

# State of the County

February 10, 2021



Happy 147th birthday, Hinsdale County! **"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."** – **Helen Keller.** Our Hinsdale County team and community has been tested again this past year, but we emerge with an even greater resiliency determined to improve the quality of life in Hinsdale County. We are excited to share our second annual State of the County snapshot of accomplishments and our goals for the upcoming year. Respectfully, Commissioner Kristie Borchers, Commissioner Robert Hurd, and Commissioner Greg Levine

**MISSION** Hinsdale County works to preserve the past while developing future opportunities.

**VALUES** Hinsdale County will promote citizen confidence through community engagement, transparency, accountability, strategic planning, collaboration, stewardship, and fiscal responsibility.

## 2020 Accomplishments

- Welcomed new Road & Bridge Supervisor, Undersheriff, Administrator, EMS Director, Emergency Manager, and Admin Assistant; appointed a new Sheriff; thanked outgoing Marketing Consultant and Commissioners Thompson and Gutterman.
- Worked with The Trust For Public Land to purchased the 10.33-acre Lake San Cristobal peninsula and island with a \$1.305 million Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO grant) and more than \$200,000 in private contributions.
- Supported the Silver Thread Public Health District and Board of Health in a COVID-19 emergency declared on March 14, 2020. Adapted County operations to meet health guidelines. Reviewed and revised Joint Resolution with Mineral County with additional commissioner seats.
- Monitored the Sand Creek Fire (107 acres) and the Little Sand 2 Fire (9.5 acres) in the Sand Bench area of the Upper Piedra River Valley.
- Adopted International Code Council (ICC) 2015 & 2018 Building Codes with local amendments; issued 50% increase in building permits and nearly double use tax; partnered with Public Health to increase education for Radon exposure.
- Received an EMTS grant for a 4x4 ambulance (\$175,714.97) matched with the revenue from sale of the previous ambulance; (\$27,500); responded to 91 calls; hosting EMT-Basic class with 8 participants funded by a Covid grant; hosted IV-class in Hinsdale County (3 trained).
- Hosted Avalanche/Rescue 1 and High-Angle Rescue training. Repurposed Coursey Annex for shared use by the Sheriff's Office, Search and Rescue, and meeting venue.
- Commemorated Memorial Day and Veteran's Day at our historic Courthouse.
- Completed the hiring process for two full-time deputy positions and one part-time POST certified Alpine Ranger; received Colorado POST grant to pay for 2021 training; added 2 non-certified Reserve Deputies to roster; renewed BLM service contract for Alpine Ranger program; partnered with the Alpine Outdoor Association to conduct safety and educational "checkpoints" for all users.
- Updated Land Code for Lot Consolidation in Wade's Addition.
- Provided SIPA grant (\$5,000) to Town of Lake City fiber ring project
- Submitted Special Use Permit for the Philip H. Virden Dark Skies Observatory; raised \$18,000 towards construction of an observatory in the decommissioned Slumgullion Campground.
- Completed Geologic Information Services (GIS) project.
- Conducted 3 major elections; installed ballot dropbox; continued work to digitize and index historic County records
- Crushed gravel at Clausen's Mesa; widened corners on the Shelf Road and at the Ute Ulay; constructed a pull-out viewing area of the Hidden Treasure dam; installed four bear-proof roll-offs for trash removal for tourists; reduced fees for wildfire mitigation debris to encourage work; rented a tub grinder to reduce debris pile.





- Treasurer became certified County Treasurer/Public Trustee through Colorado Mesa University following four years of intensive study; Hinsdale County Treasurer’s office joins 34 other counties in having records retention manual approved by The Colorado State Archives Department.
- Replaced water treatment system for Wupperman Campground; improved compliance with State Public Water Quality Regulations.
- Installed Electric Utility Service 30-Mile Resort; concessionaires replaced roofs, cleared brush and debris, installed solar power supply systems for water well and outhouses, cabins cleaned; received Cultural Resource Inventory from HistoriCorps.
- Presented an Investing in History award to Liz Francisco, a Lifetime Achievement award to Jerry Gray, and a letter of appreciation to John Taylor.
- Completed a new County website and new tourism website with partners.
- Partnered with HistoriCorps to reroof historic Capital City Post Office; began implementation of minor restoration work at Debs Schoolhouse; fixed the fence and completed second interpretive sign for the Ute Ulay Town & Mill Site; Cultural Resource Inventory of 30-Mile Resort completed.
- Supported a Charge Ahead grant application for a Fast Charger for electric vehicles with partners.
- Repurposed vehicle for sole-use by coroner and installed coroner’s cot funded in part by the Lake Fork Community Foundation; Coroner and Chief Deputy Coroner attended American Board of Medical Death Investigator as part of approved Continuing Education.
- Approved Upper Piedra Cell Tower (Region 10 grant for \$10,000 which funds half our match with the 2019 Department of Regulatory grant with Archuleta County).
- Adopted Grants Management Policy; updated Investment Policy, Credit Card Policy, Boat Dock Policy, and the Personnel Policy.
- Provided support for the 2020 census.
- Participated with public lands in forest planning, grant application preparation, road contracts, & other projects.

