



# Town of Niwot Incorporation Initiative

It's Time for Niwot to Lead  
December 2025

# Thank you for coming!

- Please hold questions and comments until after the presentation.
- Presentation will be posted on [www.Niwot.Town](http://www.Niwot.Town).
- The Left Hand Valley Courier is running a series of articles about incorporation in digital and print editions. (December 9 is **Colorado Gives Day** so please make a tax-deductible donation today at [www.coloradogives.org](http://www.coloradogives.org) or anytime at [www.lhvc.com](http://www.lhvc.com). We need our local newspaper!)
- **Register** on [www.Niwot.Town](http://www.Niwot.Town) to keep informed on future events.



Niwot.Town

# Why Incorporation Matters

- **Niwot is a special place** – a small town with a soul, sense of community, and a way of life worth protecting.
- Over the last decade, decisions about our town are increasingly **made by people who don't live here**—and it shows.
- **Niwot's spirit is strong – but our authority is weak.**
- Incorporation lets us take responsibility for our future – not politics, but stewardship.

# Challenges Niwot Faces Today

- **County-owned roads continue to deteriorate**, with no commitment to repair.
- **Local businesses and restaurants have been closing and continue to face a \$1.37 higher minimum wage than Longmont**, even after an exhausting fight with the Commissioners over its high minimum-wage experiment.
- **County land-use and building rules keep tightening**, driving down home values, driving up project costs, and preventing valuable renewal projects.
- **Niwot Fire District taxes far exceed neighboring districts**, meaning Niwot subsidizes others' costs.
- **Public safety remains outside our control**, dependent on County priorities.
- **Limited ability to direct our own master plan** and shape the future of our town.
- **No seat at the table when it comes to State and County Level projects**, which affect our town.

# What Niwot Becomes with Incorporation

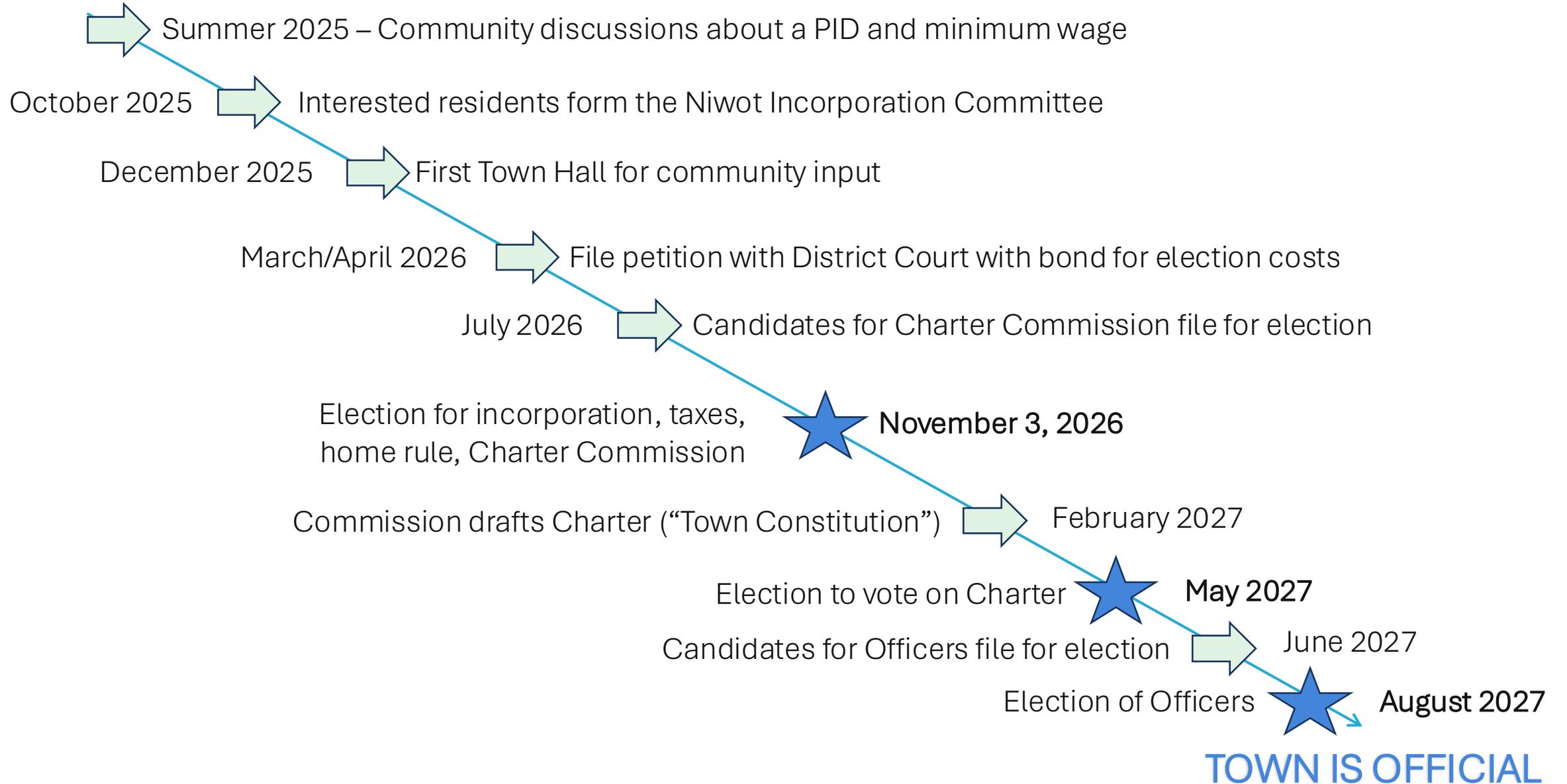
With local control, Niwot becomes **a town again** — not a testing ground for Boulder County policy, but a community that stewards its own future.

