

NOVEMBER 2020 Ballot Guide

At the Downtown Denver Partnership, we know that elections - no matter the size or scale - have the power to significantly impact our city and state. And, we believe it is critically important to cast an educated vote - every time. The Partnership publishes a ballot guide to help you navigate the ballot questions and issues you'll be asked to vote on.

Each election cycle, the Downtown Denver Partnership - under the leadership of the Board of Directors - chooses to take positions on several measures that based on alignment with the Partnership's mission to build an economically healthy, growing and vibrant downtown. *Read on to learn more about Partnership positions and other ballot initiatives you'll be deciding on this election cycle.*

Downtown Denver Partnership Position Quick Reference

The Downtown Denver Partnership has taken positions on the following state and local ballot measures:

Denver:

- ✓ Measure 2A
- ✓ Measure 2B
- ✓ Measure 2D
- ✗ Measure 2E

- ✓ Measure 2F
- ✗ Measure 2G
- ✓ Measure 4A
- ✓ Measure 4B

Colorado:

- ✓ Amendment B
- ✓ Proposition EE

Denver Ballot Initiatives

Ballot Measure 2A: Climate Action Sales Tax

What is it?

2A establishes a 0.25% sales tax to fund efforts to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, and to adapt Denver's communities to climate change.


 YES

Why vote 'yes'?

The Downtown Denver Partnership participated on Denver's Climate Action Task Force, which recommended a dedicated funding stream to combat climate change. This measure will generate an estimated \$40.8 million in the first year, offering a dedicated funding stream to combat climate change. The 2007 Downtown Area Plan identifies building a 'Green' downtown as one of its five primary vision elements, emphasizing that sustainability be implemented as a core value for our center city. The Partnership supports this measure as part of our commitment to building an equitable and sustainable city of the future.

Ballot Measure 2B: Homelessness Resolution Sales Tax

What is it?

Measure 2B establishes a 0.25% sales tax to fund supportive housing, expanded shelter access, and services for people experiencing homelessness. If passed, 2B is expected to generate roughly \$40 million annually; the funds will be managed by Denver's Department of Housing Stability (HOST).

YES

Why vote 'yes'?

A dedicated, additional funding source to address housing, shelter and services for those experiencing homelessness is necessary to protect the health and safety of our community's most vulnerable residents. This revenue stream will fund shelter and services for people experiencing homelessness, including (but not limited to) building housing and expanding rental assistance; expanding the number of shelter beds and access to 24-hour shelter and services; and providing more housing referrals and other services to people living on the streets. The Partnership supports this measure as part of an ongoing commitment to provide housing stability, critical resources, and support to people experiencing homelessness in our city.

Ballot Measure 2C: Authority of City Council to Procure Professional Services without Executive Approval - *No position taken.*

Measure 2C gives Denver City Council the authority to procure professional services without the approval of the executive branch. This charter change would mean that that City Council can hire outside experts using their own budget without approval of the Mayor.

Ballot Measure 2D: Board of Transportation & Infrastructure

What is it?

Measure 2D establishes an advisory board for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI). The Board would be made up of 19 individuals: one representative appointed by each City Council member and six representatives that would be appointed by the Mayor.

YES

Why vote 'yes'?

Establishing a DOTI advisory board will bring additional expertise and perspectives as our city looks to create more innovative approaches to mobility and transportation. A key priority of the Downtown Denver Partnership is advocating for programs and initiatives that will create a well-connected, multi-modal region with strong connections throughout the city and, as such, the Partnership supports Measure 2D.

Ballot Measure 2E: City Council Confirmation Requirement for Certain Mayoral Appointments

What is it?

Measure 2E gives Denver City Council the ability to approve or reject certain mayoral appointments – such as the Chief of Police and directors of departments such as parks and recreation, finance, and community planning and development – with a majority vote.

NO

Why vote "no"?

Denver's long standing strong-mayor form of government has proven successful. This form of governance includes the current ability of the Mayor, a city-wide elected leader, to curate their leadership team to most effectively achieve the vision upon which they were elected. The Mayor is ultimately accountable for running the city and delivering the expected results. Direct appointments by the Mayor deliver a more efficient government and greater ability to attract the highest quality candidates.

Ballot Measure 2F: City Council Meetings

What is it?

