



# 2025 FORT COLLINS MUNICIPAL ELECTION **VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE**

FC  VOTE



RANKED



CHOICE



VOTING

Welcome to your official 2025 City of Fort Collins Voter Information Guide. Read this guide to learn about how, when and where to vote; to learn more about ranked voting; and to find answers to frequently asked questions.

This guide includes a list of the candidates expected to be on this year's ballot, as well as a factual summary for the various ballot measures, including related pro/con statements. Additional information on candidates and the various ballot measures can be found at [www.fcgov.com/elections](http://www.fcgov.com/elections).

## WHAT IS ON THE BALLOT FOR FORT COLLINS?

- City Council Races for Mayor and Councilmembers for Districts 1, 3 and 5
  - » Ranked Voting will be used for any race where there are three or more candidates
- Six Charter Amendments
- Two Tax Initiatives (TABOR)
- Two Ballot Questions related to the Hughes Stadium property

## WHEN IS ELECTION DAY?

- Nov. 4, 2025

## WHEN DO I VOTE?

- You will receive a ballot in the mail sometime between Oct. 10-17. You can return your completed ballot anytime up until 7 p.m. on Election Day.

## HOW CAN I REGISTER TO VOTE OR CHECK MY VOTER REGISTRATION?

- [www.govotecolorado.com](http://www.govotecolorado.com)
- Fort Collins City Clerk's Office, 300 LaPorte Ave.
- Larimer County Administrative Services Office, 200 W. Oak St.
- Voter Service/Polling Centers (starting Oct. 27)
  - » Find locations: [www.larimer.gov/elections](http://www.larimer.gov/elections)
- The last day to apply to register to vote **through the mail** is Oct. 27. However, you can register to vote online or at a polling center up to and including Election Day, Nov. 4.

## ELECTION DATES AND DEADLINES

- Sept. 20 – Last day for County to transmit ballots and related materials to overseas voters and first day an eligible elector can request a ballot from the County Clerk
- Oct. 3 – Last day for County to mail TABOR Notices to voters
- Oct. 17 – Last day for County to mail ballots to voters
- Oct. 20 – First day County can begin counting ballots
- Oct. 27 – Last day to apply to register to vote through the mail
- **Nov. 4 – Election Day!** Ballots must be received no later than 7 p.m.!
- Nov. 13 – Last day for County to verify and count provisional ballots
- Nov. 26 – Last day for County to finalize election

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# HOW TO VOTE

## BY MAIL:

- Ballots will be mailed to voters sometime between Oct. 10-17.
- Make sure to add postage before mailing.
- Make sure there is enough time to mail – the ballot must actually be received by the County no later than Nov. 4 and postmarks do not count as the received date!
- You can check the status of your mail ballot by:
  - » Looking it up on the Colorado Secretary of State's website: [www.govotecolorado.com](http://www.govotecolorado.com)
  - » Calling the Larimer County Elections Office: 970-498-7820
  - » Using the orange stub on your ballot to track your ballot through [BallotTrax](#).
- This is only available for mail-in ballots.

## BY DROP BOX:

- This is a preferred method of turning in your ballot because the chain of custody is not broken. Your ballot goes directly from you (the voter) to Larimer County.
- There are multiple 24-Hour Fort Collins locations:
  - » **Colorado State University - Lory Student Center (Walk-Up)**, 1101 Center Ave. Mall
  - » **Elks Lodge (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 1424 E. Mulberry St.
  - » **Edora Pool Ice Center (EPIC) (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 1801 Riverside Ave.
  - » **Fort Collins Habitat for Humanity ReStore (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 4001 S. Taft Hill Rd.
  - » **Fort Collins Police Services (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 2221 S. Timberline Rd.
  - » **Fort Collins Senior Center (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 1200 Raintree Dr.
  - » **Fort Collins Traffic Operations (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 626 Linden St.
  - » **Harmony Library (Walk-Up)**, 4616 S. Shields St.
  - » **Larimer County Administrative Services (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 200 W. Oak St. - Outside SW entrance
  - » **Larimer County Human Services (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 1501 Blue Spruce Dr.
  - » **Northside Aztlan Community Center (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 112 E. Willow St.
  - » **South Transit Center (Walk-Up/Drive-Thru)**, 4915 Fossil Blvd.
- There are locations in surrounding communities that can be used as well. A full list of available drop boxes is at [www.larimer.gov/elections](http://www.larimer.gov/elections).

## AT A VOTER SERVICE AND POLLING CENTER (VSPC):

- These centers are open Oct. 27-Nov. 4
  - » Here you can vote in person, obtain a replacement mail ballot, deliver your voted mail ballot, register to vote, change your address, or vote on an ADA accessible voting machine.
- Locations of Fort Collins VSPCs:
  - » **Larimer County Administrative Services (Walk-Up)**, 200 W. Oak St. – 1st Floor
  - » **Colorado State University – Lory Student Center**, 1101 Center Ave. Mall
  - » **Front Range Community College – Longs Peak Student Center**, 4616 S. Shields St. (Nov. 3-4 only)
- Hours and more information: [www.larimer.gov/elections](http://www.larimer.gov/elections)

## ON ELECTION DAY:

- Nov. 4, 2025
- Polls are open for in-person voting from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Larimer County must have your ballot no later than 7 p.m. Nov. 4 to ensure your vote counts!

# RANKED VOTING

## HOW DO I FILL OUT MY BALLOT WITH RANKED VOTING?

1. Pick your first-choice candidate and completely fill in the oval next to their name under the 1st column.
2. If you have a second-choice candidate, fill in the oval next to their name under the 2nd column.
3. You can rank all candidates within an existing race (up to 10). You can still rank just one candidate; however, if that candidate does not have enough votes to make it through to the next round, you will have no further say in the outcome of the vote.

### WHAT IS RANKED VOTING?

Starting this year, Fort Collins will use Ranked Voting – commonly known as ranked-choice voting – in all City Council races that have three or more candidates. With Ranked Voting, you can rank up to 10 candidates in your order of preference instead of choosing just one. This gives you more say in who gets elected and results in a candidate being elected who receives more than 50% of the vote.

### WHY ARE WE USING RANKED VOTING?

Fort Collins voters elected to use Ranked Voting in a 2022 ballot measure. It passed with 58.15% support and included a provision that this form of voting would be implemented during the 2025 election.

### WHICH OFFICES WILL I VOTE FOR WITH RANKED VOTING?

- Mayor
- Councilmember – District 1 (for those who live in District 1)
- Councilmember – District 3 (for those who live in District 3)

You can find out which District you live in [here](#).

CANDIDATES	1ST CHOICE	2ND CHOICE	3RD CHOICE
strawberry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
chocolate	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vanilla	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

..... This is a correctly marked ballot with the voter's 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices indicated.

CANDIDATES	1ST CHOICE	2ND CHOICE	3RD CHOICE
strawberry	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
chocolate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vanilla	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

..... Voters cannot rank one candidate multiple times. This voter's 1st choice would be counted and would continue until their candidate either won or was eliminated. If their 1st choice was eliminated, the voter's 2nd and 3rd choices would not count because the candidate would no longer be in the race.

CANDIDATES	1ST CHOICE	2ND CHOICE	3RD CHOICE
strawberry	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
chocolate	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
vanilla	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

..... Voters cannot give multiple candidates the same ranking. This voter's 1st choice would be counted, but if their candidate was eliminated there would be no way to determine the voter's intent for second choice. At that point, the voter would have no further active choice in the race.

### SAMPLE BALLOT

A sample ballot is posted for review at [www.larimer.gov/clerk/elections/current-elections/2025](http://www.larimer.gov/clerk/elections/current-elections/2025).

## CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

There are 15 candidates running across four races: Mayor, Councilmember for District 1, Councilmember for District 3, and Councilmember for District 5. You can find a Council District map [here](#).

