the community toward prosperity with our expertise as a private, investor-driven organization.

The board usually meets quarterly on the fourth Thursday of the month March through September and the second Thursday in December.

*Why the City should be represented:* AC-REP is a contact point for businesses looking to develop in Adams County and the City needs to ensure that business inquiries are directed to the City as well as the County. AC-REP negotiates county incentives on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners and in coordination with the City.

**ADAMS COUNTY COMMUNITY TRANSIT POLICY COUNCIL** - The Council was established in 2000 and is renewed annually through an IGA with Adams County. It is comprised of representatives from the cities of Thornton, Westminster, Northglenn, Commerce City, Federal Heights and Adams County. The purpose is to assure adequate transportation services for older adults and the disabled in Adams County. The policy council provides oversight of federal and local City match dollars.

The City’s staff representative is Jessica Romito, Older Adult Services Manager. Meetings are held every other month and an annual retreat for developing new goals and objectives is held each November.

*Why the City should be represented:* The City should be involved in this program to ensure that the City continues to receive funding for the transit services that are provided to older adults of Thornton. This group submits a grant to DRCOG for transportation services for Adams County and provides coordination of this effort. The Thornton Active Adult Center receives funding through this program to help offset the cost of transportation program.

**AIRPORT COORDINATING COMMITTEE** - This Committee was established in 1988 through an IGA among Adams County and the cities of Aurora, Brighton, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Westminster, and Thornton. The City of Westminster withdrew in late 2013. The Committee is comprised of the five Adams County Commissioners and two elected officials from each of the cities. The purpose of the Committee is to coordinate the participation of the above parties in, and as they may be affected by, the operation of Denver International Airport (DIA). The two primary areas of coordination are with respect to noise (and enforcement of the noise standards) and planning/development on DIA. The IGA provides for the coordination of the parties in planning and environmental review processes as well as preparation for and to undertake litigation or other actions. The IGA also provides for the sharing of fees, costs, and other expenses among the parties. With Westminster's withdrawal, the City's share will be 5.0%.

In 2014 and 2015, the ACC and representatives from Denver negotiated an amendment to the land use provisions in the IGA between Adams County and Denver which provided for a one-time payment of \$10 million from Denver and sharing of 50% of the revenue from the new development on DIA on Designated Development Parcels as authorized pursuant to the IGA. The amendments to the IGA between Adams County and Denver were approved by the voters in both counties at the November 2015 election. The amendment requires Denver to pay Adams County, on an annual basis by March 31 of each year, 50% of the revenue derived from Denver taxes on the development or use of any Development Parcel. Denver is also required to provide an annual report to the ACC regarding land development and revenue generation. Included in the amendment was a provision providing for the creation of a Regional Planning and Marketing Entity, by separate intergovernmental agreement among the ACC and Denver. The purpose of the new regional entity is to promote and market development opportunities on and around the New Airport and assist in coordinating land use and infrastructure planning efforts by the respective jurisdictions on and around DIA.

In December 2015, the ACC also revised the 1988 agreement amongst themselves to address issues pertaining to land use, revenue sharing, and other provisions that were included in the IGA amendments. Discussions in 2017 and 2018 focused on the creation of a Regional Planning and Marketing Entity and development at Aerotropolis. In mid-2018, Adams County Board of Commissioners filed suit against Denver alleging that DA underestimated the noise impact through the use of an outdated, archaic aircraft noise modeling system. The lawsuit is seeking Denver to stop using the outdated modeling program and requesting DIA be ordered to install a new airport noise monitoring system. The court awarded noise violations to Adams County and parties, but it was appealed to the Colorado Court of Appeals in November of 2021.

The Committee usually meets quarterly on the second Wednesday of each month, February through November.

*Why the City should be represented:* The City is there to represent the interests of the city particularly with respect to airport noise and enforcement of the noise violation provisions. While the planning aspect is important, with an eye towards directing development within Adams County rather than just Denver, because of the City's



distance from DIA, this aspect isn't as important as airport noise. The actions of the Committee impact the City—financially as well as operationally.

*Expectation of the representative:* In the past, the entities participating in this Committee have wanted to present a united position to Denver as it relates to DIA. The City's representatives to this Committee need to be able to separate the issues from the emotion since there is a great deal of distrust between Adams County and City/County of Denver. There are also different and competing interests between the Adams County members, particularly as it relates to potential development around DIA.

**COLORADO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE (CML) POLICY COMMITTEE** - CML's primary role is to represent cities' interests in the Colorado legislature. In that role, they act to secure the enactment of legislation that will be beneficial to municipalities and oppose legislation that might injure them. CML is governed by a 21-member Executive Board who is elected by the member cities. The Policy Committee, one of several advisory committees, is responsible for developing the League's legislative program and for reviewing legislative proposals/providing recommended positions to the CML Executive Board. Issues that will be prevalent in the 2025 session includes affordable housing; land use, climate change, and the budget deficit.

