



City of Littleton

Littleton Center
2255 West Berry Avenue
Littleton, CO 80120

Meeting Agenda - Final City Council

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

6:30 PM

Council Chamber

Study Session

1. Study Session Topics

- a) [ID# 26-101](#) South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) Board Joint Study Session

Attachments: [1. SMHO Starlight Funding Request](#)
[2. Presentation_SMHO](#)

Scheduled time: 45 minutes

- b) [ID# 26-097](#) Utility Rate Study Results - Part I

Attachments: [1. Presentation_Utility Rate Study](#)

Scheduled time: 60 minutes

- c) [ID# 26-090](#) 2026 Potential ballot questions discussion

Attachments: [1. Charter Section Comments and Recommendations](#)
[2. Presentation_Potential Ballot Questions](#)

Scheduled time: 45 minutes

2. Updates

- a) Council Members
- b) Mayor
- c) City Manager
- d) City Attorney

3. Adjournment

The public is invited to attend all regular meetings or study sessions of the city council or any city board, commission, or committee. Please call 303-795-3780 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting if you believe you will need special assistance or any reasonable accommodation in order to attend, or participate in, any such meeting. For any additional information concerning city meetings, please call the city clerk's office at the above referenced number.



Staff Communication

File #: ID# 26-101, **Version:** 1

Agenda Date: 05/12/2026

Subject:
South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) Board Joint Study Session

From:	James L. Becklenberg, City Manager
Prepared by:	Kathleen Osher, Deputy City Manager Julie Latham, Housing Policy Manager
Presentations:	SMHO staff and Board of Commissioners

PURPOSE:

This is the annual joint meeting between Littleton City Council and the South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) Board of Commissioners.

LONG-TERM OUTCOME(S) SERVED:

Robust & Resilient Economy

DISCUSSION:

The South Metro Housing Options Board and staff will provide an update on recent accomplishments and ongoing work, including the annual cycle of Private Activity Bond allocation and a gap funding request on the Starlight project. SMHO’s Board will then engage Council in a discussion about future priorities and needs to further the city’s affordable housing goals, policies, and action steps.

BACKGROUND:

South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) provides affordable housing solutions in Littleton. SMHO is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners appointed by City Council.

Private Activity Bonds (PAB) are tax-exempt bonds that offer low-cost financing for private projects serving a public purpose. Unlike typical municipal bonds, PABs do not require the city to repay investors. The city is allocated funds on an annual basis that can be issued, carried forward, relinquished to the statewide balance, or assigned to a qualified issuer to support a project. PABs are a valuable tool for SMHO that unlocks the federal 4% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. In 2025, the city shifted from relinquishing its balance to the state to a policy of annual assignment to SMHO. Littleton’s PAB balance for 2026 is \$3,162,447, and the annual assignment resolution is anticipated to be on City Council’s June 16 consent agenda.

SMHO’s Starlight project will redevelop property at the corner of W Littleton Blvd and Delaware to create 72 affordable multifamily units for families earning 30-70% of the area median income. This will also include eight foster youth vouchers to support those aging out of the foster care system. There are funding and cost challenges with the project and SMHO is requesting \$1M from the city’s Affordable Housing Fund. The fund has collected \$2,785,766 from inclusionary housing fee-in-lieu payments to date, with \$1,990,929 committed

for disbursement, leaving available funds of approximately \$795k. 2026 budget estimates included the potential of one additional fee-in-lieu payment of \$839k.

SMHO's request for support meets the Affordable Housing Fund criteria as outlined below:

- The request supports 100% affordable properties that are deed, covenant, or otherwise restricted to ensure long-term (30+ years) affordability. Requests that create new formally restricted affordable units or extend the affordability of existing ones are in alignment with IHO parameters
 - √ Yes, units are formally restricted to serve 30-70% area median income levels
- The project is located within city limits
 - √ Yes
- The requested funding fills a demonstrable financing gap
 - √ Yes, it is a challenging construction environment and SMHO will provide additional details on their capital stack
- A preference but not requirement that the funding leverages other resources, such as county, state, or federal funds
 - √ Yes, SMHO is applying for the 4% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program and the city's funding support will help the competitiveness of that application. The project is also anticipating funding from the Colorado Department of Housing and Arapahoe County, as well as 2025 PAB allocations from the City of Englewood and the City of Centennial.

Prior Actions or Discussions

- Annually City Council hosts a joint meeting with the SMHO Board of Commissioners during a study session to receive an update on the activities of the city's housing authority.
- May 27, 2025 - South Metro Housing Authority and their bond counsel provided an overview of Private Activity Bonds (PABs), including their purpose, regulatory framework, and common uses, particularly in the development of affordable housing.
- June 25, 2025 - City Council Consent Agenda Resolution authorizing assignment of Littleton's Private Activity Bonds to SMHO.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The funding request will reduce funds in the Affordable Housing Fund.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend continuing the annual PAB allocation assignment to SMHO and providing funding support for Starlight by authorizing the City Manager to sign a funding agreement on behalf of the city.

ALTERNATIVES:

Council could fund at varying levels or deny the funding request.



South Metro Housing Options

Mr. Jim Becklenberg
City Manager
City of Littleton
2255 West Berry Avenue
Littleton, CO, 80120

RE: Funding request for Starlight Affordable Housing

Dear Mr. Becklenberg,

South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) is underway on its newest affordable housing development, Starlight. Situated along the Littleton Boulevard corridor, the community is designed for residents earning 30-70% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and offers walkable, bikeable access to employment centers, grocery stores, parks, retail, and schools. Residents will also benefit from convenient connections to RTD bus lines and the downtown Littleton light-rail station.

The total project cost is estimated to be \$32M. This project will be primarily capitalized through equity generated by the sale of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) and debt financing via a first mortgage. However, rising construction costs and uncertainty surrounding soft funding sources have resulted in a projected funding gap of approximately \$3,500,000. SMHO anticipates closing this gap through grants from the City of Littleton, Colorado Division of Housing, Arapahoe County, and deferring developer fees.

South Metro Housing Options is proud of what we have accomplished through our partnership with the city of Littleton and remains deeply grateful for your commitment to affordable housing. We respectfully encourage your investment in our partnership that will continue to address the housing affordability crisis in our state. SMHO formally requests One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) from the city of Littleton for the upcoming Starlight project.

Thank you for your leadership and your dedication to ensuring that all have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our work further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Corey Reitz
Executive Director
South Metro Housing Options



South Metro Housing Options



LITTLETON CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

MAY 12, 2026

Housing Authority of the
City of Littleton, DBA
South Metro Housing
Options



AGENDA

- SMHO Overview
- Public Housing Transition
- Reposition of John Newey
- Montview Flats Update
- Starlight Request
- Private Activity Bond Cap



SMHO AREAS OF OVERSIGHT

- Administer the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program
 - Largest program with over 1,500 participants
 - Over \$10 million paid to private landlords through HCV program annually
- Own and Operate Subsidized Properties
 - Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)
 - 312 apartment for Seniors and/or people with a disability
 - Amity Plaza
 - Alyson Court
 - Bradley House
- Own and Operate Affordable Properties
 - Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
 - 120 apartment homes
 - Overlook at Powers Park
 - Powers Circle Apartments
- Own and Operate Libby Bortz Assisted Living Center
 - 111 apartment homes
 - Range of Area Median Income (AMI) up to 100%



Overlook at Powers Park



Powers Circle



Alyson Court



Amity Plaza



Bradley House



Libby Bortz

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- Powers Circle repainted with new signage added
- Replaced Amity Plaza elevator jack
- New signage and furniture at Amity Plaza
- New exterior signs at all properties
- Concrete work at Libby Bortz Assisted Living Center
- All interior and exterior lighting at Powers Circle
- Energy Outreach Colorado partnership



PUBLIC HOUSING TRANSITION

- Project started in 2019 and ended in April 2026
- 71 scattered site single-family homes and duplexes operated under the Public Housing program
- After repositioning:
 - 71 Tenant Protection Vouchers
 - 51 new apartments for Seniors 62+ at Overlook at Powers Park
 - 59 for-sale homes (Habitat for Humanity)
 - Proceeds to use for future Affordable Housing development





South Metro Housing Options
and **Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver**
Partner to Bring 59 Affordable,
For-Sale Homes to Littleton



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PARTNERSHIP

- 59 single-family homes and duplexes
 - Two-bedroom: 20
 - Three-bedroom: 26
 - Four-bedroom: 12
 - Five-bedroom: 1
- Average Sales Prices
 - Two-bedroom: \$240,000
 - Three-bedroom: \$285,000
 - Four-bedroom: \$315,000
 - Five-bedroom: \$320,700

HOMEOWNERS

- People working in following industries:
 - Sales/Retail
 - Service Industry
 - Healthcare
 - Education
 - Human Services
 - Construction



JOHN NEWEY UPDATE

- 20-unit portfolio of single-family scattered site homes
- PBRA properties operated under a Housing Assistance Payment contract (HAP)
- Three different locations
- Utilized Different Strategies
 - 9 homes sold to Habitat for Humanity buyers
 - 8 homes sold to a market-rate buyer
 - 3 remaining TBD



