

**The General Election is November 5, 2024.**

- Ballots for the 2024 General Election will be mailed beginning October 11th through October 18th.
- Overseas and military voters were sent their ballots September 21st.
- Register or update your registration here: [GoVoteColorado.com](https://www.govotecolorado.com)
- Voters must have submitted their ballot or be in line to vote by 7 pm November 5th for their ballot to be counted

**Colorado's Ballot Questions**

- [COLORADO'S BLUE BOOK](#)
- Initiative 89 - Right to Abortion - a constitutional amendment that would protect the right to abortion
- Initiative 91 - Prohibit Trophy Hunting - a statutory measure proposing a ban on trophy hunting of mountain lions, bobcats or lynx
- Initiative 112 - Concerning Eligibility for Parole - a statutory measure making people convicted of certain violent crimes ineligible for parole until they have served at least 85% of their sentences
- Initiative 138 - School Choice in K-12 Education - provides a statutory right to school choice
- Initiative 145 - Establish Qualifications and Registration for Veterinary Professional Associate - would create a new mid-level position between a vet technician a veterinarian called a veterinary professional associate
- Initiative 157 - Funding for Law Enforcement - would create a "Peace Officer Training and Support Fund" to help hire, train and retain new officers
- Initiative 310 - Concerning the Conduct of Elections - election reform measure proposing to replace partisan primaries with a single primary for each state and federal office, and enact a ranked choice voting system to decide general elections
- Amendment G - expands the Homestead property-tax exemption to veterans with disabilities rated at less than 100% but who are assessed by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs as having individual unemployability status
- Amendment H - creates a new Independent Judicial Discipline Adjudicative Board to conduct disciplinary hearings and hear appeals of informal remedial action orders from the Commission on Judicial Discipline
- Amendment I - makes first-degree murder an offense for which defendants are ineligible for bail
- Amendment J - revokes the currently unenforceable provision in the Colorado constitution declaring that marriage is valid only between one man and one woman
- Amendment K - moves up deadlines for filing initiative and referendum petitions and declaration of intent for judges and justices by one week and would let nonpartisan staff publish the texts and titles of ballot measures at least 45 days before an election
- Amendment JJ - allows the state to retain and spend all sports-betting tax revenue collected beyond the \$29 million authorized in 2019
- Amendment KK - imposes a 6.5% excise tax on firearms dealers and manufacturers and ammunition vendors, beginning on April 1, to fund crime-victim services, mental-health services and the School Disbursement Program Cash Fund

**House District 59**

- Ignacio Mayor [Clark Craig](#) (R) Total Contributions: \$46,574.09, expenditures \$24,717.35
- Durango school board member [Katie Stewart](#) (D) Total Contributions: \$75,695.01, expenditures \$29,496.93
- The Chamber of Commerce will host an [Eggs And Issues Candidate Forum on September 26th](#) from 8am to 10:30 am at the Doubletree.

**Senate District 6**

- Incumbent [Cleave Simpson](#) (R) Total Contributions: \$129,797.38, Expenditures: \$54,204.07
  - Colorado Association of REALTORS endorses Cleave Simpson.
- [Yivian Smotherman](#) (D): Total Contributions: \$42,913.57, Expenditures: \$41,605.71

**La Plata County Commissioner District 3**

- Incumbent [Matt Salka](#) (D) Total Contributions: \$13,215.93. Expenditures: \$819.16
- [Paul Black](#) (R) Total Contributions: \$24,577.99, Expenditures: \$21,759.00.

### **La Plata County Treasurer**

- Ann Monica Grushkin (I)
- Write-In Candidate Miles Walsh (D)

### **Durango School District Bond Measure**

- The Durango School District 9-R Board of Education unanimously voted on August 27th to approve ballot language for a \$150 million bond measure that will appear on the November ballot. The proposed bond, if passed, would fund projects such as addressing deferred maintenance, building a new elementary school at Three Springs, upgrading safety and security systems, and addressing housing for staff.

### **County Lodgers Tax**

- August 27th, La Plata County Commissioners approved a resolution to ask voters in November whether to reallocate 70% of the county's lodgers' tax for child care and affordable housing efforts. Commissioners listened to about an hour of public input mostly in support of the resolution before the vote. Commissioner Marsha Porter Norton said she thinks the lack of childcare is at a crisis level and that even if the voters pass the reallocation, it will take a concerted effort to put it in place. Prior to the unanimous vote approving the resolution, Commissioner Matt Salka called it a win/win, saying it will promote jobs, development and business in the county. Business organizations Local First, Durango Business Improvement District, and Durango Chamber of Commerce had asked Commissioners to cap the reallocation at 50% for a trial period to assess the impacts on the tourism industry.