The candidates for each race are listed below, and additional details on the candidates can be found at [www.fcgov.com/elections/candidate-filings](http://www.fcgov.com/elections/candidate-filings).

- All Fort Collins voters can vote for a Mayor and rank up to 7. The candidates include:
  - » Tricia Canonico - [triciaforfoco.com](http://triciaforfoco.com)
  - » Adam Eggleston - [adamegglestonformayor.com](http://adamegglestonformayor.com)
  - » Emily Francis - [emilyforfc.com](http://emilyforfc.com)
  - » Adam Hirschhorn - [@electadammayor.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/electadammayor)
  - » Shirley Peel- [shirleyforfoco.com](http://shirleyforfoco.com)
  - » Jeff Shumway - [shumwayformayor.com](http://shumwayformayor.com)
  - » Scotty V VanTatenhove - [scotttyv.com](http://scotttyv.com)
- District 1 residents can vote for a District 1 Councilmember and rank up to 3. The candidates include:
  - » Chris Conway - [chrisconwayfc.com](http://chrisconwayfc.com)
  - » Susan Gutowsky - [susan-gutowsky.org](http://susan-gutowsky.org)
  - » Daisy Montgomery - [daisyforfoco.com](http://daisyforfoco.com)
- District 3 residents can vote for a District 3 Councilmember and rank up to 3. The candidates include:
  - » Josh Fudge - [fudgeforfortcollins.com](http://fudgeforfortcollins.com)
  - » Lance Smith - [lancesmith4foco.com](http://lancesmith4foco.com)
  - » Steve Yurash - [steveyurash.org](http://steveyurash.org)
- District 5 residents can vote for a District 5 Councilmember. Because there are only two candidates, this race will not use ranked voting. The candidates include:
  - » Amy Hoeven - [amyforcouncil.com](http://amyforcouncil.com)
  - » Zoelle Lane - [zoellelane.com](http://zoellelane.com)

The order of candidates on the ballot is set out in the City's Charter under [Article VIII, Section 6](#) and requires that the candidates for each office be arranged in alphabetical order based on surname.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### GENERAL ELECTION

#### Who can vote in City elections?

To vote in a City election you must be a resident of the state of Colorado for at least 22 days immediately prior to the election. To vote on City of Fort Collins questions, you must also reside within the Fort Collins city limits and be registered to vote at your current address by election day. You can find more information about being registered to vote on page 2 of this guide.

Many people believe they should be allowed to vote in City elections because they own property or a business in Fort Collins. Others believe that a Fort Collins mailing address or the fact that they pay City sales tax while shopping in Fort Collins should qualify them. While we understand your desire to participate in City elections, the law simply does not permit it.

**Why don't I get to vote for a District candidate?**

District Councilmembers are nominated and elected by the voters in their District. The election of District Councilmembers alternates so that voters from Districts 1, 3 and 5 elect Councilmembers in one election, and voters from Districts 2, 4 and 6 elect Councilmembers in the next election. All Districts vote on candidates for the office of Mayor at every election (elections are held on the first Tuesday in November of odd-numbered years). You can find out which District you live in [here](#).

**Can I give my ballot to a candidate or other person to mail or deliver to the County?**

State statute provides that an elector may deliver the ballot to any person of their own choice. However, you should take into consideration how well you know the person you are giving your ballot to and whether or not you trust them to perform that service. Under state statute, no person may receive more than 10 mail ballots in any election for mailing or delivery.

**RANKED VOTING****Do I have to rank all candidates?**

No. You may rank as many or as few candidates as you like. However, any choices after a skipped ranking will not be tabulated. If you mark a first choice, skip a second choice, and then mark a third choice, only your first choice will be tabulated.

**Can I rank two or more candidates the same preference?**

No. You cannot give more than one candidate the same ranking. Ranking two or more candidates in the same preference column (for example, marking two candidates as your first choice) would invalidate your vote because there would be no way to determine voter intent. Only one candidate can represent the voter's first, second, third, fourth or other vote, depending on the number of candidates.

**How are votes counted in ranked voting?**

During the first round of counting, the voting system will tabulate all first-choice selections on each ballot. If a candidate receives more than 50% of first-choice selections, they win the election outright. If no one gets a majority of the votes in the first round, tabulation will continue to the next round; the candidate with the fewest first-choice ranks is eliminated and the votes they received are transferred to the second-choice candidate indicated on each of those ballots. This process continues until one candidate receives more than 50% of ballots cast.

**What happens if my top candidate gets eliminated?**

In that case, if you have selected a second-choice candidate, your second-choice vote will be counted and added to the vote count for that candidate; this process will continue until a candidate receives more than 50% of the votes cast.

**Does Ranked Voting mean some votes are counted more than others?**

Ranked voting is designed to give every voter an equal opportunity to express their preferences, but not to count more than one vote per voter.

In each round of counting, only one choice per voter is counted. If your first-choice candidate is still in the running, your vote stays with them. If your first-choice candidate is eliminated, your vote transfers to your next-ranked candidate. This ensures all voters have an opportunity to express their preferences, even if their top choice doesn't advance.

Think of it like a series of runoff elections, but instead of having to cast a new ballot each round, all of your preferences are already indicated on your ballot.

**How does Larimer County ensure ranked voting is accurate?**

The accuracy of tabulation is verified both before the election (with a Logic and Accuracy Test) and after (with a Risk-Limiting Audit).

The purpose of the Logic and Accuracy Test is to verify the voting system is properly configured and programmed to accurately tabulate votes. The Logic and Accuracy Test verifies that the system correctly records all valid votes, under votes, over votes, and blank votes.

A Risk-Limiting Audit is a post-election audit that gives a statistical level of confidence that the outcome of an election is correct. In a Risk-Limiting Audit, the county examines and reports to the Secretary of State voter markings on randomly selected ballot cards, then compares them to the voting system's tabulation as reflected in the corresponding cast vote records.

### **How long will it take to count the votes and determine the winner?**

The process of verifying and tabulating mail ballots received up to and on Election Day can continue for several days after. In the 8 days following Election Day, the Larimer County Clerk and Recorder's Office will continue to legally receive and tabulate ballots from military and overseas voters, ballots returned in other Colorado counties, and ballots that have been "cured" (due to a missing signature, missing identification, or signature discrepancy). While ballots are still being received and processed, results are subject to change and should be considered unofficial. Election results will remain unofficial until all election processes conclude and the election has been canvassed, no later than Nov. 26, 2025.

### **What happens if there is a tie?**

According to the [Colorado Secretary of State Election Rules](#), if two or more candidates tie for the lowest number or votes in a tabulation round, the designated election official will determine the eliminated candidate by drawing. If two or more winning candidates tie for the most votes in any round, the designated election official must first count the surplus votes of the candidate chosen by drawing.

Read more Election and Ranked Voting FAQs at [www.fcgov.com/elections/faq](http://www.fcgov.com/elections/faq).

## **2025 BALLOT MEASURES**

There are 10 local measures that will be on Fort Collins voters' 2025 ballot:

- Two TABOR (tax) questions that ask voters to extend already existing taxes;
- Six Charter Amendments; and
- Two ballot questions related to the Hughes Stadium property and associated uses.