MONTVIEW FLATS OPENS THIS SUMMER

- Waitlist now open
- 37 one-bedroom units
- 13 two-bedroom units



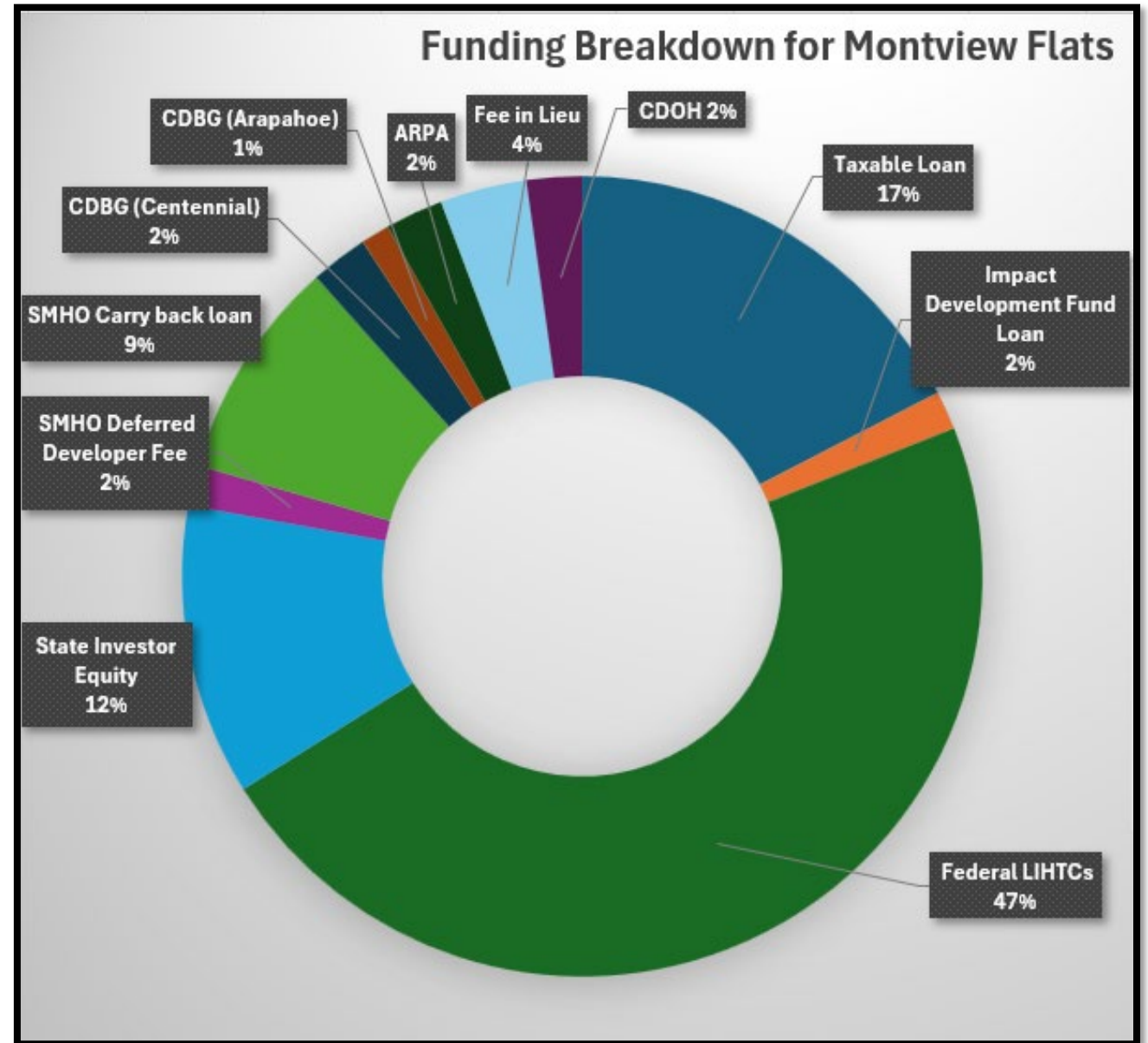
<https://smho.co/montview-flats/>



MONTVIEW FLATS CRUCIAL CITY SUPPORT

\$1,500,000 City funding leveraged \$24 million in other sources

- \$600,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- \$900,000 in Inclusionary Housing Ordinance





STARLIGHT

- Serving **72 families** earning 30-70% of the Area Median Income (AMI), including **8 foster youth** aging out of care
- Studios (11), One-Bedrooms (46), and Two-Bedrooms (15)
- Located along the Littleton Blvd Corridor
- Fits into Blueprint Boulevard



BLOCK 0, LOT 7
HERMANS SUBDIVISION
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
OWNER: NAL OLIN W JV



WEST LITTLETON BOULEVARD
(107' ROW)

SOUTH DELAWARE STREET
(70' ROW)

STARLIGHT – VALUES AND MISSION

- 40-year affordability commitment through Land Use Restriction Agreement (LURA)
- Partnership with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
 - Help accessing medical and mental health services
 - Job skills
 - Pro-social activities
 - Financial literacy
- Trauma-Informed Design
 - Secure entry points
 - Clear sight lines
 - Noise modulation
 - Biophilic design and intentional color selection
- Implementation of Mid-Century Modern design elements



South Metro Housing Options - Starlight

Sources		
	Total	% of Total Cost
First Mortgage	\$ 7,400,000	23%
City of Littleton	\$ 1,000,000	3%
Arapahoe County 2025 CDBG	\$ 621,223	2%
CDOH Grant	\$ 800,000	2%
Arapahoe County 2026 CDBG	\$ 1,000,000	3%
HUD EDI Grant	\$ 1,000,000	3%
Deferred Developers Fee	\$ 693,090	2%
Limited Partner Equity - State Credits	\$ 7,408,607	23%
Limited Partner Equity - LIHTC	\$ 12,316,637	38%

Total \$ 32,239,557

Uses		
	Total	% of Total Cost
Construction Costs	\$ 22,193,789	69%
Professional Fees	\$ 1,757,368	5%
Construction Interim Costs	\$ 3,151,968	10%
Permanent Financing	\$ 1,019,000	3%
Soft Costs	\$ 463,432	1%
Syndication Costs	\$ 105,000	0%
Developer Fees	\$ 2,958,000	9%
Operating Reserves	\$ 591,000	2%

Total \$ 32,239,557

Sources less Uses (Gap) \$ (0)

STARLIGHT – FINANCING

- South Metro Housing Options formally requests \$1,000,000 for the Starlight project

Project Timeline



REQUEST FOR PRIVATE ACTIVITY BOND CAP

- Private Activity Bonds (PAB) are utilized for privately developed projects such as multifamily housing, single-family housing, small issue manufacturing, and solid waste recycling
- City of Littleton's 2026 PAB allocation is \$3,162,447
- City has no obligation to repay investors
- SMHO would issue bonds to SMHO projects or others in Littleton/Surrounding Community



South Metro Housing Options

QUESTIONS?

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP!**



LEARN MORE AT [SMHO.CO](https://www.smho.co)





Staff Communication

File #: ID# 26-097, **Version:** 1

Agenda Date: 05/12/2026

Subject:
Utility Rate Study Results - Part I

From:	James L. Becklenberg, City Manager
Prepared by:	Ryan Germeroth, Deputy Public Works Director
Presentations:	Brent Soderlin, Director of Public Works & Utilities Laurie Matta, Director of Finance Ryan Germeroth, Deputy Public Works Director Todd Cristiano, Vice President Raftelis

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to provide Council with an overview of the draft financial plan and proposed revenue increases for the Utility Rate Study. The content will cover the projected costs of both the sanitary sewer and stormwater utility capital and maintenance plans. Public engagement and the timeline for the review and future rate approval will also be discussed.

LONG-TERM OUTCOME(S) SERVED:

Sustainable Community with Natural Beauty; Safe Community; High-Quality Governance

DISCUSSION:

Littleton is planning for the future with a comprehensive study to update sewer and stormwater rates. These updates are essential to funding critical repairs and maintaining the infrastructure that protects Littleton homes and businesses, public health, and the South Platte River. While our 129 miles of sanitary sewer, 53 miles of storm drains, and 30 miles of drainage ways operate 24/7, many parts of the systems are aging. Proactive upgrades will prevent service disruptions and public safety concerns by providing resilience through fiscal responsibility.

Sewer and stormwater bills directly fund essential infrastructure improvements and proactive maintenance. Over the next 10 years, the City plans to repair or replace 24 miles of sanitary sewer, work with partners to modernize the South Platte Renew wastewater treatment facility to meet federal environmental requirements and replace 15 miles of storm drains. By addressing these needs now, Littleton avoids the significantly higher costs and public safety risks associated with emergency repairs like those on Jackass Hill Road or Broadway and Lee Gulch. It also assures the City charges a fair and consistent rate to the nine water and sanitation districts that connect into the sanitary sewer system for treatment only.

Over the past few months, City staff have partnered with the staff from Raftelis to create a 10-year financial plan that accounts for the costs of the day-to-day maintenance and annual capital project needs of the sanitary and storm sewer systems. The goal is to align future bills with the actual cost of service, including upgrades to

critical infrastructure and regular maintenance, and ensure the City can continue to provide reliable service. Below is a summary of the findings of the 10-year plan:

- The total capital program need for the sanitary sewer system is projected to be about \$264 million over the next 10 years. About \$180 million of that is needed for projects at South Platte Renew. Rate increases and tap fees would fund about \$139 million in projects while about \$123 million would be funded with revenue bonds and loans.
- To meet the need for the sanitary sewer program a revenue increase of 25% will be needed for 2027 and 2028 with increases dropping to 3% per year for 2029 through 2035.
- The total capital program need for the stormwater system is projected to be about \$73 million over the next 10 years. The largest portion of that funding would cover stormwater pipe replacement projects. Rate increases and tap fees would fund about \$50 million in projects while about \$23 million would be funded with revenue bonds and loans.
- To meet the need for the stormwater sewer program a revenue increase of 60% will be needed for 2027 and 2028 with increases dropping to 5% per year for 2029 through 2035.
- The plan also includes the addition of three staff in 2027 and three staff in 2028. Four of these staff would join the Water Resources Engineering team and two would join the field operations team. These additional staff will be needed to keep up with the engineering and maintenance work needed on the system as the additional revenue is put to work.
- Even with the proposed rate increases, Littleton's rates would still be less than many of the other comparable jurisdictions along the Front Range.

The next steps will be to complete a cost-of-service analysis for residential, multifamily, and commercial class customers. This information will then be used to create a rate structure so that each class of customers is paying their appropriate share for the cost-of-service they are receiving. Once complete, the impact to the bill for each rate paying customer will be better quantified and a rate comparison will be made to surrounding utility providers both using an across-the-board rate increase and one that is tailored to the actual use of each customer. Recommendations will also be made for billing frequency to move away from the current annual bill. Finally, tap fees will be reviewed and updated to ensure those connecting to the city system are paying their fair share for access to the existing capacity. This final information will be presented to the Council at the June 16th, 2026 meeting.

Public outreach and communication will be a part of the project over the next several months as well. The current plan is to hold two public meetings and at least one meeting with the connector districts. One of the public meetings will be virtual and the other in-person. Both will be held sometime between July and September. These meetings will inform attendees of the purpose and need of the rate study and communicate the new rate structure and any proposed changes to the frequency of billing. The feedback gathered from these meetings will be shared with Council in advance of the 2027 budget being finalized.

