

LEGISLATIVE POLICY STATEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

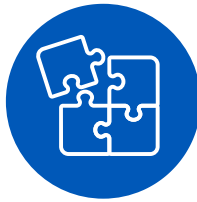
The City's adopted Legislative Policy Statement identifies positions taken by the City Council on several major policy topics including, but not limited to, local control and home rule, land use, economic development, housing, unfunded mandates, public safety, and transportation. The City encourages its congressional delegation and state legislators to work collaboratively with local governments to accomplish common goals and solutions to policy issues.



CORE PRINCIPLES AND POSITIONS



COLLABORATIVE



INTENTIONAL



SERVICE-ORIENTED



INNOVATIVE



- Article XX of the Colorado Constitution grants home rule municipalities such as Centennial, “the full right of self-government in local and municipal matters.”
- Programs and regulations mandated by the state or federal government stretch the financial resources of municipalities. These costs, if not paid by the state or federal government, prevent municipalities from fulfilling local needs and priorities.
- The City urges state and federal officials to respect local control and allow municipal officials to address local problems without interference from the state and federal government.



HOW SHOULD LEGISLATORS CONTACT THE CITY?

If a legislator would like input from the City or to work together on legislation, please contact:

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2026 City of Centennial Legislative Policy Statement

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Introductory Statement

The City of Centennial Legislative Policy Statement has been adopted as contemplated by Section VI of City Council Policy No. 2017-CCP-02 in order to identify positions taken by the City Council that relate primarily to legislative matters pending before the federal, state or local governments, and to outline procedures guiding City Council and Staff's actions in support of positions taken. This Legislative Policy Statement is adopted by Council in order to be more responsive and ensure the City's interests are represented. This document is designed to give direction and outline procedures to act on key issues of concern to City government.

Unless otherwise directed by City Council, this Legislative Policy Statement will serve as the guiding policy document for the City. It is intended that when the City Council expresses a position in this Policy Statement, either on a general policy or on a specific issue, the position is broad enough to allow subsequent action on any legislation introduced that has a similar effect. Additionally, the absence of an issue from the Legislative Policy Statement does not suggest unimportance to the City.

It is the intent of the City Council to review and revise this Legislative Policy Statement annually, or on a more frequent basis, at the direction of and subject to approval by the City Council. The City's adopted Legislative Policy Statement will remain effective in perpetuity until the City Council amends the Policy Statement or adopts a new Policy Statement. This legislative program is ongoing and evolving and the Council may update this document with newly incorporated or updated policy positions or advocacy procedures as they see fit through a majority vote. In addition to the topics addressed in the Legislative Policy Statement, other areas of concern are monitored and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Legislative Advocacy Procedures

Legislative advocacy procedures are included in the City of Centennial Legislative Policy Statement to provide clear direction and guidance to elected officials and Staff who will be engaged in the legislative tracking and advocacy process, which may include rulemaking, to ensure that their actions and statements reflect the City's objectives and priorities. Clearly defined advocacy procedures ensure that advocacy actions will be administered consistently with the City's identified positions. The procedures provide City Council and the City Manager, or designee, discretion to advocate in the City's best interests in a manner consistent with the goals and priorities adopted by City Council.

Typical advocacy positions include:

- Support - legislation that advances the City's goals and priorities.
- Oppose – legislation that could negatively impact the City or does not advance the City's goals and priorities.
- Amend – the City will advocate to amend legislation to better align with the City's goals and priorities.
- Monitor – legislation of interest that could positively or negatively impact the City, but requires additional review before a position is taken.