Here is the order these will appear on the ballot:

### **BALLOT ISSUE 2A**

#### **City-Initiated Ballot Issue No. 1**

(Community Capital Improvement Program (CCIP) Tax Extension – Resolution 2025-077)

### **BALLOT QUESTION 2B**

#### **City-Initiated Proposed Charter Amendment No. 1**

(Correct Errors and Eliminate Outdated or Unnecessary Language - Ordinance 63, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

### **BALLOT QUESTION 2C**

#### **City-Initiated Proposed Charter Amendment No. 2**

(Modernizing and Updating – Ordinance 067, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

**BALLOT QUESTION 2D****City-Initiated Proposed Charter Amendment No. 3**

(Modernizing publication requirements and requirements for adopting ordinances, resolutions and motions – Ordinance 065, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

**BALLOT QUESTION 2E****City-Initiated Proposed Charter Amendment No. 4**

(Alignment with amended or further developed laws and removing inconsistencies – Ordinance 064, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

**BALLOT QUESTION 2F****City-Initiated Proposed Charter Amendment No. 5**

(Conflicts of Interest – Ordinance 066, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

**BALLOT QUESTION 2G****City-Initiated Proposed Charter Amendment No. 6**

(Council Vacancies – Ordinance 108, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

**BALLOT QUESTION 2H**

City-Referred Ordinance – Expressing Support for the Civic Assembly Recommendations for the Hughes Site and Adopting a Conceptual Framework for the Use and Management of the Hughes Site

**BALLOT ISSUE 302****Citizen-Initiated Ballot Issue No. 2**

(Natural Areas Tax Extension – Resolution 2025-077)

**BALLOT QUESTION 303****Citizen-Initiated Proposed Ordinance No. 1**

(Making the Hughes Site a 100% Natural Area – Resolution 2025-073)

The order of ballot measures is set out in the [Secretary of State Rules](#) governing elections. City-referred items are listed first by order of measures to increase taxes, measures to retain excess revenues, measures to increase debt and other referred measures. These are followed by citizen initiatives to increase taxes, initiatives to retain excess revenues, initiatives to increase debt and other initiated measures. The order of the ballot measures included in this guide reflect the order they will be shown on the ballot.

The following pages contain factual summaries of each ballot measure. Each factual summary includes the question as it will be written on the ballot, a summary of the item, what “yes” and “no” votes mean related to the item, and a summarized listing of pro/con statements written and/or received for the item.

BALLOT ISSUE 2A

CITY-INITIATED BALLOT NO. 1

(Community Capital Improvement Program (CCIP) Tax Extension – Resolution 2025-077)

WITHOUT RAISING ADDITIONAL TAXES, SHALL THE CITY’S EXISTING 0.25% SALES AND USE TAX (25 CENTS ON A \$100 PURCHASE) APPROVED BY THE VOTERS IN 2015 FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS BE EXTENDED FROM ITS CURRENT EXPIRATION AT THE END OF 2025, THROUGH THE END OF 2035;

PROVIDED THAT REVENUE FROM THE EXTENSION OF SUCH TAX SHALL BE USED FOR PLANNING, DESIGN, REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION, AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOLLOWING CAPITAL PROJECTS, AND FIVE (5) YEARS OF OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (“O&M”) FOR CERTAIN OF THESE CAPITAL PROJECTS, ALL SUBJECT TO PROPOSED VOTER-APPROVED ORDINANCE NO. 003, 2025:

- PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK PROGRAM
- ARTERIAL INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS AND STREETSCAPES
- BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE & OVERPASSES/UNDERPASSES
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAPITAL FUND
- MULBERRY POOL RECREATIONAL REPLACEMENT SUPPORT
- POUDRE RIVER – RIVER HEALTH, ACCESS, PARKS, AND TRAILS (WITH O&M)
- COMPOSTING INFRASTRUCTURE (WITH O&M)
- DOWNTOWN PARKS SHOP
- COMMUNITY BIKE PARK (WITH O&M)
- OUTDOOR PICKLEBALL FACILITIES (WITH O&M)
- NATURE IN THE CITY
- TRANSFORT BUSES & STOPS
- RECREATIONAL PAVED TRAILS (WITH O&M)
- CONSTRUCTION WASTE DIVERSION EQUIPMENT
- HISTORIC TROLLEY BUILDING RENOVATION (WITH O&M)
- GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK – CHILDREN’S GARDEN & INFRASTRUCTURE
- LEE MARTINEZ FARM IMPROVEMENTS
- TIMBERLINE RECYCLING CENTER IMPROVEMENTS;

AND PROVIDED THAT ALL REVENUES FROM THE TAX MAY BE RETAINED AND EXPENDED BY THE CITY FOR SUCH PURPOSES, NOTWITHSTANDING ANY STATE REVENUE OR EXPENDITURE LIMITATION INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION?

\_\_\_\_\_

YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_

NO/AGAINST

SUMMARY:

The current City sales tax includes a twenty-five hundredths percent (0.25%) tax dedicated to capital projects designed to serve the community as a whole. The tax does not apply to food for home consumption and equates to 25 cents on a \$100 purchase to generate revenue for the construction of certain capital projects. The projects funded were

identified in Ordinance No. 013, 2015, which was approved by City voters on April 7, 2015. The current tax expires at midnight on December 31, 2025.

For four decades, the revenue generated by such 0.25% tax has supported expanded City facilities and infrastructure to serve the needs of the community.

City Council believes it is in the best interests of the City’s residents to extend the existing tax for an additional ten-year period to generate additional revenues for purposes similar to those for which the existing tax was originally imposed. The list of capital projects included in the ballot language were decided on by City Council after public outreach and are believed to meet the needs and desires of the community.

*What a “Yes” vote means for this measure:*

A “yes” vote on this measure indicates a voter agrees with continuing the existing 0.25% tax for another ten-year period to cover the proposed capital projects.

*What a “No” vote means for this measure:*

A “no” vote indicates a voter does not agree with continuing the existing 0.25% tax for another ten-year period to cover the proposed capital projects.

## ARGUMENTS FOR THIS MEASURE:

A supporting comment notes that Fort Collins has a long history of paying for City projects as funds are collected, rather than borrowing money. The commenter explains that the 0.25-cent sales tax has been an important tool to make this “pay as we go” approach possible.

The tax is set to expire every 10 years, which allows enough time for the City to plan and complete large projects. At the end of each 10-year period, voters are asked to decide on a new package of projects.

A supporting comment notes this system provides accountability because the City must commit to a specific set of projects and then return to voters for input on the next set.

The current proposal includes projects spread across different parts of the community and addressing a variety of needs. The planned funding is divided into categories similar to past packages:

- **42%** for transit, transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure
- **25%** for parks and recreation
- **20%** for river and environmental projects
- **10%** for affordable housing
- **3%** for cultural amenities

Supporting comments emphasize that this package balances priorities, continues a proven funding method, and allows residents to see direct results from their tax dollars. Supporters urge voters to support this measure.

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS MEASURE:

Opposing commenters were concerned about the proposed spending priorities in this measure. They noted that \$5 million would be allocated to build a community bike park, with an additional \$15,000 per year for maintenance. It was pointed out that another \$11 million would go toward bike-related infrastructure, totaling over \$16 million for biking projects. A commenter argued that this spending is too high when compared to the smaller amount planned for affordable housing, which community surveys show is a top need.

An opposing comment questioned the timing of the measure. With state and federal funding cutbacks and an uncertain economic future, the commenter believes now is not the right time to approve new taxes for large recreational projects.

Another opposing comment noted the measure is more of a “community wishlist” than a carefully chosen list of high-priority projects. The comment reflects that the list includes items that appeal to certain groups but do not benefit the entire community. The commenter argues that elected officials should have been more deliberate and selective in proposing projects for taxpayer funding.

An opposing comment reflects frustration that voters are being put in a difficult position. The commenter believes the ballot measure allows elected officials to avoid accountability—if the measure passes, officials can say it was voter-approved; if it fails, they can say voters rejected it. They argue this protects officials while leaving taxpayers responsible for tough choices.

Opposing commenters urge voters to reject the measure and send it back to officials to create a better proposal that focuses more directly on the community’s top needs.