BACKGROUND:

To continue delivering the high-quality sewer and stormwater services Littleton customers expect and deserve, the City must periodically adjust utility rates to recover the costs of operating, maintaining, and providing these services. The City is reviewing its stormwater and sewer rates to ensure that future revenues are sufficient to operate and maintain each utility and to support the reliability and resilience of our critical infrastructure in the future.

Prior Actions or Discussions

Council approves the utility rates for stormwater and sanitary sewer each year as a part of the annual budget process. The last rate study was completed in 2020 with presentations to Council occurring at that time.

Staff provided an overview of the goals and objectives for the Utility Rate Study and gathered initial feedback at the March 10th, 2026, study session.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The 10-year financial plan is projected to need about \$264 million in capital funding for the sanitary sewer system and about \$73 million in capital funding for the stormwater system. To fully fund both programs, this will require an initial revenue increase of 25% per year for 2027 and 2028 for the sanitary sewer system and 60% per year for the same two years for the stormwater system. The annual increases would then reduce to 3% and 5% per year for the remainder of the 10-year planning timeframe.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES:

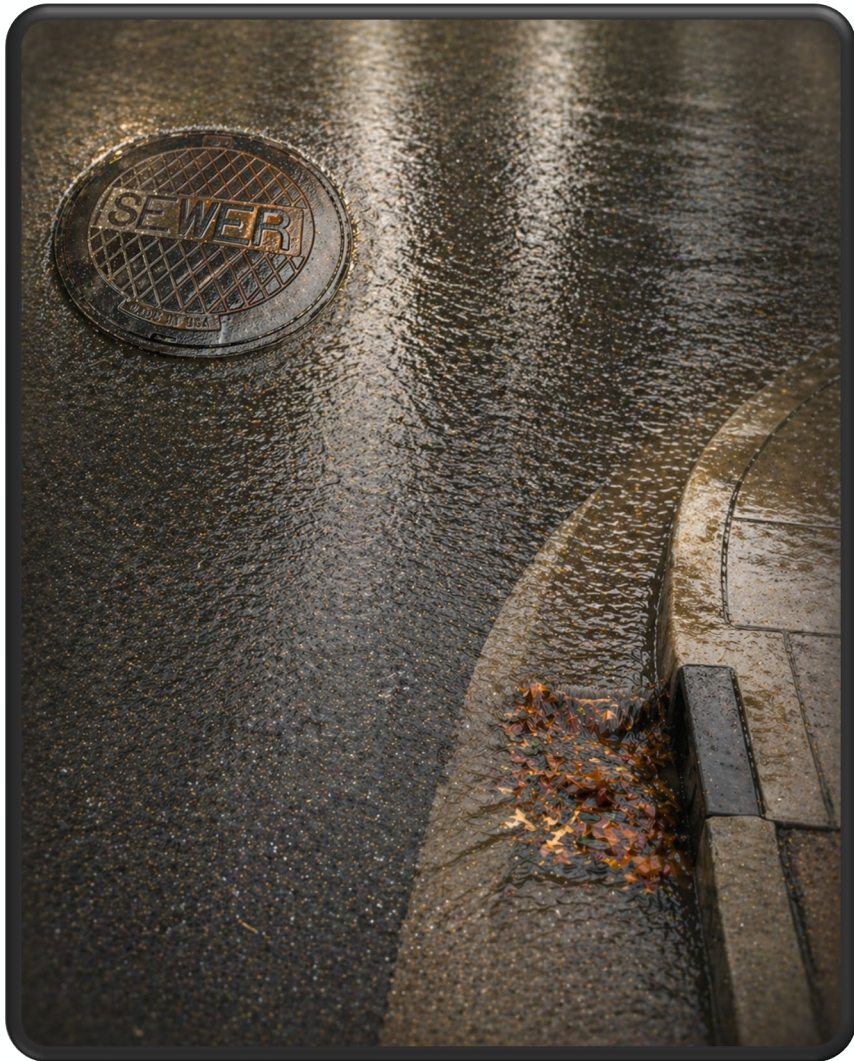
N/A

City of Littleton

Sewer and Storm Drainage Rate Study

May 12, 2026





Agenda



Utilities overview



Study goals and objectives



Utility financial forecasts



Peer utility survey

At a glance: Sewer utility

A self-supporting enterprise fund



9 mgd treated wastewater flow

3,267 Manholes

100 square mile service area

130 Miles of linear sewer mains
Distance from Littleton to Laramie WY

57,000 Customers

8 Adjacent sanitation districts served

At a glance: Storm drainage utility

A self-supporting enterprise fund



16 square miles of urbanized land

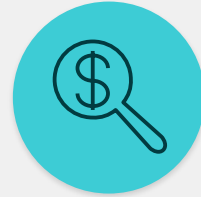
55 miles of stormwater mains

11 employees

8,000 customers served



Study Goals and Objectives



Rate revenues sufficient to meet annual operating expenses, debt service, and capital expenditures



Plan maintenance proactively to keep rates low and avoid expensive emergency repair



Maintain target reserve levels to sustain financial viability



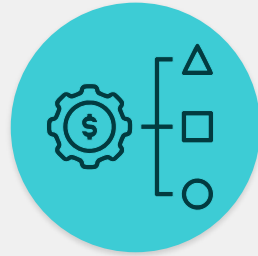
Rates that equitably recover the cost to provide service to customer classes and encourage conservation

Rate Study Process



Financial Plan

What amount of revenue is needed to meet operating and capital expenditures?



Cost of service

Is each class paying their fair share of costs?



Rate Design

Does rates meet community objectives in recovering costs?



Tap Fees

Is new development paying their fair share?

Sewer Forecast



Sewer utility Financial forecast outcomes



- Annual revenue increases
 - 25% in 2027 and 2028
 - 3% in 2029 through 2035
- Target reserves
 - 90 days of operation and maintenance expense
 - Capital reserve: 1-year depreciation expense
- Debt service coverage
 - Amount of income needed to pay for debt service and maintain financial sufficiency
 - Typically required in bond covenants
 - Target: 1.25 net income

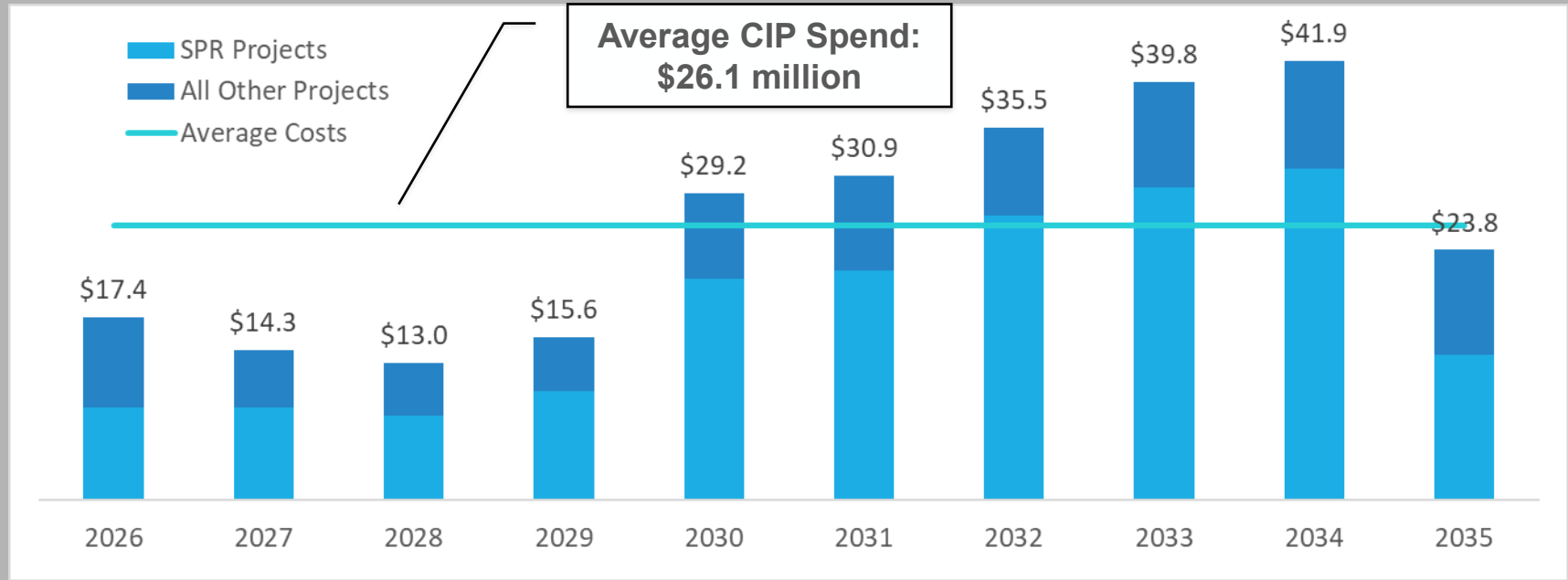
Sewer utility Financial forecast outcomes



- Bonds and loans
 - 20-year term
 - Bond: 4.5% interest rate
 - State loans: 3.5% interest rate
- Total CIP funded: \$261.5 million
 - Revenue bond/State loans: \$122.8 million
 - Rates, tap fees, reserves: \$138.7 million
- New FTEs to support CIP execution
 - 1.5 FTEs in 2027
 - 1.5 FTEs in 2028
 - Project management, engineering, operators