The Policy Committee generally meets, one to two times, shortly before the start of each legislative session to consider member proposals and any items regarding potential legislation brought to the committee by staff. Workshops are also held during the session from time to time to review key municipal issues being considered by the legislature.

*Why the City should be represented:* The Policy Committee consists primarily of elected officials from around the State advocating on behalf of issues that impact their municipality. As a statewide organization that advocates on behalf of all Colorado municipalities, it is essential that Thornton have a voice in this advocacy.

*Expectation of the representative:* To be familiar with the various legislative issues and proposals that CML is proposing to take a position on and provide timely and influential feedback of the City's position to the CML Executive Committee, directly, as well as through the Policy Committee.

**DENVER REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (DRCOG)** - DRCOG is the metro area's federally designated metropolitan planning organization, federally designated Area Agency on Aging, and state designated regional planning commission. DRCOG will soon have the federal Economic Development Designation. The DRCOG Board of Directors is comprised of 59 representatives from the 58 jurisdictions within the Denver metro area. Its mission and vision are as follows:

Mission: The Denver Regional Council of Governments is a planning organization where local governments collaborate to establish guidelines, set policy and allocate funding in the areas of:

- Transportation and Personal Mobility

- Growth and Development
- Aging and Disability Resources
- Decarbonization

Vision: Our region is a diverse network of vibrant, connected, lifelong communities with a broad spectrum of housing, transportation and employment, complemented by world-class natural and built environments.

The DRCOG Board regularly meets in-person on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. and as a DRCOG Board Work Session that regularly meets virtually on the first Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m.

*Why the City should be represented:* There are four primary areas that DRCOG focuses on: transportation, regional planning, active adult services, decarbonization, and soon will have the federal Economic Development District designation. Regarding transportation, the primary reason for having City representation on DRCOG is because this agency determines how transportation dollars will be spent in the DRCOG area.

In addition to transportation, DRCOG is also a hub for federal monies related to active adult services. The three primary programs that are run through DRCOG are nutrition (meals on wheels program), in-home services, and grants to provide transportation for active adults.

A third area that is overseen by DRCOG is regional planning. As part of the Metro Vision planning, DRCOG has established an urban growth boundary/area for the Denver region to promote an orderly, compact and efficient pattern of future development. DRCOG uses this UGB/A to increase the region's overall density. As a perimeter growth community, DRCOG's goals to densify are frequently in conflict with the City's goals to have good, planned development but development that is appropriate for a primarily residential, suburban community.

The fourth area that is overseen by DRCOG is decarbonization. DRCOG received a grant of just under \$200 million dollars to decarbonize residential buildings and distribute local government funding related to building review.

*Expectation of the representative:* To become familiar with the representatives of the DRCOG Board and their positions on issues presented by DRCOG staff and be able to influence policy decisions and present/propose alternative solutions. The four areas the representatives are expected to promote Thornton's interests are: transportation, regional growth (to ensure DRCOG growth policies don't prohibit our ability to grow in a manner as planned by Council), active adult services, and distribution of the decarbonization money. Thornton's DRCOG representatives also serve on the ADCOG Subregional Transportation Forum and the SW Weld Subregional Transportation Forum. These Forums are subregions of DRCOG.

*DRCOG committees* - DRCOG standing committees include:

- Advisory Committee on Aging
- Executive Committee
- Finance and Budget Committee

- Performance and Engagement Committee
- Regional Transportation Committee (RTD, CDOT, DRCOG)
- Transportation Advisory Committee (all staff)
- Regional Decarbonization Oversight Committee
- Economic Development District Advisory Committee (being formed)

**E-470 HIGHWAY AUTHORITY** - The E-470 Public Highway Authority is a political subdivision of the State of Colorado, formed in 1985 to construct and maintain a 46-mile toll highway running generally to the east of I-25. The highway consists of four segments from I-25 in Thornton to I-25/ C-470 interchange. The eight-member Board of Directors consists of elected officials of the cities of Aurora, Brighton, and Commerce City and Thornton; the Town of Parker; and Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas counties. Ex-officio members include CDOT, RTD, and DRCOG. Affiliates include Weld County, the cities of Arvada, Greeley and Lone Tree, and the City/County of Broomfield. The Board provides direction and considers recommendations from staff related to the construction and operation of the highway.

The Board usually meets on the second Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m.

*Why the City should be represented:* Thornton is a member of the Authority and will benefit from the full development of the Quebec Street Interchange, construction in the future of multi-modal regional trail, and as an alternate to I-25.