# BALLOT QUESTION 2B

## CITY-INITIATED PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 1

(Correct Errors and Eliminate Outdated or Unnecessary Language - Ordinance 63, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

Shall Articles II, IX, and X of the Charter of the City of Fort Collins, be amended to correct errors and eliminate outdated or unnecessary language in light of the Charter amendments adopted in November 2024, by:

- Clarifying in Section 2(d) of Article II that a registered elector must notify the City Clerk before seeking a court determination to challenge the qualifications of any member of the Council; and
- Updating language in Section 2(e)(i) of Article IX about determining the number of votes cast in a specific race to work with the new ranked voting rules that were approved in November 2024; and
- Changing language in Section 2(e)(i) of Article X to restore the number of days for a signature gatherer to circulate an initiative petition by increasing it from 63 days to 77 days?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_ NO/AGAINST

**SUMMARY:**  
This Charter Amendment has three parts, each correcting language related to local elections within the City to be in conformance with amendments adopted by the voters in November 2024 and to correct errors in the language presented to the voters at that time.

First, this Charter Amendment requires a registered elector to notify the City Clerk before seeking a court determination challenging the qualifications of a Council Member, in part for consistency with language adopted in November 2024.

Second, this Charter Amendment updates the language regarding recall petitions to align with the new ranked choice voting process that was approved in November 2021.

Third, the current version of the Charter gives signature gatherers sixty-three (63) days to circulate an initiative petition. This timeframe was not updated in November 2024 to reflect an increase to seventy-seven (77) days intended by City Council. The proposed amendment incorporates the intended timeframe for circulation of an initiative petition by updating the Charter language to give signature gatherers seventy-seven (77) days instead of sixty-three (63) days.

*What a “Yes” vote means:*  
A “yes” vote indicates the voter agrees with updating the Charter language regarding local elections.

*What a “No” vote means:*  
A “no” vote indicates the voter does not agree with the updates and would rather leave the Charter language as is.

**ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:**

These updates make the Charter and Code more consistent and cohesive throughout, as well as correct language that is now outdated in light of Charter amendments adopted in recent elections. For example, the adoption of ranked choice voting requires updates to election language to ensure clarity throughout the Charter. This results in procedural fairness by ensuring consistency in applying the new ranked voting provisions.

The proposed corrections to increase the petition circulation time aligns with City Council’s initial intentions and increases civic access and participation by giving residents more time to collect signatures.

These updates improve legal clarity by ensuring proper procedures for challenging a Councilmember’s qualifications and align election timelines with recent revisions to Charter Article VIII.

**ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:**

Requiring electors to provide notice to the City Clerk before challenging a Councilmember’s qualifications adds a step to the process and might discourage electors from taking action or may delay action.

Some voters may feel the changes result in minimal policy changes and question the need for a Charter amendment.

BALLOT QUESTION 2C

CITY-INITIATED PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 2

(Modernizing and Updating – Ordinance 067,2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

Shall the Charter of the City of Fort Collins be amended to modernize and update it by reformatting and updating language usage for ease of reading and clarity, and eliminating inapplicable and invalid provisions, without undoing any substantive Charter amendments approved by the voters at the Tuesday, November 4, 2025, municipal election, by:

- Changing the words “shall” to “will,” “must” or “may,” or other words to improve clarity; and
- Making the language more inclusive by taking out words “he” and “she” and related word forms; and
- Dividing sections into subsections and adding titles to subsections to make them easier to read and understand; and
- Eliminating transitional provisions that
  - » Address residency requirements for City department heads appointed prior to March 6, 1985 (Section 3 of Article IV); and
  - » Set a mill levy cap on Council’ s adoption of taxes (Section 6 of Article IV), which Council must now adopt only with voter approval; and
  - » Provide for transition from the prior Charter when the Charter was adopted Article XIV); and
- Renumbering and updating section cross-references throughout the Charter?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_ NO/AGAINST

SUMMARY:

This proposed Charter Amendment updates and removes provisions of the City Charter that, through the passage of time and other outside circumstances, have become outdated, unnecessary, or redundant. Such deletions include references to department heads appointed before 1985, tax provisions now provided in State law, and language guiding the transition from a Commission to a Council form of government that was completed in 1955.

This Charter Amendment will also modernize the language and syntax of the entire Charter in general. Examples of updated language include changing “shall” to “must”, “will”, or “may” where appropriate, and “he or she” to “they”.

This Charter Amendment updates formatting by separating sections into subsections.

*What a “Yes” vote means:*  
A “Yes” vote indicates the voter agrees with updates and removes language in the Charter that no longer serves any purpose and modernizes the language of the entire Charter.

*What a “No” vote means:*  
A “No” vote indicates the voter does not agree with the updates and keeps the Charter language as is.

**ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:**

The Charter provisions at issue are redundant with State law or no longer serve a purpose. Removing them makes the Charter shorter, easier to read, and less confusing.

The wording of the Charter as written does not reflect modern language. Updating the wording of the Charter makes it more legible to the average person without changing its meaning.

**ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:**

The Charter language is part of the City’s history. It has no negative impact on the City and thus there is no reason to remove it.

This may seem to some as legal fine-tuning and not necessary.

BALLOT QUESTION 2D

CITY-INITIATED PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 3

(Modernizing publication requirements and requirements for adopting ordinances, resolutions and motions – Ordinance 065, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

Shall Articles II and IV of the Charter of the City of Fort Collins, be amended to modernize publication requirements and requirements for adopting ordinances, by:

- Revising Section 6 of Article II about adopting ordinances, resolutions, and motions to:
  - » Make the provision easier to read and understand by adding subsections, subsection titles and better organizing them;
  - » Remove language entitling any Councilmember to request that an entire ordinance be read aloud at a Council meeting; and
- Revising Section 7 of Article II about publication and effective date of ordinances to:
  - » Allow an ordinance to proceed to adoption if publication of the ordinance before adoption was not timely, so long as all other notice requirements have been met; and
  - » Cure late publication of ordinance after final passage if publication completed within a reasonable period of time; and
  - » Delay the effective date of the ordinance until publication requirements are met; and
  - » Toll the deadline to file a notice of referendum protest; and
- Revising Section 7 of Article IV to require notice be published on the City’s website and posted at City Hall, instead of publishing formal legal notices in a local newspaper; and
- Adding a new Section 17 to Article IV of the Charter of the City of Fort Collins about how to apply deadlines throughout the Charter in the manner already enacted for Articles VIII, IX and X?

\_\_\_\_\_

YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_

NO/AGAINST

SUMMARY:

This Charter Amendment modernizes requirements for adopting ordinances, including publication requirements. For example, the amendment would add sections detailing the effects of late publication and the methods for computing time for the purpose of publication. The amendment also removes the option for a City Councilmember to request that an ordinance be read aloud in its entirety at a City Council meeting.

What a “Yes” vote means:

A “yes” vote indicates the voter agrees with updating the Charter language regarding publication and adoption requirements of ordinances and adds language detailing how time is computed for these processes.

What a “No” vote means:

A “no” vote indicates the voter does not agree with updating the Charter language and would rather leave the language as is.

## ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:

These Charter Amendments remove outdated processes and replace them with modern equivalents that better suit the needs of the City's electors. For example, the requirement of publishing ordinances in a newspaper would be replaced with the option to publish ordinances on the City's website. This reaches a wider spread of electors and conserves vital City resources.

Removing the ability of City Councilmembers to request that an ordinance be read in its entirety prevents political manipulation of City Council meetings and protects the Council's ability to take action during the meeting time.

This amendment reduces restarts and prevents legislative delays due to minor publication errors and provides needed clarification regarding what happens if publication of an ordinance is not timely.

This amendment increases consistency by applying clear deadline rules across the entire Charter.

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:

Some electors prefer the current methods for ordinance publication or may not feel comfortable using the internet to find political information.

Hearing the entire ordinance read during a City Council meeting is helpful because it increases transparency and it's never a waste of time for electors to have all the information available to them before voting on an issue.