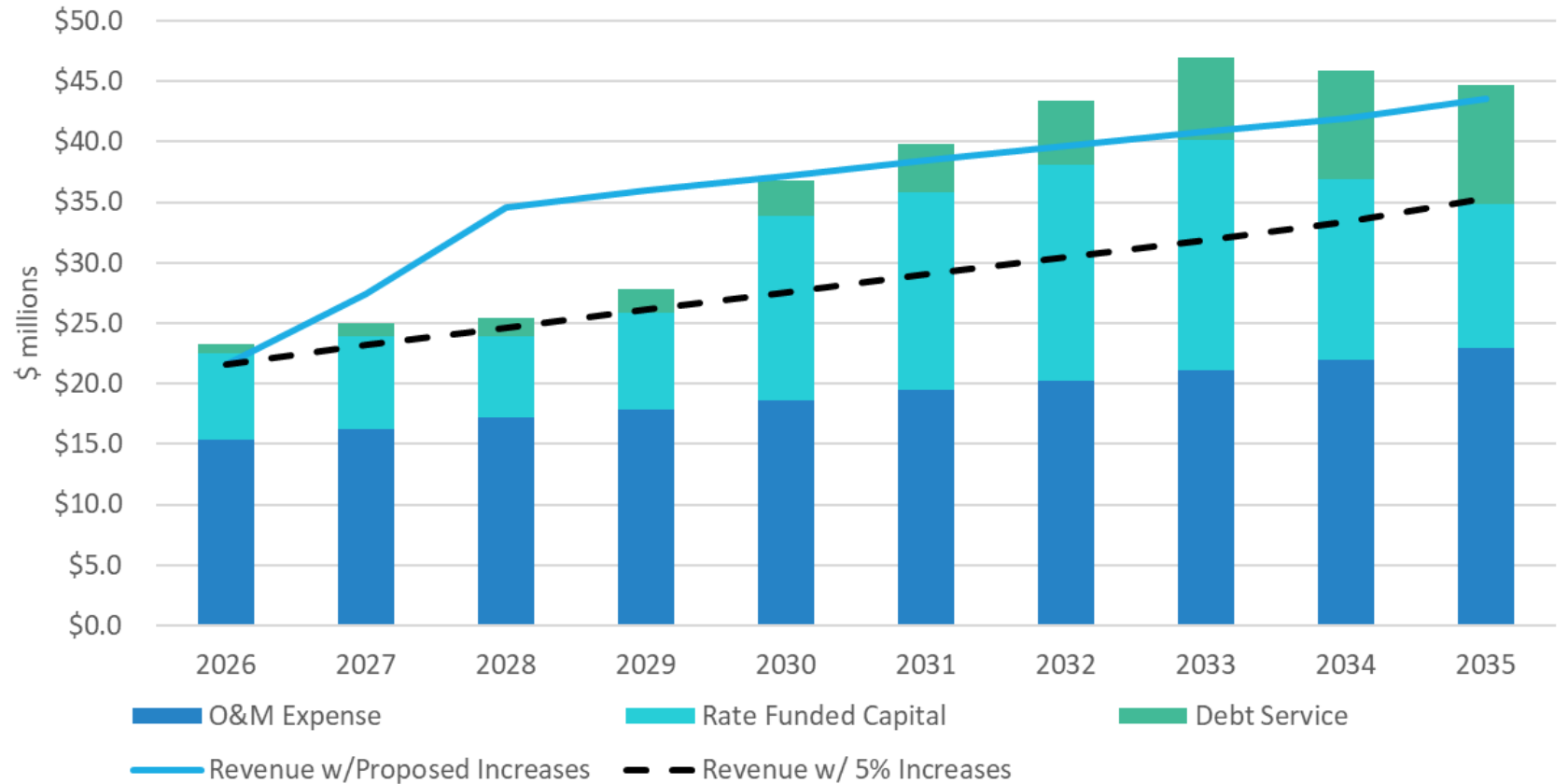
Sewer capital program: \$261.5 million



Top 5 Projects	(\$millions)
South Platte Renew - Capital	\$181.4
Pipe Patches or Point Repair (High)	14.3
Full Sewer Replacement Identified in Master Plan	12.2
CIPP Lining (High)	6.5
Upsize Slaughterhouse Gulch	5.9
Total	\$220.3

Sewer 10-Year financial forecast

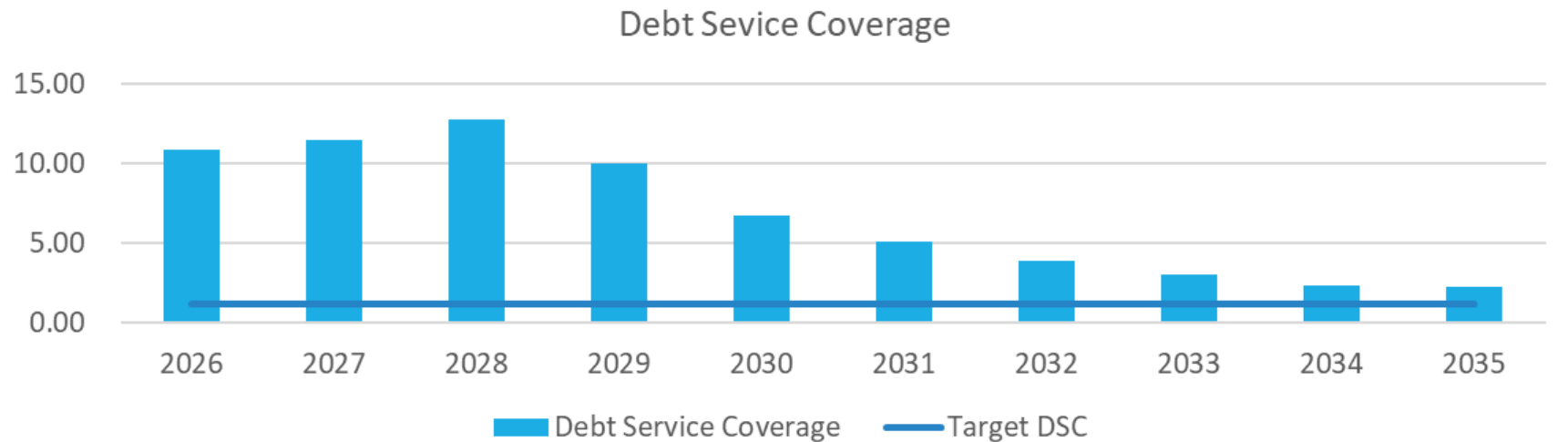
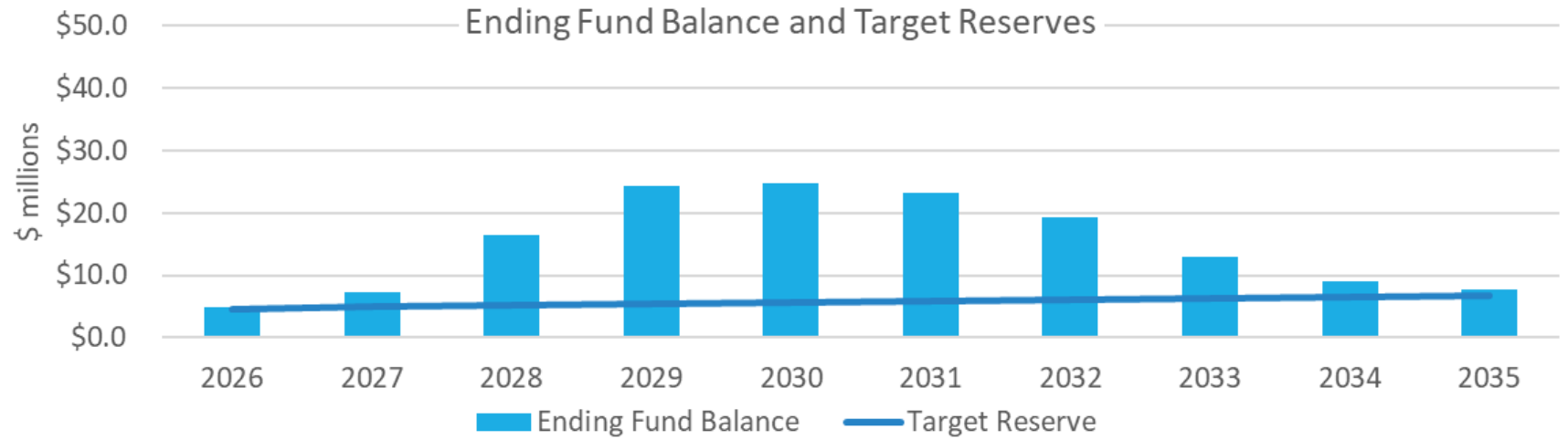
Annual revenues and expenditures



Capital costs are shown net of projects funded by loans and tap fees



Sewer 10-Year financial forecast



Sewer utility customer base

Collection and Treatment

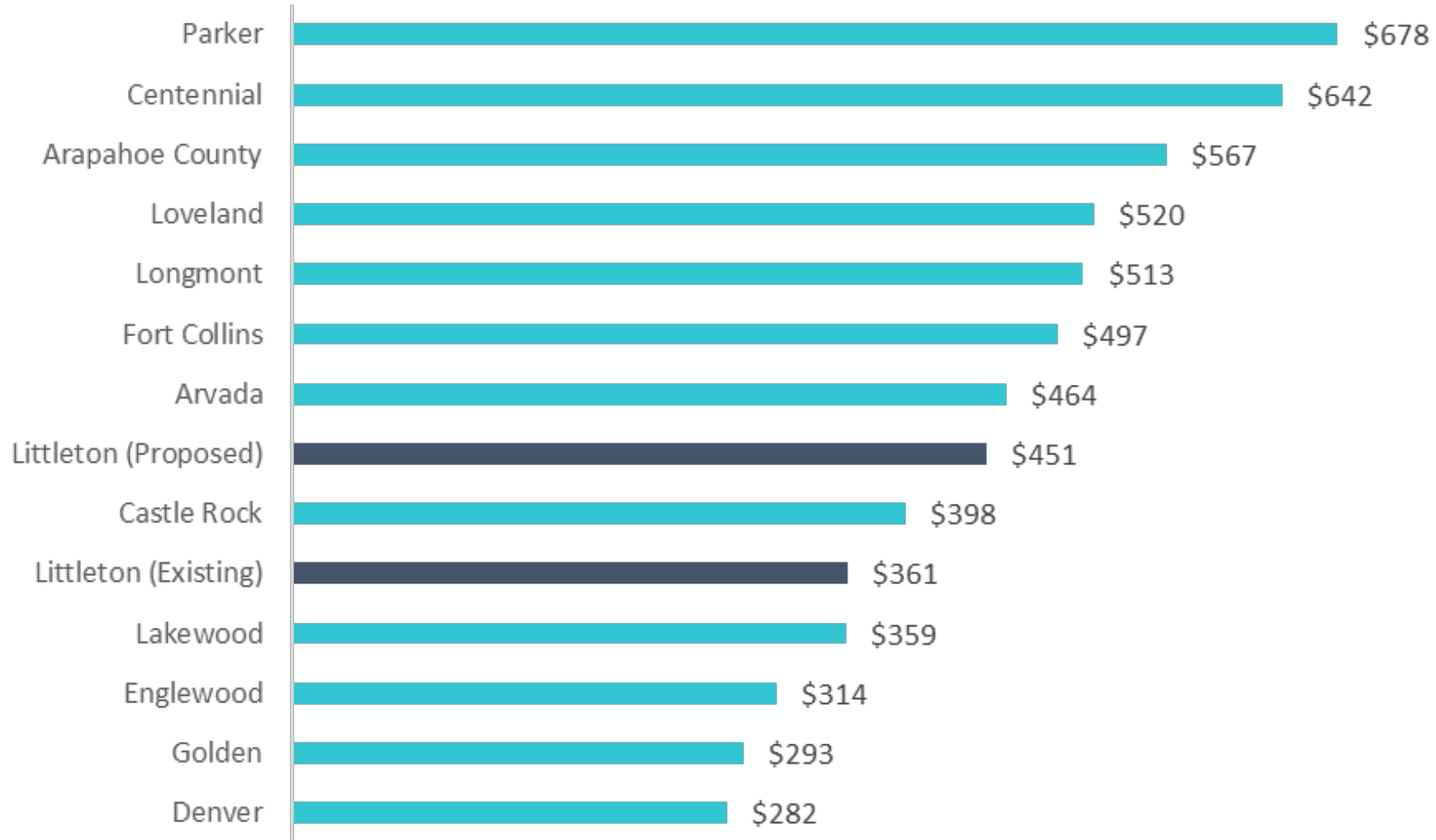
- City of Littleton
- Littleton Sanitation District