*Expectation of representative:* To be familiar with the issues and decisions the E-470 Authority will be making and how they impact Thornton; to voice Thornton's issues and work with the other representatives to provide viable solutions.

**NORTH I-25 COALITION** - This group includes: Adams, Larimer and Weld Counties; City/County of Broomfield; CDOT; towns of Berthoud, Evans, Erie, Firestone, Frederick, Johnstown, Mead, Milliken, Windsor, and Timnath; and the cities of Dacono, Erie, Firestone, Fort Collins, Longmont, Loveland, Thornton, Westminster, and Wellington. This group was formed to address transportation needs for the North I-25 Corridor from Thornton to the Wyoming border. Representatives from the offices of Senator Bennet and Hickenlooper and Representatives Neguse and Caraveo normally attend.

*Why the City should be represented:* In order for the plans of this group to integrate with the City's plans, it is important that Thornton be represented to convey our interests, and to maintain open communication. The North I-25 Coalition also has been very active legislatively to push for transportation funding within this corridor. N I-25 is an important freight corridor for our businesses.

**NORTH AREA TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE (NATA)** - The North Area Transportation Alliance (NATA) is a partnership of public and private entities in the North Denver metro area working to *identify, develop, advocate and lobby* at the local, state and federal level for multimodal transportation solutions that will enhance sustainable mobility options and improve transit service, promote economic opportunity to improve

quality of life and reduce traffic congestion to safely and equitably move all people in the north metro area. NATA meetings are scheduled for the fourth Thursday of the month and are scheduled to begin at 7:30 a.m. Meetings are in-person at 1870 W. 122nd Ave, Westminster CO, 80234.

The following communities are members of NATA: cities of Brighton, Commerce City, Dacono, Erie, Federal Heights, Firestone, Frederick, Longmont, Northglenn, Thornton and Westminster; City and County of Broomfield; Adams County, and the AC-REP. Each member has a representative and an alternate, one of whom must be an elected official. Ex-Official members include State representatives from Congressional districts and Senators offices, State legislators, CDOT, RTD, and DRCOG.

Why City should be represented: The north I-25 corridor is the major transportation corridor for the City and future improvements in this area will have a significant impact on future economic development and congestion relief for people living and working in Thornton. NATA provides a collective voice to promote and obtain improved transportation within the NATA area in the form of passenger rail, bus service, and highway improvements in the north I-25 Corridor and the north metro area. The NATA area includes communities located north of I-70, east of Highway 287, west of US 85 and south of the Boulder/Larimer County line extended.

*Expectation of representative:* To become familiar with the major transportation needs/issues of Thornton and the north area; provide information to City Council; represent Thornton and NATA's interests in various arenas. The expectation is that the City's representative will advocate Thornton's transportation priorities within NATA.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT 27-J CAPITAL FACILITIES FOUNDATION** - The purpose of the Capital Facilities Foundation is to promote and assist in the development, financing and acquisition of educational facilities and improvements, which will benefit the residents of Adams County, Weld County, the City of Brighton, the City of Commerce City and the City of Thornton. The primary goal of the Foundation is to address a shortfall between the bonding capacity of the district and the capital construction needs of the district for new schools.

