

Resolution 16-_____

A Resolution of the Town of Erie, Colorado, Supporting Boulder County Sustainability Tax Ballot Measure 1C; a Proposal, Without Raising Taxes, to Extend One-Half (0.125%) of the Existing 0.25% Countywide Open Space Sales and Use Tax For the Purpose of Funding Sustainability Infrastructure and Programs.

WHEREAS, Boulder County leaders and citizens have long held a commitment to stewardship of our land, environment and community. By prioritizing natural resource conservation and environmental sustainability, we can achieve greater economic vitality in our communities; ensure cleaner air, land and water for the well-being and health of residents; and combat major environmental issues, such as climate change, resource depletion, ecosystem degradation, pollution, waste management, and access to healthy and sustainable food sources; and

WHEREAS, the effects of climate change on our environment and quality of life in Colorado are a real and growing cause for concern. Increasingly, scientific evidence demonstrates that carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere from the use and reliance on fossil fuels are exerting a profound detrimental effect on the global climate, the impacts of which are likely to be realized on a local level through hotter summers, warmer winters, thinner snow-pack, earlier spring runoff, more precipitation falling as rain, longer periods of drought, more frequent and intense wildfires, widespread beetle infestations in pine forests, water shortages, and increased public health problems, resulting in higher rates of chronic and infectious disease; and

WHEREAS, Colorado generates most of its electricity from coal-fired power plants, and over half of all greenhouse gas emissions in Boulder County result from the energy needed to operate, heat, light and power homes and businesses. The drilling extraction and transportation of fossil fuels required to supply this power contributes disproportionately to the effects of climate change through release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, including potent methane leakage from natural gas wells, making the need to reduce energy consumption, increase the use of clean energy and transition away from fossil fuels imperative; and

WHEREAS, emissions from fossil-fuel powered vehicles, in addition to producing dangerous local and regional air pollutants that carry significant risks for human health, are the second largest source of ozone-forming air pollution in Colorado's Front Range, making up one third of the county's total greenhouse gas emissions and thus posing a critical need to support sustainable transportation systems, alternative transportation infrastructure and fuel-efficient vehicles to reduce congestion on our roadways and reduce transportation-related emissions and pollutants; and

WHEREAS, the waste produced from our homes, businesses and industrial sources is another substantial contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, as well as pollution of our land, air and water. Significant energy is required to extract and harvest resources and raw materials, to transform these materials into useful products, transport goods and provide services, and to process disposal of consumed materials. County residents and businesses throw away an estimated 250,000 tons of "garbage" each year. This waste releases methane, generated from otherwise compostable materials decomposing in landfills. Proper solid and hazardous waste management, including reuse, recycling and composting options is of utmost importance for combating climate change and preventing degradation of environmental resources; and

WHEREAS, in the semi-arid climate of Colorado, Boulder County's rivers and streams are a vulnerable and invaluable resource in the provision of clean and plentiful drinking water and support for important riparian ecosystems essential to abundant fish and wildlife populations. In the face of increasing population growth across Boulder County and the region, conserving and protecting our water resources from overuse and depletion, pollutant contamination, and unsustainable agricultural practices is paramount to preserving the health of our residents and ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, as the populations of Colorado's Front Range communities continue to grow, the need for County residents to have reliable access to healthy, locally grown food options is also of pressing concern, and it is critical to encourage and implement sustainable land management and farming practices that lessen the impact of soil and resource degradation, conserve water and energy, and support healthy ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, in the face of these challenges, Boulder County is committed to continue its role as a strong leader in conservation and environmental sustainability. In 2005, the Boulder County Sustainability Initiative was created to support policies and practices that reduce the environmental footprint of County operations as well as to provide nationally recognized conservation programs and environmental services for County employees, residents and businesses in the larger community. The Sustainability Initiative provides resources, knowledge and services to make sustainability an integral part of the County's public service mission, and played an integral role in the adoption of Boulder County's Environmental Sustainability Plan in 2012, laying out the comprehensive goals, targets, and key strategies to help Boulder County, as a community and as a government agency, become more environmentally sustainable; and

WHEREAS, building on the work of the Sustainability Initiative and in an effort to fully implement the purpose and goals of the Sustainability Plan, the County desires to expand upon current successful programs as well as implement new countywide projects and services to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve our natural resources, support the local economy, protect the health of our residents and ecosystems, and be environmental stewardship leaders through:

- Promoting energy efficiency by conserving the energy needed to operate and power our buildings through deep energy efficiency upgrades, expanding "net zero" energy codes, and helping replace fossil fuel power and heating sources with clean, renewable energy;
- Striving to become a "zero waste" community through waste reduction and diversion initiatives and infrastructure, and develop and promote effective reuse, recycling and composting options;
- Supporting new and improved vehicle technologies, electric vehicles, strategies to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled, increased transit services and other transportation Demand Management strategies;
- Providing for the wise use, conservation and protection of water and other natural resources; and
- Supporting local and organic food production and sustainable agricultural practices: and

WHEREAS, in order for Boulder County to succeed in its commitment to these goals, the Board finds it necessary to establish an ongoing and reliable source of funding to assist in developing and securing the essential facilities and services to provide County residents and businesses with the very best environmental programs, and determines that a countywide sales and use tax dedicated to sustainability efforts would provide necessary funding to develop, implement and achieve these conservation and sustainability goals: and

WHEREAS, on November 2, 1993, the voters of the County approved a 0.25% countywide sales and use tax for the acquisition, improvement, management and maintenance of open space lands, as described in Resolution 93-174; and

WHEREAS, on November 2, 1999, the voters approved a proposal for the extension of the 0.25% countywide open space sales and use tax, for an additional period of ten (10) years to and including December 31, 2019, as described in Resolution 99-111: and

WHEREAS the County now desires to refer to the registered electors of the County an extension of one-half of the existing 0.25% open space sales and use tax at a rate of 0.125% for an additional period of fifteen (15) years to be effective through December 31, 2034, for the new purpose of funding sustainability facilities and programs; and

WHEREAS, the extension of one-half of the existing countywide sales and use tax at the rate of 0.125% for an additional period of fifteen (15) years to and including December 31, 2034, with proceeds of such extension to be utilized for

sustainability infrastructure and programs in accordance with the provisions of this Resolution, and the exemption of such tax revenues and the interest thereon from fiscal year spending limitations of article X, section 20 of the Colorado Constitution, would permit additional revenues to be utilized to further accomplish the County's sustainability goals and provide a cost-effective method of obtaining additional revenue for sustainability initiatives without an increase in the total cumulative countywide sales and use tax rate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF ERIE, COLORADO, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Endorses Boulder County Ballot Measure 1C to support a proposal to extend one-half (0.125%) of the existing 0.25% countywide open space sales and use tax for the purpose of funding sustainability infrastructure and programs.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED THIS 11th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2016, BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF ERIE, COLORADO.

TOWN OF ERIE,
a Colorado Municipal Corporation

By: _____
Tina Harris, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: _____
Nancy Parker, CMC, Town Clerk