

## CCI Sets up Statewide Transportation Meetings

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### *A Letter from CCI Executive Director Larry Kallenberger*

The Colorado Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel asked CCI to take the lead in setting up meetings in 24 different locations throughout the state. A list of those meetings and locations can be found on page 2.

Counties have responded by co-hosting all 24 meetings, locating meeting venues and making sure invitations are sent. We have many co-sponsors including CML—our local government partner.

The meetings will not only give the panel and the CDOT staff a chance to report their findings, but also more importantly will give a chance for local community leaders statewide to begin organizing for the upcoming transportation funding effort.

Together with other community leaders, you have the unique capacity to reach out to legislators and be a big part of ensuring increased transportation funding for both state and local government.

It has been almost 20 years since cities and counties have gotten a local share of new Colorado transportation funds. Your leadership could make all the difference in whether we receive future state funding.

Thank you for everything you are doing to show county leadership in this effort. Please contact Michael Smith or me at 303-861-4076 with any questions.

*These meetings are being co-sponsored by: Blue Ribbon Panel, CDOT, CCI, CML, DOLA, Club 20, Action 22, Progressive 15, Economic Developers Council of Colorado and the Colorado Rural Council.*

**For a full list of upcoming meetings, please see page 2.**

### Counties Profiles Featured

Adams County 8

Gilpin County 9

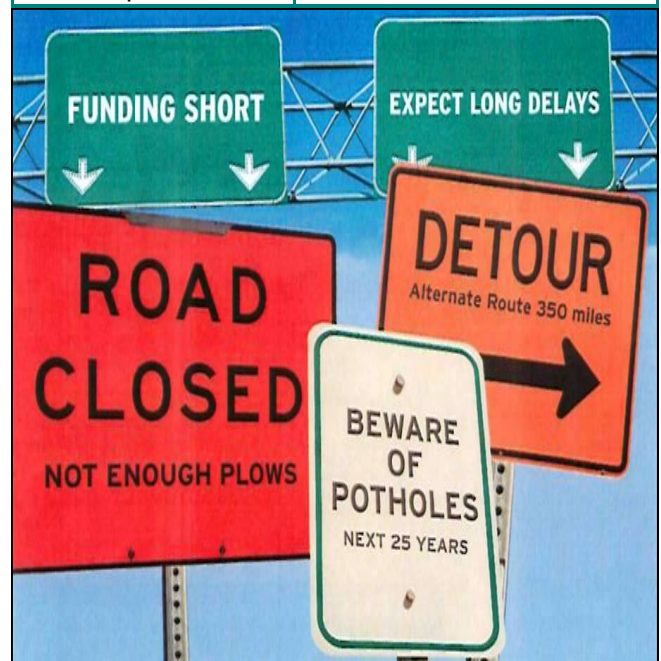
San Juan County 10

Pueblo County 11

## Transportation Meeting Times & Locations

Date, Day & Time	Location
<b>September 24</b> Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.	<b>Lamar</b> Lamar Cultural Event Center 102 E. Parmenter
<b>September 25</b> Thursday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Pueblo</b>
<b>September 25</b> Thursday, 2:00 p.m.	<b>Colorado Springs</b> Pikes Peak Area COG 15 South 7 <sup>th</sup> St Colorado Springs
<b>September 26</b> Friday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Limon</b> Hub City/Limon Senior Center 220 E Ave
<b>October 2</b> Thursday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Castle Rock</b> Douglas County Admin Bldg 100 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street
<b>October 2</b> Thursday, 2:00 p.m.	<b>Denver</b> Denver Public Library 10 West 14 <sup>th</sup> Ave Parkway
<b>October 3</b> Friday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Aurora</b> Center Point Plaza 14980 East Alameda
<b>October 3</b> Friday, 2:00 p.m.	<b>Golden</b> Jefferson County Admin Bldg Commissioners Hearing Rm 100 Jefferson County Pkwy
<b>October 8</b> Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Boulder</b> Boulder County Courthouse Hearing Room 1325 Pearl St
<b>October 8</b> Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.	<b>Longmont (tentative)</b> Longmont City Hall Council Chambers Civic Center 350 Kimbark St
<b>October 9</b> Thursday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Broomfield</b> <b>City Council Chambers</b> One DesCombes Drive Broomfield
<b>October 15</b> Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.	<b>Sterling</b> Gary De Soto Building Logan County Fairgrounds
<b>October 16</b> Thursday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Fort Morgan</b> Event Center 720 Ellsworth St Brush
<b>October 16</b> Thursday, 2:00 p.m.	<b>Greeley</b>
<b>October 17</b> Friday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Fort Collins</b>