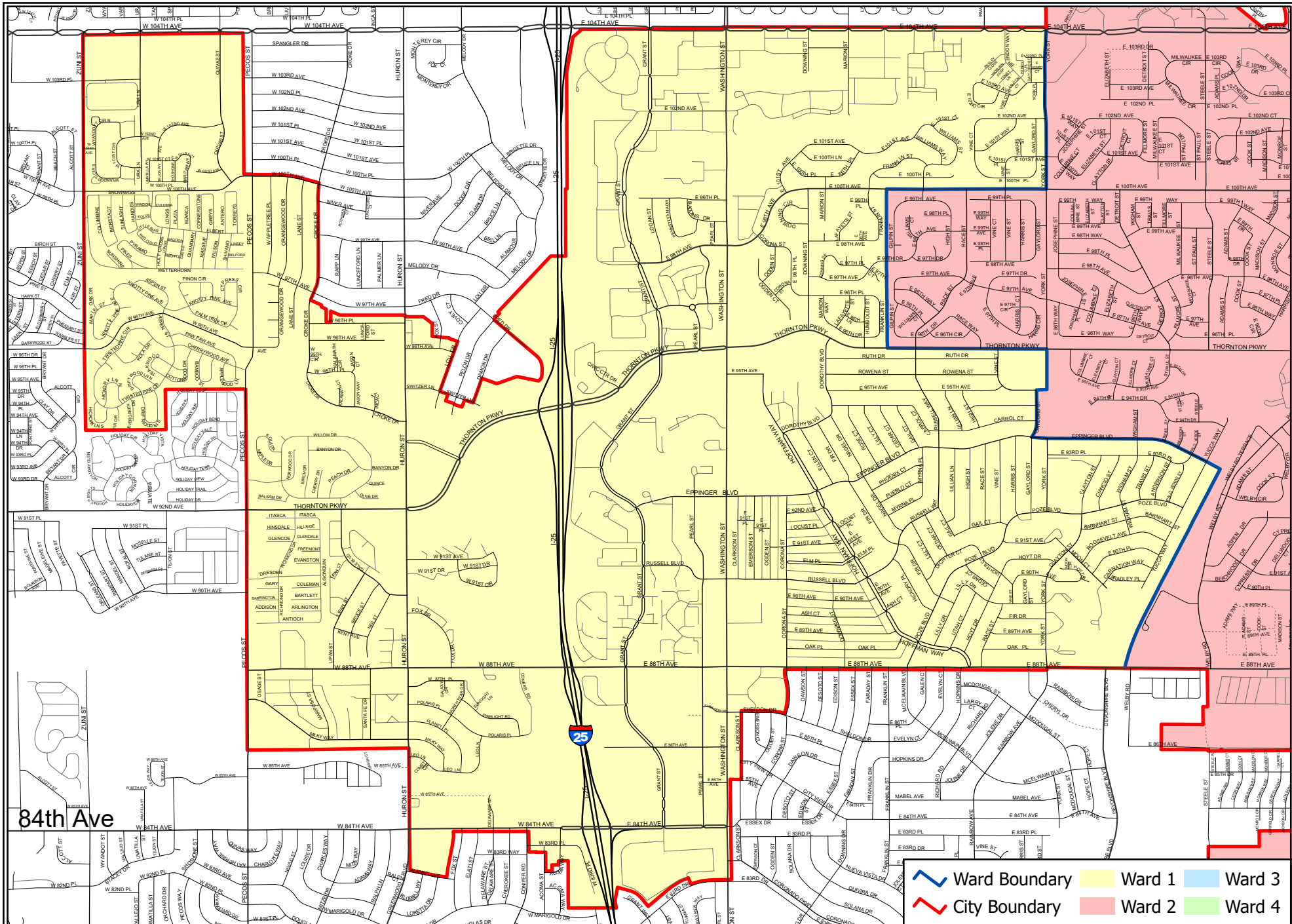
The Foundation meets on the second Thursday in February, April, June, September, and November at 2:00 p.m.

*Expectation of the representative.* The expectation is that Thornton's representative will advocate for adequate resources to be provided to Thornton residents which includes planning for future expansion of services and areas within which the parties can collaborate on services and facilities.

**STATE HIGHWAY 7 COALITION** – By 2040, there are projected to be more than 56,000 new residents and 38,000 new jobs along the Colorado State Highway 7 (CO 7) corridor between Brighton and Boulder because of large areas of undeveloped parcels in unincorporated areas of Adams and Boulder Counties, Lafayette, Erie, Broomfield, Thornton and the east side of Brighton. This will lead to a 37% increase in traffic along an already congested corridor. In order to prepare for the growth and development, the

CO 7 Coalition, CDOT and RTD are planning multimodal transportation improvements, including Bus Rapid Transit, a regional bikeway, pedestrian improvements and first and final mile connections.

The Coalition meets on the last Friday in January, April, June, and October.



84th Ave

**GIS DATA DISCLAIMER**



The City of Thornton GIS has made every reasonable effort to represent geographic data as accurately as possible, and assumes no liability associated with the use or misuse of its products. Information contained herein is for representational purposes only and is not intended to be substituted for accurate boundary locations, legal or professional opinions.

**City of Thornton**  
 9500 Civic Center Drive, Thornton, Colorado 80229. (303) 538-7295  
**Ward 1**  
 Effective January 1, 2023