- **Roads are repaired quickly and affordably**, using contractors we choose.
- **A thriving business district returns**, with restaurants and shops that can finally compete on a level playing field.
- **Home values stabilize and grow**, supported by sensible, local land-use rules.
- **Fair fire and EMS contracts replace excessive taxes**, keeping more money in residents' pockets.
- **Public safety priorities match Niwot's needs**, not county politics.
- **Our master plan reflects our vision**, protecting rural character while enabling smart renewal.
- **As a municipality**, we have a voice to shape future state-level projects that affect our community

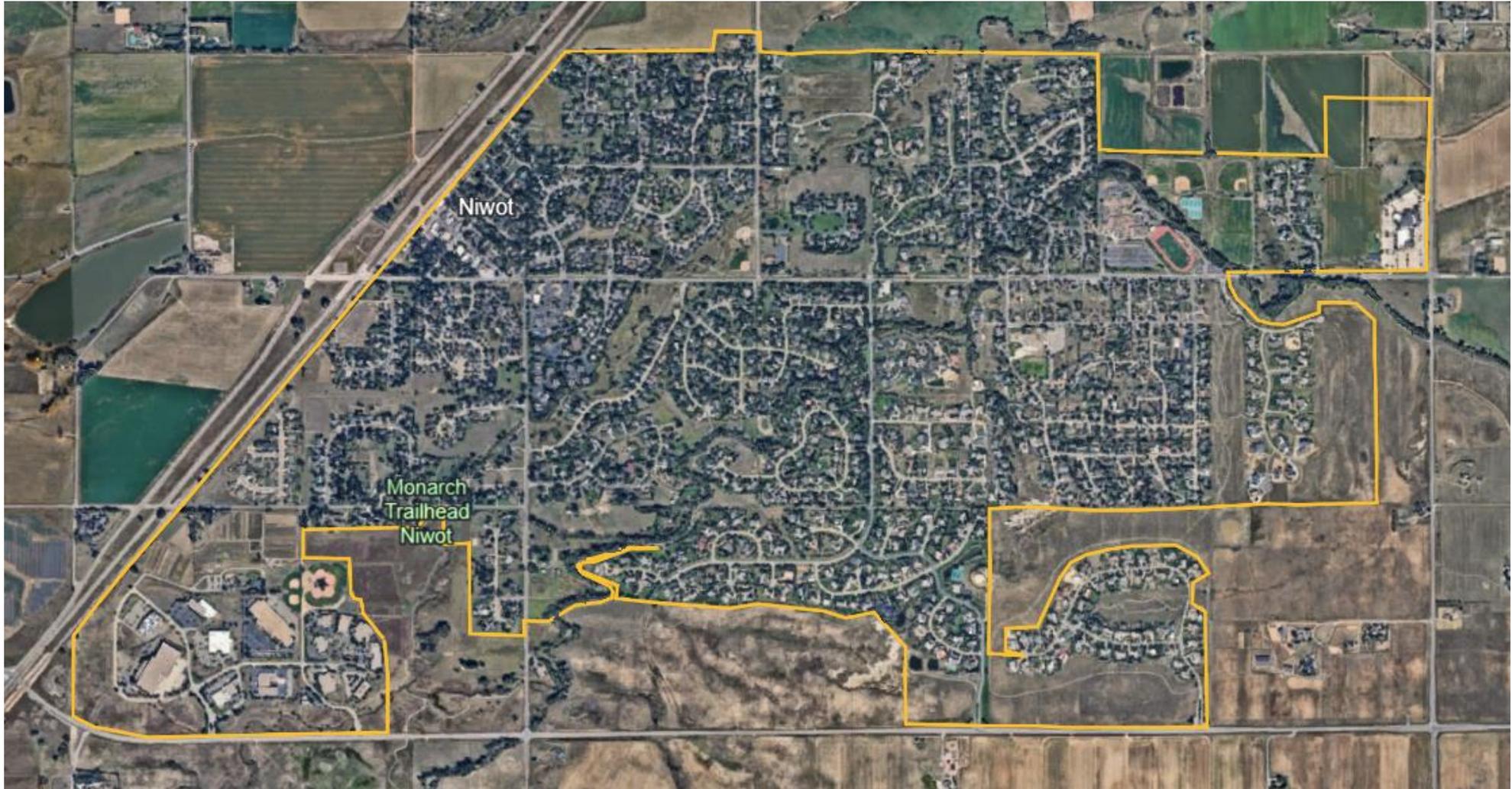
Niwot becomes the community it should be — vibrant, walkable, welcoming, and in control of its own destiny.

**We choose to govern ourselves because Niwot is worth protecting.  
This is how small towns stay strong: by taking responsibility for their own future.**

# Timeline – Three Elections



# Proposed Niwot Boundary



Colorado has 273 municipalities. At a population of 4,100 Niwot will be #86 on the list or in the top third of all municipalities.

