

Frequently Asked Questions: Aurora Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

What is a Downtown Development Authority (DDA)?

A DDA is a special governmental entity—separate from the City—that helps revitalize downtown areas. DDAs bring funding and organization to efforts like:

- Supporting small businesses
- Beautification and placemaking
- Infrastructure and public improvements
- Marketing, branding, and special events

How are DDAs formed?

A DDA is created through two steps:

1. An ordinance passed by the City Council.
2. A vote by eligible electors within the proposed DDA boundary.

On July 28, 2025, the Aurora City Council approved an ordinance placing measures related to an Aurora Downtown Development Authority (DDA) on a Nov. 4, 2025, mail ballot election.

What guides a DDA's work?

Colorado law requires every DDA to follow a “Plan of Development.” For East Colfax, this would be the **Colfax Community Vision & Action Plan**. The plan was created by working with residents, businesses, local organizations, property owners, and the City to capture community goals and priorities. More information can be found on the plan webpage: [Colfax Community Vision and Action Plan](#)

The draft plan identifies six strategic goal areas the DDA would focus on:

1. Public Safety and Security
2. Business Support and Access to Goods and Services
3. Housing and Neighborhood Stability
4. Cleaning and Maintenance
5. Advancing Arts, Culture, and a Creative Economy
6. Public Space Improvements

If voters approve the DDA, the City Council will formally approve the plan and start the 30-year Tax Increment Financing (TIF) period (called the “TIF clock”).

What is the proposed DDA boundary?

The boundary includes Aurora's historic and commercial core along East Colfax. Properties next to the DDA could opt in in the future.

General boundary:

- **North:** East 16th Avenue
- **South:** East 14th Avenue
- **West:** Yosemite Street
- **East:** Peoria Street, near the Fitzsimons Urban Renewal Area

Who can vote in the DDA election?

You may vote if you are:

- A registered Colorado voter who lives within the DDA boundary, **or**
- An individual or entity that owns or leases real property in the boundary

Important rules:

- One person, one vote (even if you qualify in multiple ways)
- Entities (e.g., businesses or LLCs) must designate one Colorado registered voter to vote on their behalf

How will this election work?

The election is run by the law firm **Spencer Fane LLP**, not by the City of Aurora or Arapahoe or Adams County. Having a law firm conduct an election for a special district, especially one that spans over two counties, is a standard practice. All forms, questions, and ballots should be submitted to:

Courtney Linney, Designated Election Official
Spencer Fane LLP
1700 Lincoln St., Ste. 2000,
Denver, CO, 80203
[303.839.3778](tel:303.839.3778)
clinney@spencerfane.com

Eligible voters will receive **a separately mailed ballot for the DDA election** – the DDA will NOT appear in the November general election ballot. The ballot will present two measures, asking:

1. Should a DDA be formed?
2. Should the DDA be able to use Tax Increment Financing under Colorado's Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR)?

Each ballot measure requires a simple majority to pass.

How can I get a ballot if I am eligible to vote?

Residents:

If you are registered to vote at an address within the DDA boundary, **you will automatically receive a DDA ballot** by mail starting October 13, 2025.

Property Owners or Lessees:

You must submit a **Ballot Request/Self-Affirmation Form** to receive a DDA ballot.

Organizations and Businesses:

To vote, you must submit a **Designation of Elector Form** naming one person to receive and cast the DDA ballot on behalf of the organization or business. This person must be a registered Colorado voter.

These forms and instructions are available on the City of Aurora's DDA election webpage:

www.auroragov.org/DDAelection

How do I return my ballot?

All ballots are due by **7:00 PM on Tuesday, November 4, 2025**. Late ballots will NOT be counted, even if postmarked before the deadline.

There are three ways to return your ballot:

1. Mail the ballot to Spencer Fane LLP,
2. Return the ballot in person to Spencer Fane LLP, **or**
3. Return the ballot to the special DDA ballot drop box located at the front desk of the MLK Jr. Library, 9898 E Colfax Ave, Aurora, CO 80010.

DO NOT return your ballot to a regular election drop box.

How is a DDA funded?

The DDA will use **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** as its main source of funding:

- As property and sales tax revenue grows in the area, the increase in revenue is captured and reinvested in the DDA boundary.
- TIF does **not** increase anyone's taxes. It simply allows the increase in value to support local improvements.

Will the DDA create new taxes?

No. TIF does **not** raise or impose new taxes on residents, businesses, or property owners. It uses future tax revenue growth to invest in the area.

How will the DDA be governed?

If approved:

- The Mayor will appoint **5 to 11 board members**, approved by City Council
- Board members must **live, own property, or operate a business** in the DDA
- One seat must be held by a City Council member

DDA Board meetings are open to the public and the DDA must obey open records laws.

Have other Colorado cities formed DDAs?

Yes. DDAs exist all over Colorado. Communities that have formed DDAs include: Loveland, Castle Rock, Colorado Springs, Crested Butte, Denver, Fort Collins, Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction, Longmont, Thornton, Greeley, Englewood, Littleton, and Lafayette.

What will the DDA do?

The **Colfax Community Vision & Action Plan** outlines six goal areas to guide the DDA's work. Each area includes suggested actions that respond directly to community priorities. Each year the DDA board would look to these goals and suggestions as they make their annual work plan and budget.

Important: DDAs cannot condemn property or use eminent domain.