Date, Day & Time	Location
<b>October 21</b> Tuesday, 2:00 p.m.	<b>Glenwood Springs</b> Garfield County Courthouse 108 8 <sup>th</sup> St. Hearing Room
<b>October 22</b> Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Grand Junction</b>
<b>October 22</b> Wednesday, 2:30 p.m.	<b>Montrose</b> "The Bridges" 2500 Bridges Circle
<b>October 23</b> Thursday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Durango</b> La Plata Courthouse 1060 East 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave Hearing Room
<b>October 23</b> Thursday, 4:00 p.m.	<b>Alamosa</b> Alamosa Service Center 8900 Independence Way
<b>October 24</b> Friday, 10:00 a.m.	<b>Trinidad</b> Las Animas County Court- house 200 East 1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>October 29</b> Wednesday 2:00 p.m.	<b>Craig</b>
<b>October 30</b> Thursday, 9:00 a.m.	<b>Steamboat Springs</b> Howelsen Hill Ski Area Olympian Hall
<b>October 30</b> Thursday 3:00 p.m.	<b>Frisco</b> County Commons 0037 Peak One Drive



# District Meetings



## Eastern District

Nine of the ten eastern district counties were present this summer at CCI's Eastern District Meeting. As in past years, CCI staff highlighted the 2008 legislation of county interest and reviewed 2009 legislative ideas proposed by the counties.



Phillips County Commissioner Susan Roll Walters and Morgan County Commissioner Jon Becker look over materials during the Eastern District meeting in Fort Morgan.

Following CCI staff reports, CDOT Executive Director, Russ George joined county commissioners to give a grim status report on the state's transportation system and funding crisis. Director George began by describing the performance condition of the state's system in general, then focused, in particular, on the condition of roads and bridges on the Eastern Plains. He explained that 4 (3%) of the 125 bridges rated "poor" in the state

and 431 (13%) of the 3,266 highway miles rated "poor" in the state are located in CCI's Eastern District Counties. Director George cited the diminished buying power of the state's fuel tax, the looming insolvency of the federal highway funds, the rising construction cost index and other factors for Colorado's current transportation crisis.

Following Director George's report, Larry Kallenberger, CCI's Executive Director, spoke briefly about the Blue Ribbon Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel's upcoming educational presentations and CCI's leadership role in this effort. Beginning in late September, the Panel will host 24 meetings throughout the state. The goal of these presentations is two-fold: 1.) to increase awareness among community leaders regarding the state's transportation crisis and 2.) to encourage grassroots leadership in promoting a solution that will address the state's transportation problem. Kallenberger explained that the three meetings scheduled for CCI's Eastern District counties will be held on Friday, September 26<sup>th</sup> in Limon, Wednesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> in Sterling and Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup> in Fort Morgan. Commissioners Gary Beedy, Debbie Zwirn and Tony Carlson were acknowledged for their help in securing a meeting space for each of the meetings listed above.

Director George was then asked to comment on CDOT's Rail Relocation Study and why CDOT has funding for such a study in the midst of a funding crisis. He explained that the study is

supported by federal funding, not state funding. Director George openly acknowledged the legitimate concerns of both the Eastern Plains and the Front Range communities. And, while the issue is not going away, the conversation must be broadened beyond just the business side of the proposal.

Brad Young, former state representative, presented the "SAFE" (Savings Account for Education) initiative. Young explained that the initiative dedicates a permanent source of funding for K-12 public education while preserving the right of citizens to vote on taxes. Constituents will have an opportunity to vote on the SAFE initiative this November.

Yuma County Commissioner Robin Wiley gave a brief update on the Republican River and the state's efforts to comply with the multi-state compact's provisions. Yuma County Commissioners Trent Bushner and Dean Wingfield then led a conversation on the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission's rule revision efforts.

The meeting concluded with Eastern District President and Yuma County Commissioner, Trent Bushner, and Eastern District Vice President and Kit Carson County Commissioner, Dave Gwyn, thanking their peers for traveling to Fort Morgan and recognizing Morgan, Washington and Yuma Counties for purchasing lunch.

## Front Range District

With eight of ten Front Range District counties present, Douglas County Commissioner and Front Range District President Jack Hilbert and Boulder County Commissioner and Vice President Cindy Domenico recognized El Paso County Commissioner Dennis Hisey for his year of service as immediate past president of the district.



Dave Ferrill with Denver City & County and Boulder County Commissioner Cindy Domenico peruse materials during the Front Range District Meeting on August 8.

Following a review of new laws affecting counties and proposed 2009 legislative issues, Russ George, Director of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), briefed the commissioners on CDOT's projected

2008-2009 budget and future needs. Director George noted that the Front Range counties hold 22 percent of the state's total centerline miles, yet contain 46 of the "poor" rated bridges, 23 percent of the "poor" condition centerline miles and 75 percent of the congested highway miles statewide. One of two CDOT

documents shows a projected revenue reduction from approximately \$1.3 billion to under \$1 billion because of a number of factors including federal funding cuts and reductions in fuel tax revenues. Director George noted this is the first time that all CDOT revenue sources are uniformly in decline.