# Pro Forma Budget

4 Mills in 2028 & 2029; 10 mills in 2030 forward + 2.5% sales tax

All \$ figures in 000s unless otherwise specified

Revenue	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Property Tax		\$884	\$903	\$2,386	\$2,439	\$2,577	\$2,634	\$2,784	\$2,845	\$3,006	\$3,072	\$3,247	\$3,318	\$3,506
Sales Tax		\$1,856	\$1,930	\$2,007	\$2,088	\$2,171	\$2,258	\$2,348	\$2,442	\$2,540	\$2,642	\$2,747	\$2,857	\$2,972
Use Tax		\$292	\$304	\$316	\$329	\$342	\$356	\$370	\$385	\$400	\$416	\$433	\$450	\$468
Grants		\$250	\$260	\$270	\$281	\$292	\$304	\$316	\$329	\$342	\$356	\$370	\$385	\$400
Highway Users Tax Fund		\$135	\$141	\$147	\$152	\$158	\$165	\$171	\$178	\$185	\$193	\$201	\$209	\$217
Specific Ownership Tax		\$75	\$78	\$82	\$85	\$88	\$92	\$95	\$99	\$103	\$107	\$112	\$116	\$121
Road and Bridge Fund		\$33	\$35	\$36	\$37	\$39	\$41	\$42	\$44	\$46	\$47	\$49	\$51	\$53
Cigarette/Marijuana Tax		\$50	\$52	\$54	\$56	\$58	\$61	\$63	\$66	\$68	\$71	\$74	\$77	\$80
Other fees		\$50	\$52	\$54	\$56	\$58	\$61	\$63	\$66	\$68	\$71	\$74	\$77	\$80
Planning Department		\$90	\$187	\$195	\$202	\$211	\$219	\$228	\$237	\$246	\$256	\$266	\$277	\$288
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		\$3,716	\$3,943	\$5,548	\$5,726	\$5,996	\$6,190	\$6,482	\$6,691	\$7,006	\$7,232	\$7,573	\$7,817	\$8,186
<b>Expense</b>														
Pay and Benefits	\$176	\$432	\$456	\$473	\$491	\$509	\$528	\$547	\$568	\$589	\$611	\$634	\$658	\$683
Public Safety (Sheriff's Office)		\$225	\$468	\$487	\$506	\$526	\$547	\$569	\$592	\$616	\$640	\$666	\$693	\$720
Fire Protection Contract			\$1,750	\$1,820	\$1,893	\$1,969	\$2,047	\$2,129	\$2,214	\$2,303	\$2,395	\$2,491	\$2,590	\$2,694
Public Works - Snow removal/minor road repairs		\$175	\$364	\$379	\$394	\$409	\$426	\$443	\$461	\$479	\$498	\$518	\$539	\$560
Planning and Development		\$90	\$187	\$195	\$202	\$211	\$219	\$228	\$237	\$246	\$256	\$266	\$277	\$288
Administrative Expenses	\$157	\$239	\$249	\$258	\$269	\$280	\$291	\$302	\$314	\$327	\$340	\$354	\$368	\$383
Materials Costs	\$50	\$100	\$104	\$108	\$112	\$117	\$122	\$127	\$132	\$137	\$142	\$148	\$154	\$160
Election Costs		\$20	\$21	\$22	\$22	\$23	\$24	\$25	\$26	\$27	\$28	\$30	\$31	\$32
Niwot Master Plan		\$250	\$260	\$270	\$281	\$292	\$304	\$316	\$329	\$342	\$356	\$370	\$385	\$400
Incorporation Costs		\$150												
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	\$383	\$1,681	\$3,859	\$4,012	\$4,171	\$4,336	\$4,508	\$4,687	\$4,873	\$5,067	\$5,268	\$5,477	\$5,695	\$5,921
<b>CAPITAL EXPENSES AND RESERVES (roads)</b>	-\$383	\$2,036	\$84	\$1,536	\$1,556	\$1,660	\$1,682	\$1,795	\$1,817	\$1,939	\$1,964	\$2,096	\$2,122	\$2,265
<b>Cumulative Capital Expenses and Reserves</b>		\$1,653	\$1,737	\$3,273	\$4,828	\$6,489	\$8,170	\$9,965	\$11,782	\$13,722	\$15,686	\$17,782	\$19,904	\$22,169

# Property Tax Rates to Decrease after 2029

## Residential and Commercial Property Tax

Property Tax Mill Levies	Current	2028-2029 Proposed	2030 Forward Proposed
Municipality	0.000	4.000	10.000
School	57.168	57.168	57.168
County	22.661	22.661	22.661
Fire	16.247	16.247	0.000*
North CO Water District	1.000	1.000	1.000
Other (Flood; Ecopass)	0.900	0.900	0.900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97.976</b>	<b>101.976</b>	<b>91.729</b>
	Change from current	+4.000	-6.247

\* Fire paid by through Town budget instead of property tax.

