

## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



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### STAFF

Anissa Hollingshead, City Clerk

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### SUBJECT

**Staff Report: Regarding National Voter Registration Day and Efforts Ahead of the November 7, 2023, Municipal Election.**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Registering to vote is the first critical step to participating in elections in Colorado. The upcoming municipal election will be held as a coordinated election conducted by Larimer County and all active registered voters will be sent a mail ballot to participate in the election. Ensuring eligible Fort Collins residents have active voter registrations is one key to maximizing voter participation in this election.

National Voter Registration Day is an annual nationwide event, occurring this year on September 19, focused on ensuring people eligible to vote across the country know how and where to register. In Colorado, online voter registration is fast and easy through the Secretary of State's secure resources at: [www.GoVoteColorado.gov](http://www.GoVoteColorado.gov).

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### BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

Colorado has implemented many practices to make voting accessible and simplified for eligible residents. Holding mail ballot elections is one key practice that ensures active registered voters get ballots for every election sent directly to them with no additional action needed. The State has also implemented automatic voter registration, ensuring residents can be registered or have their registration updated when obtaining a Colorado Driver's License or State ID card. Valid registrations are also updated when completing a change of residence with the U.S. Postal Service through the National Change of Address database. Same day registration is another practice in place, allowing voters to register right up through Election Day when casting a ballot in person at a Voter Service and Polling Center. All of these efforts have contributed to Colorado's second in the nation rating for voter participation perennially.

The key role of voter registration to participation in the electoral process makes focusing on maximizing the number of eligible Fort Collins residents registered one of two primary areas of focus for election outreach and education efforts this year, along with how residents benefit from voting in municipal elections. Currently 112,703 Fort Collins residents have active voter registrations. These are the voters who will be receiving a ballot in the mail for the 2023 Coordinated Election beginning October 16.

There also 14,435 inactive voter registrations in Fort Collins that will not automatically be sent ballots. A voter's registration becomes inactive if: Larimer County receives notice from the National Change of Address database that the voter has moved out of state; or if official election correspondence and/or ballot has been returned to the election office as "undeliverable".

All Fort Collins residents eligible to vote are encouraged to check their voter registration status, register to vote, or update their registration through the Secretary of State's secure online site at:

[www.GoVoteColorado.gov](http://www.GoVoteColorado.gov)

There is also intentional focus in education efforts on identifying eligible residents who are not reached through automatic registration or who may face other registration barriers. More mobile residents, students, and those with a State issued ID or driver's license issued at their current address are part of this population. College students who live in Fort Collins while attending school can choose either to vote in Fort Collins if they consider Fort Collins their residence for voting purposes or to vote in another jurisdiction if they maintain a different permanent residence they wish to vote in. Voters who register up until October 30 will still be sent a mail ballot. Registering after that date is still possible in conjunction with voting in person at a Larimer County Voter Service and Polling Center.