CCI Executive Director Larry Kallenberger outlined CCI's opportunity to work with CDOT and the Colorado Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel in coordinating 24 statewide meetings aimed at outlining the Panel's findings. The meetings will most importantly be a start of the organizing effort to come. The sessions will take place throughout the state during September and October.

Henry Sobanet, former Director of the Office of State Budget and Planning, presented the proposed initiated measure of Savings Account for Education (SAFE) explaining the mechanics of the measure as well as the pros and cons. Mr. Sobanet stated that SAFE, if passed in November, would provide a "de Brucing" of state revenues for K-12 education by allowing otherwise refundable amounts to be directed to a permanent fund and simultaneously addressing the inherent conflict between TABOR and Amendment 23.

### Mountain District

CCI's Mountain District met in Summit County with ten of the district's 13 counties represented. The 2008 legislative review included Pitkin's observation that their schools want to work with the county to develop safer school buildings and to have them inspected and Gilpin's report that they have found some CPAs to help low income residents with their tax preparations, which dramatically increased the number of individuals claiming the earned income tax credit.

After review of the 2009 legislative proposals, DOLA Field Representative Greg Winkler provided an update on the energy and mineral impact fund grant process with the first cycle using the new multi-tiered approach. They have received twice as many applications as usual. Mr. Winkler said that with this level

Jackson County Commissioner John Rich & Fremont County Commissioner Larry Lasha listen during the Mountain District Meeting in Summit County.

of demand on the grant resources, applicants will have to make strong showings of natural resource impacts, quantifiable local effort, measurable outcomes and readiness to proceed.

CDOT local liaisons, Michelle Halstead and Angie Drumm, reviewed the status of the state transportation system and the funding challenges, which all transportation providers are experiencing. Joe Elson, Region 3 Program Engineer, reviewed projects that are happening within the district including the completion of the Maroon Creek Bridge in Pitkin

County, the reconstruction and addition of shoulders to US 24 west of Leadville and the new management structure adopted for the I-70 corridor. Mr. Elson noted the closure of Vail Pass 18 times last winter and the ongoing planning for alternatives to deal with this situation. CCI's Executive Director, Larry Kallenberger, discussed the planning for regional transportation meetings that CCI is helping to coordinate.

Three mountain counties reviewed economic development activities in their area. Jackson Commissioner John Rich talked about his efforts to entice a pellet plant to locate in his area. He is now talking to a group that can make ethanol from beetle kill wood. Custer Commissioner Kit Shy said that they formed an economic development group three years ago and instituted a bed tax and tourism board. Grand Commissioner Nancy Stuart talked about their efforts to get economic development help from the establishment of a rural health center.

Finally, Andy Karsian provided an update on legislative wild land urban interface (WUI) discussions. He said the interim committee would like to know what powers counties want relative to WUI areas, such as the power to enforce defensible space requirements. There was discussion about the desirability of this power and associated enforcement costs. Summit County noted that many private water systems are not designed for wild land firefighting but are expected to be used for that purpose. Park County is promoting a voluntary cleanup program and asking developers to consult with fire districts. Gilpin County has a community slash pile that it uses as an incentive to get property owners to participate in cleanup, as well as a source of fuel to heat the county's new R&B building. It was noted that incentive-based programs are less effective with absentee owners. Fremont County suggested "firewise" education may help even absentee owners understand that their home may be triaged if it is not defensible.

### Southern District

Southern District President and Alamosa County Commissioner George Wilkinson called the meeting to order. CCI legislative staff updated more than 40 county commissioners and administrators on legislation passed last year that included optional

powers or mandates for county government. They also reviewed more than 50 legislative issues submitted to CCI for the upcoming legislative session. The final part of the morning concluded with a short review of submitted NACo resolutions and a short summary of successfully administered NACo resolutions of past years.



Jackson County Commissioner John Rich & Fremont County Commissioner Larry Lasha listen during the Mountain District Meeting in Summit County.



Alamosa County Commissioner George Wilkinson shares a laugh with Alamosa County Administrator Barry Shiohita and Commissioner Darius Allen at the start of the Southern District Meeting.

Commissioners discussed five agenda items in the afternoon. Transportation weighed heavy in the conversation of two agenda items. Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) local government liaisons discussed the current status of CDOT funding and what local governments should expect in the upcoming years. The funding outlook was not optimistic. With an aging infrastructure and decreasing revenue for transportation the state's roads and bridges are facing a "silent crisis." Increasingly the problems are a growing population with increasing fuel costs leading to decreased gas tax revenue while no political road map is available for solving the problem.

CCI and its members are taking the lead in setting up meetings at 24 locations throughout Colorado to allow local leaders the chance to hear from the Transportation Finance and Implementation Panel on its findings and begin to organize to seek new transportation funding for state and local governments. Southern District counties agreed to support the effort.