Changes may be seen as overly administrative.

# BALLOT QUESTION 2E

## CITY-INITIATED PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 4

(Alignment with amended or further developed laws and removing inconsistencies – Ordinance 064, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

Shall Articles II, IV, XIII of the Charter of the City of Fort Collins be amended to improve consistency with amended or further developed laws and removing inconsistencies, in order to minimize conflicts between the Charter legal developments, by:

- Changing Section 8 of Article II about contributions to City Council elections to:
  - » Specify which city employees are prohibited from contributing to Council elections for consistency with state law;
  - » Continue to prohibit a political party, public service corporations, and persons or entities with city contracts from contributing to any City Council election, while recognizing that some speech is protected by the U.S. or Colorado constitution;
- Adding definitions to Article XIII to correspond to the changes to Article II; and
- Adding language to Section 11 of Article II incorporating state law provisions regarding City Council executive sessions; and
- Clarifying language in Section 5 of Article IV that City records are available for public inspection and disclosure consistent with state open records laws?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_ NO/AGAINST

**SUMMARY:**  
This Charter Amendment has three parts, each aiming to better align the City’s charter with state and federal laws.

First, the current Charter language prohibits all City employees from contributing to City Council elections. Colorado statutes provide that local governments must allow employees to participate fully in political activity. The law allows limits on political activities of public employees with policy-making responsibilities. Other provisions address how the City may restrict political activity of those interested in City Council elections. This Charter amendment aligns the Charter language about supporting and opposing City Council candidates with state and federal constitutions and statutes.

Second, the current Charter language allows the City Council to go into executive session to discuss specific topics confidentially, including personnel matters, legal matters, water and real property acquisitions and sales by the city, or matters of competition for electric utility (including broadband) matters. The Council is not allowed to make decisions in executive sessions. This Charter amendment updates the language to also allow executive session discussions for any matter authorized by the Colorado Open Meetings Law.

Third, the current Charter language requires that City records be available for public inspection subject only to reasonable restrictions. This charter amendment updates the City’s records requirements to coordinate with the Colorado Open Records Act.

*What a “Yes” vote means:*

A “yes” vote indicates the voter agrees with the updates to the Charter language to reflect legal developments in state and federal law, including regarding employee election contributions, permissions for City Council to go into executive session, and City records requirements.

*What a “No” vote means:*

A “no” vote indicates the voter does not agree with the updates would rather leave the Charter language as is, without regard to conflicting state and federal laws.

**ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:**

The changes clarify how City employees may engage in City Council elections and ensure that campaign contributions are in alignment with federal and state law. This continues to promote ethical governance by limiting campaign influence from certain high-level and policymaking employees.

The changes provide legal consistency by aligning the City Charter with state and federal law. The amendment also promotes efficiency since the voters would not need to approve changes as laws evolve over time.

Executive sessions provide a limited opportunity for City Council to receive and discuss confidential information. Over the years state law allowing executive sessions has evolved, while the Charter has not been amended to stay consistent with the statute. This change gives Council the same ability to go into executive session that is set out in the state statute.

Finally, the change to the records process clarifies to all that the City’s records policy will follow the state’s Open Records Act. This promotes efficiency and eliminates potential confusion.

**ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:**

The language protecting free speech guaranteed by the U.S. and Colorado constitutions is too vague and does not emphasize citizens’ constitutional rights enough.

No City employee should be involved in City Council elections.

Executive sessions lack transparency and the City Council should not be allowed to have them for the reasons specified in state law but rather only those specified in the Charter.

The current Charter has not been challenged and this may reflect that the City’s campaign contribution limitations are already sufficient and do not need clarification. If the Charter violates state or federal constitutions or laws, someone should litigate the issue and ask a court to invalidate the provision.

## BALLOT QUESTION 2F

### CITY-INITIATED PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 5

(Conflicts of Interest – Ordinance 066, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

Shall Section 9 of Article IV of the Charter of the City of Fort Collins, regarding conflicts of interest, be amended to:

- Allow City Councilmembers or the Mayor to sell real property to the city if the property is needed for a city project or public use, while retaining all requirements for disclosure and refraining from involvement that otherwise apply in the case of a conflict of interest; and
- Allow City employees to rent property from the city with City Manager approval, if it is for the city's benefit and related to the employee's performance of their job?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_ NO/AGAINST

#### SUMMARY:

The current Charter of the City does not allow the City ever to buy real or personal property from a Councilmember under any circumstances. Proposed Charter Amendment 5 will allow the City to purchase real or personal property from a Councilmember when the City needs the property for City projects or purposes, provided the property is purchased at fair market value. This amendment does not change the existing requirement that Councilmembers must recuse themselves from participating in decisions when they have a financial or personal interest.

Charter Amendment 5 will also specifically authorize the City to rent City property to City employees when such an arrangement is related to the employee's position and beneficial to the City. For example, a park ranger may live in a housing unit in a park or natural area so they may be closer to and monitor the site.

#### *What a "Yes" vote means:*

A "Yes" vote indicates the voter agrees with updating the Charter to allow the City to buy needed real or personal property from Councilmembers at fair market value, and to allow the City to rent property to City employees when related to their job.

#### *What a "No" vote means:*

A "No" vote indicates a voter does not agree with the updating the Charter and would rather leave the Charter as-is, forbidding the City from ever buying property from Councilmembers or renting property to City employees.

**ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:**

The current language of the Charter is too restrictive on the City. The City may have legitimate need for a property to carry out a project but is prevented from doing so because the property is owned by a Councilmember.

Other provisions in the City Charter and Code prevent Councilmembers from participating in decisions where there is a conflict of interest. This would ensure continued transparency through disclosure and non-participation requirements.

Both the City and employees in certain positions would benefit from allowing the employee to live on site by renting property from the City, such as park rangers living at the site of parks. This would allow practical lease arrangements that serve the City's interest.

**ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:**

The authority to go forward with projects and buy property ultimately stems from Councilmembers. Allowing the City to buy property from Councilmembers could affect which projects City Council chooses to move forward on.

Leasing property to employees could be viewed as allowing special treatment for certain employees.

This change may lead to future weakening of conflict-of-interest or ethical standards.

BALLOT QUESTION 2G

CITY-INITIATED PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT NO. 6

(Council Vacancies – Ordinance 108, 2025 and Ordinance 109, 2025 (final ballot language))

Shall the Charter of the City of Fort Collins be amended to revise Section 1 and Section 18 of Article II to update the process for filling a vacant district Councilmember or Mayoral office and to clarify how existing term limits apply to partial terms to fill a vacancy, by:

- Adding a new subsection ( e) to Section 1 of Article II providing that if a person serves a total of more than one-half a term in office, this will count as a term when determining term limits; and
- Revising Section 18 of Article II to:
  - » Add procedural steps including public announcement of a vacancy and acceptance of applications to the process for filling vacancies;
  - » Require Council to appoint a replacement to fill a District Councilmember vacancy within 35 business days;
  - » Retain the provision that if the Mayor office is vacated, the Mayor Pro Tem becomes the Acting Mayor and Council selects a new Mayor Pro Tem during the time there is an Acting Mayor;
  - » Require the Council to fill the district Councilmember seat that is vacant for the time the Mayor Pro Tem serves as Acting Mayor using the vacancy filling process;
  - » Provide that any vacated office will appear on the next regular municipal election ballot for which process requirements can be met; and
  - » State that if there is no qualified candidate for an elected office on a municipal election ballot, the Council organized after the election will then appoint a qualified person to fill the resulting vacancy?

\_\_\_\_\_

YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_

NO/AGAINST

SUMMARY:

The current Charter does not address term limits. Instead, Councilmember term limits are only governed by the Colorado Constitution provisions about local government term limits. The Constitution allows local governments to set their own term limits or eliminate them altogether. This proposal addresses a term limits question that arises when a person serves a partial Council term.