**Working Draft of Department & Commission Goals and Strategic Actions 2021**

**ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS**

Partner to create a vibrant, business-friendly climate that enables citizens, entrepreneurs, taxpayers, and businesses opportunity to prosper.

- Promote marketing and economic development by supporting local organizations and events.
- Research opportunities for workforce housing, including the Flexible Partnership project.

**HISTORIC & NATURAL RESOURCES**

Promote responsible stewardship of historic and natural resources.

*Planning and Land-Use*

- Coordinate with the State, FEMA and Colorado Water Conservation Board on the continuing development of new digital floodplain maps and the use of LiDAR data.
- Monitor water-related issues relevant to the County, including fund development for a stream gauge at the Lake San Cristobal inlet.
- Work with Planning Commission to identify opportunities and priorities including funding sources to address issues regarding the Community Plan.
- Coordinate at least two joint / bi-annual Planning Commissioner/Board of County Commissioner meetings.
- Continue to work with Planning Commission to streamline planning and zoning review procedures.



- Continue to work with Planning Commission to review and update Land Use and Development Regulations as needed.
- Host discussion related to avalanche building hazards and other disaster mitigations efforts related to building and land use.

*Local Sites and Amenities*



- Develop Roadmap per County facility to ensure maintenance and improvements, including Courthouse, new Sheriff's Office/Administration building, and multi-purpose Southend shop.
- Continue work with the Ute Team to further develop the Ute Ulay into a heritage tourism destination, including trail development, and install 2 interpretive signs.
- Work with design team to create Project Plan for Lake San Cristobal peninsula and boat launch facilities; submit and implement infrastructure grants.
- Identify improvements for Wupperman Campground and Red Mountain Day Use Area.
- Partner with Bureau of Land Management for signage at the Slumgullion Creek inlet.
- Continue minor restoration work at Debs Schoolhouse to include plaster work, paint, window repair, exterior board replacement, and interpretive signs.
- If permitted by Forest Service, enter Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Philip H. Virden Dark Skies Observatory with Lake Fork Valley Conservancy for operation and programming.
- Review wayfinding sign needs with partners.
- Install interpretive sign at Hidden Treasure pull-out.
- Seek funds for 13 vault toilets or wag bag stations.



*Noxious Weed Control*

- Advertise & appoint Weed Officer & Noxious Weed Control Board.
- Continue to review County Weed program for efficiency and effectiveness.
- Continue to work with surrounding counties on partnerships for weed control.
- Provide appropriate notice to responsible landowners for control of noxious weeds.
- Seek additional funding where possible.



**PUBLIC SAFETY**

Provide a safe and secure community that protects life and property.

Develop an all-agency volunteer roster with qualifications and associated training schedule.

Identify all-agency short-term and long-term emergency communication needs.



*Sheriff's Office*

- Ensure a safe and secure environment for all persons by providing professional law enforcement through responsive, caring, and dedicated service.
- Provide timely and professional response and stewardship of public funds.
- Improve current facilities so that they are useable and beneficial to all functions of the Office (i.e., SAR and Wildland Fire).
- Improve our "in-house" training capabilities by sending employees to instructor level trainings and improving our current facilities.
- Seek out and provide professional leadership training opportunities for all SO employees.



*Emergency Management (EM)*



- Continue to support an Emergency Management Program that includes preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation through implementation of plans and exercises.
- Support existing efforts for multi-agency coordination (MAC), training and exercises.
- Utilize regional partners for assistance.
- Focus on community wildfire education to prepare for and mitigate the danger of wildfires.



### *Emergency Medical Services (EMS)*

- Continue progress on agency guidelines, policies, and procedures.
- Maintain Continuous Quality Improvement program.
- Develop new team member orientation program.
- Successful integration of newest team members.
- Build foundations for First Responder resiliency program.
- Focus on quality training and scenario simulation.
- Provide specialized pediatric training for providers.
- License and equip new transport ambulance.



### COUNTY SERVICES

Provide resources to Elected Officials and Departments for efficient, high-quality services.