Former state representative Brad Young addressed the Southern District to speak about the upcoming Savings Account for Education ballot initiative (SAFE). Mr. Young discussed the current difficulties Colorado faces with fiscal constraints on the budget set in the Constitution. SAFE proposes to change TABOR and Amendment 23 to allow for a permanent account that will fund education in Colorado. The arguments for the ballot initiative included: allows elected officials to decide funding (as opposed to constitutional mandates), patches up problem areas in Amendment 23 and TABOR, leaves the tax rates in Colorado where they are now and clarifies confusing and contradictory ballot efforts. Some arguments against SAFE include less say for citizens on how their money is spent and increased estimated taxes in Colorado.

Commissioners also discussed the harmful effect of increasing fuel costs on county budgets. Part of this discussion included weighing the pros and cons of moving to a four day work week for the counties. Finally, Otero County discussed with others the difficulty they have in meeting utility company billing deadlines. Other counties offered ways that may help Otero work through the timing situation.

**Western District**

The morning session on legislative issues focused on the 37 new laws passed by the 2008 General Assembly that require county adherence as well as 2009's 63 proposed administrative and legislative issues that steering committees will consider at their September meetings. The legislative committee will finalize those decisions at the Legislative Committee Meeting October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Allan Gerstle, Ouray/San Miguel Social Services Director, presented the counties concern on the Colorado Department of

Health Care Policy and Finance proposed change from a decentralized county determination of Medicaid eligibility to a centralized state determination. There is considerable concern from counties throughout the state on this issue.

Herman Stockinger, CDOT's Director of Intergovernmental Relations, made a presentation on the status of and need for funding transportation in Colorado. He outlined the issue beginning with the history of how transportation has been funded. He mentioned that over the past 16 years funding declined because of 1) the passage of several constitutional amendments that had the affect of decreasing funds for transportation 2) the demand has increased because more than one million more people live in Colorado 3) the dramatic inflationary increase in construction costs. He was urging



Rio Blanco County Commissioner Forrest Nelson, San Juan County Administrator Willy Tookey and San Juan County Commissioner Pete McKay observe during the Western District Meeting.

counties to support funding changes that would increase resources for transportation.

Larry Kallenberger, CCI Executive Director, reported that the Blue Ribbon Panel (BRP) on Transportation Finance and Implementation continued work to determine needs and how to finance road, bridge and transit improvements in Colorado.

The Panel is conducting 24 meetings throughout the state to explain to local Colorado leaders the progress of the panel and to seek their help in organizing support for transportation funding. CCI is working with the 24 counties that are being asked to host the meetings. Counties in surrounding areas are being asked to help recruit community, county and regional leaders to attend these regional meetings.

Commissioner Craig Meis (Mesa) provided an update on mineral lease and severance tax issues. A continuing issue for counties is the netback deduction on oil and gas production that comes back years later to require counties to "repay" companies that have been "overcharged." Alternative solutions continue to be offered but no decisions have been made. There was a brief review and comments on the severance tax issues headed for the ballot.

Commissioner Wally White (La Plata) provided information on an oil field worker who was exposed to a toxic fluid in the field. A secondary exposure by an individual at the hospital treating the worker was a cause for some concern, though other emergency and medical personnel showed no symptoms. There is a federal rule/regulation that requires declaration of chemicals in toxic fluids/materials to emergency and medical personnel immediately for treatment purposes only. Oil and gas industries have an EPA waiver on their toxic fluids reporting for proprietary reasons. Commissioner White wants the EPA to lift the waiver.

# 2008 District Meetings Photo Highlights



Bent County Commissioner Tom Wallace and Baca County Commissioner Peter Dawson enjoy some coffee and catching up prior to the Southern District Meeting.



Otero County Commissioner Jake Klein strikes a pose during the Southern District Meeting.



Hinsdale County Commissioner Al Brown and Montrose County Commissioner Bill Patterson enjoy themselves at the Western District Meeting.



Douglas County Commissioner Jack Hilbert, City & County of Broomfield Councilmember Bob Gaiser and Arapahoe County Commissioner Susan Beckman find amusement during the Front Range District Meeting.



Jefferson County Commissioner Kathy Hartman and Larimer County Commissioner Kathy Rennels laugh during the Front Range District Meeting.



El Paso County Commissioners Jim Bensberg and Sallie Clark examine documents during the Front Range District Meeting.



More than 40 county commissioners and administrators attended the annual CCI Southern District Meeting in Walsenburg.



Mesa County Commissioner Steve Acquafresca makes a point during the Western District Meeting.



Sedgwick County Commissioners Chuck Powell and Gene Bauerele listen during the Eastern District meeting on August 22nd in Morgan County.



Teller County Commissioner Bob Campbell enjoys some coffee prior to the Mountain District meeting.



