

Unemployment Update

- La Plata County unemployment rate for September was 2.8%. August was 2.9%..
- San Juan County's rate was 1.4% in September; 1.6% in August..
- Montezuma County's rate was 3.3% in September; 3.4% in August.
- Archuleta County's rate was 2.9% in September; 3% in August.
- Dolores County's rate was 2.7% in September; 2.8% in August.

La Plata County Sales & Lodgers Tax Update

- Sales tax collections for July show an increase of \$82,189 or 3.48% in comparison to the same period in 2021. Year to date, Sales tax has increased \$928,490 or 6.73% as compared to the same period in 2021.
- Lodger's tax collections are earned Quarterly; Quarter 2 Lodgers tax decreased \$15,662 or -7.88% in comparison to Quarter 2, 2021. Year to date collections for Lodger's tax are \$431,916 or -.01% as compared to the same period for 2021.

Chapter 90 Update

- La Plata County Commissioners agreed to focus solely on surface impacts when it comes to orphan wells. The County will not require financial assurances for plugging and abandoning wells. The commissioners also agreed to keep financial assurances the same as they are currently written in the draft code. Financial assurances will be applied per operator, not per well.
- Next steps in the process include a public meeting on December 7th to discuss setbacks.

Board of Health Update

- The La Plata County Commissioners passed a resolution Nov. 15th that dissolved the San Juan Basin Public Health District as of December 31, 2023. The Health District includes Archuleta and La Plata Counties and has been in place for over 7 decades. Commissioners attributed the dissolution to philosophical differences that were exacerbated during the COVID pandemic.
- County Commissioners held a work session Nov. 16th to discuss the formation of a new Board of Health.
- County Commissioners are now seeking applicants for the Board Of Health. The BOCC will choose members of the public who live in La Plata County and have education, experience, or a combination of both in finance, public administration, public governance, or a public health discipline such as environmental health, health education, epidemiology, social and behavioral health, biostatistics, or public health administration. Initial Board members will serve staggered terms, with each position serving a five-year term thereafter.
- Interested candidates should complete an application at www.co.laplata.co.us/BoardOfHealth no later than Dec. 9, 2022. Interviews will be conducted during an open public meeting and scheduled on either Dec. 16, 2022, between 1 and 5 p.m. or Dec. 19, 2022 between 1 and 5 p.m. Interviewees will be offered the option of attending in person or via Zoom.

Emergency Response Center Update

- Consultants say the 2.2-acre River City Hall site could be feasible for a Community Emergency Response Center if the building has 2 or 3 levels. The idea is to house both the Police and Fire Departments in the building located between the Animas River Trail and Camino del Rio. Both existing locations are said to have critical space needs and are outdated and unsafe.
- The next steps in the process would be to come up with concepts for the building and the site and prepare cost estimates. The next public meeting is expected to be In January.

Durango Bump-out Program Update

- Durango City Council voted 4 to 1 to approve a 5-year pilot program that allows seasonal bump outs with design standard updates, enhanced compliance, and a per square foot fee of \$6.30. Some updates to the program include meeting Americans with Disabilities Act standards, preserving the line of sight, prohibiting signage and advertising on the bump outs and staff inspections.

Durango Downtown Next Step Update

- Durango City Council approved the taking of a phased approach to the Downtown Next Step project. In a 4 to 1 vote, Council agreed to conduct the full traffic study, inventorying the corridor, and fully designing a few downtown blocks.
- The city of Durango has begun the design process, taking the conceptual design that came from the community's visioning process and designing it in phases for construction.
- The conceptual design proposes pedestrian improvements from 5th Street to 14th Street, and include curb extensions at the intersections, widening the sidewalks, improving ADA ramps and accessible parking spaces,

Proposed Solar Installation

- Early in November, Primergy Solar submitted an application to La Plata County proposing to build an array of panels on 1,900 acres near Hesperus.
- The project faces strong opposition by a citizen group - www.stophesperussolar.com
- The project must go through a major permit review in which the Community Development Director will determine whether the application is complete. He has until early January to do that.
- If the application moves forward, the project will ultimately go before the BOCC for a public hearing and decision.

Project Approvals

- Durango City Council approved the preliminary plan for Mesa Verde Estates. Mission Senior Living of Carson City, Nevada has proposed construction of a 105,000 square foot senior living community in Southfork west of the Mercy Hospital campus. Mesa Verde Estates would have 124 units, with 92 assisted living units and 32 memory care units. The applicants may submit a Final Plan review, and could submit a building permit application by winter 2023.
- Durango City Council approved the Conceptual Planned Development, rezone and minor subdivision for Upstream Development. Upstream Development LLC, represented by PST Engineering, proposes to subdivide, rezone, and create a planned development on the property addressed at 760 E 31st St. Two new single-family homes, and one ADU, are proposed for the site.

Meetings attended November 3 - December 1

11/3 - 3 pm LAC Meeting	11/15 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting
11/8 - 10 am BOCC Meeting	11/16 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
11/9 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time	11/16 - 12 pm BOCC Work Session on SJBPHD
11/10 - 5:30 pm Durango Fire Public Meeting	11/22 - 10 am BOCC Meeting
11/14 - 8 am BOCC Oil & Gas Hearing Special Planning Meeting	11/23 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
11/14 - 4:30 pm URA Meeting	11/28 - 5 pm Durango Planning Commission
11/15 - 10 am BOCC Business Meeting	11/29 - 10 am BOCC Meeting CANCELLED
11/15 - 1 pm Durango Council Study Session	11/30 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time CANCELLED