Map Printed: 11/5/2024



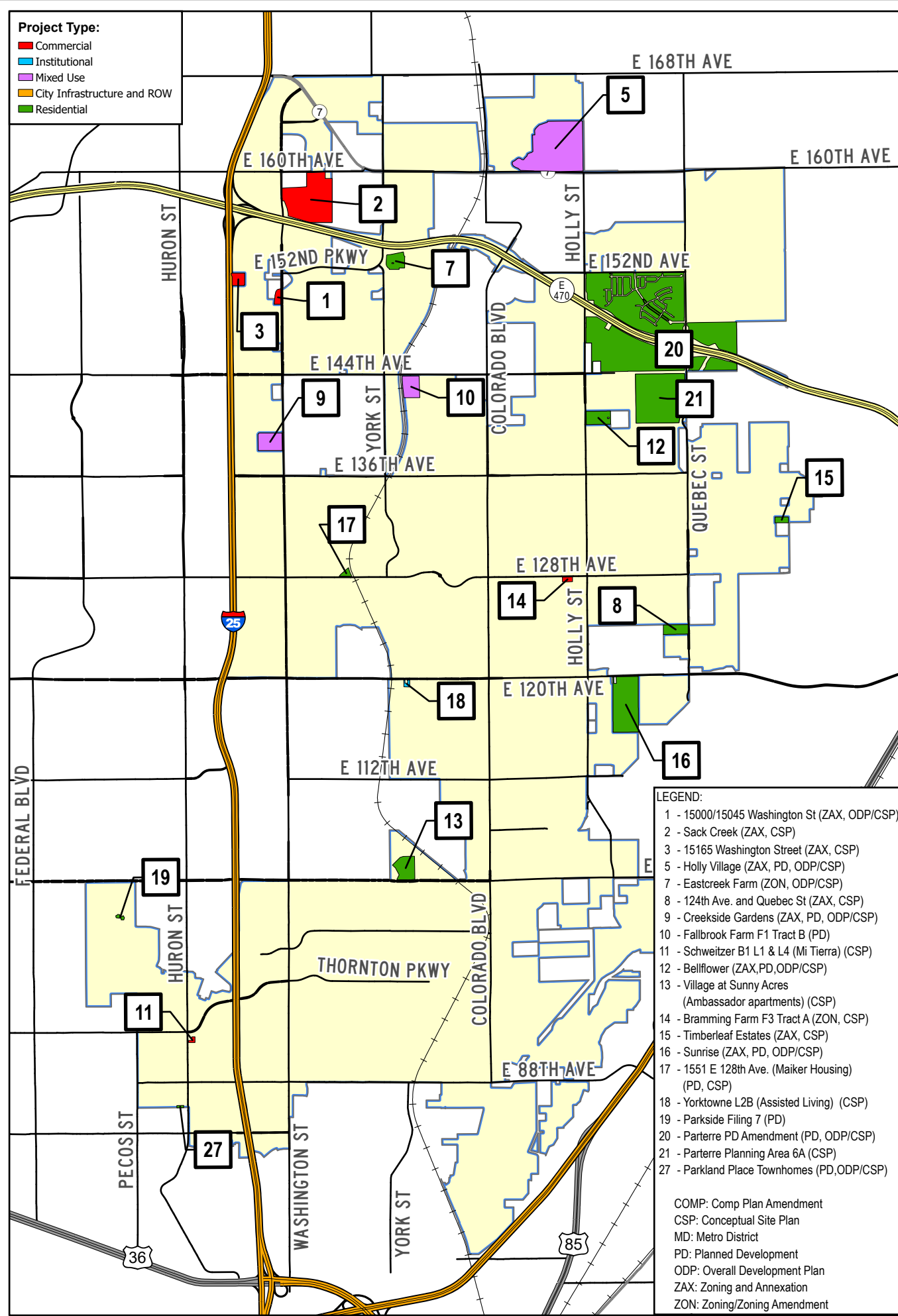
1:24,900

**Project Type:**

- Commercial
- Institutional
- Mixed Use
- City Infrastructure and ROW
- Residential



1:79,628



**LEGEND:**

- 1 - 15000/15045 Washington St (ZAX, ODP/CSP)
- 2 - Sack Creek (ZAX, CSP)
- 3 - 15165 Washington Street (ZAX, CSP)
- 5 - Holly Village (ZAX, PD, ODP/CSP)
- 7 - Eastcreek Farm (ZON, ODP/CSP)
- 8 - 124th Ave. and Quebec St (ZAX, CSP)
- 9 - Creekside Gardens (ZAX, PD, ODP/CSP)
- 10 - Fallbrook Farm F1 Tract B (PD)
- 11 - Schweitzer B1 L1 & L4 (Mi Tierra) (CSP)
- 12 - Bellflower (ZAX, PD, ODP/CSP)
- 13 - Village at Sunny Acres (Ambassador apartments) (CSP)
- 14 - Bramming Farm F3 Tract A (ZON, CSP)
- 15 - Timberleaf Estates (ZAX, CSP)
- 16 - Sunrise (ZAX, PD, ODP/CSP)
- 17 - 1551 E 128th Ave. (Maiker Housing) (PD, CSP)
- 18 - Yorktowne L2B (Assisted Living) (CSP)
- 19 - Parkside Filing 7 (PD)
- 20 - Parterre PD Amendment (PD, ODP/CSP)
- 21 - Parterre Planning Area 6A (CSP)
- 27 - Parkland Place Townhomes (PD, ODP/CSP)

- COMP: Comp Plan Amendment
- CSP: Conceptual Site Plan
- MD: Metro District
- PD: Planned Development
- ODP: Overall Development Plan
- ZAX: Zoning and Annexation
- ZON: Zoning/Zoning Amendment

**City of Thornton**  
 9500 Civic Center Drive, Thornton, Colorado 80229. (303) 538-7295  
**Quasi-Judicial Applications**  
 as of December 6, 2024

**GIS DATA DISCLAIMER**

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# Colorado Municipal Candidate Guide



COLORADO  
MUNICIPAL  
LEAGUE





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people choose to run for public office.