Treatment Only

- Ken Caryl/Trail Mark
- Dominion
- Platte Canyon
- Grant
- Bow Mar
- Meadowbrook
- Southwest Metro
- Roxborough/Lockheed
- Columbine

Residential peer utility bill survey

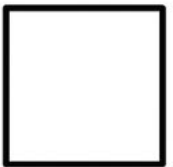
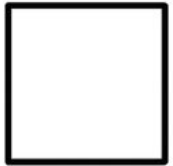
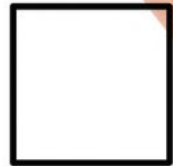
4,000 gallons monthly billable volume, *annual bill*



Storm Drainage Forecast

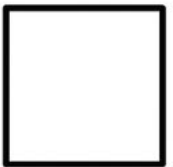
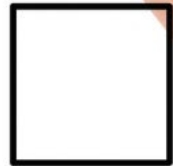


Storm drainage utility Financial forecast outcomes



- Annual revenue increases
 - 60% in 2027 and 2028
 - 5.2% in 2029 through 2035
- Target reserves
 - 90 days of operation and maintenance expense
 - Capital reserve: 1-year depreciation expense
- Debt service coverage
 - Amount of income needed to pay for debt service and maintain financial sufficiency
 - Typically required in bond covenants
 - Target: 1.25 net income
- Current debt service repayment of \$625,000 to sewer fund is affecting the funds reserve stability (~5.0% of total annual expenditure)
- Baseline capital spend of \$1.5 million is insufficient with current capital plan

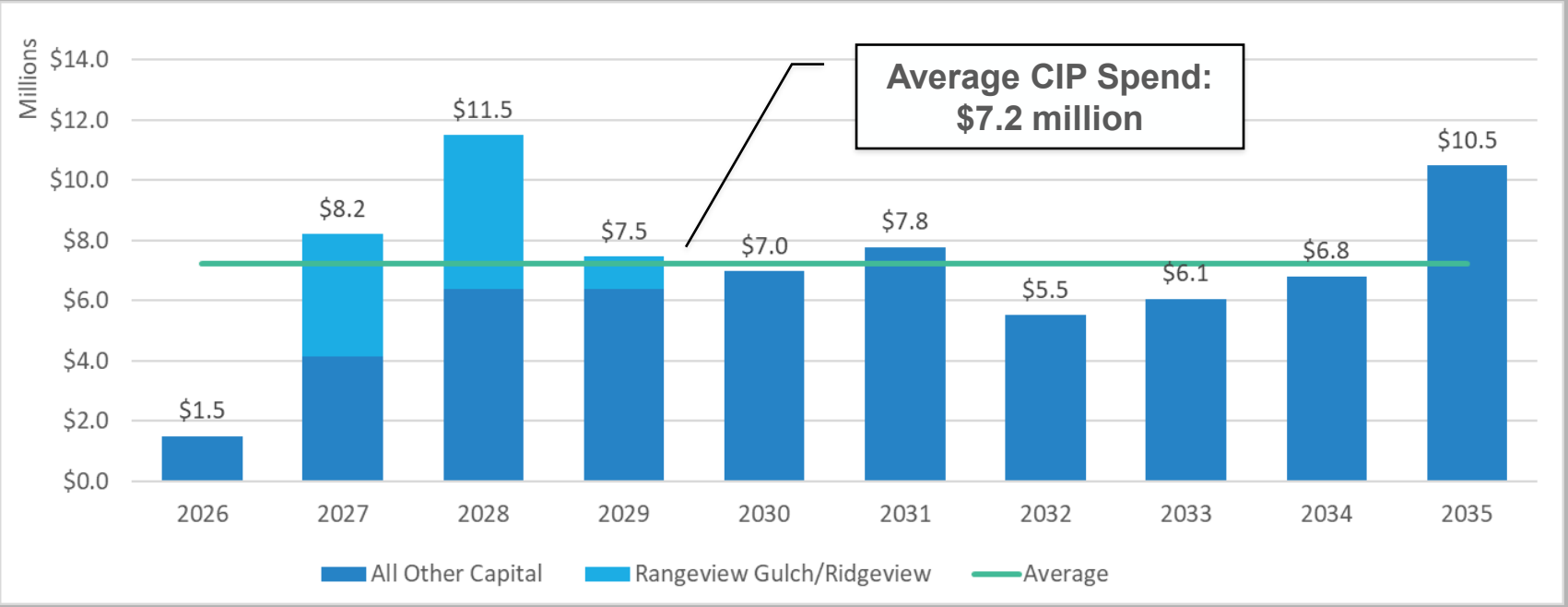
Storm drainage utility Financial forecast outcomes



- Bonds and loans
 - 20-year term
 - Bond: 4.5% interest rate
 - State loans: 3.5% interest rate
- Total CIP funded: \$72.4 million
 - Revenue bond/State loans: \$22.8 million
 - Rates, tap fees, reserves: \$49.6 million
- New FTEs to support CIP execution
 - 1.5 FTEs in 2027
 - 1.5 FTEs in 2028
 - Project management, engineering, operators



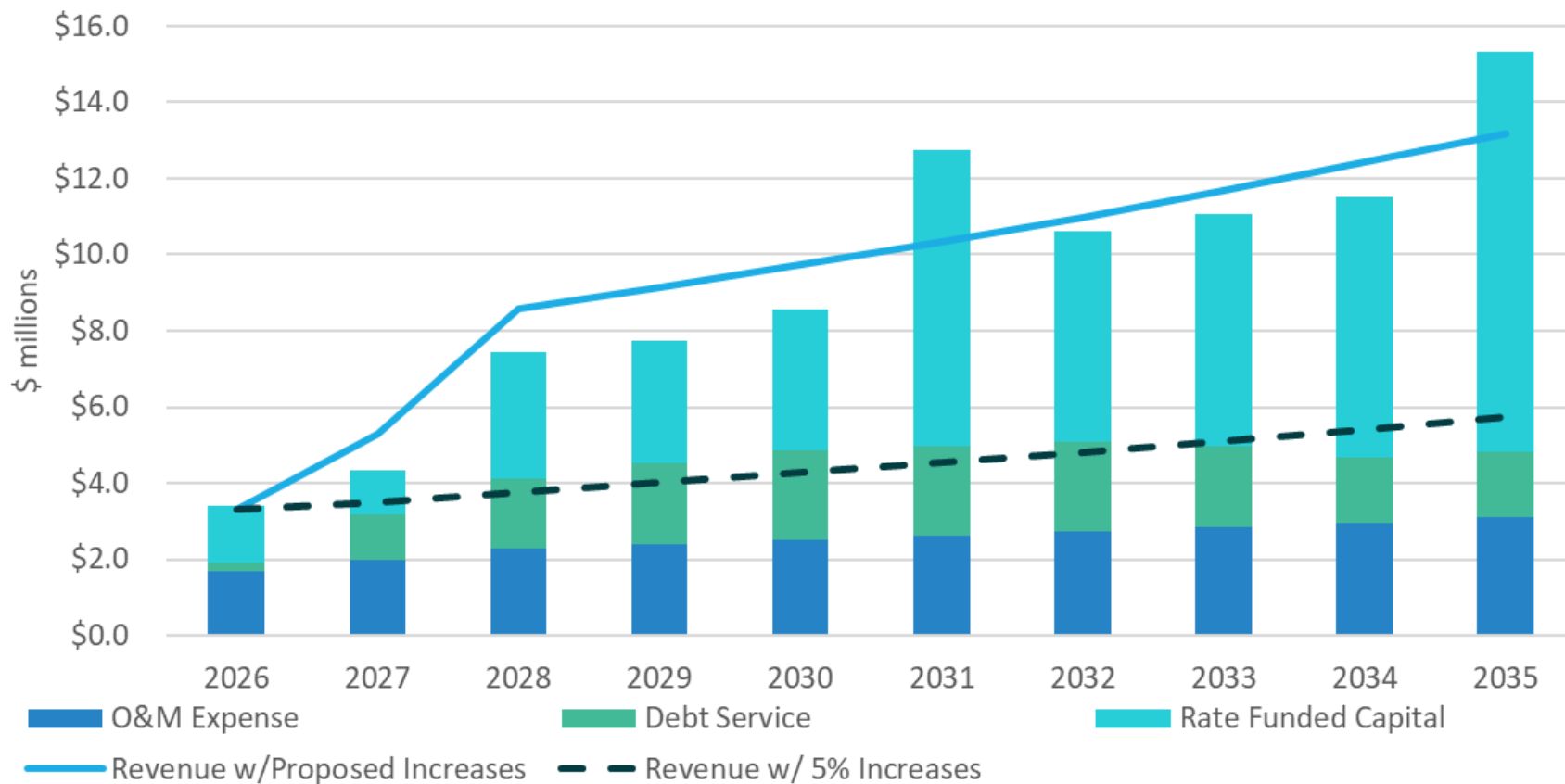
Storm drainage capital: \$72.4 million



Top 5 Projects (including inflation)	(\$millions)
Full Pipe Replacement	\$12.6
Lining/CIPP - High	6.1
Rangeview Gulch d/s Santa Fe (Reach 4 & 5)	5.1
Full Pipe Replacement - High	3.2
Rangeview Gulch u/s Santa Fe (Reach 1-3)	3.1
Total	\$30.1