CCI Executive Director Larry Kallenberger and San Miguel County Commissioner Elaine Fischer chuckle with the crowd during the Western District Meeting.



Teller County Commissioner Jim Ignatius and Grand County Commissioner Nancy Stuart catch up prior to the Mountain District Meeting.



Gilpin County Commissioners Ron Slinger and Jeanne Nicholson speak with Pitkin County Commissioner Dorothea Farris at the Mountain District Meeting.



Lincoln County Commissioners Gary Beedy & Steve Burgess focus during the Eastern District Meeting.



CCI Board of Directors meet annually at the State Fair.

## 2008 State Fair and Junior Livestock Sale

Right: CCI board members proudly support the young participants of the Junior Livestock Sale.



## Adams County

Adams County operates on an annual budget of approximately \$390 million with 1,800 employees, ten elected officials and an assessed valuation of approximately \$4.5 billion.

Located in the northern metropolitan area of Denver, Adams County covers 1,179.5 square miles. It is home to the cities of Bennett, Brighton, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton and portions of Arvada, Aurora, Westminster and Lochbuie.

Adams County is the fifth most populous county in the state and is projected to be the fastest growing county in the metro Denver region over the next two decades. With a current population of approximately 433,000, the county is anticipated to grow to 450,000 by 2010 and to 700,000 by 2030.

Records of the Adams County area date back more than 400 years when the Spanish settled in Pueblo Indian territory. The first permanent settlement in Adams County, Henderson, was home to numerous settlers, most of whom had come west to strike it rich during the "gold rush." These residents discovered that there was more money to be made raising crops and livestock in order to feed the prospectors and residents of the new city of Denver than there was in gold mining. These early farmers helped make the growth of Denver possible and established the agricultural economy still seen in the county today.



**CCI District: Front Range**

**Commissioners:**  
W.R. "Skip" Fischer  
Alice Nichol  
Larry Pace

**Location: Northeast of Denver**

**Square Miles: 1,182**

**Population: 422,495**

**Assessed Value:**  
4,527,197,700

Brighton became the first town 15 years before Adams County was formed. It began as Hughes, Hughes Junction or Hughes Station in 1870 because it connected the Denver Pacific and the Denver and Boulder Valley Railroads. Adams County was officially formed on November 15, 1902 when "old" Arapahoe County was split into Arapahoe County to the south and Adams County to the north.

Adams County is governed by a three-member Board of County Commissioners. Each board member is elected at large (with a residency requirement within a specified district) to represent the county as a whole. The board administers all county functions, appoints all boards and commissions, holds public hearings twice a week and attends and represents the county on numerous regional and county organizations.



Above is a drawing depicting the new Adams County Government Center with ground breaking set for March 2009.

The abundance of open space, parks and trails in Adams County provides a wide variety of recreational activities. In addition, the county boasts a number of golf courses, the South Platte River, Barr Lake State Park and Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. Adams County rests in an ideal location to suit the travel needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

The county surrounds most of Denver International Airport which is the seventh busiest airport in the nation and the tenth busiest in the world. Front Range Airport, a county-owned general aviation airport, features the tallest general aviation air traffic control tower in the United States and can accommodate aircraft as large as the military C130 and the Boeing 737. Major Colorado highways, interstates and railroads also flow through the county, providing a convenient commute to nearly anywhere in the Denver-metro area. Over the next ten years, the county will be a beneficiary of the Regional Transportation District's (RTD) FasTracks project. This will include the building of three light rail or commuter rail lines, in addition, to bus rapid transit lines.

Substantial growth is on the horizon for Adams County. While this growth promises to bring a wealth of opportunities, it also introduces a number of challenges, including crowding, urban sprawl, crime and traffic congestion. Many infrastructure issues also challenge the growing county, including the building of new roads and the widening of existing ones. To meet these challenges, Adams County has established an ongoing five year capital improvement program (CIP). The county plans to break ground on a new centralized government center in March 2009 as shown above. By consolidating numerous centers, citizens will gain access to more services in one convenient location.

# Gilpin County

Gilpin County is one of Colorado’s oldest (one of the original 13 counties created with the formation of the Colorado Territory in 1861) and smallest (except for the City and County of Broomfield) counties. It is situated in the Front Range foothills immediately adjacent to the Denver metropolitan area.

Gold was first discovered in bonanza quantities in Gregory Gulch, located between the present-day communities of Central City (the current County seat) and Black Hawk on May 6, 1859, leading to the “Pikes Peak or Bust” gold rush that quickly populated what had been a remote western outpost of the Kansas Territory.



Gilpin County built a new community center for its residents.



Historic Gilpin County Courthouse in Central City.

