

CANDIDATE GUIDELINES



December 2022

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General

Introduction

These *Candidate Guidelines* are furnished as general information about the basic requirements of, and deadlines for, candidacy for City Council in the City of Grand Junction. Regular municipal elections are held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in April odd-numbered years (City Charter Article II, Paragraph 3). In addition, general, basic information is provided regarding administration of the election and about the organization of the City Council.

These *Guidelines* are not intended to be comprehensive in scope or depth. If you have questions regarding the interpretation of and/or application of laws, rules and regulations, you will need to consult with your attorney. Neither the City Clerk nor the City Attorney may provide advice. If there is any inconsistency between these *Guidelines* and the applicable provisions of the City Charter, Municipal Code, or State law, the provisions of the Charter, Code or statutes take precedence.

Throughout these *Guidelines* there will be references to additional material, which are available online (address) or at the City Clerk's Office.

Election Administration

The City Clerk's Office conducts all regular municipal elections under the provisions of the Charter, Municipal Code and Colorado law.

Information regarding the requirements of a candidate for City office should be obtained from the City Clerk's Office. The City Clerk's Office will assist you through the election process as much as possible; however, the City Clerk's Office cannot provide legal advice.

The City Clerk's Office is available from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, with the exception of legal holidays.

Candidacy

General

To be an eligible candidate for municipal office, at the time of election, he or she must be (CRS 31-10-301):

- A citizen of the United States;
- At least 18 years of age;
- Have been a registered elector within the City of Grand Junction for at least one year immediately preceding the election, and
- In the case of a District Councilmember, have continuously resided in the District from which he or she is to be elected for at least one year immediately preceding the election. (The acceptance of nomination is a part of the nomination petition process.)

No person who has been convicted of a felony is eligible to be a candidate for or hold the office of Councilmember.

All municipal elections are non-partisan.

Officers to be Elected

At the regular municipal election in April 2023, City voters will elect Councilmembers from Districts B, C, and at-large for four-year terms, and one Councilmember to fill a vacant two-year term from District A. The President of the Council (also known as “Mayor”) is elected by the City Council at the first Council meeting in May of each year (City Charter Section 39).

District Boundaries

A map showing Council Districts can be found on the City’s [website](#).

Commencement of Campaign Activities

There is no limitation when a candidate for office may commence campaign activities. **Be aware that you become a candidate if you have publicly announced an intention to seek election, and close attention should be paid to the requirements of the Fair Campaign Practices Act.** The Merriam-Webster definition of “publicly” is *“in a manner observable by or in a place accessible to the public: openly.”*

Within ten (10) days of the public announcement, a candidate must file a [Candidate Affidavit](#) form with the City Clerk's Office.

Nomination Petitions

Nomination petitions will be available four days prior to the circulation period. A sample is included on page 15 of these *Guidelines*.

Petition Deadlines

As provided by Colorado law, nomination petitions must be circulated and filed no earlier than 91 days before the election; no later than 71 days before the election (CRS 31-10-909(1)(a)).

*If the petition deadline falls on a City holiday, City offices will be closed; therefore, nomination petitions must be filed no later than the previous **business day** by 5:00 PM.*

Signature Requirements

Each candidate's petition must be signed by at least **50 registered electors who reside within the City** (City Charter Article II, Paragraph 6).

Acceptance of Nomination

The candidate must sign the *Candidate Acceptance of Nomination* at the end of the nomination petition and the petition circulator must sign the *Affidavit of Circulator* on the nomination petition. Both statements must be notarized.

The candidate is also asked on the nomination petition form to state how he or she wants his or her name to be placed on the ballot. Names will be arranged by surname on the ballot in alphabetical order for each office. The City Charter prohibits the printing of any party or political designation. The candidate's name may be a nickname but may not include any punctuation marks setting out the nickname (City Charter Article II, Paragraph 20).

Candidates are encouraged to obtain more than the required 50 signatures. The City Clerk's Office will examine all signatures on the submitted petition(s).

Notification

Within five days after the filing of the nomination petition, the City Clerk will notify the candidate as to the sufficiency of the petition. This notification is typically done by email.

Withdrawal from Candidacy

A person who has been nominated may withdraw from candidacy by filing a written affidavit with the City Clerk. Forms for withdrawing from candidacy may be obtained from the City Clerk and must be filed no later than 63 days before the election (CRS 31-10-303).

Write-in Candidacy

Write-in votes are counted only if the write-in candidate files an *Affidavit of Intent* with the City Clerk not later than 64 days before the election (Grand Junction Municipal Code (GJMC) Section 2.20.020(c)).

