FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gallup voters will have the opportunity to help shape future Municipal Elections with a ballot question during the coming Regular Local Election.

On November 7, 2023, Gallup voters will decide if the Mayor and City Council should have the authority to move Gallup’s Municipal Election date to the Regular Local Election date in November in odd-numbered years. If voters approve the measure, the City Council will decide whether the election of Council members and the Municipal Judge should remain in March of even-numbered years, or move to November in odd-numbered years (the Regular Local Election date).

A change to the Regular Local Election date will save the City approximately $40,000 in election expense every two years, and will increase voter turnout and participation by making voting more convenient and simpler. Elections require security and significant additional staffing and technology resources, including publication costs. Holding all elections on the same day reduces the needed resources and associated costs. Gallup is a “home rule” city, meaning it has a founding Charter and does not depend on the State of New Mexico for its existence and authority. The Charter is similar to the U.S. Constitution, as it sets the basic rules by which the City is governed. One such set of rules are those governing the City’s elections.

Currently, the Charter requires that City elections — elections for the offices of City Council, Mayor and Municipal Judge — be held on the second Tuesday in March. In 2018, New Mexico adopted a statute, known as the Local Election Act, allowing cities to “opt in” to the regular general election held in November of odd-numbered years.

In order for Gallup to “opt in” to the regular November election, it is necessary to amend the Charter’s requirement of a March election. The ballot measure does that by giving the City Council the authority to move the City’s election to the November date. If voters reject the ballot question, City elections will continue to be held in March of even-numbered years. If voters approve the question, the City Council will have the authority to choose whether to align the City’s elections with all regular local elections (in November of odd-numbered years) or retain the March date.
For more information about the proposed Charter Amendment, contact the City Clerk’s Office at 505-863-1254. For more information about the Local Election Act, or to register to vote, visit the New Mexico Secretary of State’s Office website at www.sos.nm.gov. If you prefer to register in-person, visit the McKinley County Clerk’s Office at 207 W. Hill Ave.

Early voting starts Tuesday, Oct. 10. The Regular Local Election date is Tuesday, Nov. 7.

###