

Election Information

- General Election is November 5th, 2024
- [Register to vote online in Colorado](#) up to 8 days before election

House District 59

- Ignacio Mayor [Clark Craig](#) (R) Total Contributions: \$26,968.37, expenditures \$19,691.71
- Durango school board member [Katie Stewart](#) (D) Total Contributions: \$49,208.81, expenditures \$12,588.82
- The Chamber of Commerce will host an [Eggs And Issues Candidate Forum on September 26th](#) from 8am to 10:30 am at the Doubletree.

Senate District 6

- Incumbent [Cleave Simpson](#) (R) Total Contributions: \$72,833.38, Expenditures: \$42,216.34
- [Yivian Smotherman](#) (D): Total Contributions: \$24,442.93, Expenditures: \$25,771.95

La Plata County Commissioner District 3

- Incumbent [Matt Salka](#) (D) Total Contributions: \$13,215.93. Expenditures: \$819.16
- [Paul Black](#) (R) Total Contributions: \$24,577.99, Expenditures: \$21,759.00.
- The Chamber of Commerce and La Plata Forum will host a [County Commissioner Candidate Forum on September 10th](#) at 11:30 am at the Doubletree in Durango.

La Plata County Commissioner District 2

- Incumbent [Marsha Porter Norton](#) (D) is unchallenged. Total Contributions: \$4,660.00, Expenditures: \$2,262.77.

Colorado Special Legislative Session

- Gov. Jared Polis has called Colorado Legislature back for a special session beginning at 10 a.m. on Aug. 26th to pass an expanded property-tax-relief package and avoid a ballot showdown on the subject.
- [Initiative 50](#), which already has been certified for the ballot, would cap annual statewide increases in property-tax revenue at 4% and require a statewide vote if governments wanted to keep revenues more than that. Initiative 108, which is currently undergoing examination of its submitted signatures, would reduce 7.15% residential assessment rates to 5.7% and 29% commercial and agricultural assessment rates to 24% in 2025 and require the state to backfill local governments seeing a revenue decline because of the measure.
- Legislators passed [Senate Bill 233](#) in the final days of the 2024 session. It capped annual growth in statewide property-tax revenues for local governments at 5.5% but exempted revenue going to school districts or pledged to repay bonds and other debt. It also lowered commercial assessment rates to 25% and residential rates to 6.95%, calculated after residents deduct 10% of home value, up to \$70,000.
- A potential new bill would reduce existing assessment rates for most kinds of property, would impose stricter caps on annual growth in statewide property-tax revenue than legislators approved in 233 and would add \$300 million in additional tax savings to that law.

County Lodgers Tax

- The La Plata Board of County Commissioners plan to ask voters to reallocate the Lodgers Tax this November. The question will likely ask if the County will be allowed to use a significant portion of the tax to provide childcare programs and affordable housing opportunities for the tourism-related workforce, seasonal workers, and other workers in La Plata County. The remaining tax would continue to be used for advertising and marketing local tourism.
- The Commissioners are expected to decide on the ballot question and percentages on August 27th.

Durango 2005 Sales Tax

- Durango City Council opted to reconsider a resolution to put to a ballot issue before voters concerning the extension of the 2005 half-cent sales tax that is set to expire in 2026. If passed, the ballot measure would have allowed the tax to be collected at the same half-cent rate that will be split evenly between parks and recreation and capital projects, primarily the new Police Department/ City Hall Project at 201 East 12th St. The Councilors may decide to put the measure on the ballot in April.

Downtown Next Steps Update

- Several business owners spoke at the public comment section of the city council meeting on August 20th against the Durango’s Downtown Next Steps project. They said the number one problem downtown is parking, that the project was ill conceived, and that the council is being perceived as non-business friendly. The project will be discussed at the [Next Steps Business Forum with the city](#), hosted by the Durango Chamber, the Business Improvement District, and Local First on Tuesday 8/27 from 8-10 at the Center for Innovation.

Region 9 Economic Development Update

- This summer the Region 9 Economic Development District learned it will receive more than \$1.1 million dollars in grant funding for collaborative regional projects.
 - Nearly \$1 million from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) will pay to purchase and install broadband equipment in five data centers in Southwest Colorado. The data centers - also called carrier neutral locations or CNLs - are in Pagosa Springs, Bayfield, Durango, Mancos, and Cortez. The equipment will connect the CNLs into a statewide fiber Loop called the Alpine Loop.
 - Another \$34,000 from DOLA will support training and data platforms that strengthen the skills of the region’s economic development professionals.

Durango La Plata County Airport Update

- 2024 passenger traffic is up 24% in July year-over-year, building on the strong growth experienced in 2023.
- United Airlines will be expanding their daily flight schedule from from five to six times daily between Durango and Denver beginning September 26th.

La Plata County Sales Tax

- Sales tax collections for May show an increase of \$51,546 or 2.33% in comparison to the same period in 2023.

La Plata County Land Use Code Changes

- The Board of County Commissioners approved changes to the La Plata County Land Use Code relating to traffic - specifically Chapters 62, 66, 74 and 81. The changes are intended in part to:
 - Raise the threshold for commercial and industrial projects to be classified as a major project from a 5% or more increase in background traffic on the adjacent roadway to a 20% or more increase.
 - Expand on criteria to grant waivers for traffic analysis for projects.
 - Add the ability to require traffic analysis for projects to account for approved projects, phasing, or other projects in process concurrently with the county.
 - Replace the requirement for updates or a completely new traffic study based on the age of the original report with the requirement for updates based on certain criteria.

Planning Projects

- La Plata County Commissioners approved the Base Camp Village Conceptual Plan on 550 North. This is a 27 acre parcel and as proposed, will include 195 residential units, and 10,000 sf of commercial. The proposed units include 120 hotel rooms and up to 75 resort condominiums.

Meetings attended July 25 - August 22

7/25 - 9:30am LAC Meeting	8/12 - 4:30 pm Durango URA meeting
7/25 - 6 pm LPC Planning Commission	8/13 - 8 am Alliance Meeting
8/1 - 5:30 pm Fairgrounds Master Plan Meeting	8/13 - 10 am BOCC meeting
8/6 - 10 am BOCC Meeting	8/13 - 11 am BOCC Planning Meeting
8/6 - 2:45 pm Durango Council Study Session	8/19 - 2:30 pm BOCC Work Session
8/6 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting	8/20 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting
8/7 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time CANCELED	8/21 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
8/8 - 2 pm RHA Meeting	8/22 - 9:30 am LAC Meeting
8/9 - 3 pm BOCC Work Session	