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The *Colorado Municipal Candidate Guide* has been prepared by the Colorado Municipal League as a guide for prospective candidates who are seeking useful information on municipal government. The guide includes tips on how to be an effective municipal official, as well as an overview of how municipal government works.

Published in 2019 by the Colorado Municipal League.

# Becoming a municipal official

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Serving as an effective municipal elected official requires dedication, knowledge, and a substantial time commitment. There are countless reasons why people choose to run for public office. Whatever your reason may be, as a member of the municipal governing body, you have the opportunity to make important contributions toward shaping the future of your community. For this reason, becoming a municipal elected official can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

Whether you are still undecided about your candidacy – or you have already made the decision to run for a municipal elected office, the information in this guide can help you. What follows is general information on what it takes to be an effective member of a governing body, a synopsis of municipal government in

Colorado, and information about the Colorado Municipal League. Material contained in this brochure should not be viewed as a substitute for legal advice or specific information applicable to your community. If you are serious about your candidacy, you should consider other, more detailed information sources available to you, including:

- attending city council or board of trustee meetings;
- examining your charter, if your municipality is home rule;
- checking the Colorado Revised Statutes;
- reviewing municipal ordinances; and
- for elections, asking the municipal clerk for additional information, consulting your own attorney, or otherwise making yourself familiar with the requirements of the election laws.

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# Qualifications for municipal office

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At a minimum, successful elected officials must devote a significant amount of time and energy to fulfill a position that answers directly to citizens. Some desirable leadership attributes include:

- a general understanding of municipal government;
- willingness to learn about a wide range of topics;
- integrity;
- consistency;
- confidence;
- dedication to the interests of citizens and the community as a whole;
- strong communication and team-building skills, including being a good listener;
- openness to the thoughts and ideas of others;
- being approachable and accessible; and
- a willingness to work cooperatively with others.

## **Mayors, councils, boards of trustees, and presiding officers**

The mayor and city council or town board of trustees collectively serve as the governing body for a municipality and normally possess all legislative powers granted by state law. The positions of both councilmember and trustee have been compared to those of the members of state legislatures and U.S. Congress. All of these positions require elected officials to represent their constituents, make policy decisions, budget for the execution of policies, and ensure that their policies are carried out. Unlike their counterparts in state and federal offices, municipal officials are in direct contact with the people they serve on an ongoing basis.

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## **An elected official wears many hats**

To meet the responsibilities of being a municipal elected official, candidates should consider the number of disciplines involved in becoming an effective mayor, councilmember, or trustee.

Municipal elected officials share the following job titles as part of their responsibility:

- legislator;
- decision-maker;
- financier;
- employer of municipal staff;
- constructive critic;
- intergovernmental participant;
- public relations representative; and
- facilitator.

## **Are you eligible?**

To run for office in a statutory municipality in Colorado, you must:

- be a citizen of the United States;
- be registered to vote;
- be at least 18 years old on the date of the election; and
- have resided in your city or town for at least 12 consecutive months prior to the election.

In home rule municipalities, check with your municipal clerk on whether additional or different requirements apply.

# Petitions, practices, and basics

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## Nomination petitions

To run for municipal office, you must get a nominating petition from your municipal clerk and have that form signed by a specific number of registered voters in your community. The number of signatures needed will vary depending on whether you live in a statutory or home rule municipality. Most candidates try to get more signatures than needed in case some are ruled invalid.

Different municipalities have different rules about how the petition must be signed and the date on which the petition must be returned. Your municipal clerk will inform you of the nomination procedure rules and deadlines.

## Fair Campaign Practices Act

Candidates for a municipal office who accept contributions must meet the filing requirements of the state Fair Campaign Practices Act. Among other requirements, you must register any "candidate committee" and report its contributions and expenditures. Information about reporting deadlines and copies of the reporting forms are available from your municipal clerk.

## Municipal government basics

Municipal elected officials should have a basic understanding of municipal government and the duties, authority, and limitations of an elected body.

Of course, there is no better way to understand what elected officials do than to attend council or board of trustee meetings. In addition, most cities and towns have advisory boards that are formed to make or recommend policy or quasi-judicial decisions, such as a planning commission or parks and recreation commission. Serving on these and other appointed boards is another excellent way to become informed.

Finally, reviewing Title 31 of the Colorado Revised Statutes and – if you are in a home rule municipality – having a basic familiarity with the municipal home rule charter will help you have a better understanding of municipal government and your role as an elected official.

