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Charlie Brown

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Big menu of bond issues on Nov. ballot



Construction like this bridge and road work at Cherry Creek Drive South and South Holly Street could become more common if a \$150 million bond issue is passed by Denver voters. The streets bond issue, Question 1-D, is part of a \$550 million package of nine issues facing voters in the Nov. 6 mail election.

Denver voters will make key decisions about the brick-and-mortar future of their city when they vote Nov. 6 on nine bond issue questions.

Those measures propose \$550 million in spending for everything from routine street and park maintenance to upkeep and construction at major cultural facilities such as the Museum of Science and Nature, Boettcher Concert Hall and the Denver Botanic Gardens.

A central part of the package is a property-tax increase that would fund

ongoing regular maintenance of city facilities.

Much of the price tag for the projects will be covered by already-approved bonding capacity that will be freed up as older bonds are paid off. Question 1-A would cause a \$49 property tax increase on a home valued at \$255,000. If voters approve all the bond proposals, current bonding capacity would be exceeded by \$70 million, requiring another \$12 increase in property taxes on that average home.

The proposals grow out of

view of Denver's needs and of detailed study by a set of citizen committees. The final plan was reviewed and adopted by city council earlier this year for submission to the voters.

Arguments for and against the proposals, as summarized by the League of Women Voters of Denver, include:

FOR: The city has fallen behind in basic maintenance and needs a dedicated source of revenue for annual upkeep. Timely maintenance re-

(Continued on page 2)



Denver Arts Week, a celebration of Denver's thriving arts scene, kicks off Oct. 5 with special events, concerts, art shows, theatre, dance, street parties and prizes.

You can explore more than a dozen museums, 40 performing arts groups, six neighborhood arts districts and 100 art galleries.

Highlights include:

- An early opening of the "Artisans and Kings: selected Treasures from the Louvre" at the Denver Art Museum on Oct. 5 from 5 to 10 p.m.
- A special price of \$52.80 on two tickets for the Colorado Ballet's "Le Corsaire" Oct. 5-12.
- There's also a \$52.80-for-two offer for Magnificent Mendelssohn II at the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Oct. 5, 6 and 7.
- And, special \$52.80 packages also are available Oct. 5-12 for "La Traviata," staged by Opera Colorado.

There's a full list of events, a search tool and all the other information you'll need at www.denverartsweek.com.

It's a great opportunity to, in the words of the organizers, "Discover why 'The Mile High City is remaking itself as a world capital of art and architecture.'"

Zoning rules change (Continued from page 1)

duces the need for future bond issues, and the proposed tax increase is modest and keeps Denver's property taxes low relative to neighboring cities.

AGAINST: Needs can be met out of existing city revenues, property taxes fall disproportionately on residents with fixed incomes and expansion of some facilities will require higher operating costs in the future.

There's plenty of information voters can use to inform themselves on the bond questions.

Full texts of relevant documents and links to Channel 8 broadcasts about the issues are available on the city's website, www.denvergov.org. The League of Women Voters of Denver also has a full analysis at www.lwvdenver.org/download/procon0711.pdf. And, both daily newspapers are covering the election. Check www.denverpost.com and www.rockymountainnews.com.

The election is being conducted by mail, and registered voters should receive their ballots by the middle of October. If your registration has lapsed, or if you're not sure you're still registered, you can register until Oct. 9. For more information, check the city's elections website at www.denvergov.org/election_commission.

Here's a summary of the spending proposed by each measure:

Question 1-A would raise city property taxes with the new revenues devoted solely to ongoing maintenance of city infrastructure. The tax would generate an estimated \$27 million a year.

Question 1-B would allow spending of \$48.6 million on building improvements at Denver Health and city child-care facilities and replacement of the city animal shelter and Eastside Human Services Facility.

Question 1-C plans to spend \$51.9 million on library maintenance and new branch facilities in West Denver, Stapleton and Green Valley Ranch.

Question 1-D proposes \$149.8 million in spending on street repair and related projects, plus expanding the city's Cherry Creek Solid Waste Facility.

Question 1-E would allow spending of \$93.4 million and parks and recreation maintenance and improvements.

Question 1-F plans spending of \$10.3 million for work on the City and County Building and the neighboring former city permit center.

Question 1-G budgets \$60.5 million for renovation, replacement and other work at the Botanic Gardens, Boettcher Hall, the Municipal Auditorium, Buell Theatre rehearsal space and the Museum of Science and Nature.

Question 1-H contains \$70 million for new construction at the Museum of Nature and Science and Boettcher Hall.