Affidavit forms are available from the City Clerk's Office.

Election Night Tabulation

Ballots will be tabulated by the Grand Junction City Clerk's Office. **Unofficial results are not expected to be available until after 9:00 PM on Election Day.** (Results are unofficial until the canvass is conducted.)

Unofficial results will be posted on the City's website.

Elected Officials

Upon completion of the canvass at the City Council meeting the day after Election Day, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes for a particular office shall be declared elected to that office. Candidates are sworn in at a special Council meeting the first Monday in May at 10:00 AM (City Charter Article IV, Paragraph 35) (see *AFTER THE ELECTION* on page 11).

Candidate Reporting Requirements

Candidates for municipal office are required to follow the Fair Campaign Practices Act. The Secretary of State has an [online manual](#) and [rules concerning campaign and political finance](#) that are helpful in determining which forms must be filed and their respective deadlines. Because the City Clerk's Office cannot render legal or financial advice, it is recommended candidates seek the counsel of legal and financial professional(s).

Financial Disclosure Statements

Each candidate must file a financial disclosure statement with the City Clerk within ten (10) days after acceptance of nomination. The purpose of the statement is to disclose information concerning source of income, financial and property interests, offices and directorships, creditors, and business associations.

Elected candidates are required to provide an amended disclosure statement, or written notification that there has been no change in the disclosure statement filed prior to the election, within 30 days of their election and each year thereafter prior to May 15.

The [Financial Disclosure Statement](#) form is available online.

Candidate Committee Registration and Campaign Reports

All candidate committees are required to complete a [registration form](#) and file their report with the City Clerk. Additionally, candidate committees must report their contributions and in-kind contributions received, expenditures made, and obligations entered into by the committee.

[Reports of Contributions and Expenditures](#) must be filed at least three separate times (CRS 1-45-108(2)(a)(II)):

- 21 days before Election Day
- Friday before Election Day
- 30 days after Election Day

and **annually** until the Committee terminates.

On the 19th day of October, 2022, City Council adopted [Ordinance No. 5107](#) amending Chapter 2 Section 20.040(d) of the Grand Junction Municipal Code relating to Municipal Campaign Finance limiting any municipal campaign contribution limits, including contributions in-kind, from any person if that person's contributions on behalf of the candidate have an aggregate amount or value more than \$625.00.

All reports must be submitted on [forms](#) provided on the Secretary of State's website and complete in all respects. The City Clerk's Office may contact the committee treasurer if clarification is needed with regard to any report filed. Reporting dates are listed in the [election calendar](#).

A campaign report is considered timely if the report is received by the City Clerk's Office by 4:30 PM on the date due.

Reports Are Public Record

Any report submitted pursuant to these guidelines will be made available for public inspection and will be available on the City's website.

No information contained in any campaign report may be sold or used by any person for the purpose of soliciting contributions or for any commercial purpose.

Notary Services

Some election forms must be notarized and some must be filed under oath. Notary public services are usually available at banks, car dealerships, real estate offices, and at places that provide mailing services. A notary public may charge for each document notarized.

The City Clerk's Office is unable to notarize any election-related documents.

Campaign Activities

Electioneering

State law prohibits [electioneering](#) (to take part actively and energetically in the activities of an election campaign; persuasion of voters in a political campaign) on election day within any polling place, or in any public street or room, or in any public manner within 100 feet of any building in which a polling place is located.

For municipal elections, electioneering is prohibited within 100 feet of City Hall, 250 North 5th Street, beginning Monday, March 20, 2023.

Disclaimer Statements

Disclaimer requirements for communications must include:

- The name of the person that paid for the communication;
- In the case of an independent expenditure, a statement that the communication is not authorized by any candidate; and
- A natural person who is the registered agenda if the person identified above is not a natural person.

Refer to the Secretary of State's [online rules](#) for additional information regarding required font size, printed small items, and online communications (CRS 1-45-107.5(5)(c)).

Election Signs

Permits are not required for placement of political signs on private property; however, permission must be obtained from the property owner before sign(s) are placed on private property. Political signs may only be placed upon private property behind the sidewalk and only with the consent of the property owner.

Political signs are not allowed on park land, medians, sidewalks, street rights-of-way, in front of City buildings or any other public area owned or controlled by the City of Grand Junction. The public right-of-way includes the area between the sidewalk and the street, as well as approximately two feet behind the sidewalk.

Six temporary signs are allowed on parcels of one acre or less, so long as each sign is not greater than six square feet in area, except in that one of these signs may be up to 32 square feet in area when construction is occurring on a parcel or a subdivision of land is being developed.