Proposed Charter Amendment 6 will establish how the term limits apply to a partial Councilmember term. It provides that in the event of a person filling a vacancy, the time they serve on Council in that seat counts as a “term” for term limit purposes if they serve at least half of the length of a full term.

Proposed Charter Amendment 6 also updates the process of filling vacancies on City Council. The Amendment will require City Council to post notice of such vacancy and appoint a new Councilmember within thirty-five business days. The Amendment will also require Council to appoint a qualified person for a full term if no qualified candidate is on the ballot to fill an opening. The Amendment also clarifies language describing the process for making appointments.

*What a “Yes” vote means:*

A “Yes” vote indicates the voter agrees with a Charter Amendment that will clarify how a “partial” term is calculated in regard to term limits and clarifies the process Council must follow when filling a vacant Council seat.

*What a “No” vote means:*

A “No” vote indicates the voter does not agree with the Charter Amendment and would rather keep the Charter as is.

### **ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:**

The current Charter is unclear how a “partial” term should be dealt with in connection with the City’s term limits. Currently anyone who serves a “partial” term may run for Council for two full terms with that “partial” term not counting toward their limit.

This change would align the application of term limits to reflect the language of the Twenty-Second (XXII) Amendment to the United States Constitution.

This change sets out a specific process and timeline for filling a Council vacancy and ensures the vacancy will appear on the next election ballot when feasible.

### **ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:**

There is no need to clarify how a partial term impacts Council term limits. Someone willing to serve out an existing term to fill a vacancy should be permitted to have an additional two full terms.

Counting partial terms could discourage future qualified applicants for appointment to a vacancy if they wanted to serve an additional two full terms.

Changes include procedural detail that is unnecessary in the Charter.

BALLOT QUESTION 2H

City-Referred Ordinance – Expressing Support for the Civic Assembly Recommendations for the Hughes Site and Adopting a Conceptual Framework for the Use and Management of the Hughes Site

Ordinance No. 141, 2025, Expressing Support for the Recommendations of the Civic Assembly and Adopting a Conceptual Framework for the Use and Management of the Hughes Stadium Site (the “Council-Adopted Ordinance”), was adopted by the City Council on September 2, 2025, and provides for the following City actions:

- requiring multi-use development and management for the approximately 165-acre Hughes Site;
- requiring the City to consult with Native American tribes and the Indigenous community throughout the process;
- requiring site plans to feature native and xeric vegetation and a naturalistic architectural palette, and include the following new amenities for the Hughes Site:
  - » a City natural area, up to 60 acres;
  - » dedicated space and facilities for environmental education and wildlife conservation, to include wildlife rescue and rehabilitation, up to 30 acres;
  - » a trail system throughout the site connected to nearby City natural areas and parks;
  - » a City park with a community bike park up to 35 acres, a community gathering area and appropriate related facilities;
- may include existing uses, such as disc golf and winter sledding; and
- requiring the City to manage these uses over time as planning, design and funding allow, in accordance with regular City planning and review processes, and consistent with the Public Open Lands zoning.

Shall the Council-Adopted Ordinance for multi-use of the Hughes Site be approved?

\_\_\_\_\_

YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_

NO/AGAINST

SUMMARY:

An initiative relating to the purchase by the City, zoning, and use of the former Hughes Stadium property was approved by 68.61% of the registered electors of Fort Collins at the regular City election on April 6, 2021. The ballot initiative required the City of Fort Collins (“the City”) to rezone the former Hughes Stadium property as a Public Open Land, acquire the property, and use it for “parks, recreation and open lands, natural areas, and wildlife rescue and education.”

The City rezoned the Hughes Site as Public Open Lands and then on June 30, 2023, the City acquired the Hughes Site for a total cost of \$12,700,000.

The City Council adopted as one of its 2024-2026 Council priorities moving forward with an inclusive process to develop and adopt a general use plan of the Hughes Site. In 2025, the City used a facilitated “Civic Assembly” process to engage the public on the future of the Hughes Site. After extensive preparations, 20 Fort Collins residents were selected by lottery to form the Civic Assembly, with the goal of representing a balanced cross-section of the community.

In April and May 2025, the Civic Assembly met to receive information and then discuss and develop recommendations for the site’s development and management. During a series of public meetings, they heard from various presenters and reviewed information from past outreach efforts, all of which focused on potential uses for the Hughes Site that align with its voter-mandated zoning as Public Open Lands.

Members of the Civic Assembly and City staff presented the Assembly's recommendations for the development and management of the Hughes Site to City Council on May 27, 2025.

On September 2, 2025, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 141, 2025. Ordinance No. 141, 2025, sets out Council's intent to establish use and management plans for the Hughes Stadium Site based on the recommendations of the City's Civic Assembly, as outlined in the ballot measure above.

*What a "Yes" vote means:*

A "Yes" vote indicates the voter approves of the use and managements plans for the Hughes Stadium Site described in the measure.

*What a "No" vote means:*

A "No" vote indicates the voter does not approve of the use and management plans for the Hughes Stadium described in the measure.

## ARGUMENTS FOR AMENDMENT:

Supporting comments argue that this proposal would conserve the former Hughes Stadium property as Public Open Lands, consistent with the 2021 voter direction to use the site for "parks, recreation, open lands, natural areas, wildlife rescue and restoration."

Supporting comments note key elements including:

- **Habitat Conservation:** Approximately one-third of the land with the highest ecological value would be conserved as Natural Areas, providing wildlife habitat and trail connections to existing Natural Areas.
- **Wildlife Rescue and Education:** A new wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and nature center is proposed. This "Conservation Campus" would provide education, research, and stewardship opportunities for residents of all ages, along with demonstration gardens and restoration projects.
- **Recreation Opportunities:** The plan keeps open the possibility of continuing the popular disc golf course and sledding hill. It also proposes a family-friendly bike park for riders of all ages, as well as new multi-use trails across the site.
- **Shared Funding Model:** Costs would be shared across multiple City departments and nonprofit partners, reducing reliance on Natural Areas funds and allowing those funds to support conservation in other parts of the community.

Supporters expressed as key benefits:

- **Equitable Access:** The site would be open and welcoming to all Fort Collins residents, providing inclusive access to recreation, education, and nature.
- **Support for Youth:** A bike park, outdoor learning, and hands-on conservation programs would offer safe and engaging opportunities for younger residents.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** By spreading costs across departments and partners, the proposal minimizes impact on existing conservation budgets.
- **Wildlife Protection and Restoration:** Ecological restoration and stewardship would be prioritized, including the creation of a collaborative wildlife rehabilitation center.
- **Preservation of Community Uses:** Existing recreational uses such as sledding and disc golf could be maintained, while adding new opportunities for trails, biking, and environmental education.
- **Community Support:** The proposal reflects the strongest recommendation of the Fort Collins Civic Assembly, which preferred a balanced, multi-use approach over a 100% Natural Area designation.

Supporters also argue that the proposal commits to consulting with Indigenous communities about site decisions and allows long-term flexibility for the property's use as community needs evolve.

Overall, supporters argue this plan is presented as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect important natural areas, provide diverse recreation, expand environmental education, and honor the will of voters expressed in 2021.

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST AMENDMENT:

Opposing comments for the proposal argue that Question 2H does not fully reflect the recommendations of the Fort Collins Civic Assembly. They point out that the Assembly's strongest consensus was for Indigenous groups to have both a role in using the land and in shaping development plans. They say this measure fails to guarantee those commitments, raising concerns about equity and transparency.