#### *Administration Office*

- Continue to review and streamline processes for greater efficiency and consistency.
- Support positive and professional culture and work environment.
- Continue positive working relationships with department heads and other partners.
- Continue working toward increased availability of services through online platforms.
- Increase transparency and access to information through virtual meetings and online records.
- Continue to review budget and expenditures regularly for fiscal responsibility together with the Treasurer's Office.
- Quarterly review of Grants Path to supplement County budgets.
- Implement ongoing policy review process.
- Continue to provide current public information through website and social media.
- Provide access and services to community and visitors according to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) regulations.
- Continuing position appropriate training, including Public Info Training for Admin Assistant.
- Participate in ongoing county project planning.



#### *Assessor's Office*

- Implement new hardware for current GIS software.
- Finalize initial GIS parcel overlay.
- Implement public computer terminal for GIS map use and parcel record search.
- Verify first responder information, new zoning maps, and digitization of Flood Zone Mapping.



#### *Building Official and Enforcement Department*

- Provide high quality Building Safety & Code Enforcement Services for property owners and contractors to include Permitting, Inspection, Guidance and Education.
- Train new staff member to assist with maintenance of County owned properties, permitting, documentation and inspection services.
- Improve the quality and affordability of the built environment, to help sustain development and ensure the economic viability of the construction industry while improving public health, safety, and the quality of life for the entire community.
- Coordinate continuing development of new digital floodplain maps, public awareness of disaster mitigation efforts & help prevent loss of life/property damage from natural disasters.
- Continued cooperation with Public Health to raise awareness of Radon Exposure.



#### *Clerk's Office*

- Commitment to being good public servants and team players by respecting the public and providing quality services with integrity and excellence. We work to be courteous and treat all equally with professionalism and efficiency.
- To be provided with the resources for efficient, high-quality services.
- Increase storage for historic records.
- Input current and historic records into the county search system.
- Digitize current plats and increase storage for historic records.





### Treasurer's Office

- Use and maintain a comprehensive accounting system within the Treasurer's office. This has been accomplished by the implementation of the Eagle Treasurer system and a more in-depth use of Incode, an evolving process in which the Treasurer's Office and the Finance Director will continue to work together.
- Attend continuing education courses to maintain certification for County Treasurer/Public Trustee through the Extended Studies Program at Colorado Mesa University.
- Remain active with state and regional treasurer's groups.
- Participate in any strategic planning brought forth by the Board of County Commissioners.



### Veteran's Office

- Continue to utilize social media & Silver World for veteran's outreach.
- Work with real estate companies to identify veterans as they move into the area.
- Host quarterly meetings with veterans and spouses to maintain contact.
- Attend training programs offered of CO Dpt of Military & Veterans Affairs Western Region.
- Attend Colorado County Veteran Service Officer annual training conference.

### Coroner's Office

- Carry out the duties of the Coroner Office with professionalism and compassion.
- Coroner & Chief Deputy Coroner will attend American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigator approved Continuing Education.
- Coroner will attend First Responder Resiliency training & participate in the program.
- Chief Deputy Coroner will complete the 40-hour, 17 section MedicoLegal Death Investigator Course, complete investigation and reports for certification.



### HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- Promote prosperous, collaborative and healthy communities.
- Deliver high quality services throughout the valley.
- Ensure sound infrastructure.
- Continue prevention services for all.
- Embrace health equity within our community.
- Participate in multi-agency discussions that advance the County's goals.



### TRANSPORTATION

- Continue to maintain and repair all County Roads, culverts and bridges.
- Continue a sustainable snowgrooming partnership with Continental Divide Snowmobile Club.
- Upgrade and or rebuild equipment in the shop as time and budget permits.
- Reclaim and prepare County Road 30 adjacent to Lake San Cristobal for overlay.
- Assist federal agencies in the high country with campsite designation and trash removal.
- Provide support to remove decommissioned toilets Slumgullion, Spring Creek, Burrow's Park.
- Add dormer porch to the Administration office.
- Assist with park development on east entrance of the Courthouse by June 2021.
- Run Transfer Station running efficiently and add solar power to the new E waste scale house.
- Evaluate facility for Transfer Station attendant for improved working conditions.

### COMMUNICATIONS

- Research technical assistance opportunities and fund-development multiple types of communication to create connection to the north and to the south of Lake City. This may include fiber, broadband, cellular, microwave, radio, and satellite options.
- Complete cell tower construction in the Upper Piedra area.
- Research funding options for repurposing solar panels at Hill 71 through partnership.



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