Within a few years, these towns along with others now forgotten, like Nevadaville, Russell Gulch and Apex, became the economic engine and political powerhouse of Colorado. At the time of statehood in 1876, all three members of Colorado’s delegation to the U.S. Congress, Henry M. Teller, Jerome Chaffee, and James B. Belford, were Gilpin County men. Other prominent residents included Senator Nathaniel P. Hill; the 2<sup>nd</sup> president of the University of Colorado, Horace Hale and his son Irving, the Hero of Manila Bay during the Spanish American War; and territorial secretary and journalist Frank Hall.

Gilpin County women also rose to prominence: “Aunt” Clara Brown and Frances Wisebart Jacobs are both depicted in stained glass at the Colorado State Capitol, while Florence Sabin, a pioneer in public health, was honored as one of Colorado’s two representatives in Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

This period of prominence was short-lived, as newer mining camps like Leadville and Cripple Creek soon surpassed Gilpin’s mineral output. Population in the towns declined precipitously after World War I, but subsequent improvements in transportation led to the development of numerous small mountain subdivisions. One of these, Lincoln Hills, along the “Moffat Road,” was one of the few African-American resort communities in the country. Descendents of the early residents still own many of the small cabins there.

This semi-rural growth created its own problems including small lot sizes, inadequate septic systems and a marginal County road system. Stringent septic regulations and an enforceable growth-limiting compact with the towns of Central City and Black Hawk have contributed to a desirable lifestyle. So too has the 1991 implementation of limited stakes gaming in the two towns, which has brought a level of prosperity to the communities unknown since the 19<sup>th</sup> century albeit not without social costs.

To deal with some of those costs and to compensate for the loss of established patterns and places for social interaction, the County constructed a new Justice Center, which also houses public health and social services offices, a Library and a Community Center, with pools, exercise equipment, and classroom and meeting space.

The bulk of the County’s land, more than 52 percent, is held by other public entities, including Colorado State Parks (Golden Gate State Park) and the U.S. Forest Service. The County is now working with those entities and others to deal with the latest threat, the mountain pine beetle infestation. Combining a response to that crisis with a novel method of dealing with soaring energy costs, the County opened an award-winning, woody biomass-heated Road & Bridge facility in 2007.

Today, Gilpin County has about 5,000 residents, enjoying one of the lowest tax rates in the state, along with an idyllic mountain lifestyle just 45 minutes from downtown Denver. Rooted in the past, it enjoys a prosperous present, while looking forward to the future.



CCI District: Mountain

Commissioners:  
 Jeanne Nicholson  
 Ron Slinger  
 Forrest Whitman

Location: North Central Colorado

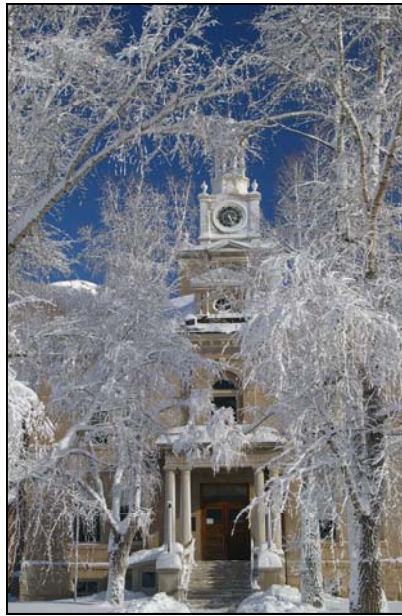
Square Miles: 150

Population: 5,091

Assessed Value:  
 346,629,880

## San Juan County

Established in 1876 San Juan County has the highest mean elevation of any county in the United States. The San Juan National Forest, Rio Grande National Forest, Uncompahgre National Forest, Weminuche Wilderness Area and BLM Lands account for nearly 90% of the county's land area. San Juan County is the least populated county in Colorado with 560 of the 589 county residents living in Silverton, the county's only incorporated municipality. With an average snowfall of over 200 inches and a growing season of approximately 14 days San Juan County does not have a single acre of agricultural land. The primary crop is rhubarb that grows wild throughout the community and is featured at the International Rhubarb Festival during Silverton's spectacular 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration.



The San Juan County Courthouse in Silverton sees an average of 200 inches of snow a year.

San Juan County was founded on the tradition of mining gold, silver, lead and zinc. Even though there are no mines currently in operation, the county takes pride in preserving our mining heritage. The hard working San Juan County Historical Society can take much of the credit in its never ending struggle to preserve the old mining structures. The recent increases in metal prices have caused the county to be guardedly optimistic that mining may soon return. Mining is the only Use by Right allowed in San Juan County, all other uses are considered a Use Subject to Review.

With a long history of mining boom or bust San Juan County has slowly transformed from a mining economy to a tourist and recreation economy. Silverton is the northern terminus for the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad and Silverton Mountain is one of the newest and most challenging ski areas in the state. There are two scenic byways that go through San Juan County, the San Juan Skyway and Alpine Loop. Numerous four wheel drive roads and an abundance of public lands throughout San Juan and neighboring counties provide an amazing playground for back country adventures.