# Sales Tax Rate Lower than Boulder or Longmont

Sales Tax Components	Niwot Current	Niwot Proposed	Boulder	Longmont
Municipality	0.00%	2.50%	3.86%	3.53%
Boulder County	1.19%	1.19%	1.19%	1.19%
Colorado State	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%	2.90%
RDT + Special	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%	1.10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.19%</b>	<b>7.69%</b>	<b>9.05%</b>	<b>8.72%</b>

Municipalities are typically funded with sales taxes. As our businesses are revived, more of the sales tax revenue will come from non-residents.

# Other Sources of Revenue

## Road Grants

- Incorporation unlocks transportation and infrastructure grants that currently bypass Niwot—often \$300k to \$2M for safety, drainage, and pedestrian improvements.
- Grant funding can meaningfully reduce the total cost of rebuilding subdivision roads by covering required upgrades alongside repaving.
- Could unlock ~\$10M+ over the next decade

## Urban Renewal Authority (URA) with Tax Increment Funding (TIF)

- Captures the *increase* in property tax revenue (not new taxes) to fund streets, utilities, parking, and revitalization
- Requires meeting 4 of 11 state “blight” factors—typically achievable in historic downtowns
- Could unlock ~\$10–15M for downtown over 25 years

# Niwot Pays Way Too Much for Fire Service

- Actual cost of fire and ambulance is related to **number of homes, residents and square miles**.
- Fire protection paid through a mill levy (currently 16.246 mills) is proportional to **property values**.
- Town can negotiate a fire and EMS contract that is paid by the town, thus removing the property tax mill levy. Town pays more, but property owners pay lower taxes for significant savings.

	<b>Niwot</b>	<b>Lyons</b>	<b>Mountain View Fire Rescue Overall</b>	<b>Boulder Rural Fire Protection Overall</b>	<b>Niwot future</b>
Provider	Mountain View Fire Rescue	Lyons Fire Protection			To Bid
# Residents	4,100	6,200			4,100
Sq Miles	4	66			4
Approx Cost/yr	\$3.6M	\$2.8M			<b>\$1.4 to \$1.8M</b>
Cost/Resident	\$880	\$450	\$547	\$335	\$335-500
Cost/Sq Mile	\$900K	\$42K	\$200K	\$65K	\$350 to \$450K

Niwot will continue to have fire protection during the transition

# Moving from Fire District mill levy to contracted service

- This change is provided for by Colorado law.
- Colorado law doesn't allow a lowering of fire service standards, so any new or renegotiated service will be the same quality and response times.
- We have a professional consultant reviewing the current fire and EMS services and preparing an RFP to present to current and potential fire districts.
- Two nearby districts have already indicated they are interested and were surprised at how much we're paying now.
- **Yes, there will still be a fire station in Niwot.**
- **If the change takes longer than in our budget model, it simply means that the tax structure of 4 mills for the Town proposed for 2028 and 2029 could be extended by the Town Council.**
- Once we leave the fire district, the Town takes on the cost as a budgeted item, hence the increase to 10 mills; BUT property taxes for residential and commercial go down by 16.247 mills for a **net decrease of 6.247 mills.**