City Staff and elected officials will utilize the following procedures when engaging in legislative advocacy:

1. The City Manager, or designee, shall track legislation and identify positions on legislative matters that align with the City's current approved Legislative Policy Statement, and are likely to have a significant impact on the City.
2. The City Manager, or designee, will consider positions and analysis completed by City Staff, local government/professional associations, and the Colorado Municipal League when determining the City's advocacy positions.
3. The Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tem, and the City Manager, or designee, shall determine appropriate advocacy actions, and review all requests for advocacy on legislative issues, to most efficiently and effectively advance the City's stated goals and priorities as outlined in the City's Legislative Policy Statement. Advocacy actions could include, but are not limited to, letters, phone calls, emails, or in-person testimony.
4. Only those individuals who have been expressly authorized by the City Manager, Mayor or the City Council may advocate positions on pending or proposed legislation on behalf of the City.
5. The City Manager, or designee shall coordinate the initiation and development of legislative advocacy communication with the Mayor, or Mayor Pro Tem.
6. Advocacy actions taken on behalf of the City will be executed by the Mayor or the City Manager depending on the legislative issue, subject to the approval of the Mayor and the City Manager, or designee. In the Mayor's absence, the City's legislative advocacy may be executed by the Mayor Pro Tem. If the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem is unavailable or timing is a factor, the City Manager, or designee, is authorized to advocate. The Mayor may also designate other members of City Council to advocate on behalf of the City. When feasible and time permitting, the City Manager shall notify the City Council of an advocacy action prior to the execution of such action.
7. When an advocacy letter or email pursuant to this policy statement is sent to the Colorado General Assembly or the United States Congress, City Council Members shall be included as a copy "cc" on the letter.
8. When a member of City Council or Staff testifies pursuant to this Legislative Policy Statement before the Colorado General Assembly or the United States Congress on behalf of the City, City Council Members shall be notified as soon as possible.
9. The City Manager may issue a letter of concern or interest without taking a formal position on a piece of legislation. The City Manager's Office is responsible for drafting and issuing letters of concern. When feasible and time permitting, the City Manager shall notify the City Council of a letter of concern or interest prior to transmittal.

The City Manager, or designee, will provide updates to City Council summarizing legislative issues and those matters on which the City has a stated position.

Individual Advocacy & Personal Views

These procedures do not limit and are not intended to abridge City Staff's and elected officials' federal and state Constitutional rights and the ability to express personal opinions on legislative affairs. When expressing personal opinions, City Staff and elected officials must communicate that the personal opinion is not issued in an official capacity or on behalf of the City of Centennial or the City Council, and must refrain from the use of the City of Centennial's copyrighted logo. The elected official or City Staff should include language in the communication substantially as follows to communicate that the opinions are personal: "The views expressed today are my own personal views, and do not represent the official position or policy of the City of Centennial or the City Council."

Policy Statement Positions

Home Rule

Article XX of the Colorado Constitution grants home rule municipalities such as Centennial, “the full right of self-government in local and municipal matters.” As the government most accountable to the people, municipal governments serve the people best by identifying local needs and enacting the best solutions accordingly. State and federal interference can undermine the ability of municipalities to recognize problems and tailor thoughtful, customized solutions. At worst, state interference can violate the constitutional mandate of home rule.

In order to increase the City’s ability to solve issues at a local level, maintain its standard of self-determination, and be more responsive to local needs, the City will:

Support:

- Maintaining the existing taxation and fee authority of home rule municipalities
- The need for state and federal officials to respect local control and allow municipal officials to address local problems without interference from the state and federal government
- The need for Congress and the executive branch to respect the roles and responsibilities of state and local governments and urge state officials to avoid preempting local authority

Oppose:

- Legislation that mandates state or federal intercession in matters of local concern and which unnecessarily or adversely affects the City’s ability to manage pursuant to its home rule authority

Community Development/Land Use

The City of Centennial will continue to emphasize local control and determination of planning, land use, development and redevelopment. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Policies which encourage new development and redevelopment to be located within the City
- Managing responsible growth through sensible land use planning and economic development efforts
- Municipal discretion concerning the imposition of development fees and requirements
- Measures that promote intergovernmental cooperation on land use issues
- Regulation of metro districts for appropriate use and public benefit in accordance with the City’s Municipal Code
- Local control over the siting and permitting of utility facilities and energy projects

