

Visit Durango Update

- [Visit Durango](#) has proposed merging with the City of Durango to create a unified tourism and community development strategy. As part of the partnership, the City of Durango would assume management of the Welcome Center at 802 Main Ave. beginning Jan. 1. City staff and Visit Durango are developing a transition plan and proposal that is expected to go before Durango City Council for approval in January or February 2025.
- Visit Durango underwent a forensic audit at Durango City Council request and the results were reported publicly 11/19/24. Auditors found a number of issues and made several recommendations, including a need for a policy to be created around fraud and theft, credit card usage, travel expenses, bidding, and tipping. Auditors also noted the organization needs to keep a closer eye on expense approvals.

Downtown's Next Step Update

- The City of Durango removed the temporary curb extensions associated with [Downtown's Next Step](#) design on downtown Main Avenue for the winter season. The intent of the temporary curb extensions has been to receive feedback and make observations regarding turning movements and deliveries associated with the Downtown's Next Step design. Based on staff observations and public feedback received, city staff will adjust the design of the curb extensions over the winter and reinstall them in the spring with the bump-out program to gather further data on design adjustments.

City of Durango Property Update

- Durango City Councilors approved the sale of a parcel at the corner of College Dr and Camino del Rio back to the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad for \$4.3 million. The City purchased the parcel from the Railroad back in 2002 for \$2.5 million after Railroad officials approached the City to raise funds. The Railroad retained the right to repurchase the property if the City ever decided to sell. Proceeds from the sale will go back to the Transportation Enterprise Fund.
- In addition, City Council approved the first consideration of an ordinance to buy a parcel of land in the Rivergate planned development area located on Sawmill Road across from State Highway 3. The land would be used to develop future affordable and workforce housing using funds the city received from the American Rescue Plan Act during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Weather Radar Update

- La Plata County cut the ribbon on 10/29/24 on the new [weather radar station](#) at the Durango La Plata County Airport. County staff say the ribbon cutting event was the culmination of 6 years of work by county staff and numerous partners, including CDOT, LPEA, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, and others. Because of the radar's capabilities, it will greatly improve the quality of weather forecasts and safety throughout the region.

LPC Community Development Update

- Community Development Director Lynn Hyde gave a report on 11/14 to the LPC Planning Commission on the metrics coming out of the department as of last month. She noted that the department is now out of the backlog they had been carrying for such a long time as there were currently 154 active applications and only 15 waiting for a planner to be assigned to them. There were 170 submitted planning applications this year and 214 concluded – showing that the department was now completing them faster than they were coming in.
- Building permits are now taking about 4 weeks to process, where they used to take about 8 weeks.
- To date there were 592 total permits with 119 of them being new single family residences.

Planning Projects

- The Durango City Council agreed on 11/19/24 to annex the Westside and Triangle mobile home parks on US Highway 160 west. Elevation Community Land Trust is working with the residents to replace all 74 mobile homes

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with up to 107 new homes and apartments. Council also approved a resolution changing the Future Land Use map designation of the parks from Commercial to Mixed Use.

- On 11/14/24, the LPC Planning Commission approved the Broken Shovel Subdivision, a proposal to subdivide the existing 39.43 acre parcel into two parcels on CR526 in Bayfield.
- The LPC Planning Commission also approved the Vaquero Subdivision Sketch Plan, a proposal to subdivide approximately 80.14 acres into 19 lots ranging in size from approximately 2.8 acres to 6.8 acres. These are located at 303 Vaquero Wy, Durango and 184 Seabiscuit Dr, Hesperus.
- On 11/4/24, the LPC BOCC approved the Willow Springs request to rezone two parcels from General Commercial to Neighborhood Commercial at 213 & 275 CR 252 in Durango. The applicant is contemplating a small lot, single family patio home development, suggesting up to 19 lots.
- In a 2 to 1 vote, on 10/29/24 the LPC BOCC approved the preliminary plan for the Fidelity Towers Forest Lakes Monopole, a 150-foot telecommunications tower on CR 502 in Bayfield. Commissioner Matt Salka voted against the proposal, saying visual impacts were not adequately resolved.
- On 10/28/24, Durango’s Community Development Commission approved the Master Sign Program for 1259 Main Ave (Durango Herald building).

Election Results

- From the [La Plata County Clerk & Recorder’s Website](#):
 - **Matt Salka** and **Marsha Porter Norton** were re-elected as La Plata County Commissioners.
 - Durango School District 9-R’s **Ballot Issue 4A** passed; that is a \$150 million school district bond that will be dedicated to handling deferred maintenance, building a new school, and affordable housing for teachers.
 - **Ballot issue 1A**, the County Lodger’s Tax Reallocation passed. This will allow La Plata County to redirect up to 70% of the revenue from its lodgers tax toward affordable housing and child care rather than to tourism marketing.
- From the [Colorado Secretary of State’s Website](#):
 - **Cleave Simpson** won Senate District 6
 - **Katie Stewart** won State Representative District 59

Meetings attended October 24 - November 28

10/28 - 5 pm Durango Comm Dev Committee	11/12 - 10 am BOCC Business Meeting
10/29 - 8:30 am BOCC Planning Meeting	11/12 - 3 pm BOCC Work Session
10/29 - 10 am BOCC Work Session	11/13 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
11/4 - 10:30 am BOCC Special Planning Meeting	11/14 - 7:30 am Energy Council Annual Meeting
11/5 - 3:15 pm Durango Council Study Session	11/14 - 2 pm RHA Meeting
11/5 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting	11/14 - 6 pm LPC Planning Commission
11/6 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time	11/19 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting
11/7 - 6 pm Joint BOCC/Ignacio Meeting	11/20 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
11/12 - 8 am Economic Alliance Meeting	11/26 - 10 am BOCC Business Meeting