# Incorporation Will Make Our Town Safer

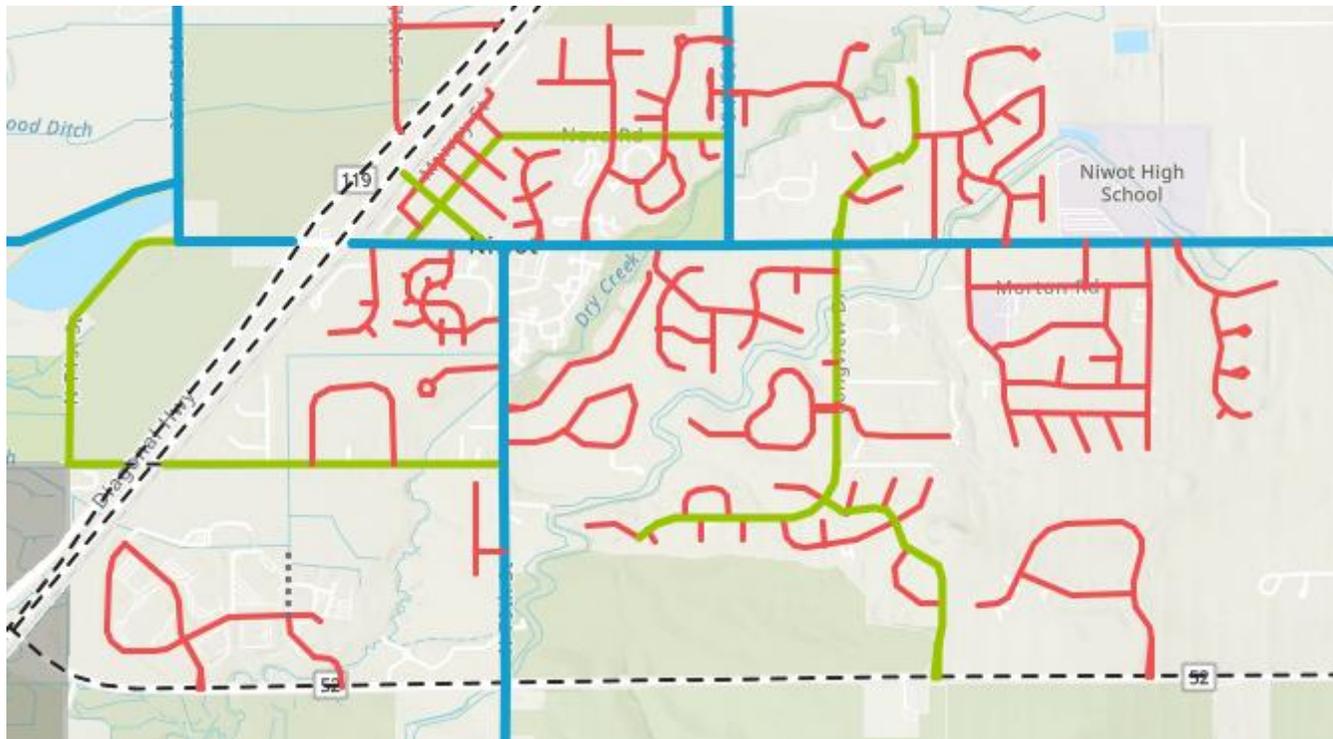
- Currently served by the Boulder County Sheriff on an “as needed” basis.
- Sheriff’s calculation based on actual dispatches is that this amounts to the “full-time equivalent” of **60% of a deputy**.
- **The Sheriff is elected and operates independently of the County Commissioners.**
- Over half of the Sheriff Department’s revenue comes from contracts with municipalities.
- Proposed Town budget will cover a **full-time deputy assigned to Niwot . . . resulting in better and more consistent coverage.**

# What About the Roads?

- Operating revenue in excess of expenses creates a capital fund for road repairs and reconstruction.
- Town will contract directly for road work - preliminary bids from non-Boulder County contractors are lower than County estimates.
- Colorado standard for roads needing full reconstruction is at a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of <20, not <50 as per Boulder County for a PID. Using a PCI of <20 for full reconstruction substantially reduces costs.
- Town will use future revenue stream to secure debt so that roads are repaired as fast as possible, which reduces total cost (stop further degradation).
- Task force is working on getting detailed road estimates and a funding and construction plan.

# More on Roads – Snow Removal

Boulder County's Snow Removal Map –  
Red means “don't hold your breath”



## Snow Removal (Priority Level)

1. These roads are on a primary snow removal route, indicates that the road will be plowed to maintain continuous all-weather access within the maximum capabilities of the county
  2. These roads are on a secondary snow removal route, indicates that the road will be plowed to provide reasonable all-weather access as time, available funds and manpower permit
  3. Snow will not be removed to provide access during all storm conditions and will be plowed only as time, available funds, and manpower permit
- N

## State Owned Roads

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The Town of Niwot will hire its own contractors for snow removal to provide much better service.