Question 1-I includes \$65.2 million for renovation or replacement of the police crime lab, firing range, fire stations and the police traffic operations facility.

This article is intended to be informational for readers. Pursuant to the city charter, Councilman Brown does not express a position on ballot measures in his tax-supported newsletters.

Water will cost more come next spring

With autumn in the air and yards ready to be put to bed for the winter, watering and water rates may be the last things on our mind.

But, the Denver Water board has sown a seed for next spring with its vote on Sept. 26 to increase water rates effective Jan. 1, 2008.

The average Denver residential customer, who uses about 120,000 gallons a year, will see an annual cost increase of \$13.32 a year. (Rates also will rise for those suburban customers who are served by Denver Water.)

Other kinds of water users — primarily business, industry and government, but also homeowners' associations — will see their rates go up by about 10 percent.

Denver Water officials say they need an additional \$9.7 million in revenue to cover the increasing costs of maintaining, improving and expanding our water system. The additional revenue will be used for treatment plant enhancements, upgrades to the overall water system, increased conservation education and incentive programs and to improve cash reserves as insurance against events like the watershed damage caused by the Hayman Fire.



The orange signs of Denver Water's latest conservation campaign have become a familiar site around the city.

The utility also has been promoting its "Use only what you need" campaign, seen on billboards and yard signs around the city, to encourage continued water conservation by consumers. For detailed information on rates and the conservation campaign, go to www.denverwater.org.

City officials mulling rule changes to accommodate public disagreements over pooches on eatery patios



The city is considering new rules for dogs on patios such as these along East Mississippi Avenue in the Old South Gaylord district.

Many patio denizens at Denver restaurants and coffee shops have been grumbling in recent months about enforcement of the city rule that bars pets from such outdoor areas.

It should be noted that patrons who'd rather not have dogs near their tables have been happy with the state of affairs.

Now, the Denver Department of Environmental Health is working to come up with revised rules that would provide a little more flexibility.

The proposal would allow individual food establishments to register as "dog friendly" if they obeyed certain conditions, including posting of signs, hav-

ing a separate entrance for the outdoors eating area, using only disposable containers for food and drinks served on patios and allowing only self-service on patios where dogs are allowed. Other proposed rules require clean up of dog waste and that dogs be leashed.

The Board of Environmental Health will hold a hearing on the proposed rules at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 11 in room 2H14 of the Webb Building, 201 W. Colfax Ave. If you wish to testify at the meeting, contact the department through phicomments@ci.denver.co.us. You also can read the full text of the rules on the department's website, www.denvergov.org/phi.

DPS has changes in mind for Place Middle School

Although no schools in District 6 are on the Denver Public Schools closure list, Place Middle School at 7125 Cherry Creek Drive North is proposed for conversion to a preschool-through-8th grade school specializing in English learners and immigrants. Place, with a capacity of 885 students, now has 387 enrolled now. The new P-8 program is to have 784 students.

The Board of Education will have meetings on the citywide plans at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 18 and Thursday, Nov. 15. A final decision is expected Nov. 19. For more information, go to www.dpsk12.org or call the DPS reform hotline at (720) 423-2300.

New Office Depot opens



Councilman Charlie Brown and Office Depot officials cut the ribbon to open the new store on South Colorado Boulevard and East Evans Avenue in late September, a key part of the redevelopment of the former Albertson's site. Other confirmed tenants are Wells Fargo and Verizon Wireless.

- Photo supplied by Office Depot



Restoration work in Washington Park's Grasmere Lake, which has been leaking badly for years, looked like this in late September. But the project has gone quickly and is expected to be finished this month.

- Photo by Jay Wozny

News to use

The Myrtle Hill Fall Festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 6 at the corner of East Mississippi and South High streets. Sponsored by the developers of Washington Park Place, the event will include food and drink, live music and games for the kids. The company is redeveloping the Washington Park Elementary School site into lofts and custom homes.

The 10th Annual Booklovers' Ball, sponsored by the Denver Public Library, will be held Saturday, Oct. 20 and is being billed as "Denver's first large-scale, environmentally green event." For more information, call (720) 865-2051 or go to www.denverlibrary.org/blb.

The 2nd Annual University Park Apple Fun Run will kick off at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 3 on East Iliff Avenue in front of University Park Elementary School. The family fun run/walk fundraiser generates support for the school's full-time physical education program. Last year's inaugural event raised \$10,000, and this year's goal is \$15,000. Go to the school office by Oct. 29 to pledge to sponsor a student runner or register yourself. Fees are \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a family.