What follows is a brief introduction to a few basic governance issues.

# What is a municipality?

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## What is a municipality?

An area becomes a municipality when residents vote to incorporate as a city or town. Colorado has four classes of municipalities:

### Home rule municipalities

- have chosen to adopt a home rule charter based on the principle that local citizens should have the right to decide how their local government should be organized and how local problems should be resolved;
- have their own form of government set forth in their charters;
- may call themselves either a city or town; and
- have considerable protection from state interference in their affairs (except where the courts determine that a matter is of statewide concern or mixed state and local concern, then state law may prevail over home rule authority).

### Statutory towns

- traditionally are less than 2,000 in population; and
- have a mayor–council (board of trustees) form of

government in which the mayor is elected by popular vote, with legislative power held by the board of trustees.

### Statutory cities

- usually are more than 2,000 in population; and
- may have a mayor–council or council–manager form of government, with the mayor elected by the people or by the council.

Statutory towns and cities are under greater legal control of the state legislature. They look to state law (generally Title 31 of the Colorado Revised Statutes) to determine their legal authority and limitations. Nevertheless, state laws traditionally have given statutory cities and towns considerable authority to make decisions on local issues.

### Territorial charter cities

The only remaining territorial charter city is Georgetown. Its charter dates from before Colorado became a state. The charter can only be changed by the state legislature.

# Forms of municipal government

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There are two prevalent forms of municipal government in Colorado: mayor–council and council–manager.

## **Mayor–council structure**

- The mayor is the ceremonial head of government and presides over council or board of trustee meetings.
- The council or board of trustees sets policy.
- Depending on local charter, applicable statute, or local practice, broad or limited administrative authority is vested with the mayor,

members of the council, board of trustees, an administrator, or designated department heads appointed by the mayor, council, or board of trustees.

## **Council–manager structure**

- The mayor is the ceremonial head of government and presides over council meetings.
- The council sets policy and hires and fires the manager.
- The city manager normally has broad administrative authority.

# Basic municipal services

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Services provided by municipalities vary from community to community. However, typical services include:

- **Public safety** (police, fire, and sometimes ambulance service);
- **Utilities** (water and wastewater, and sometimes trash collection, electric power, and natural gas);
- **Land use** (planning, zoning, code enforcement, and other regulatory activities);
- **Transportation** (street construction and maintenance, traffic safety, and sometimes public transit);
- **Recreation/cultural facilities** (parks, recreation, libraries, and sometimes cultural facilities); and
- **Legal** (ordinances protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of the community).





# Municipal finance

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In budgeting, the governing body makes important decisions about the operation and priorities of the municipality. Is a swimming pool more important than storm drains? Does the municipality need a new library more than it needs additional police personnel? Should the potholes be filled or the street completely rebuilt?

Budgeting is a process by which the governing body determines the community's standard of living – what the community needs and wants, what it is willing and able to pay, and what services it can expect to receive for its tax dollars.

Municipalities levy specific taxes to finance municipal services. The following are the most common taxes levied by Colorado municipalities:

- **Sales tax** is levied on retail sales of tangible personal property and some services.
- **Use tax** is levied on the retail purchase price of tangible personal property and some

services purchased outside the municipality, but stored, used, or consumed within the municipality.

- **Property tax** is levied on the valuation of taxable property located within the municipality.
- **Occupation tax or business license fee** is levied at a standard rate for all or specified businesses and professions.
- **Liquor and beer occupation tax** is a special occupation tax levied on retail liquor and beer establishments.
- **Utility occupation tax and/or franchise fee** is levied on non-municipally owned utilities (telecommunications, electric, gas, cable TV).

In addition, many municipal services are financed in whole or in part by user fees and charges. Finally, municipalities receive revenues from various federal and state grant and allocation programs.

# Knowing the law

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## Term limits

In 1994, the Colorado Constitution was amended to place term limits on local elected officials, including all mayors, councilmembers, and board of trustee members in both statutory and home rule municipalities. All municipal elected officials (except judges) are limited to serving two consecutive terms in office, except if the term of office is two years or shorter, in which case officials are limited to serving three consecutive terms in office. Terms are considered consecutive unless they are four years apart.

Municipal voters may modify or eliminate term limits through a local option election; you should check to determine the status of term limits in your community.

## Ethics and conflict of interest

A municipal elected official must adhere to an ethical level of conduct while in office. Elected officials are vested with the public trust and must carry out their responsibilities in an ethical manner. Ethics and conflict of interest requirements for local government officers

are addressed in the Colorado Constitution, state statutes, and sometimes in local charter or ordinance provisions. In general, these requirements are aimed at preventing those in a position of public trust from using that position for personal financial gain. State law provides that, among other things, elected officials may not:

- use confidential information for personal benefit;
- accept gifts or economic benefits as rewards or inducements for official action;
- engage in substantial business with one who supervises or inspects; and
- vote on matters involving a "personal or private interest."