# What Does This Mean for My Household?

## 2028 and 2029 Examples

Home Value	Annual Purchases*	Current Property + Sales Tax	Proposed Property + Sales Tax	Combined Change in Taxes per year
\$3,000,000	\$30,000	\$19,700 + \$1,560	\$20,500 + \$2,310	\$1,550
\$2,000,000	\$30,000	\$13,130 + \$1,560	\$13,665 + \$2,310	\$1,105
\$1,000,000	\$20,000	\$6,560 + \$1,040	\$6,830 + \$1,540	\$770
\$1,000,000	\$10,000	\$6,560 + \$520	\$6,830 + \$770	\$520
\$500,000	\$5,000	\$3,280 + \$260	\$3,415 + \$385	\$260

## 2030 Forward Examples

Home Value	Annual Purchases*	Current Property + Sales Tax	Proposed Property + Sales Tax	Combined Change in Taxes per year
\$3,000,000	\$30,000	\$19,700 + \$1,560	\$18,440 + \$2,310	- \$510
\$2,000,000	\$30,000	\$13,130 + \$1,560	\$12,290 + \$2,310	- \$90
\$1,000,000	\$20,000	\$6,560 + \$1,040	\$6,145 + \$1,540	\$85
\$1,000,000	\$10,000	\$6,560 + \$520	\$6,145 + \$770	- \$165
\$500,000	\$5,000	\$3,280 + \$260	\$3,070 + \$385	- \$85

\* Purchases made online by Niwot residents, plus automobiles

# PID and Town – two approaches to solve roads problem

A public improvement district (PID) is another option for raising funds to fix our roads.

- A big thank you to group that has put in the effort to find a solution
- Raised awareness that Boulder County has no intention of fixing the roads
- Expect to raise about \$2.6M/yr through a 12 mills tax increase dedicated to subdivision roads
- Initial petition was withdrawn with group working on a revised petition with adjusted boundaries
- Road projects directed by Boulder County Commissioners through the Transportation Department with Niwot having an advisory role.

Town proposal provides for an operating surplus for capital roads projects.

- Expect to raise about \$1.5M/yr with essentially **no net increase in taxes**
- Current bids from road construction contractors indicate that this is sufficient
- Use a debt funding plan to complete projects sooner (as would PID)
- Town Council will have full control over projects
- Far greater flexibility in how capital dollars are spent, especially once the deferred road maintenance is completed.

# Comparison of Options in 2030 (after transition is complete)

Option and estimated cost implications	Annual Capital Funding for Roads	Annual Property Tax change per \$1M actual value - residential	Incremental <u>Average</u> Annual Cost per Household, (property and online sales tax)
Town with contracted fire service (2.5% sales tax)			
Phased in to 10 mills (4 mills in 2028 and 2029)	\$1.5M	-\$420 (savings)	\$90
Public Improvement District			
PID at 12 mills (with Tech Center but not downtown)	\$2.6M	\$804	\$1,200

- Incremental Cost per household =  
 Total reduction in property tax (residential only) + total increase in sales tax (online/auto) paid by residents,  
 divided by 1741 households
- PID revenue for roads excludes proposed 5% to Niwot Master Plan and assumes zero administrative expenses.

# Organization Overview: Niwot Incorporation Committee

- Niwot Incorporation Committee is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation
- Engaged Widner Juran LLP, (**attorney for the last 3 municipal incorporations in Colorado**)
- Solicit experts and input on pro forma budget
- Decide on borders and commission property survey and proof of number of inhabitants
- **Prepare Petition**
- Administer incorporation costs funding through 501(c)3 bank account.