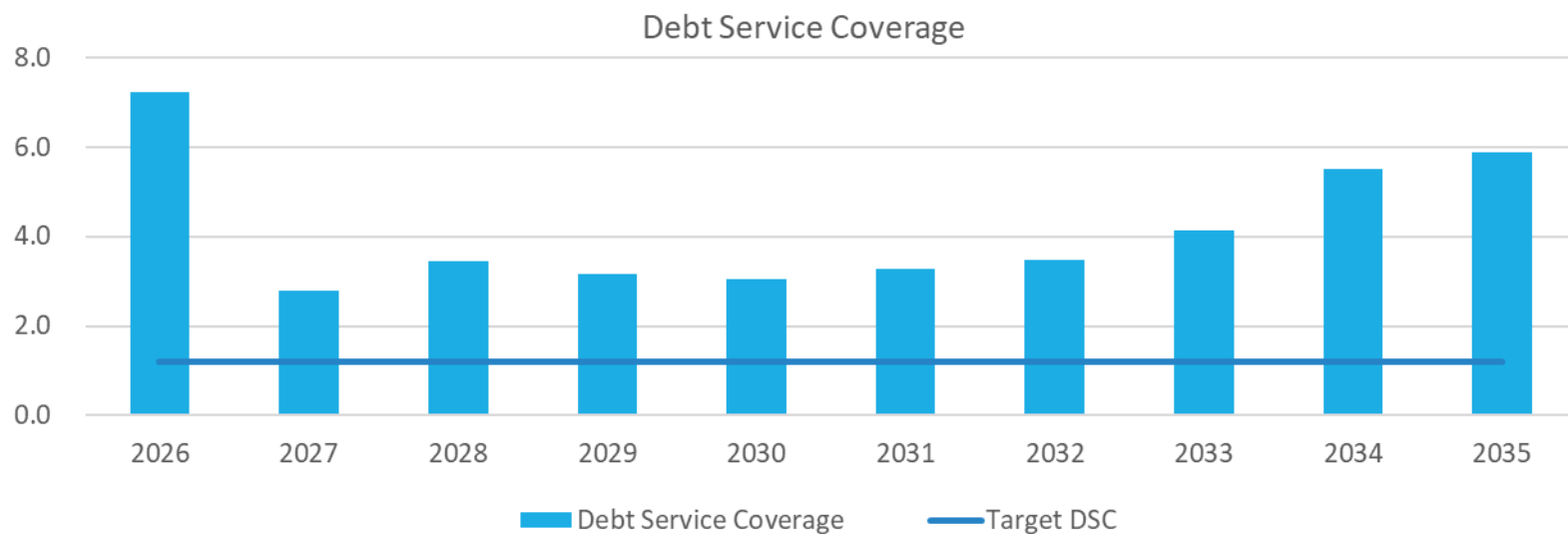
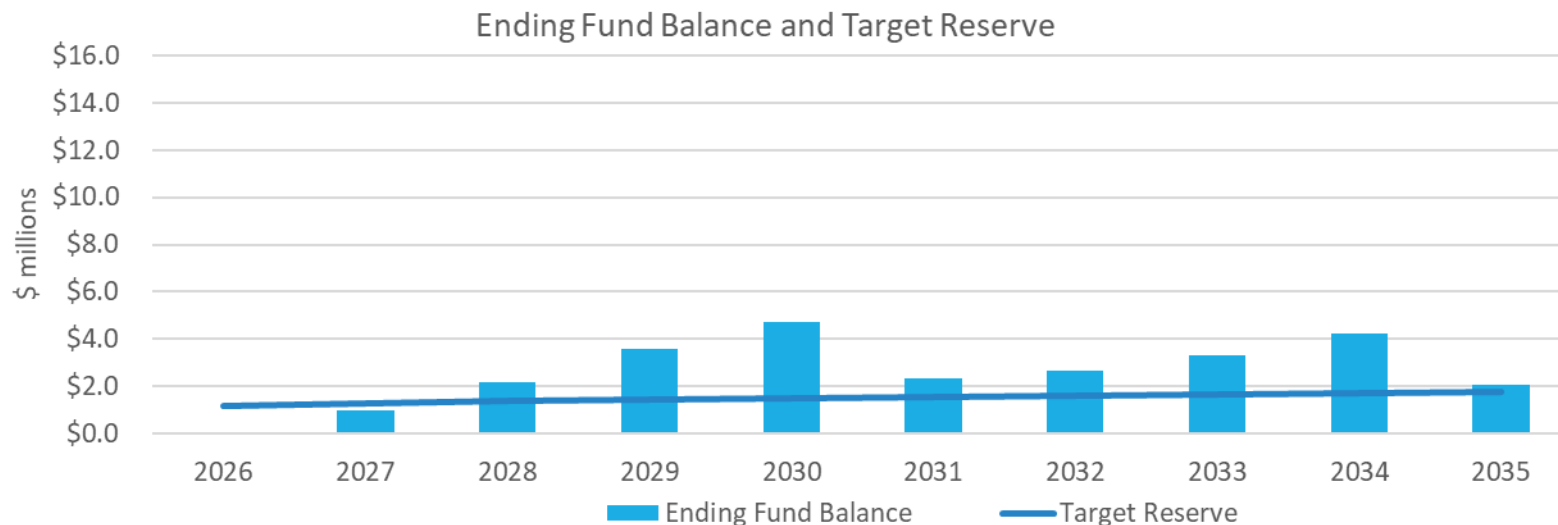
Storm drainage 10-Year financial forecast

Annual revenues and expenditures



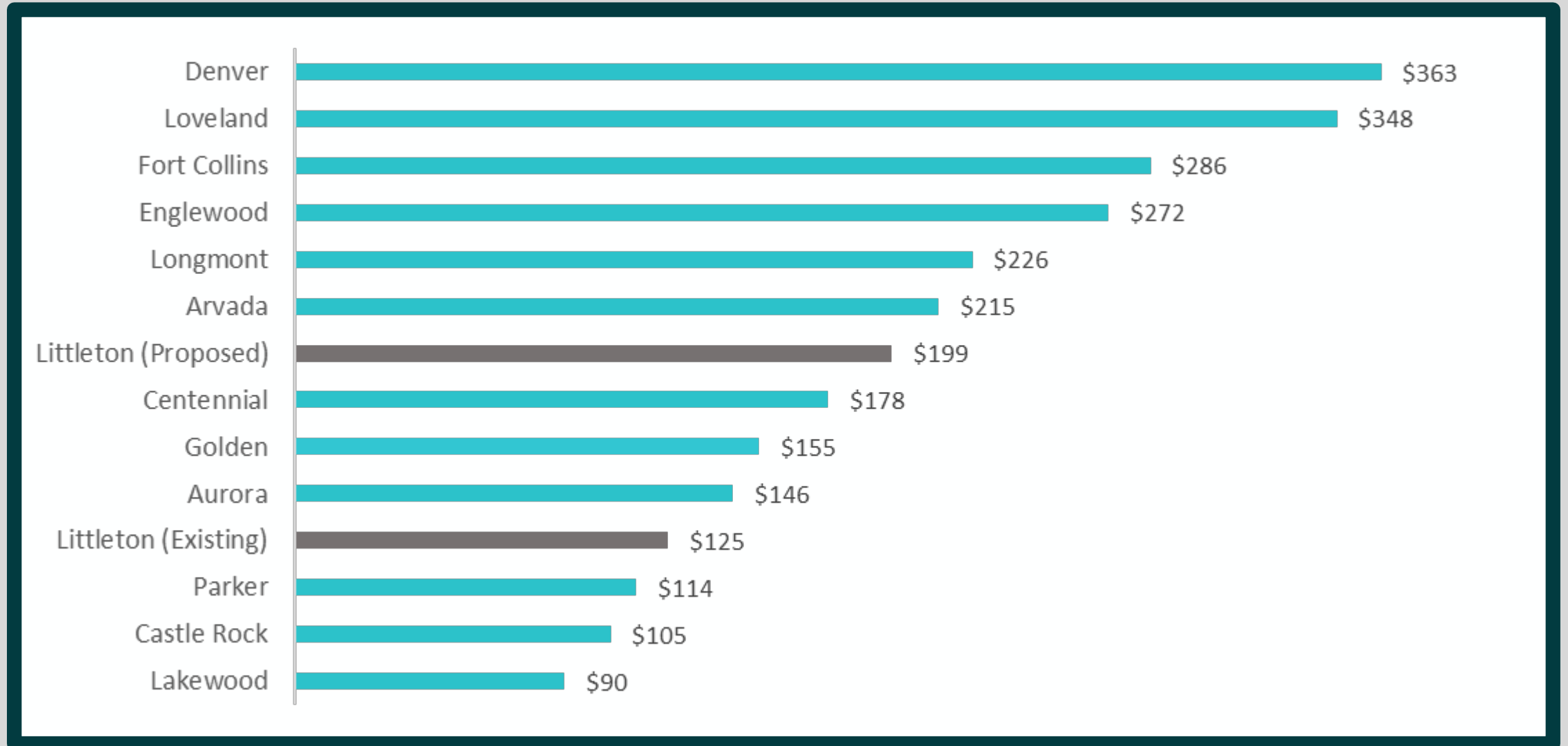
Capital costs are shown net of projects funded by loans and tap fees

Storm drainage 10-Year financial forecast



Residential peer utility bill survey

11,000 sq ft lot, 4,500 sq ft impervious area





Next steps

- Cost of service analysis
 - Cost recovery required from sewer collection and wastewater
 - Cost recovery from residential, multifamily, and commercial classes
- Sewer rate design alternatives
 - We will revisit rate structure alternatives developed in 2021 study
These alternatives were not implemented at the time
- Tap fees
- Customer bill impacts
- Updated peer utility survey
- Customer outreach update
- Billing frequency analysis

City of Littleton

Sewer and Storm Drainage Rate Study

May 12, 2026





Staff Communication

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Agenda Date: 05/12/2026

Subject:
2026 Potential ballot questions discussion

From:	James L. Becklenberg, City Manager
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Presentations:	Mike Gent, Deputy City Manager Colleen L. Norton, City Clerk

PURPOSE:

To review specific findings of the Charter Review Committee's (CRC) with consideration of potential future ballot questions.

