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October 2020



QUARTERLY POLICY PERSPECTIVES

Hello VISIT DENVER Partners,

Welcome to VISIT DENVER's quarterly *Policy Perspectives* newsletter highlighting local, state and federal issues impacting the tourism and hospitality industry. This edition also includes a special election section with information about key races and issues.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Carrie Atiyeh, Director of Government & Community Affairs, at catiyeh@visitdenver.com or (303) 571-9466.

ELECTION OVERVIEW

Ballots are in the mail beginning October 9 and we want you to be aware of the position that VISIT DENVER's Board of Directors has taken.

Local

- VISIT DENVER's Board of Directors voted to [support Denver Ballot Measure 2B](#), which will implement a 0.25% sales tax to support homeless shelters, services and housing. The measure is supported by Mayor Hancock as was referred unanimously to the ballot by the Denver City Council. The fund will raise approximately \$40M annually and be administered by the Department of Housing Stability (HOST).
- Denver voters will decide on 12 local ballot measures. Full details are in the [Blue Book](#).

State

- Voters will decide on [11 statewide ballot measures](#).

National

- VISIT DENVER is joining with the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce and others to host a U.S. Senate Candidate Forum with U.S. Senator Cory Gardner and former Governor John Hickenlooper on October 15. [Registration is available here](#).
- [Restaurants Rally the Vote](#) is a nationwide grassroots campaign to encourage the restaurant industry and its employees to be engaged in this year's election process.

LOCAL NEWS



- VISIT DENVER continues to closely monitor and stay engaged on local, state and federal pandemic guidance and policies impacting our industry. The [Clean & Safe Resource Guide](#) is kept up to date with useful information for our partners, visitors, planners, and residents.
- VISIT DENVER announced a first-ever fall Denver Restaurant Week to help our struggling restaurant industry. Now featuring to-go along with in person options, the event will be held November 13-22. Restaurants can register to participate beginning Monday, October 5 at [DenverRestaurantWeek.com](#). Participating restaurants and menus will be announced on October 26.
- Denver still has [free Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) kits](#) available for small businesses and non-profits. Each kit, valued at over \$300, includes sanitizer, disinfectant, gloves, masks, face shields and a thermometer.
- Denver City Council approved the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) resources as a major component of financing the [16th Street Mall](#). The project is expected to begin construction next year.
- The city has [extended the restaurant outdoor expansion program](#) through October 2021.

- City Council is moving forward with a 4-month pilot program to regulate 3rd party food delivery services and implementing a [fee cap of 15%](#).
- [Short-term rental lodger's tax revenue](#) has declined by 55% during the pandemic. And several short-term rental hosts who were [facing felony charges](#) for illegal rentals have had the charges dropped.
- Denver International Airport projects it could be until the [end of 2023](#) before recovering to 2019 pre-pandemic levels of passenger traffic. And the [Great Hall renovation](#) project is being scaled back due to cost constraints.
- City Council has approved a pilot program for [car sharing at Denver International Airport](#), allowing residents who are parking at the airport while traveling to rent their cars to visitors.
- There have been several important developments recently regarding support for people experiencing homelessness:
 - The City's [unauthorized camping ordinance was upheld](#) by a district judge, overruling a previous decision regarding the constitutionality of the measure.
 - Denver City Council approved a [new emergency homeless shelter](#) in Northeast Park Hill.
 - A [new women's shelter](#) was opened by the Volunteers of America to address the increasing needs of elderly women and veterans.
 - City Council and the Mayor continue to work to find locations for [Safe Outdoor Spaces](#), temporary sanctioned camps to provide services during the pandemic.
- The Mayor released the [proposed 2021 budget](#) for the city, which includes reductions in many departments and programs in order to close a \$190M shortfall.
- RTD has opened the new [N Line commuter rail](#), connecting downtown Denver to the National Western Center and the north metro area.
- Construction of [Colorado State University's](#) second of three new buildings at the National Western Center is underway.

STATE NEWS



- Small businesses can apply for the second round of the [Energize Colorado Gap Fund](#) beginning October 5. The program provides grants up to \$15,000 and loans up to \$20,000 for total assistance up to \$35,000. Of the \$25M in total available, \$5M is dedicated to the tourism industry.

FEDERAL NEWS



- The U.S. Travel Association (USTA) posts [weekly travel trends data reports](#) highlighting car and air travel data, traveler sentiment and economic impacts of the pandemic on our industry.
- The [Great American Outdoors Act](#) was passed by the Senate and signed by the President. Colorado Senator Cory Gardner was a lead sponsor of the bill which will provide \$1.9 billion annually to address deferred maintenance and improvements at National Parks and other federal lands.
- The National Restaurant Association is supporting a major national relief bill in Congress, the [“Real Economic Support that Acknowledges Unique Restaurant Assistance Needed to Survive Act”](#) (RESTAURANTS Act, S.4012), a \$120 billion fund for the industry.
- The National Independent Venues Association is supporting the [Save our Stages Act](#) (S. 4258), which would make grants available to venue operators, producers, and others.

PARTNER PERSPECTIVES



Visit CHLA's [COVID-19 Resources and Information page](#) for orders, policies and information impacting Colorado hotels.

Should you have questions or need further information on anything that [CHLA](#) is working on, please don't hesitate to contact Amie Mayhew, President & CEO, at 303-297-8335 or amayhew@chla.com.



Visit CRA's [Coronavirus Info & Resources page](#) for local, state and federal information.

Please contact Nick Hoover, Manager of Government Affairs or Sonia Riggs, President & CEO, at 303-830-2972, should you have questions or need further information on anything that [CRA](#) is working on.



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