

City of Lakewood

Office of City Clerk
Margy Greer

480 South Allison Parkway
Lakewood, Colorado 80226-3127
303-987-7080 Voice
303-987-7057 TDD
303-987-7088 FAX

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Margy Greer, City Clerk
Date: July 20, 2009
Subject: Proposal for placing a Question to change the Charter on the November Ballot

I am requesting that City Council pass an ordinance placing a question on the November 3, 2009 Ballot to amend Sections 13.1 and 13.2 of the Lakewood City Charter regarding elections brought about by Initiative and Referendum Petitions.

Specifically, I am requesting the following:

Authorize City Council to schedule citizen-initiated ordinances and referenda to the first Tuesday in November so that the vote could be conducted as a coordinated election with Jefferson County;

AND

Give City Council the discretion to hold a special election outside of the coordinated election time frame, but extend the period in which the election must be held from 90 days to 120 days from the day the petition is presented to Council.

Rationale:

Coordinated elections cost the Lakewood taxpayers approximately one-fourth or less of the cost of a citywide stand-alone election. For example, the January 2007 stand-alone election cost the taxpayers approximately \$270,000, while the November 2007 coordinated election cost the taxpayers approximately \$30,000.

Voter turnout is much higher in a coordinated election than in a stand-alone election.

City Council must still have the discretion to hold an election sooner than the November time frame on time-sensitive ordinances.

When a special election sooner than November is required, an additional 30 days to hold the election is necessary to complete the RFP/contracting processes for election equipment, printing companies, voter registration software, etc. Due to the large number of voters in Lakewood, it is nearly impossible to complete the process of printing and mailing ballots within the current 90 day timeframe.

Thank you for your consideration.