## Open meetings

Before assuming public office, become familiar with Colorado's Open Meetings Law, which covers local public bodies such as a municipal governing council or

board. You will need a basic understanding of what constitutes a public meeting, the minimum requirements for a quorum, when "full and timely notice" prior to a meeting is required, and the basic requirements concerning "executive sessions" (that is, meetings that are not open to the public).

The open meetings law reflects the policy that public bodies are engaged in the public's business. Consequently, their meetings should be open to the public and held only after "full and timely" public notice. Therefore, the open meetings law permits executive sessions only on specific topics. The law also requires that these sessions be for deliberation only; decisions must be reached in an open meeting. In home rule municipalities, you may be subject to additional or varying requirements under your charter or ordinances.

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# About CML

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Founded in 1923, CML is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that represents and serves Colorado’s cities and towns. Of Colorado’s 272 Colorado cities and towns, 270 are members of CML, representing more than 99% of the municipal population in the state.

The Colorado Municipal League believes that local problems are best resolved at the local level of government and that people are best served by a strong and responsive local government.

The League’s core functions are advocacy, information, and training.

## Advocacy

CML represents the interests of Colorado municipalities before the state and federal governments and in the courts. The League employs a team of legislative and legal advocates to ensure that all municipalities are well-represented in the state capitol and that the interests of cities and towns and their residents are protected through participation in certain appellate court cases. The work of state agencies also is under the watchful eye of CML, as are statewide ballot issues.

## Information

CML provides accessible information that you need to serve your municipality and its residents. Each year, staff responds to individual inquiries with information, advice, and sample documents. CML periodicals include the award-winning bimonthly magazine, *Colorado Municipalities*; biweekly *CML Newsletter*; and *Statehouse Report*, a weekly report on legislation of municipal interest that is sent while the General Assembly is in session.

Publications produced by CML reflect important technical and legal research on a variety of issues impacting municipal government.

The CML website, [www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org), and presence on social media platforms, ensure that the most up-to-date information is available to our members. CML also produces short, informative videos on topics important to municipal officials; visit the CML website to view.

## Training

Each year, CML offers dynamic events and workshops to support your continuing education and training on such topics as

leadership, council collaboration, municipal finance, land use and planning, personnel issues, telecommunications, legislative issues, strategic planning, and more.

MUNiversity recognizes the efforts of officials who go the extra mile to increase their knowledge and their capacity to lead. Since 1991, hundreds of municipal elected officials have participated in this highly successful program. MUNiversity is based on interactive, affordable, capacity-building learning opportunities that promote a better understanding of municipal government and provide the tools to be a more effective community leader. The program is simple:

- Any municipal elected official may participate. This includes mayors, councilmembers, and trustees.
- There is no cost for enrolling.
- There are no required courses. You select the credited training that fits your specific needs from CML workshops and conferences.

For more information about this program and other League services, contact the League office in Denver at 303-831-6411 / 866-578-0936.

## Colorado municipal facts

### Number of incorporated municipalities: 272

Population (2017 estimates)

State: 5,609,445

Municipal: 4,159,526

Municipal as percent of state: 74%

Range in municipal population:

Lakeside: 8                      Denver: 705,651

Municipalities with CML membership: 270

### Structure of Colorado municipal governments

Structure	#	Population	% of municipal population
Home Rule	102	3,886,636	93.44%
Statutory	169	271,815	6.53%
Territorial Charter	1	1,075	0.026%

### Municipal finance

#### Property tax (2017)

Assessed valuations

State: \$111.63 billion

Municipal: \$74.99 billion

Municipal as percent of state: 67.2%

#### Sales tax (2019)

Total municipalities levying a local sales tax: 222

Municipalities with self-collected sales tax: 71

Low: 1%                      High: 7%

### Municipal elections (1993-April 2019)

Ballot issues	Passed	Failed	% Passed
TABOR revenue and spending changes	494	78	86%
Municipal tax/tax rate	636	414	61%
Municipal debt/obligation	313	138	69%

### Other facts

- Colorado has 272 municipalities (including the City and County of Denver and the City and County of Broomfield).
- There are approximately 1,800 municipal elected officials in Colorado (mayors, mayor pro tems, councilmembers, trustees).
- Pay for mayors, councilmembers, and trustees is determined locally. Compensation varies from no compensation to modest compensation levels for part-time officials. There are a few full-time paid positions, i.e., mayors in Denver and Aurora.

*Compiled by the Colorado Municipal League, April 2019*

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Empowered cities and towns,  
united for a strong Colorado



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