

CITY OF GOLDEN
Jefferson County, Colorado

ALL REGISTERED VOTERS

NOTICE OF ELECTION TO INCREASE TAXES ON A REFERRED MEASURE

Election Date and Hours: Tuesday, November 7, 2023 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Designated Election Official:

City of Golden
Monica Mendoza, City Clerk
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Golden, CO 80401
303-384-8014
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CITY OF GOLDEN BALLOT ISSUE 2K

SHALL CITY OF GOLDEN TAXES BE INCREASED UP TO \$4,675,000 FOR COLLECTION IN CALENDAR YEAR 2024, AND BY SUCH AMOUNTS AS MAY BE GENERATED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, FROM AN AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAX MILL LEVY IMPOSED AT A RATE OF SIX MILLS TO FUND THE CAPITAL NEEDS AND OPERATIONAL COSTS OF THE GOLDEN FIRE DEPARTMENT, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

- ATTRACT, TRAIN, AND RETAIN THE NECESSARY NUMBER OF FIREFIGHTERS;
- IMPROVE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TIMES;
- ENSURE FIREFIGHTERS HAVE APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY LIFE-SAVING MEDICAL EQUIPMENT;
- PROVIDE EMERGENCY VEHICLES AND NECESSARY EQUIPMENT TO STRENGTHEN LOCAL EMS, FIRE AND WILDFIRE RESPONSE;

WITH ALL EXPENDITURES SUBJECT TO AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENT AUDIT, AND SHALL THE CITY BE AUTHORIZED TO COLLECT, RETAIN, AND SPEND THE PROCEEDS OF THE REVENUE FROM SUCH TAXES AND ANY EARNINGS THEREON WITHOUT LIMITATION OR CONDITION AS A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE UNDER ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION OR ANY OTHER LAW?

FISCAL INFORMATION

Total City Fiscal Year Spending

2023 (estimated)	\$ 61,489,065
2022 (actual)	\$ 56,590,680
2021 (actual)	\$ 49,359,713
2020 (actual)	\$ 40,031,258
2019 (actual)	\$ 43,785,451

Overall percentage change from 2019 to 2023 40.4%

Overall dollar change from 2019 to 2023 \$ 17,703,614

City Estimate of the Maximum Dollar Amount of the Proposed Tax Increase For Fiscal Year 2024

BALLOT ISSUE #2K Golden Fire Department \$4.65 million

City Estimate of 2024 Fiscal Year Spending Without Proposed Tax Increases \$70 million

Summary of Written Comments For Ballot Issue 2K:

Public safety is the most important responsibility and expectation for Golden. This ballot measure will appropriately fund and staff Golden Fire Department services. This proposed mill levy increase will generate revenues 100% dedicated to the fire department to hire and retain personnel and purchase new fire equipment. The 6 mill increase will bring to 10 mills the amount dedicated to Golden Fire. At 10 mills, this increase will still be several mills below the fire budgets for surrounding fire districts near Golden. And, it has the added benefit of retaining local control over our fire services. Specifically, the funds will permit retention of the seven firefighters recently hired under an expiring federal SAFER grant and the hiring of additional personnel needed to operate 24/7 both north area and south area Golden Fire Stations. With this added salaried staff, response times will improve throughout the city. Golden Fire will continue to gratefully depend on Golden's outstanding volunteer firefighters, whose ranks are understandably but unfortunately declining. This better staffed department is needed to respond to Golden Fire Department's ever increasing service call volume which is expected to eclipse 2,500 calls for service this year alone. With over 30% of our incidents occurring simultaneously, Golden Fire needs the added personnel and equipment to raise our now overly long Golden Fire response times up to national standards. As most of these 2,500 calls are medical in nature, Golden Fire will also leverage this new dedicated funding to establish Paramedic services to provide immediate advanced life support when private ambulance services are otherwise unavailable. This funding will strengthen our response in our wildland urban interface zones to hopefully avoid catastrophic losses due to wildfire along Golden's "high risk" western boundary. Likewise, several fire trucks and support vehicles are also due for immediate replacement. Purchase and maintenance costs associated with fire trucks have soared in the last few years; this revenue will allow Golden Fire to purchase two new fire trucks for wildfire and structural firefighting, which have a service life of 15 to 20 years. What will the cost be to Golden homeowners? The 6 mills increase equates to an annual \$175 increase in property tax for a \$500,000 home. Lastly, the revenue generated by this funding will allow Golden to remain competitive in pay and benefits for its firefighters, attract more applicants and stem the high rate of turnover and attrition Golden Fire currently experiences. In summary, this ballot measure will retain local control, reduce response times, retain firefighter staffing, improve training, and provide a safer community for residents and firefighters alike.