**Members:** Nick Little, Steve Lehan, Paula Hemenway, Andrew Fowler, John Supsic

**Participants need to have significant time to devote to this over next 2-3 months.**

**If you're interested, please email "contact@Niwot.Town"**

# Process of Incorporation Costs

<b>Item</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Attorney Fees	\$50,000
Property Survey	\$10,000
Demographic Certification	\$1,000
Petition Costs	\$4,000
Mailing Costs	\$5,000
Election Costs (3)	\$60,000
Contingency	\$20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$150,000</b>

This is midrange of Attorney's estimate of \$100,000 to \$200,000+  
Goal is to raise \$200,000

# Funding Status

- Goal of \$200,000 for incorporation costs; minimum of \$150,000
- Asking for loans of \$5,000 to \$20,000 to “Niwot Incorporation Committee”, a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Corporation
  - If incorporation succeeds, will be repaid by Town
  - If incorporation fails, will be a tax-deductible donation
- Donations of any amount can be made to “Niwot Incorporation Committee”
- Approximately \$130,000 pledged in loans and donations so far in range of \$5,000 to \$20,000. **All are from interested Niwot residents and/or business owners, not outside interests.**
- Please email [contact@Niwot.Town](mailto:contact@Niwot.Town) if you're interested in loaning or donating to the Niwot Incorporation Committee.

# Community Liaisons

## Community Leaders and Interested Residents to:

- Liaison with key constituencies (HOAs, non-HOA neighborhoods, businesses and NBA, NCA, LID, etc.)
- Gather input on key parts of the proposed Petition
- Provide this input and act as a sounding board to the Niwot Incorporation Committee.
- Act as Ambassadors to explain and encourage Niwot incorporation

**Current Volunteers:** Deborah Fowler, Amy Grolnick, Georgianna Holderbein, Kevin Klau, Nick Little, Adam Monette, Dayna Roane, Tony Santelli, Cornelia Sawle

If you're interested, please email "[contact@Niwot.Town](mailto:contact@Niwot.Town)"

# Niwot Now Issue Committee

- All campaign and political activities and expenses are separate from the Niwot Incorporation Committee
- Niwot Now Issue Committee will be registered with the State of Colorado once active
- Contributions are not tax-deductible
- Current member: Melissa Koller

If you're interested, please email "[contact@NiwotNow.org](mailto:contact@NiwotNow.org)"

# These are Volunteer Groups – Decisions will be made by You, the Voters, Step 1

First, through election of nine Charter Commissioners to draft the home rule charter.

- Any resident registered voter can run for the Charter Commission

These elected Commissioners will write the Town Charter, which is the Constitution for the Town:

- Municipality's powers
- Governing structure
- Terms of elected offices
- Budget and election procedures
- Procedures for referendum of measures, etc.

Commissioners must hold at least one public hearing

Registered voters will then vote on the Town Charter

# Decisions will be made by You, the Voters, Step 2

Second, through election of a Town Council.

The Town Council will make decisions on such things as:

- Policies on land use and planning, rural preservation, business revitalization, etc.
- Contracts with Sheriff, Fire, public works (e.g., snow removal), etc.
- Staffing
- Building department
- Facilities to use for town business

Boulder County is obligated to continue to provide services for at least one year after the Town Council is sworn in.

# Incorporation Protects Niwot's Identity

Incorporation gives Niwot the ability to stay competitive with surrounding incorporated municipalities

- Well-maintained Infrastructure
- Appropriate Land Use
- Improved Safety
- Better Business Environment

Deep culture of volunteerism – our concerts, festivals, parades, markets, and traditions – won't change

- Community priorities will still be made by residents
- Events will be run by volunteers, businesses, and the community

# Thank You!

- Please fill out short response form before you leave.
- Comments and suggestions can also be sent to [Contact@Niwot.Town](mailto:Contact@Niwot.Town) or by contacting any Niwot Incorporation Committee or Community Liaison member.
- Volunteers are needed to help with incorporation tasks, as well as to communicate the plan to the community and receive feedback from the Niwot residents and businesses.
- Loans and donations to help pay third-party costs are welcome.
- Visit [www.Niwot.Town](http://www.Niwot.Town) for updates and to be added to the contact list.



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