Opponents expressed as key concerns:

- **Conflicting with Voter Intent:** Opponents say the 2021 voter-approved measure intended the Hughes property to be preserved primarily as natural areas and low-impact recreation. They argue that the current proposal allows for high-impact development—such as a bike park and wildlife facility—that could cover more than 75% of the site, with no minimum acreage guaranteed for natural areas.
- **Environmental Impact:** The Hughes site sits within an important ecological corridor supporting deer, elk, moose, coyotes, and many bird species. Opponents believe development would fragment wildlife habitat, reduce biodiversity, and undermine the ecological health of the foothills-to-plains transition zone. Concerns also include added roads, parking lots, and buildings, which could worsen heat island effects and increase the city's carbon footprint.
- **Equity and Accessibility:** Critics say a bike park would primarily serve a limited group, excluding older residents, people with mobility challenges, and those unable to afford equipment. They argue this is inconsistent with promises of inclusive, low-impact recreation for all.
- **Traffic and Location:** The site is not easily accessed from regional communities such as Loveland, Windsor, and Wellington. Opponents suggest a more central location would better serve regional users and local businesses.
- **Transparency and Planning:** Opponents raise concern about the City's process, including limited disclosure about private partnership opportunities, the omission of the Civic Assembly's top priorities, and the lack of a publicly released feasibility study for the bike park.
- **Funding and Long-Term Costs:** The measure does not identify clear funding sources. Critics say this creates uncertainty about construction costs, long-term maintenance, and the potential tax burden on residents.
- **Natural Area Protection:** Opponents do not consider the measure to provide a sufficient level of commitment to preserve a significant portion of the site as natural area, raising fears that development could expand incrementally over time.
- **Climate Goals:** With City commitments to reduce emissions and preserve open space, opponents argue that paving portions of the site would conflict with climate action goals by reducing open land, harming habitat, and increasing emissions.
- **Feasibility:** With no defined funding, timeline, or implementation plan—and amid current City budget shortfalls—opponents say there is no guarantee the project can be completed or sustained.

Opponents argue that Question 2H leaves too many questions unanswered about ecological protection, funding, equity, and voter intent. They believe it risks high-impact development on a critical open space without sufficient safeguards for taxpayers or the environment.

# BALLOT ISSUE 302

## CITIZEN-INITIATED BALLOT ISSUE NO. 2

(Natural Areas Tax Extension – Resolution 2025-077)

WITHOUT RAISING ADDITIONAL TAXES, SHALL THE CITY’S EXISTING 0.25% SALES AND USE TAX (25 CENTS ON A \$100 PURCHASE), AUTHORIZED BY CITIZEN-INITIATED ORDINANCE NO. 1, 2002, FOR THE ACQUISITION, MAINTENANCE, AND OPERATIONS OF NATURAL AREAS, BE EXTENDED, WITHOUT EXPIRATION, FROM ITS CURRENT EXPIRATION AT THE END OF 2030;

PROVIDED THAT REVENUES DERIVED FROM SUCH TAX EXTENSION SHALL BE USED TO ACQUIRE, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN NATURAL AREAS, OPEN SPACES, COMMUNITY SEPARATORS, WILDLIFE HABITAT, RIVER, STREAMS, RIPARIAN AREAS, WETLANDS, AND BIODIVERSE LANDSCAPES, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPROPRIATE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THEM BY THE CITIZENRY CONSISTENT WITH CITIZEN-INITIATED ORDINANCE NO. 2, 2025, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING CHANGES FROM THE 2002 ORDINANCE:

- BEGINNING IN 2061, REDUCE THE MINIMUM PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL REVENUE THAT MUST BE SPENT ON LAND CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES, AS DEFINED IN THE ORDINANCE, TO 70% (INSTEAD OF 80%);
- BEGINNING IN 2061, INCREASE THE MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL REVENUE THAT MAY BE SPENT ON OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES, AS DEFINED IN THE ORDINANCE, TO 30% (INSTEAD OF 20%);
- TREAT IMPROVING ACQUIRED LANDS BY RESTORING, ENHANCING, AND MAINTAINING NATIVE PLANT AND ANIMAL COMMUNITIES FOR THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE ECOLOGICAL HEALTH OF PROTECTED LANDS AS “LAND CONSERVATION ACTIVITY”; AND
- CLARIFY OTHER LANGUAGE OF THE ORDINANCE FOR CONSISTENCY WITH THE CITY’S NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM.

AND PROVIDED THAT ALL REVENUES FROM THE TAX EXTENSION MAY BE RETAINED AND EXPENDED BY THE CITY NOTWITHSTANDING ANY STATE REVENUE OR EXPENDITURE LIMITATION, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION?

\_\_\_\_\_ YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_ NO/AGAINST

### SUMMARY:

A citizen-initiated measure to continue the City’s Open Space Sales and Use Tax for a period of 25 years (the “2002 Initiative”) was approved by the registered electors of Fort Collins at a special City election on November 5, 2002.

An initiative petition amending the terms of the 2002 Initiative and extending the Open Space Sales and Use Tax without expiration (the “Initiated Measure”) was submitted to the City, certified as sufficient and approved to move forward to a vote of the people at the next regular City election on November 4, 2025.

In addition to removing the expiration of the Tax, the Initiated Measure amends the terms of the 2002 Initiative by:

- a. Starting in 2061:
  - i. reducing the percentage of revenues from the tax that must be used for “land conservation activities” to 70 percent (from 80 percent); and
  - ii. increasing the percentage of revenues from the tax that may be used for maintenance and operations to 30 percent (from 20 percent);
- b. Changing the definition of “land conservation activity”, for which a specified amount of the tax revenues must be

- used, to include expenditures to support the ecological health of protected lands; and
- c. Clarifying other language to eliminate confusion and more accurately reflect the policies and practices of the Natural Areas program.

*What a “Yes” vote means:*

A “Yes” vote indicates the voter approves of extending the Natural Area tax without expiration and amending how the revenues will be allocated.

*What a “No” vote means:*

A “No” vote indicates the voter does not approve of extending the Natural Area tax without expiration or amending how the revenues will be allocated.

## ARGUMENTS FOR THE MEASURE:

A supporting comment for this measure explains that this item continues the existing  $\frac{1}{4}$  of 1 percent sales and use tax for Natural Areas in Fort Collins. It is not a new tax, and it is not a tax increase.

The Natural Areas tax was first approved by voters in 1992 to protect land, wildlife, and outdoor spaces. Over more than 30 years, the program has protected thousands of acres of land and built 114 miles of trails. It is widely seen as one of the City’s most successful and popular programs, but unlike most other City programs, it relies almost entirely on voter-approved sales tax revenue.

A “yes” vote would ensure the Natural Areas Program can continue into the future. If approved, the funds would: Protect open space, natural areas, and wildlife habitat in and around the community

- Provide opportunities for walking, hiking, biking, and outdoor education
- Support long-term maintenance and ecological restoration of protected lands
- Leverage local partnerships to stretch taxpayer dollars further

Supporting comments highlight accountability measures built into the program. Natural Areas funds cannot be used for other purposes. Spending is guided by a Council-adopted framework, reviewed by the citizen-led Land Conservation and Stewardship Board, and reported publicly through annual and quarterly financial reports. Land purchases are only made from willing sellers.

A supporting comment notes that the Natural Areas Program has earned community trust by managing taxpayer funds responsibly for more than three decades. The commenter believes this program defines Fort Collins’ identity and quality of life and says the measure will allow the community to protect more land, expand access to nature, and restore wildlife habitats for future generations.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE MEASURE:

An opposing comment raises concerns about giving the Natural Areas Program permanent funding. The commenter argues that removing the expiration date of the existing 0.25% sales tax would take away the regular opportunity for voters to review how their money is being used. Currently, the tax must be renewed by voters every 10 years, which creates accountability and allows for adjustments to changing community needs.

Another opposing comment notes that approving this measure would give the program a “blank check” without requiring future voter approval. The commenter expresses concerns about trust and transparency in the City’s management of the program.