Oppose:

- Any land use policies that undermine home rule and local control
- Limiting municipal control over the formation of special districts
- Reduction or preemption of municipal land use (e.g., zoning) authority

- Restrictions on municipal authority governing residential growth
- Restrictions on the purposes for which eminent domain powers may be used by a municipality
- Limitations on municipalities' power of annexation
- State legislative interference on local authority of urban renewal authorities (URAs)
- New restrictions on the use of tax increment financing (TIF)
- Mandates to require specific elements in comprehensive plans
- State mandated parking requirements

Economic Development

The City recognizes the importance of positive economic changes occurring in Centennial through the diversification of our economy, wealth generation, attracting and growing businesses and jobs, and expanding our tax base. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- The diversification and expansion of local economies, including support for existing businesses, creation of new jobs and promotion of tourism
- Adequate funding and authority for a strong, multifaceted statewide program to promote Colorado as a positive business location
- Regional economic development through partnerships and coordination with local, county, regional and statewide economic partners including Denver South and its partner communities, Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation, and the Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade
- The development of public and private amenities that position Centennial as an attractive community for residents, visitors, employment, businesses and consumers
- Adherence to the longstanding Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation Code of Ethics for economic development
- Maintaining and increasing incentives for quality economic development that benefits the City consistent with the Centennial Economic Development Incentives Policy
- Real estate investment, or development and redevelopment, that aligns with Centennial NEXT providing reinvestment opportunities for the City's retail centers, accommodates job growth through the attraction and retention of companies, provides housing for current and future residents and workforce, and increases Centennial's sense of place

Elections

The City recognizes the right of all municipalities under the Colorado state statutes to conduct free and fair nonpartisan elections at the municipal level that are unencumbered by state and federal overreach. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- The continued retention of authority for home rule municipalities to administer the election process as a matter of local concern
- Municipal control over alternative voting methods in local elections, and options for alternative voting methods in coordinated elections

Oppose:

- State interference on home rule authority over municipal elections including, but not limited to, the authority to set local limits on campaign contributions

Federal, State, and County Policies and Mandates

The City will continue to emphasize the importance of the federal, state, and county government's respect for the roles and responsibilities of local governments, and collaboration between the City and its Congressional delegation. Mandates imposed on local governments, especially unfunded mandates, can stretch the financial and personnel resources of municipalities and shift such resources away from local priorities and needs. At a minimum, any mandates imposed on the City should be funded entirely by the entity imposing said mandates. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Distribution of funds to municipal governments without unnecessary administrative burden or excessive diversion at the federal, state, and county levels
- Inclusion of municipal government officials to ensure ongoing municipal input and consultation on administration of federal, state and county programs that affect local governments
- Recognition of Colorado's unique economic, social and physical characteristics when federal action affects programs or projects of local concern
- The ability to expend funds outside of municipal boundaries in intergovernmental and regional projects
- The statutory requirement for the General Assembly to reimburse municipalities for the cost of state mandates and to delineate this requirement in state fiscal notes prepared for the General Assembly
- Direct municipal involvement in any statewide growth management legislation

Oppose:

- Any policies that undermine home rule and local control
- The direct or indirect taxation of the activities and operations of municipal government
- The denial of funds based upon a state's or municipality's failure to meet requirements of an unrelated program or because of factors beyond the control of the state or municipality
- Cuts in programs that disproportionately affect municipalities
- Imposition of regulations upon local government operations and employees that do not apply equally to federal and state government operations and employees
- Unfunded mandates that impose financial and reporting burdens on municipalities and their citizens
- Direct legislative oversight or approval for public-private partnerships
- Federal and state funding that penalizes or lessens benefits to contract-model cities in comparison to benefits allocated to similar size cities with more traditional operational models
- Federal and state clawback/revocation of previously allocated funding