Summary of Written Comments Against Ballot Issue 2K:

Golden wants a property tax hike? The government should be REDUCING the mill levy tax – NOT trying to drive it higher.

Property values are skyrocketing. Those higher values mean higher property taxes. Property owners are getting gouged and those costs get passed to tenants and consumers.

Inflation costs are hurting property owners and renters. Meanwhile, the City is profiting because the higher the cost an item is, the more we pay in sales tax. Golden also taxes our groceries. What kind of government taxes food?

VOTE NO on City of Golden measure 2K. Our wallets are not bottomless.

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NOTICE OF ELECTION TO RETAIN EXCESS REVENUES ON A REFERRED MEASURE

CITY OF GOLDEN BALLOT ISSUE 2L

WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY NEW TAX OR INCREASING THE RATE OF ANY EXISTING TAX, SHALL THE CITY OF GOLDEN BE AUTHORIZED TO RETAIN AND EXPEND ALL REVENUES RECEIVED BY THE CITY IN 2022 FROM THE LODGING TAX IMPOSED PURSUANT TO BALLOT ISSUE 2C APPROVED BY THE CITY'S REGISTERED ELECTORS ON NOVEMBER 2, 2021, WITH THE REVENUES FROM SUCH TAX TO BE USED AS ORIGINALLY APPROVED BY VOTERS, INCLUDING ADDRESSING VISITOR IMPACTS AND FUNDING COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, AND MAY THE CITY CONTINUE TO IMPOSE AND COLLECT THE TAX TO THE FULL EXTENT OF THE 6.0% PERMITTED BY THE ORIGINAL VOTER APPROVAL?

FISCAL INFORMATION

To retain \$589,049.87 the amount which was collected above the tax estimate in the first year, 2022.

Summary of Written Comments For Ballot Issue 2L:

1. The Golden community discussed a lodging tax for more than a decade and came to consensus that we need resources to ensure the vitality and small-town character of Golden that residents move here for, and that visitors and tourists come to enjoy.
2. Golden residents overwhelmingly approved the Lodging tax in 2021. This ballot measure simply allows us to retain additional revenues in full compliance with TABOR.
3. The money was already collected in 2022 and only collected from the visitors who come to stay overnight and use the amenities of Golden.
4. We pay lodging taxes whenever we leave Golden. This measure allows Golden to retain revenue from visitors staying in our city. RESIDENTS DO NOT pay this fee. Tourists pay the lodging tax as a way to support our city (which they also benefit from)
5. Golden is a beautiful and welcoming community and requires funds to maintain and enhance the vibrancy and small-town character that invite so many to visit and spend their money enjoying Golden. Prior to the lodging tax, Golden residents had to pay 100% of the cost to maintain and improve our city for both residents and visitors.
6. All money collected goes to ensure a clean, safe and thriving community for us to live and recreate in through a dedicated fund to ensure responsible and transparent expenditures.
7. The City of Golden has kept their promise to voters. Funds are only used for two purposes: Offsetting Visitor Impacts to Golden and ensuring a Thriving Community.

Funds are being used to:

1. Improve Clear Creek Corridor and Downtown Golden, Parks and Open Space (such as the Peaks to Plains trail), our Museums, increased trash pickup and

more. For example, funding is committed to support Ulysses Park improvements, children's playground equipment upgrades, and dog park improvements.

2. Increase Golden Police Department resources and enforcement.
 3. Support Cultural Alliance Members and community groups, local non-profit organizations and food banks focused on serving Golden residents (Nearly \$500,000 in grants last year to twenty Golden non-profits and community groups.)
 4. Add new Shuttle services for seniors, students and all residents and visitors to improve transit options and reduce parking and traffic conflicts.
8. Voting NO will actually cost us money!
1. How? The cost of rebating small payments (as little as \$1.37) to literally tens of thousands of tourists across the globe is estimated to actually exceed the money collected - not to mention absorb enormous City Accounting Staff time and financial resources to track down payors.
 2. The City made good faith efforts to estimate initial revenues (made difficult by the global pandemic). Golden residents should not be punished because we were more successful than anticipated in attracting visitors to enjoy our town.
9. Voting YES honors the intention of Golden Voters who gave an overwhelming yes vote in 2021.

Summary of Written Comments Against Ballot Issue 2L:

SHOCKING NEWSBREAK:

City of Golden has been gouging lodgers with an extra high tax. It doesn't matter if those lodgers are a traveling nurse, Grandpa and Grandma visiting the grandkids, or a young couple who is barely able to afford the room rental – they get stuck with a big tax. So much so that the City took in \$500K excess in revenue from this tax and wants our permission to keep it.

Vote no on Golden Ballot Issue 2L. It's not humane and it's not compassionate.

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