### **County Sales & Lodgers Tax Collections**

- Sales tax collections for June show a decrease of \$10,984 or -44% in comparison to the same period in 2023. Year to date sales tax shows an increase of \$227,699 or 1.83% over 2023.
- Lodger's tax collections are earned Quarterly; Quarter 2 Lodgers tax decreased \$1,257 or -.66% in comparison to Quarter 2, 2023. Year to date Lodgers tax shows an increase of \$8,158 or 1.84% over 2023.

### **Durango Chamber of Commerce Update**

- The Durango Chamber of Commerce and its Board of Directors selected Jeff Dupont as the new Chief Executive Officer. He has been the Dean of Student Engagement at Fort Lewis College since 2021 and will officially join the Chamber full-time on October 14, 2024. Meanwhile, Dupont will be involved in key Chamber activities during the transition.

### **La Plata County Road Impact Fee**

- The Board of La Plata County Commissioners approved a resolution establishing road impact fees for new development effective immediately. Under the resolution, residential road impact fees for a new 900 square foot dwelling are about \$1200. For a 900 square foot addition or remodel it's about \$800. Commercial rates vary depending on size and use. Low- or moderate-income housing or affordable employee housing may qualify to have the fees waived. County Commissioner Marsha Porter Norton noted the county is still about \$10 million dollars short in the road and bridge fund.

### **Durango-La Plata County Airport Update**

- Durango-La Plata County Airport had its busiest summer ever with a 21% increase compared to summer of 2023. That's a 6% increase over the previous record setting summer in 2021.
- The Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) has received nearly \$13 million in federal grant funding from the Federal Aviation Administration to support a multi-phase terminal expansion project underway at DRO. The funds represent the final piece of funding needed to execute Phase 1B of the Terminal Expansion Project, which will add two new airline gates and passenger hold rooms, a new and expanded TSA passenger screening checkpoint, new food and beverage concession areas, and a new and expanded baggage claim area. Groundbreaking is scheduled for October 2nd.

### **Downtown's Next Step Update**

- A forum was hosted on August 27th by Durango Chamber of Commerce, Business Development District and Local First and featured City of Durango staff answering questions about Downtown's Next Step. The project aims to make downtown more walkable and bikeable, to reduce crashes and slow down traffic, and to widen sidewalks, among other goals. The forum did not appear to win over many businesses to the controversial project, according to on-the-spot polling by forum organizers.

Legislative Action Coalition Report for September 26, 2024

- At the meeting on the 27th, City staff said it's not known at this time how much the project will cost, and that construction could likely begin no sooner than 2027. Design is not expected to be completed until next year.
- On September 17th, Durango City Council voted to suspend construction and construction spending on Next Step but will complete the design phase so they can get an idea of construction costs.

**Planning Projects**

- August 26th, Durango's Community Development Commission approved the annexation petitions for County Roads 250 & 251 Road Right of Way. The Annexation is a partnership between the City of Durango and La Plata County, under an IGA in which they agree to improve the roadways and intersections to enhance safety and traffic flow and hope the improvements will lead to economic opportunity to the benefit of City and County residents. Annexation is anticipated in the fall of 2024, with final road construction to be completed in summer 2025.
- August 26th, The Community Development Commission also approved a parking variance request at 736 Main Avenue. The applicant is proposing to redesign an internal space which has historically been used for parking vehicles into a multi-use outdoor gathering and event space.
- September 19th, the Joint Planning Commission approved the Gravity Lab Expansion Sketch Plan proposal to expand climbing facilities on CR 233 in Durango. The plan is to add an additional 4,950 square foot building that will provide year-round instruction and practice for climbers.

**Meetings attended August 22 - September 26**

8/22 - 9:30 am LAC meeting	9/11 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
8/22 - 6 pm LPC Planning Commission	9/12 - 2 pm RHA Meeting
8/26 - 5 pm Durango Comm Dev Commission	9/12 - 4pm Meet & Greet at Chamber
8/27 - 8 am Downtown's Next Step Forum	9/12 - 6 pm LPC Planning Commission
8/27 - 10 am BOCC Business Meeting	9/17 - 10 am BOCC Meeting
8/28 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time	9/17 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting
9/4 - 2:15 pm Durango Council Study Session	9/18 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
9/4 - 5:30 pm Durango City County Meeting	9/19 - 6 pm Joint Planning Commission
9/10 - 10 am BOCC Meeting	9/23 - 5 pm Durango Comm Dev Commission
9/10 - 11:30 am County Commissioners Forum	9/24 - 10 am BOCC Meeting
	9/25 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time