Fiscal Policy - Tax and Finance

Municipal finances are closely interrelated with state finances and policies. The federal and state government must carefully consider the impacts to local government services when proposing to reduce sales, property, or personal property tax bases, or the ability of local government to impose service-related fees. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Policies that encourage fiscal responsibility at the federal, state and local level
- Efforts that expand municipal taxing authority or equitably share new state revenue with municipal governments
- Retention of authority for all municipalities to set local tax rates and for home rule municipalities to collect their own taxes and determine their own tax base
- Appropriate action to address the state and local financial crises caused by the interaction of various constitutional amendments and the economy
- Financial sustainability of state programs that provide technical assistance to municipalities at a reasonable cost
- Appropriate legislation or court action allowing state and local governments to require businesses to collect state and local sales and use taxes on remote sales
- Enhancement of municipalities' flexibility to finance public projects economically and efficiently
- State legislation and local practices that eliminate the financial inequities created by the imposition of taxes on municipal residents for state services and county services that are provided primarily or solely to residents in unincorporated areas
- Legislation to address the fiscal policy conflicts within the state constitution
- Efforts to audit and collect sales tax from remote on-line retailers, when the retailer meets legal standards, and require remittance of a City sales tax in the same manner as collection of sales tax from retailers with a physical presence within the City

Oppose:

- Efforts that reduce local revenues, or future opportunities for local revenue, or preempt municipal taxing authority, including authority to set the local tax base, local collection and related authority
- State legislative interference on local authority of urban renewal authorities (URAs)
- New restrictions on economic development tools, including but not limited to, the use of tax increment financing (TIF) and public improvement financing (PIF)
- Disproportionate cuts in federal, state and county program funding, collected through taxes and fees, and services if cuts will be detrimental to local governments
- The state utilizing local funds or requiring local governments to collect state revenues in order to fund state programs
- State granted exemptions or other state actions that erode municipal sales, use, property and other revenues unless the state provides adequate replacement revenues
- Any efforts to abolish or impair the effectiveness of the municipal bond interest exemption

Governance

The City recognizes the importance of intergovernmental cooperation, transparency and citizen involvement in local government. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Open meetings, including conducting government business and formulating public policy in public
- Reasonable efforts to advance access to public records, transparent record-keeping practices and the right of municipal governments to maintain their own records
- Increased dialogue and cooperation among federal, state and local officials and the development of cooperative intergovernmental agreements and solutions to common issues
- Legislation that protects personally identifiable information from disclosure
- Municipal authority to establish and implement reasonable open records policies/procedures

Oppose:

- Legislation that limits the City's home rule authority in determining the processes by which it conducts its business, including public meetings and outreach

Housing

The City recognizes the importance of housing. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Local policies and regulations to support and encourage diverse housing types including affordable and attainable housing options
- A statewide solution to remedy construction defect laws that create barriers to development and impede development of a variety of housing types
- Development and redevelopment that provides housing for current and future residents and workforce
- Preservation, revitalization and reinvestment in existing neighborhoods
- Regional and statewide efforts to address persons experiencing homelessness
- Financial support for affordable housing from federal and state government, regardless of the existence of a local housing authority within a municipality
- Preservation of Proposition 123 funding for the advancement of municipal efforts to increase affordable housing

Oppose:

- Preemption of local authority to adopt and enforce regulations to support housing that meets local needs
- Mandated affordable housing requirements, such as inclusionary zoning and accessory dwelling units, that infringe upon local home rule authority

- State mandates to impose additional requirements on the construction of housing, above life and safety measures, that increase development costs, negatively impact affordability, and/or decrease consumer options
- State prescribed density increases and minimums, and zoning modifications

Human Resources

The City recognizes the importance of maintaining competitive Human Resources programs and policies to attract and retain employees. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Fair and equitable hiring and employment policies
- Programs that promote diversity and inclusion

Oppose:

- Changes in the state unemployment compensation program that increase costs to the employer
- Efforts to interfere with a municipality's ability to determine the terms and conditions of municipal employment including, but not limited to, benefits and pensions
- Legislation that interferes with a home rule municipality's ability to manage its recruitment of, retention of, and relationship with employees