One commenter worries that locking in funding formulas for decades could limit flexibility for future City Councils. Priorities may change over time, and permanent funding could make it harder to respond to new needs or economic challenges. The commenter also notes that funds could be spent on projects outside of city limits, such as buying water or mineral rights, which may not provide clear or direct benefits to Fort Collins residents.

In summary, opposing commenters argue that this measure removes important voter oversight, limits future flexibility, and risks committing taxpayer dollars for purposes that may not align with the community’s needs over time.

## BALLOT QUESTION 303

### CITIZEN-INITIATED PROPOSED ORDINANCE NO. 1

(Making the Hughes Site a 100% Natural Area – Resolution 2025-073)

An ordinance modifying the citizen-initiated ordinance approved by the registered electors in April 2021, which required the City of Fort Collins to rezone, acquire, and use for specified purposes the approximately 165-acre parcel of real property formerly home to the Hughes Stadium, so as to require that the property be designated and used 100% as a City natural area.

\_\_\_\_\_ YES/FOR

\_\_\_\_\_ NO/AGAINST

#### SUMMARY:

An initiative relating to the purchase by the City, zoning, and use of the former Hughes Stadium property was approved by 68.61% of the registered electors of Fort Collins at the regular City election on April 6, 2021. The ballot initiative required the City of Fort Collins (“the City”) to rezone the former Hughes Stadium property as a Public Open Land, acquire the property, and use it for “parks, recreation and open lands, natural areas, and wildlife rescue and education.”

The City rezoned the Hughes Site as Public Open Lands and then on June 30, 2023, the City acquired the Hughes Site for a total cost of \$12,700,000. The City Council adopted as one of its 2024-2026 Council priorities moving forward with an inclusive process to develop and adopt a general use plan of the Hughes Site.

An initiative petition for a citizen-initiated ordinance amending the terms of the 2021 initiative so as to require that the former Hughes Stadium property be designated and used 100% as City natural area was submitted to the City, certified as sufficient, and approved to move forward to the next regular City election on November 4, 2025.

As stated in the citizen-initiated ordinance: “Since the passage of the ballot initiative and subsequent purchase of the former Hughes Stadium property, public discussions and stakeholder processes have occurred regarding the specific allowable future uses of the former Hughes Stadium property. Some residents and elected officials have expressed confusion about the ballot initiative’s intent related to the future uses of the former Hughes Stadium property during those discussions and stakeholder processes.” The purpose of the initiated ordinance is to require that the Hughes property be designated and used entirely as a City Natural Area, considered by the initiative proponents to best reflect the intent of the 2021 ballot initiative.

#### *What a “Yes” vote means:*

A “Yes” vote indicates the voter approves of the citizen-initiated ordinance requiring that 100% of the Hughes Stadium property be designated and used as a City natural area.

#### *What a “No” vote means:*

A “No” vote indicates the voter does not approve of the citizen-initiated ordinance requiring that 100% of the Hughes Stadium property be designated and used as a City natural area.

## ARGUMENTS FOR THE MEASURE:

Supporting comments argue a YES vote on this citizen-initiated ordinance would designate the entire 165-acre Hughes property as a Natural Area, protecting it permanently as public natural area.

Supporters emphasize several key points including:

- **Habitat Protection:** The Hughes site is a vital ecological corridor connecting Maxwell and Pineridge Natural Areas. It provides important habitat for a wide variety of wildlife and is one of the last large, undeveloped open spaces within Fort Collins city limits. Designating the whole property as a Natural Area would safeguard this land for future generations.
- **Public Access and Recreation:** The measure would provide free, inclusive access to low-impact outdoor activities such as hiking, running, biking, bird watching, and other multi-use recreation. Supporters note that these uses are open to people of all ages and abilities, ensuring equitable access for the entire community.
- **Conservation Legacy:** Advocates view this proposal as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect the site from future development. They argue that preserving the land as a Natural Area honors the will of voters, who approved the purchase of the site in 2021 with the intent of protecting it as open space.
- **Immediate Implementation:** Since 1992, Fort Collins has dedicated sales tax funding for the acquisition and management of Natural Areas. Designating Hughes as a Natural Area would not require new taxes or funding sources. Supporters believe the City can implement the designation right away under existing resources.
- **Community-Driven Values:** The proposal reflects resident concerns about disappearing open lands and a desire for Fort Collins to continue its leadership in conservation. Supporters say this measure ensures a clear, lasting commitment to preservation, wildlife protection, and low-impact recreation.

Supporters in favor of the measure say a YES vote secures permanent protection of the entire Hughes site as a Natural Area, ensures inclusive public access, and provides a conservation legacy for generations to come—all without requiring new taxes.

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE MEASURE:

Opposing comments note that while the Hughes property is already zoned as Public Open Lands—which prohibits residential and commercial development—requiring the entire 165-acre site to be designated only as a Natural Area would create significant downsides for the Natural Areas Program – limiting future land acquisition and restoration efforts, as well as other community-wide benefits.

Opposing comments highlighted several key issues, including:

### Financial Impacts:

- Under City rules, departments must pay for the portion of the Hughes property they manage. If the entire site is zoned as a Natural Area, the Natural Areas Department would be responsible for the full \$12.5 million purchase price plus bond interest, totaling more than \$75,000 per acre.
- Opponents say this cost would divert funds away from higher-priority land acquisitions and restoration projects across Fort Collins.
- By contrast, the alternative multi-use proposal would conserve about 60 acres of the site as Natural Areas, reducing costs while protecting the most ecologically valuable portions.

### Restoration Burden:

- Much of the site is degraded and covered with invasive species. Designating the entire property as a Natural Area would require significant restoration costs and staff time, drawing resources away from projects already identified as top priorities.

**Restrictions on Public Uses:**

- Natural Areas zoning carries strict limitations. Activities like disc golf and sledding may not be permitted, meaning these popular uses could eventually be eliminated.
- The measure may also prohibit a wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and education center and prevent development of other recreational and educational opportunities for families, youth, and outdoor enthusiasts.
- Consistency with Voter Intent:
- Opponents argue that the measure conflicts with the 2021 voter-approved ordinance, which directed the City to rezone Hughes as Public Open Lands for “parks, recreation, open lands, natural areas, wildlife rescue and restoration.”
- They say the 100% Natural Area approach narrows this vision to a single use, while the multi-use proposal balances conservation, recreation, and education. This limits the ability to meet diverse community needs at the site.

**Community Support:**

- In the Civic Assembly process, the 100% Natural Area option was the least supported, receiving only 16% of votes, while the multi-use approach received the strongest endorsement.
- Opponents also note that this measure does not require consultation with Indigenous communities, unlike other proposals.

Opponents believe Issue 303 is too costly, too restrictive, and inconsistent with both voter intent and community needs.

# VOTER REGISTRATION

Make sure you are registered to vote and that your voter information is up to date. Visit [www.govotecolorado.com](http://www.govotecolorado.com) to register to vote, or to check or update your registration.

- If you prefer to register in person, you can do this at:
- Fort Collins City Clerk's Office, 300 Laporte Ave.
- Larimer County Administrative Services Office, 200 W. Oak St.
- Voter Service/Polling Centers (starting Oct. 27)
  - » Find locations: [www.larimer.gov/elections](http://www.larimer.gov/elections)

The last day to apply to register to vote **through the mail** is Oct. 27. However, you can register to vote online or at a polling center up to and including Election Day, Nov. 4.

We encourage you to register and to vote! Your voice matters in this important election!

## ELECTION CONTACTS

If you have any questions related to the election, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We can be reached at:

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## WEBSITES

- [fcgov.com/elections](http://fcgov.com/elections)
- [vote.larimer.gov](http://vote.larimer.gov)

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