Measure 2F removes outdated language regarding City Council meetings from the charter. If passed, the measure would add greater flexibility in scheduling impromptu meetings of Council (while still giving the public at least 24-hour's notice). The measure also allows City Council and the Mayor's office to change other outdated language, such as gender references.

YES

Why vote 'yes'?

The Downtown Denver Partnership values an inclusive city. We believe in the importance of creating the greatest possible public access to Denver City Council meetings as part of building an increasingly inclusive city. 2F allows the flexibility and modernization needed to continue to build an accessible, equitable legislative process in our city.

Ballot Measure 2G: City Council Authority to Propose Supplemental Budget Changes or Appropriations

What is it?

Measure 2G allows Denver City Council greater power related to the city budget. Currently, Denver City Council approves the city budget in November before each fiscal year begins on January 1. This measure would allow City Council to make amendments throughout the year, a power currently only held by the Mayor.

NO

Why vote "no"?

This proposal erodes Denver's strong-mayor form of government, threatens productivity and creates unpredictability. This measure opens the door for special interests and allocation of funds in manners that may not be in line with the most critical essential services, basic needs, and general operations of the City.

Ballot Measure 2H: Authority for the City to Provide Internet, Telephone, and Television Services *No position taken*

Measure 2H allows the City and County of Denver to spend money on broadband internet services, which is currently prohibited by Colorado state law. By opting out of this state law, it opens the door for Denver to offer a city-sponsored internet provider in the future, if City leaders chose to do so.

Ballot Measure 2I: Director of Elections and Clerk and Recorder Staff *No position taken*

Measure 2I would allow Denver's Clerk and Recorder (who oversees Denver Elections, among other citizen services like marriage licenses and real estate records) five appointees, an increase from their current three appointees. If passed, all top-level positions under the Clerk and Recorder would become political appointees, which is on-par with other independent offices of the City, such as the Auditor's office. Though not part of the ballot question text, 2I also removes the Director of Elections position from the city charter, offering greater flexibility from an organizational perspective.

Ballot Measure 2J: Remove Pit Bull Ban and Establish Microchip and Other Requirements for Pit Bull Licenses *No position taken.*

Measure 2J establishes a permitting system for pit bull breeds in the City and County of Denver. Pit bulls are currently prohibited in Denver and if passed, 2J would allow pit bull owners to go through a special registration process and, if the dog goes violation-free for 36 months, eventually register the dog like other breeds.

Ballot Measures 4A & 4B: Denver Public Schools Bond & Bill Levy Package

What is it?

Measures 4A & 4B, also known as Denver Public Schools Bond and Mill Levy proposal, provide \$795 million in bond funding to build and maintain schools, and provides \$32 million in school-based investments in priority areas such as mental health, nursing, and special education support.

YES

4A will raise \$32 million by increasing property taxes in the city in 2021 to give teachers raises and add additional mental health professionals, school nurses, and counselors.

4B will let Denver Public Schools borrow \$795 million for capital improvement projects (like school renovations), to provide computers for remote learning, and more.

Why vote 'yes'?

The success of Denver Public Schools (DPS) is of critical importance to the economic vitality of our city and region. The Downtown Denver Partnership participated in the DPS Community Planning and Advisory Committee that reviewed the Bond and Mill Levy that was submitted to the DPS Board of Directors. Colorado ranks near the bottom of the country in education funding, spending around \$2,000 less per pupil than the national average. These measures would increase funding for critical services - especially for students from low-income families, students with disabilities, and students learning English as a second language - that are critical for the continued economic resilience of the city.

Colorado Ballot Initiatives

Amendment B: Repeal of 1982 Gallagher Amendment

What is it?

Amendment B would repeal the Gallagher Amendment of 1982 from Colorado's Constitution. The Gallagher Amendment requires that 45% of the total share of state property taxes comes from residential property taxes, and 55% of the total share of state property taxes comes from non-residential property taxes. If passed, the measure would prevent automatic cuts to residential property tax rates in the future. Under this measure, funding for schools, rural fire districts and other entities that rely on property taxes would become more reliable.

YES

Why vote 'yes'?