With the loss of mining San Juan County has experienced many changes and has faced many challenges. Beyond the basic economics lies the change of and redefin-

ing the sense of community. As the population changed, so have the needs and expectations of the residents. Most of the private property is patented mining claims that were traditionally available for hunting, hiking and other recreational uses are now being sold by the mining companies to private individuals for cabin sites. With an ever increasing number of no trespassing signs San Juan County has made it a priority to maintain public access on historically used roads and trails.

Many of the homes once occupied by miners and their families have been sold to be used as vacation homes. This has caused a severe housing crisis. The county recently purchased an old smelter site to be redeveloped for affordable and attainable workforce housing. The county received an EPA Brownfield Cleanup grant and financial assistance from the Department of Local Affairs to help cover the costs of cleaning up the site. The housing units will be developed in partnership with two regional housing agencies, Housing Solutions for the Southwest and Colorado Housing Inc. The housing crunch has made it difficult for the school district, town and county to find and retain employees.

San Juan County has worked closely with Hinsdale, Ouray and San Miguel Counties and with the San Juan National Forest and BLM to address the issues of Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) use in the backcountry. San Juan and neighboring counties have worked to come up with OHV regulations that would be consistent throughout the four counties as well as on the federal lands. San Juan County has opened nearly all county roads to OHVs but require that the drivers are licensed and that they have liability insurance for their vehicles. The counties have begun a second year with a seasonal backcountry ranger to patrol 4-wheel drive roads in the four counties. The ranger does issue tickets for violations of the county's OHV ordinance but his primary goal is to provide education and a presence.

One of the most recent successes is the partnership San Juan County developed with the Silverton Family Learning Center, a not for profit organization. By combining resources to capture government grants and private foundations monies, the collaboration has been able to construct a much needed preschool for the community. The county owns the building and the Silverton Family Learning Center operates and maintains the preschool.

San Juan County looks optimistically into the future recognizing that we are very fortunate to be located in the magnificent San Juan Mountains.



CCI District: Western

**Commissioners:**  
Ernie Kuhlman  
Pete McKay  
Terry Rhoades

**Location:** Southwestern  
Colorado

**Square Miles:** 389

**Population:** 559

**Assessed Value:**  
55,047,440

# Pueblo County

Located in southern Colorado, along the state’s major growth corridor commonly known as the Front Range of Colorado, Pueblo County is one of the most historic counties in the state. It has served as a major transportation and trading center for more than 150 years. Today, Pueblo County is combining its rich history with a progressive approach to land use and development and an emphasis on natural resources and conservation, to become a leader in renewable energy and architecture.

Pueblo County’s history dates back to the early 1800s when Lt. Zebulon Pike explored southern Colorado. The Arkansas River was an international boundary at that time, separating the Louisiana Purchase territory from what would become Mexican Session lands. In the 1840s settlers established a small adobe fort at the confluence of the Arkansas River and Fountain Creek, the present site of the city of Pueblo. Taking its name from a Spanish word meaning “town” or “village,” Fort Pueblo’s location was ideal as it was close to the mountains for the trappers, rich with grasslands for livestock grazing and had an abundant supply of water. In 1862, Pueblo County was organized and Territorial Governor William Gilpin appointed Pueblo County’s first government officials.

Growth was rapid during the 1870s and 1880s when the railroads and Colorado Coal & Mine (later Colorado Fuel & Iron or CFI) came to Pueblo. The emerging steel and mining industries were magnets for Easterners and European immigrants seeking employment opportunities in America. The city of Pueblo continued to grow and prosper and would remain the second largest city in Colorado until the early 1960s.

hospitals and health care organizations, educational institutions and government agencies. Pueblo County continues to be among the largest crop and livestock producing counties in Colorado.



The historic Pueblo County Courthouse.

With two U.S. highways, railroads, truck lines and airport services, Pueblo County serves as a major transportation and commercial “hub” for southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. Each year, the county attracts thousands of visitors for shopping, health care, higher education, recreation and cultural activities. The nationally recognized Sangre de Cristo Arts & Conference Center and

Buell Children’s Museum draw approximately 300,000 visitors per year. Other amenities include the downtown Pueblo Convention Center, Historic Arkansas Riverwalk Project (HARP), Union Avenue Historic District, Pueblo Greenway & Nature Center, Mountain Park Environmental Center in Beulah, Lake Pueblo State Park and the Pueblo Zoo. An extensive pedestrian and biking trail system from north Pueblo to Lake Pueblo and a new kayak course on the Arkansas River bring outdoor enthusiasts from throughout the state.

The Pueblo County “renaissance” has created the extensive construction of new facilities throughout the community. Over the past decade, Pueblo County and the City of Pueblo have adopted major plans including the Pueblo Regional Development Plan, Communities of Pueblo Strategic Plan, and the Central Pueblo Framework Plan, all of which are designed to guide growth, land use, and development in both urban and rural areas. Colorado State University at Pueblo with more than 4,500 students and Pueblo Community College offer bachelors and masters degrees in addition to extensive vocational programs.