LONG-TERM OUTCOME(S) SERVED:

High-Quality Governance

DISCUSSION:

The CRC, after comprehensive review of the City's Charter, made recommendations to council of 39 sections that may be considered for amendment through council-initiated ballot questions to the electors of the City.

At the April 14, 2026 City Council study session, the CRC focused its presentation on the top 11 committee recommended sections:

1. Sec. 8. Amending the Charter
2. Sec. 23. Qualifications of Council
3. Sec. 27. Council Meetings; Open and Executive Sessions
4. Sec. 34. Procedures (related to Recall)
5. Sec. 36. Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions
6. Sec. 45. Initiative
7. Sec. 46. Submissions (related to Initiative and Referendum)
8. Sec. 47. Referendum
9. Sec. 65.5. Preservation of Neighborhood Land Use Restrictions
10. Sec. 70. Submission of the Budget
11. Sec. 89. General Obligation Bonds

Council directed staff to bring forward the following for further discussion and consideration:

- Sec. 8. Amending the Charter

- Sec. 24. Presiding Officer
- Sec. 27. Council Meetings; Open and Executive Sessions
- Sec. 36. Ordinances, Resolutions and Motions (this will be a conversation to add definitions of each to Sec. 7. Definitions)
- Sec. 70. Submission of the Budget (timing of submission may be tied to Sec. 22 regarding start of council terms)
- Sec. 89. General Obligation Bonds

The CRC submitted recommendations and reasoning for change without crafting specific ballot language; staff, at council's direction, will be responsible for any proposed ballot language, ensuring it meets statutory requirements of single-subject and is written in plain language.

Staff's presentation will summarize the identified Charter sections to facilitate Council's considerations on each.

BACKGROUND:

Per the City's Charter Sec. 124, the CRC was convened by Council in April of 2025 with direction to perform a comprehensive review of all charter sections and make recommendations to council for amendments and deletions.

Prior Actions or Discussions

April 15, 2025: Council approved creation of the 2025/2026 CRC via resolution 39-2025.

April 14, 2026: CRC presented findings and recommendations to Council.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

Should council forward any of the CRC's recommendations or recommendations of their own to a ballot at a November election, there may be associated costs related to community outreach and education, as well as those costs associated with a coordinated election.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES:

- Council may consider placement of any of the committee's recommendations, in addition to those noted above, on an upcoming ballot, either in current or future years, and direct staff to draft language as appropriate, for potential ballot questions.
- Council may consider placement of council-initiated questions for inclusion on an upcoming ballot and direct staff to draft language to facilitate this process.

Charter Section - Existing Language	Questions/Discussion	CRC Recommendation	Staff Recommendation
Sec. 7. Definitions.			
<p>Agency. Any organizational unit of the City.</p> <p>Allotment. A portion of an appropriation made available for expenditure during a specified period.</p> <p>Appropriation. The authorized amount of funds set aside for expenditure during a specified time for a specific purpose.</p> <p>Candidate. A person seeking nomination or election to a City office.</p> <p>City. The City of Littleton, Colorado, a municipal corporation.</p> <p>Council. The Council of the City.</p> <p>Elector or Qualified Elector. Any person who is entitled to register to vote at a particular time.</p> <p>Emergency. An existing condition actually arising from unforeseen contingencies which immediately endangers public property, health, peace or safety.</p> <p>Emergency Ordinance. An ordinance, the immediate passage of which shall be necessary for the preservation or protection of public property, health, peace or safety.</p> <p>Employee. Any compensated person in municipal service who is not an officer.</p> <p>Franchise. A special privilege granted by the City permitting the continuing use of public property, such as City streets, and usually involving the elements of monopoly and regulation.</p> <p>Majority Vote. The greatest number of votes received by any candidate or issue.</p> <p>Officer. An elected member of the City government.</p> <p>Overlapping Terms. Terms of office are such that only a portion of the members will be appointed or elected at any one time, sometimes referred to as "staggered terms".</p> <p>Registered Elector. Any person who is registered to vote as required or prescribed by the statutes of the State of Colorado relating to municipal elections.</p> <p>Statutes. Applicable laws of the State of Colorado as they now exist and as they may be amended, changed, repealed or otherwise modified by legal procedure.</p> <p>(Amended, Election of 11-5-1991; Amended, Election of 11-3-2015)</p>		<p>Add Mayor, Home Rule, Registered Elector, Meeting types (regular, study session, executive sessions), ordinances, resolutions, motions, public utility, public utility corporation.</p>	<p><i>The first CRC recommended several changes to this section including adding Home Rule and Publication. Was not referred to a ballot. Language unchanged.</i></p>
Sec. 8. Amending the Charter.			
<p>Amendments to this Charter may be framed and submitted to the registered electors through petitioning the Council, or framed and submitted to the registered electors by Council on its own initiative, in accordance with the provisions of Article XX of the Constitution of the State of Colorado. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to prevent the submission to the people of more than one Charter amendment at any one election. (Amended, Election of 11-5-1991)</p>	<p>Review thresholds set by other cities above that of statute (Boulder/Denver given as examples). Signature thresholds for amending the city's charter should not be less than that for other types of citizen-initiated actions. Tie ability to amend charter to Sec. 38 which could limit (?) subjects to be included in charter. Recommendation to require a supermajority vote to pass any charter amendment.</p>	<p>Propose that any charter amendment, whether citizen or council initiated, only be passed by a supermajority vote vs a simple majority of votes cast for that ballot question.</p>	
Sec. 22. Term.			

<p>Terms of Council Members shall begin at eight P.M. on the second Tuesday following the election. General Municipal elections shall be held every two years with the Mayor and Council Members being elected for four-year terms, so that at each general Municipal election the voters shall elect a minimum of three members to serve on the Council. In elections when the Mayor is elected, a total of four council members shall be elected. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, no Council Member including time served as Mayor shall be entitled to serve consecutive terms of office exceeding twelve years in duration unless said twelve year period expires during a term which said Mayor or Council Member is serving, in which case said Mayor or Council Member shall be entitled to serve out the remainder of his or her term. (Amended, Election of 11-3-2015; Amended, Election of 11-3-2020)</p>	<p>Committee question: Why do terms of Council Members begin at eight P.M. on the second Tuesday following the election? <i>Recommendation can be made to be less prescriptive to time, i.e., “terms of newly elected council members begin following the conclusion of old business on the second Tuesday following the election”. An argument can also be made that terms would not commence until after the canvass and certification of the election (deadline is not more than 22 days after the election).</i></p>		<p><i>The first CRC recommended that council members terms begin at the first regularly scheduled meeting in January following the election. Was not referred to a ballot. Language unchanged in Charter.</i></p>
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Sec. 24. Presiding Officer.

<p>The voters shall elect the Mayor who will be the presiding officer and entitled to vote. He or she shall have no veto power. He or she shall be recognized as the head of the City government for all ceremonial purposes and shall execute and authenticate legal instruments requiring his or her signature as such official. If a seated council member with remaining years on their term wishes to run for the position of Mayor, that council member shall be required to provide written notice to the City Clerk by July 1st of that general municipal election year of his or her intent to step down from their current council seat and run for Mayor. That council member shall continue to serve in their elected capacity until their seat is filled at the next general municipal election. (July 28, 1959; Amended, Election of 11-3-2015; Amended, Election of 11-3-2020)</p>		<p>Remove the second paragraph and replace with: If a seated council member with remaining years on their term wishes to run for the position of mayor and wins, the new city council would appoint a replacement to fill the remaining two (2) years of their term. If a seated council member with remaining years on their term wishes to run for the position of mayor and loses, they will retain their seat on city council for the remainder of their term.</p>	
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Sec. 27. Council Meetings; Open and Executive Sessions.

<p>The Council shall meet regularly at the City Hall or at such other place as Council may direct at least once each month. The meeting shall be set at a day and hour to be fixed from time to time by the rules and procedures of each Council. The Council shall determine the rules of procedure governing meetings. All meetings for the transaction of business shall be open to the public. Special meetings of the Council may be called in the manner and at the time provided for by the rules of procedure of the Council, provided that local public media are notified of the meeting at the same time that the Council members are notified. Four members of the Council shall constitute a quorum. All meetings of the Council or subcommittees of the Council, meetings of all boards, commissions and other advisory bodies of the City and the subcommittees thereof shall comply with the requirements of C.R.S. 24-6-402 (2012) otherwise known as the Open Meeting Law. An executive session may be called in accordance with C.R.S. 24-6-402 for the following reasons and no other. An executive session under this section may only be held by a majority vote of a quorum present plus one vote.</p> <p>1. To discuss matters required to be kept confidential by Federal and State laws or rules or regulations, including but not limited to specialized details of security arrangements or investigations, including defenses against terrorism or criminal acts, both foreign or domestic; and 2. To confer with an attorney regarding a legal action already filed in a court of law. The case name and number shall be cited for the public record. Any final settlement or final agreement shall be decided by a majority vote in a regular meeting of the Council. 3. The purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real or personal property. No executive session may be held for the purpose of concealing the fact that a member of the Council has a personal interest in such purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale. All formal action on the agreements for such purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real or personal property must occur in an open session of the City Council. 4. Conference with the attorney(s) for the Council for the purpose of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions. The general substance of the legal question shall be part of the agenda for executive session. Mere presence or participation of the attorney(s) for the Council is not sufficient for an executive session under this subsection. No persons, other than members of the Council, the attorneys for the City, the City Manager and only any other person required in the judgment of the attorneys for the Council to provide factual information necessary for the formulation of the legal question may be present in the executive session. No formal action of the Council may be taken during an executive session held under this subsection. All formal action arising out of or resulting from an executive session held under this subsection must occur in an open session of the City Council. 5. Personnel matters are defined as the recruitment, evaluation, discipline, termination and employment of an employee that is appointed by the Council. The employee who is the subject of the executive session shall be given, in writing, no less than forty-eight hours' notice of the executive session. The employee may request, upon no less than twenty-four hours' notice, that the matter be held in an opening meeting session. All formal action arising out of or resulting from an executive session held under this subsection must occur in an open session of the City Council.</p> <p>The entire executive session shall be taped or digitally recorded in its entirety. The recording shall be maintained in the City</p>		<p>Strike #2 and replace with "Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators" or something similar.</p>	<p>CAO concurs <i>The first CRC recommended removing reference to City Hall and replace with Littleton Center. Was not referred to a ballot. Language unchanged in Charter.</i></p>
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Sec. 36. Ordinances, Resolutions and Motions.