Since it went into effect in 1982, the Gallagher Amendment has placed a disproportionate tax burden on businesses, causing a 300% increase in the shift of the property tax burden from homeowners to business owners. Amendment B stops this continual shifting of taxes to the commercial properties, providing more predictability for businesses each year and further contributing to a pro-business environment without adversely impacting residential property owners.

Amendment C: Colorado Charitable Bingo and Raffles *No position taken.*

Amendment C relates to how nonprofit organizations operate charitable gaming events, such as raffles. This amendment would allow nonprofits to apply for bingo-raffle licenses after operating in the state for three years (the bar is currently set at five years) and allow nonprofits to hire workers outside the organization to staff charitable gaming events (which is currently prohibited).

Amendment 76: Citizenship Requirement for Voting *No position taken.*

Currently, the Colorado constitution says that “every citizen” may vote. Amendment 76 would change this language to be more explicit in saying that only United States citizens may vote. This amendment would not change anyone’s ability to vote, as only U.S. citizens can vote in state and federal elections as it stands.

Amendment 77: Allow Voters in Central, Black Hawk, and Cripple Creek Cities to Expand Authorized Games and Increase Maximum Bets *No position taken.*

Amendment 77 allows voters in cities with legal gambling (currently only Black Hawk, Central City, and Cripple Creek) to approve higher betting limits and additional games. As it stands, individual wagers are capped at \$100 and casinos can only offer slots, blackjack, craps, roulette, and poker.

Proposition EE: Tobacco and E-Cigarette Tax Increase for Health and Education Programs

What is it?

Proposition EE seeks to create a tax on e-cigarettes and other vaping products and incrementally increase cigarette and tobacco taxes over the next seven years. If passed, Proposition EE is expected to raise about \$82.7 million in fiscal year 2020 - 2021; \$167.6 million in fiscal year 2021 - 2022; and more in years to come as tax rates continue to increase under this measure. In the first two and a half years, this measure would provide relief related to state budget cuts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and after that would fund future health and education programs statewide.



Why vote ‘yes’?

As Colorado’s revenues are expected to drop by as much as \$2.6 billion in 2021, Proposition EE offers our state government and schools sorely-needed funding resulting from taxes on harmful products. The Partnership recognizes that there is a critical need to identify additional revenue streams throughout our city, state, and region; Proposition EE discourages the use of tobacco products, while creating significant additional revenue for our state.

Proposition 113: National Popular Vote *No position taken.*

Proposition 113 adopts an agreement to elect the President of the United States by popular vote, seeking to make the Electoral College obsolete. This Proposition – which is part of a larger national movement – would mean that Colorado would bind their presidential electors to the winner of the national popular vote, even if the majority of Colorado voters chose a different candidate. Even if passed in Colorado, it would only go into effect if enough other states signed on, as well.

Proposition 114: Gray Wolf Reintroduction *No position taken.*

Proposition 114 seeks to reintroduce gray wolves to the Western Slope by the end of 2023 under the direction of Colorado Parks and Wildlife, an effort intended to restore balance to Colorado’s ecosystem.

Proposition 115: 22-Week Abortion Ban *No position taken.*

Proposition 115 would ban late-term (after 22 weeks) abortions in every case except when a woman's life is directly threatened, not making exceptions for cases of rape, fetal abnormalities, or incest. As it stands today, Colorado has no laws limiting abortion at any stage.

Proposition 116: Decrease Income Tax Rate from 4.63% to 4.55% *No position taken.*

Proposition 116 would reduce the state income tax rate from 4.63% to 4.55%, a reduction that would equate to a \$40 per year savings for an individual making \$50,000 annually. This change is estimated to reduce the state's revenue by an estimated \$170 million next fiscal year.

Proposition 117: Require Voter Approval of Certain New Enterprises Exempt from TABOR *No position taken.*

Proposition 117 seeks to add a new provision to state law requiring voter permission when the state government wants to create any new enterprise that would collect more than \$100 million in fees in the first five years. Existing enterprises – like those related to transportation and health care – would not be impacted under Proposition 117.

Proposition 118: Paid Medical and Family Leave *No position taken.*

Under Proposition 118, Colorado workers would be guaranteed at least 12 weeks of paid leave for family medical purposes. If passed, Proposition 118 would establish a state-administered paid family and medical leave program funded by a payroll tax on employers and workers.

Cast your vote on or before November 3rd!



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downtowndenver.com/vote**