On a parcel of one acre or larger, up to six temporary signs per acre are allowed, so long as each sign is not greater than six square feet in area, except that one sign per acre can be up to 32 square feet in area.

The placement of election signs constitutes an announcement of candidacy and triggers the requirement to file a [Candidate Affidavit](#) (see page 4). In addition, all candidate committees must register with the City Clerk prior to accepting contributions or making expenditures and must report those contributions and expenditures (see [Campaign Reporting Requirements](#)).

Door-to-Door Solicitation

Political solicitations are permitted except where the occupant of a private residence has posted a **“NO SOLICITORS”** or **“NO TRESPASS”** sign near the entrance to the premises. Posting of such a sign prohibits *any* kind of solicitation at that residence.

The City Code sections relating to door-to-door solicitation may be found in the Grand Junction Municipal Code (GJMC) [Section 9.04.080](#).

Littering

Campaign material is not exempt from littering prohibitions. Campaign materials must be securely placed or deposited so as to prevent them from being blown or scattered by the wind. It is not permissible to place campaign materials in any fashion on motor vehicles without the vehicle owner’s permission (GJMC [Section 8.12.010](#)).

After the Election

Organizational Meeting

Terms of office for Councilmembers elected in a regular municipal election will begin at a special City Council meeting held on the first Monday in May at 10:00 AM (City Charter Article IV, Paragraph 35) and the City Clerk will administer oaths of office for the newly-elected Councilmembers.

Council Meetings

Regular Council meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month beginning at 5:30 PM. Work sessions are held on the Monday prior to the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 5:30 PM. Special meetings may be called at other times.

Agendas for Council meetings are available on the Friday prior to each meeting on the City's [website](#) and at the City Clerk's Office. All Council meetings are televised on local access channel 191 and video-streamed live on the City's website.

Powers

The [Charter](#) defines the powers and responsibilities of the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and City Council ([City Charter Articles IV – VII](#)).

All powers of the City and the determination of all matters of policy are vested in the Council, except as otherwise provided in the Charter. The City of Grand Junction is a Home Rule City with the Council-Manager form of government. Home Rule is derived from the Colorado Constitution.

The Mayor presides at Council meetings and is the recognized head of the City government for all ceremonial purposes (Charter Section 39). The Mayor executes documents and performs any other duties provided by ordinance. The Mayor Pro Tem serves in these capacities during the absence of the Mayor.

Terms of Office

Councilmembers serve four-year terms, and the Mayor is elected for a term of one year. Article XVIII, Section 11 of the State Constitution limits elected officials to two consecutive terms.

Compensation

The President of the Council (Mayor) is paid a salary of \$750 per month. All other Councilmembers are paid \$500 per month ([City Charter Article IV, Paragraph 38](#)).

Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Members of the City Council are subject to Charter, Municipal Code and State law relating to ethical rules of conduct and conflicts of interest. Candidates are encouraged to become familiar with those provisions.

Miscellaneous Voter Information

Address Changes

Registered voters who have moved since the last election must complete a change of address form 22 days before Election Day in order to receive a mail ballot at the voter's correct address. Mail ballots **will not** be forwarded and will be returned to the Grand Junction City Clerk's Office as undeliverable if the voter moved and failed to complete an address change by the deadline.

Registered voters who did not complete an address change by the deadline may vote in the mail ballot election by applying for a replacement ballot at the Grand Junction City Clerk's Office no later than 7:00 PM on Election Day.

Replacement Ballots

Voters may apply in writing at the Grand Junction City Clerk's Office for a replacement ballot under the following circumstances:

- The voter did not receive the ballot mailed to him or her.
- The voter moved and did not complete a change of address form by the deadline.
- The ballot was destroyed or damaged.
- The ballot was lost.
- The voter spoiled the ballot and needs a new one.
- The voter did not register to vote in time to receive a ballot by mail.

The deadline to apply for a replacement ballot is 7:00 PM on Election Day. In order to be counted, replacement ballots must be received by the Grand Junction City Clerk's Office no later than 7:00 PM on Election Day.

Absentee Voters

Absentee ballots can be mailed to voters who will be out of town during the time mail-in balloting takes place. Application must be made in writing to request that an absentee ballot be mailed to an address other than the voter's place of residence.

The earliest date to apply for an absentee ballot is ninety (90) days before the election and not later than the close of business on the Friday immediately preceding Election Day (CRS 31-10-1002).

Absentee ballots must be returned to the Grand Junction City Clerk's Office before 7:00 PM on Election Day in order to be counted.