In 2007, voters approved a Tabor time-out measure to generate more than \$22 million for roads, recreation and a new public health facility in Pueblo County. Many new buildings have been constructed or are in the planning/construction stages including a new Pueblo City-County Health Department, Pueblo Community Animal Shelter (funded by both public and private dollars), Police Department building, Pueblo Regional Development Center, and Justice Complex, all of which are being built as “high performance” facilities and will meet the highest energy efficiency and environmental standards. The new public health facility is designed to meet the LEED-NC Silver certification and will include a state-of-the-art Biosafety Level 3 laboratory.

It is the goal of Pueblo County to create a healthy and sustainable community with opportunities for employment, education, health care, housing, transportation, and recreation. While there are many challenges ahead in the areas of economic development and protecting the quantity and quality of water in Pueblo and the Arkansas River Valley, Pueblo County officials and citizens continue to strive to make Pueblo a desirable place to live and work with the highest possible quality of life.

In recent years, unincorporated areas have experienced significant growth in residential and commercial properties, particularly Pueblo West which grew from a population of approximately 3,000 in 1990 to more than 33,000 residents in 2007. In addition, Pueblo County has undergone an accelerated transformation from a manufacturing to a service-oriented economy. By the early 1990s, the steel industry declined and the arrival of new businesses and amenities changed the face of the community. With the development of PEDCO (Pueblo Economic Development Corporation) and voter approval of a half-cent sales tax to be used for new business incentives, more than 12,000 new jobs have been added to the economy by the turn of the century. Today, major employers are



CCI District: Southern

**Commissioners:**  
**Jeff Chostner**  
**John Cordova, Sr.**  
**Anthony Nunez**

**Location: South Central Colorado**

**Square Miles: 2,397**

**Population: 154,538**

**Assessed Value:**  
**1,216,370,410**

## Colorado's New Energy Economy Conference

The second annual "Colorado's New Energy Economy: The Path Forward – A Local Focus" conference will be held this year on Tuesday, October 14, 2008 at the Colorado Convention Center in Denver. Join close to one thousand citizens eager to share their local sustainable initiatives across Colorado. The conference will showcase best practice models that power communities into an efficient renewable future. The cost of registration is \$125.00. For more information and to register for the conference, go to <http://www.energyoutreach.org/conf/index.htm>

## Colorado Office of Smart Growth Heritage Planning Grant Program

The Office of Smart Growth in the Colorado Department of Local Affairs is pleased to announce the availability of Colorado Heritage Planning Grant (CHPG) Program funds for 2008. Local governments working cooperatively to address public impacts caused by growth may apply for grants of up to \$100,000. The office requests applications be submitted jointly by the governing bodies of at least two local governments.

For eligibility requirements and more information (including a list of previously-funded projects), please visit our website or call 303.866.2156. Please note that the department now requires all applicant submittals be transmitted electronically.

Find program application, guidelines, and award criteria on our website:

[www.dola.colorado.gov/osg](http://www.dola.colorado.gov/osg)

**Applications due Friday, October 31, 2008**

## APPLY FOR PRESTIGIOUS INNOVATIONS AWARD

Harvard University invites you to apply for the Innovations in American Government Award.

Administered by the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, the Innovations Award is heralded as the premier public-sector award in the nation. It is given annually to programs that serve as examples of creative and effective government at its best.

All units of government--federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial—from all policy areas are eligible to apply.

The top winners of the 2009 Innovations Award will receive a \$100,000 grant to support replication and dissemination activities. All winners and finalists receive monetary grants.

Applications and additional information are available on our website: [www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu](http://www.innovationsaward.harvard.edu)

**APPLICATIONS ARE DUE TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**

## Colorado Rural Development Council Event

The Colorado Rural Development Council is hosting the first ever "Colorado Entrepreneurship MarketPlace". This exciting event will be held on Friday, October 10th, 2008 on the campus of Otero Junior College in La Junta, Colorado. This event will stimulate small business development and rural community growth throughout rural Colorado.

Entrepreneurial activity is one of the key solutions to energizing rural community sustainability and growth. To enhance the success of entrepreneurs throughout the state, we will focus on three key elements of success for entrepreneurs: 1. The idea and vision. 2. Marketing their product or service. 3. Financial planning to make their business successful and sustainable.

Information Sessions dealing with topics such as *The Nuts and Bolts of Business Start-up*, *Marketing on Shoestring*, *Budget*, *Branding Your Product or Service*, *Your Online Business - Kick It Up A Notch!*, *Advertising Products and Services and many others!*

Visit [www.ruralcolorado.org](http://www.ruralcolorado.org) and click on the upcoming events link to find out more information.