

**SUBJECT: DISCUSSION/DIRECTION – CITY MANAGER RESIDENCY
REQUIREMENT**

DATE: NOVEMBER 4, 2024

**PRESENTED BY: SAMMA FOX, INTERIM CITY MANAGER
MEREDYTH MUTH, INTERIM DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
KATHLEEN KELLY, CITY ATTORNEY**

SUMMARY:

Section 8-1(c) of the City Charter reads “The City manager shall become a resident of the City within the time established by the Council, and shall remain a resident throughout the Manager’s appointment.” This type of requirement has been commonplace in cities for many years. Recently, however, cities across the nation have withdrawn their residency requirements after questioning if it limits the pool of applicants for this position.

In discussions with Valerie Phillips of Bob Murray and Associates, the recruiter the City hired to help fill the current city manager vacancy, she has noted that such a requirement will likely reduce the number of qualified applicants for the position as some applicants may already live locally and not want to move. Additionally, potential applicants from further away may not be able to afford to live in Louisville, even with the relatively high salary for the position.

To be clear, the Charter requirement cannot be changed without a vote of the electorate. However, the Council has some discretion as to how soon the person must become a resident. The Council may wish to discuss options, including allowing the new city manager a longer term to become a resident, and during that time refer a Charter amendment to the City’s voters in November 2025.

Pro/Cons of a Residency Requirement

Pros

- Ensures the City Manager is a part of the community in which they work, which may provide them with a better understanding of issues as a resident
- Ensures City Manager is available in case of emergency
- Residents have confidence the manager understands the community
- Residents see and meet the manager around town, creating confidence in local government

Cons

- Housing prices in Louisville are too high for many people to afford
- It may limit the diversity of the pool of candidates due to the high cost of housing, the limited housing stock, and the homogenous community
- Local candidates and their families may be established in a nearby community and schools and not want to move for this position
- The housing market is currently affected by the relatively higher interest rates, and candidates may not want to sell a home for which they have a low-interest rate mortgage
- If a new city manager cannot find housing in town in the time set by council, the City could face quick turnover in this very important position

Requirements in Surrounding Municipalities

<i>Municipality</i>	<i>Charter/Municipal Code/None</i>	<i>Additional Information</i>
Arvada	Charter Requirement	up to 12 months to become a resident
Boulder	No Requirement	
Brighton	Charter Requirement	
Broomfield	Charter Requirement	
Englewood	Charter Requirement	
Erie	No Requirement	
Golden	Charter Requirement	
Lafayette	Charter Requirement	Council may require the City Administrator to become a resident of the city within the time set by the Council.
Lakewood	Charter Requirement	
Littleton	No Requirement	
Longmont	Charter Requirement	
Loveland	Charter Requirement	Within 6 months
Louisville	Charter Requirement	shall become a resident of the City within the time established by the Council
Northglenn	Code Requirement	must live withing a 45-minute commute time
Superior	No Requirement	
Westminster	Charter Requirement	

Best Practices

In general, our recruiter reports that current best practice is to allow some leeway on residency as a way to encourage a wide variety of qualified applicants for the city manager position and also to keep a city manager for a reasonable amount of time.

Options

- Leave the requirement in place and allow the new city manager a reasonable time to establish residency within the City.
- Refer a Charter amendment to the electorate on the November 2025 ballot that could change the requirement.
- If a Charter amendment is approved by the voters, the City Council could still address residency for the city manager (for instance, by contract or ordinance):
 - Require the City Manager to live within a reasonable radius that would enable them to respond quickly if needed.
 - Allow the City Manager to live outside of town with City Council approval.
 - Allow the Council to consider the specific circumstances of an incoming city manager.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Unknown at this time, costs could include a higher salary to help the new City Manager afford a home here and election costs related to a possible charter amendment ballot question.

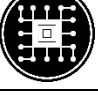
RECOMMENDATION:

Discussion/Direction

ATTACHMENT(S):

None.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT:

☒	 Financial Stewardship & Asset Management	☒	 Reliable Core Services
☐	 Vibrant Economic Climate	☐	 Quality Programs & Amenities
☐	 Engaged Community	☒	 Healthy Workforce
☐	 Supportive Technology	☐	 Collaborative Regional Partner