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# Golden and Regional Info - November 2022, and How to spend millions of \$\$

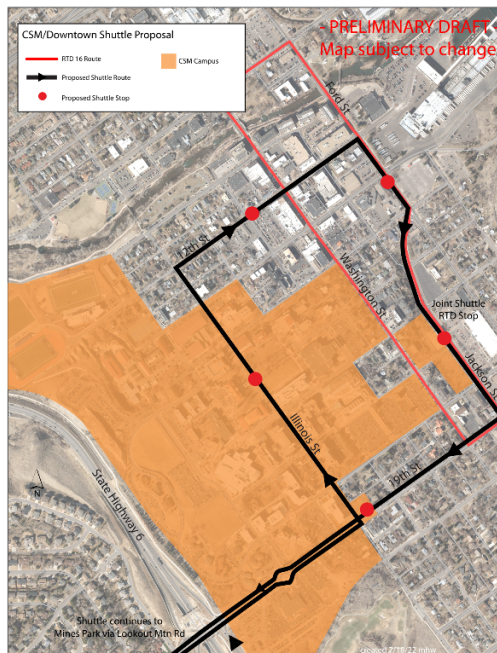
1 message

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Sun, Oct 30, 2022 at 7:12 PM

Dear Neighbors,

Autumn is budget time in Golden. Both the 10 year Capital plan (1 year funded) and the two year general operating budget (1 year funded) get approved in early December after a lot of discussion. Here are some of my big takeaways.



**Local Transportation** - The City and CSM are partnering to put in place a shuttle bus that will circulate from RTD West line, to Mines Park (think West of US6 and South of 19th) through campus, past Safeway, and back up hill. It will be free, have 15 minute head times, and anyone can use it. Some of the funding from this will be from the Lodging tax which was passed by citizen vote in 2021. The city is also exploring another route that would circulate more in downtown to create better options for remote parking. On a related note, I LOVE the new fair schedule proposed by RTD. One of the options is fixed price for both local and regional

which just might make it worth using RTD to visit Denver since we would see a much reduced fair. If you want to see something like this, fill out their survey [found here](#) by November 6th. It is a little weird, you have to do demographic data first, but then it is clearer about the fare proposal.

**Staffing** - The new city manager, Scott Vargo, along with the HR director and existing staff have identified new salary levels to help with retention and hiring. Specifically there is a need to raise our park and seasonal employee pay to get the staff we need just to do our base functions. These new positions are not government overreach, it is just a competitive labor market for entry level workers. In addition we need to have a more certain staffing plan at the fire department, and with a SAFER grant will hire 3 engineers and 3 shift supervisors so we can staff Station 24 (Heritage road). Other staffing decisions will, I believe, lead to some efficiencies and ability to increase effectiveness. Code enforcement for speeds and stolen vehicles, parking management, and an executive assistant to the city manager will all make a difference. While not finally decided and voted on, there was mostly agreement from city council on these items. [See the staff memo here.](#)

**Capital Ideas** - [The capital improvement plan](#) (CIP) is a 10 year plan, funded yearly, that the city council discusses from September until the required passage in December. Budgeting happens at the department level, is hashed out in the city manager's office, and presented for discussion by the public and city council at various meetings. Big ticket items of note for 2023 include a new ladder truck (ours is near end of life), public restroom upgrades, Lena Gulch / West Colfax work, the usual highly-important asphalt and concrete replacements, pickle ball courts (location TBD), and new multi-purpose fields at Ulysses Park. We are also looking at how to fund new police and city hall facilities, with some planning \$ in 2023 and huge expenditures in future years.

**Vote** - Last month [I suggested](#) how I would vote and if you want to know, you can read about it. One addition is just how I decide on local judges. If the reviews by peers and lawyers in the court is less than 80% then I may vote *not* to retain. My rationale is that it is awkward to give negative feedback to your peers or your "boss", and 80% may really indicate hidden problems. Still, I read the rest of the analysis before making a final decision.

**Fall Garden Tips** - I have been gardening for over 20 years in Colorado, but still learn something new all the time. Last fall I learned the importance of "leave the leaves". This is the idea that leaving leaves in your garden beds has many benefits. If you like to have birds visit your yard, you need them to provide them something to eat. Leaves provide a place for bugs to over-winter, they lie below the insulated surface, do their "thing" and hopefully come up in time for birds to feast on them after they have broken the leaves down. Save leaves, attract birds! When you have "annuals" in your yard, such as sunflowers or bee plant, don't pull them up by the root. Instead cut them about a foot off the ground and leave the stalk. There are over 400 bee species in Colorado. And many of them

will burrow down a stalk of a plant and create a home for a small brood. Most bees are not in hives, but are solitary. So leave something for them to overwinter too. Don't cut down the stalk in the spring, some bees take two years to reemerge. Also, small birds will use them as perches while scoping out your yard. Also leave the roots as they can become a carbon source for the next plants. Finally, consider "No Mow May" next spring too. Let your yard get a little shaggy in the spring and don't mow until June. Again, it leaves lots of places for bugs, grubs and worms to grow and emerge to attract birds while they are brooding their young. A clean sterile looking yard may look good from a marketing standpoint but it is just that, sterile, and not healthy.

**If you have input for city council, please use**  
[councilcomments@cityofgolden.net](mailto:councilcomments@cityofgolden.net).

Always feel free to reach me at my website, [set up a meeting](#). Or, let's run, walk or bike together if you'd like!

Peace,

Don

Feel free to forward this to friends or neighbors who may like to get more information. To join the list fill out the contact form at [cameronforgolden.org](http://cameronforgolden.org)

Want to know even more? Two other councilors have websites too, [JJTrout](#) and [Bill Fisher](#)

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