<p>The Council shall act only by ordinance, resolution or motion. All legislative enactments must be in the form of ordinances; all other procedures may be in the form of resolutions or motions. All ordinances and resolutions shall be confined to one subject, except in the case of repealing ordinances. Ordinances making appropriations shall be confined to the subject of appropriations. (July 28, 1959; Amended, Election of 11-3-2015)</p>		<p>Add definitions under Sec. 7 for all three: ordinance, resolution, motion</p>	
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Sec. 70. Submission Of The Budget.

<p>Not later than September fifteenth of each year, the City Manager shall submit to the Council: A. An annual or current expense budget of all City funds, hereafter referred to as the "budget", which shall be a complete financial plan for the ensuing fiscal year, consisting of the budget proper and the budget message. B. A capital budget. (July 28, 1959; Amended, Election of 11-3-2015)</p>		<p>Budget to be adopted before seating of new council (refer back to Sec. 22. Term.)</p>	<p>Remove reference to 9/15 ; Range of dates?</p>
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Sec. 89. General Obligation Bonds.

<p>Indebtedness and obligations of the City shall be incurred and limited as provided in Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Colorado applicable to towns and cities except as otherwise provided in this Charter. The Council shall have power to issue general obligation bonds of the City for any public capital purpose upon majority vote of the registered electors of the City voting at any special or general election. However, water and/or sewer-extension and water and/or sewer improvement bonds may be issued without an election if the total of existing and proposed such bonds shall not exceed five percent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property within the City as shown by the last preceding assessment for tax purposes. The total outstanding general obligation indebtedness of the City, other than for water and/or sewer bonds, shall not at any time exceed three and seven-tenths percent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property within the City as shown by the last preceding assessment for tax purposes. Bonds of the City, other than water and/or sewer bonds, shall be payable in installments commencing not later than two years after the date of said bonds. Water and/or sewer bonds shall mature and be payable as provided by the ordinance authorizing the issuance of said bonds. (Amended, Election of 7-8-1986; Election of 11-5-1991)</p>	<p>Would it be better to tie the GO debt ceiling for the City to its economic capacity and revenue projections where there could be debt payments where there is a limited capacity to repay the debt if there are extenuating circumstances or significant and questionable project or obligations? Is there a debt service level and accompanying percentage of general revenue that should be looked at? Should a more complex and flexible formula be prepared and reviewed to make the appropriate determination about a balanced debt portfolio for the various enterprise funds with specific uses and repayment structures?</p>	<p>Recommendation that existing language is too prescriptive; recommend change (reference state limit?). Increase with staff/council direction. Recommend "plain language" ballot language and education.</p>	
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2026 POTENTIAL BALLOT QUESTIONS DISCUSSION

Colleen L. Norton, City Clerk

Mike Gent, Deputy City Manager

APRIL 28, 2026



COUNCIL DIRECTION BASED ON CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

- CRC outlined a total of 39 Charter sections for Council consideration
- CRC focused on the top 11 committee recommendations
- Council considered *all* recommendations and directed staff to bring forth six (6) for further discussion of potential ballot question/s

TOP 11 CHARTER SECTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT

- Sec. 8. Amending the Charter.

Charter language: Amendments to this Charter may be framed and submitted to the registered electors through petitioning the Council, or framed and submitted to the registered electors by Council on its own initiative, in accordance with the provisions of Article XX of the Constitution of the State of Colorado. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to prevent the submission to the people of more than one Charter amendment at any one election. (Amended, Election of 11-5-1991)

CRC Recommendation: Create equity between the effort/ability to amend the City's Charter with that required to submit a successful initiative or referendum petition by raising the threshold for number of signatures required and/or requiring a super-majority vote or other percentage vote for passage of any Charter Amendment referred to the electorate.

Comments: Home Rule Charter amendment process is prescribed by the state's Constitution and statute. City of Littleton's Charter meets current process as allowed.

TOP 11 CHARTER SECTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT

- Sec. 24. Presiding Officer

Charter language: The voters shall elect the Mayor who will be the presiding officer and entitled to vote. He or she shall have no veto power. He or she shall be recognized as the head of the City government for all ceremonial purposes and shall execute and authenticate legal instruments requiring his or her signature as such official. If a seated council member with remaining years on their term wishes to run for the position of Mayor, that council member shall be required to provide written notice to the City Clerk by July 1st of that general municipal election year of his or her intent to step down from their current council seat and run for Mayor. That council member shall continue to serve in their elected capacity until their seat is filled at the next general municipal election.

CRC Recommendation: Remove the second paragraph and replace with: If a seated council member with remaining years on their term wishes to run for the position of mayor and wins, the new city council would appoint a replacement to fill the remaining two (2) years of their term. If a seated council member with remaining years on their term wishes to run for the position of mayor and loses, they will retain their seat on city council for the remainder of their term.

TOP 11 CHARTER SECTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT

- Sec. 27. Council Meetings; Open and Executive Sessions. (Specific to 27.2)

Charter language: To confer with an attorney regarding a legal action already filed in a court of law. The case name and number shall be cited for the public record. Any final settlement or final agreement shall be decided by a majority vote in a regular meeting of the Council.

CRC Recommendation: Replace with “Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators” or something similar thereby allowing the City Attorney to discuss *all* potential legal action, regardless of whether action has been filed.

Comments: Staff concurs with the recommendation, as replacing the provision would align the City’s Charter with statute.

TOP 11 CHARTER SECTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT

- Sec. 36. Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions.

Charter language: The Council shall act only by ordinance, resolution or motion. All legislative enactments must be in the form of ordinances; all other procedures may be in the form of resolutions or motions. All ordinances and resolutions shall be confined to one subject, except in the case of repealing ordinances. Ordinances making appropriations shall be confined to the subject of appropriations. (July 28, 1959; Amended, Election of 11-3-2015)

Recommendation: Add definitions for all three to Sec. 7. Definitions.

Comments: The 2013/2014 CRC recommended adding these definitions, and others, to Sec. 7 Definitions. This was not referred to a ballot; language is unchanged in the Charter.

TOP 11 CHARTER SECTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT

- Sec. 70. Submission of the Budget.

Charter language: Not later than September fifteenth of each year, the City Manager shall submit to the Council:

A. An annual or current expense budget of all City funds, hereafter referred to as the "budget", which shall be a complete financial plan for the ensuing fiscal year, consisting of the budget proper and the budget message.

B. A capital budget. (July 28, 1959; Amended, Election of 11-3-2015)

CRC Recommendation: Budget should be adopted prior to seating of new council*. Remove reference to 9/15 and replace with a range of dates. **Would require changes to Sec. 22. Terms as a separate ballot question;*

Comments: Deadline for approval of the budget is required prior to the date by which the county/ies certify mill levies, generally by December 15. Deadline for submittal of budget could be removed from the Charter with budget timeline set by administrative policy or ordinance.

TOP 11 CHARTER SECTIONS RECOMMENDED FOR AMENDMENT

- Sec. 89. General Obligation Bonds.

Charter language: Indebtedness and obligations of the City shall be incurred and limited as provided in Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Colorado applicable to towns and cities except as otherwise provided in this Charter. The Council shall have power to issue general obligation bonds of the City for any public capital purpose upon majority vote of the registered electors of the City voting at any special or general election. However, water and/or sewer-extension and water and/or sewer improvement bonds may be issued without an election if the total of existing and proposed such bonds shall not exceed five percent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property within the City as shown by the last preceding assessment for tax purposes. The total outstanding general obligation indebtedness of the City, other than for water and/or sewer bonds, shall not at any time exceed three and seven-tenths percent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property within the City as shown by the last preceding assessment for tax purposes. Bonds of the City, other than water and/or sewer bonds, shall be payable in installments commencing not later than two years after the date of said bonds. Water and/or sewer bonds shall mature and be payable as provided by the ordinance authorizing the issuance of said bonds. (Amended, Election of 7-8-1986; Election of 11-5-1991)

CRC Recommendation: Existing language is too prescriptive. Committee suggested referencing state statutory limit/not to exceed. Increase with staff/council direction. Use "plain" language for ballot and provide adequate outreach and education.

Comments: Staff recommends either 1) repeal of this section, and replacement with related reference to policy adopted by ordinance, aligning the City with more common municipal practices; or 2) replacement of the following verbiage “three and seven-tenths percent of the assessed valuation” with “three percent of appraised/actual valuation” to be consistent with regional municipal practices.

MUNICIPAL DEBT CAP EXAMPLES

City	Indebtedness Limit	Actual vs. Assessed Value
Arvada	3.0%	Actual
Centennial	3.0%*	Actual
Englewood	3.0%	Actual
Greenwood Village	2.0%	Actual
Lakewood	3.0%	Actual
Littleton	3.7%	Assessed
Northglenn	5.0%*	Actual
Parker	None	n/a
Westminster	3.0%*	Actual
Wheat Ridge	3.0%	Actual

*General obligation indebtedness of the City shall be incurred and limited as provided in Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Colorado



Questions