Infrastructure

Centennial recognizes the importance of local control over City assets including, but not limited to, roads, bridges, streetlights, and broadband (e.g., fiber optic cables), while also working with regional and state authorities to build and maintain infrastructure. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- The potential to transfer ownership and maintenance of certain state, utility and/or other third-party assets (e.g., traffic signals and street lights) to local governments, with municipalities' discretionary consent
- Local governments' ability to enter into intergovernmental governmental agreements (IGAs) on regional infrastructure projects

Oppose:

- All legislation and regulations that impinge on the City's authority to control access to and construction within City-owned property and public rights-of-way and that preempts the City's ability to require reasonable compensation for use of this public property for private business
- Legislative proposals that do not protect traditional local government authority over franchising, zoning, taxing, and right-of-way
- The unilateral transfer of state highways to the City without corresponding funding for operations and maintenance

Regulated Substances

As a municipality, the City has varying levels of authority when it comes to the local regulation of regulated substances including marijuana and natural medicine. In respect to marijuana, the City may prohibit the operation of marijuana cultivation facilities, marijuana product manufacturing facilities, marijuana testing facilities, marijuana delivery, marijuana clubs, or retail marijuana stores within City limits pursuant to the Colorado Constitution. In relation to natural medicine, the City may not prohibit natural medicine businesses (cultivation facilities, product manufacturers, testing facilities, healing centers) but may enact zoning measures that address the time, place and manner for the uses. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Continued efforts to maximize local control over regulated substances policy and regulation
- Maximum local control for municipal regulation and licensing of retail marijuana manufacturing, testing, extraction, and retail stores
- Continued local authority over taxation of marijuana
- Maximum local control for municipal regulation of natural medicine businesses

Municipal Court

The City will continue to oppose legislation which would impose unnecessary regulatory and financial burdens on the municipal court. Therefore, the City will:

Oppose:

- The imposition of state surcharges on municipal court fines for the purpose of funding state programs
- The limitations on the authority of municipalities to enforce their own ordinances in municipal courts
- Limitations on courts to conduct court hearings virtually

Public Health

The City recognizes the importance of public health policy impacts on its residents and therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Efforts to foster public health and education
- Federal, state, and county public health actions that allow for local government regulation
- Local government ability to respond to and work with regional partners on public health issues

Oppose:

- State efforts to preempt local authority over the control and permitting of harm reduction centers

Public Safety

The City recognizes the importance for local control of local emergency services, operations, and involvement of the state as a resource to local government in the areas of information, coordination and training. As a City that coordinates with the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office and South Metro Fire District for public safety and emergency services, Centennial also recognizes the importance of inter-jurisdictional emergency services and operations provided to enhance the safety and security of our neighborhoods. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Local control of local emergency services, operations, and involvement of the state and county as a resource and partner to local government in the areas of information, coordination and training
- Federal, state and county funds for those agencies that serve as a resource to local emergency services
- A voluntary uniform statewide fire incidence reporting program
- Close cooperation at all levels of government and increased federal funding to assist local government homeland security and first responder responsibilities
- Federal, state and county funded intervention, prevention and rehabilitation programs and state initiatives that respect the key role of communities and local government officials
- Cooperation with other agencies balanced with respect for jurisdictional authority
- Flexibility in implementing federal and state criminal justice programs

Oppose:

- Federal and state unfunded mandates on local law enforcement and emergency service operations
- Reduction of state criminal penalties for distribution of fentanyl
- Mandates on local law enforcement's use of technological tools

Sovereign and Governmental Immunity

The City recognizes the importance of sovereign immunity, which provides governmental immunity to a municipality, its officials and its employees from suits for injuries suffered by private parties. Under the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act, public officials are protected from liability under governmental immunity only if: (1) acting within the scope of performance of official duties; and (2) not acting willfully and wantonly. Therefore, the City will:

Oppose:

- Legislation that may erode protections provided by the Governmental Immunity Act

Sustainability / Energy

The City recognizes the importance of local government control over environmental and energy issues affecting its community. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Appropriate environmental and energy conservation efforts and sustainable resource management practices by all users
- Local government and special district water rights
- Federal and state financial aid programs assisting water providers with the construction and improvement of water systems to protect water quality and to comply with federal and state mandates
- Local participation in federal and statewide discussions of water use, distribution, storm water, flood control and waste water
- Statewide and regional cooperation in drought response planning including water storage, as well as increasing conservation efforts
- Federal, state and regional conservation and use efforts

Oppose:

- Unfunded environmental, waste management, and/or energy federal and state mandates that would create an unnecessary economic burden on City operations, local businesses, residents and/or community organizations
- Increases in the proportion of municipal cash funding support for state environmental programs
- Federal and state preemption of local government authority to adopt environmental ordinances

Telecommunications / Broadband

The City recognizes the importance of the availability of high-quality telecommunication services in order to connect key City sites, community anchor institutions, businesses and citizens of Centennial. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- The retention of municipal authority to require franchises for cable television systems utilizing the right-of-way in accordance with the Federal Communications Commission
- Affordable access by all municipalities to state-of-the-art telecommunication and information services
- Efforts to recognize and support broadband and fiber infrastructure as a vital utility
- Local authority over the use of right-of-way by public, private and utility interests

Oppose:

- Federal or state restrictions on local control of municipal rights-of-way or on the authority of local governments to develop or acquire their own telecommunications infrastructure
- Federal or state restrictions on municipal franchising, regulatory and taxing authority over telecommunications systems
- Federal or state restrictions or mandates on local permitting of telecommunications facilities, including restrictions on timing of permit approvals

Transportation

The City recognizes the need to maintain and expand the state's multimodal transportation system and that our streets, sidewalks, trails, transit and other services are a part of that interconnected system while also maintaining local municipal control. Therefore, the City will:

Support:

- Increased funds to finance pressing surface transportation needs if an equitable portion of new revenues is returned to municipalities
- State Department of Transportation assumption of street lighting and general maintenance costs on state highways within municipalities
- Preservation of the constitutional requirement that highway user revenues be used for the construction, maintenance and supervision of the public highways of the state, comprising all modes including, but not limited to, facilities for air, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel
- Greater flexibility and increased funding for multi-modal transportation systems
- Clarification that federal railroad laws do not preempt local governmental authority to protect the safety and environment of citizens
- Preservation of the federal funding guarantees for transportation and allocation of all federal transportation taxes and funds for their intended transportation purposes
- Close cooperation among Colorado Department of Transportation, counties, municipalities and interested stakeholders in improving Colorado's transportation system
- A balanced federal, state, and local transportation policy that addresses the need to maintain rights-of-way and expand roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, trails, carpool/vanpool, ridesharing services, and traditional and technology-based options (e.g., autonomous vehicles, e-scooters, e-bicycles, and intelligent transportation systems) that manage demand for infrastructure capacity and permit a more efficient use of infrastructure to improve Colorado's transportation system
- Enforcement of timely Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF) revenue collection and allocation to ensure local government revenue is not negatively impacted

Oppose:

- Mandates on the use of transportation funds provided by federal, state and county governments
- Mandates on the use of local government owned property and right-of-way for specific transportation-related purposes
- Decrease in local government allocation from the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF)

City of Centennial Councilmembers

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Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners

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Congressional Legislators Representing City of Centennial

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		ashley.wheeland@mail.house.gov	(202) 225-7882

State Legislators Representing City of Centennial – General Assembly

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State Rep. Gretchen Rydin	House District 38	gretchen.rydin.house@coleg.gov	(303) 866-2953
State Rep. Eliza Hamrick	House District 61	eliza.hamrick.house@coleg.gov	(303) 866-3706
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