

Governor's Race

- Current Governor Jared Polis is term-limited.
- On January 2nd, Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser (D) announced his plans to run for Governor. Attorney general is Weiser's first elected office. He previously served as dean of the University of Colorado law school.

Durango Election

- Three seats are up for grabs in the April 2025 City Council election - Melissa Youssef is term-limited, Jessika Buell and Olivier Bosman are finishing their first terms.
- Prospective candidates must schedule an appointment with [City Clerk Faye Harmer](#) by email or phone 970-375-5010. After scheduling a meeting with the city clerk a candidate packet can be picked up at City Hall beginning Jan. 15. Following that, candidates can begin obtaining petition signatures. Petitions must be completed and returned to the city clerk no later than Feb. 4 at 3 p.m.

Colorado Legislative Session

- The Colorado Legislative session began January 8th.
- Democratic Sen. James Coleman of Denver officially took the gavel as Senate president. In the House, Speaker Julie McCluskie, a Dillon Democrat, was selected again as speaker. Southern Ute Chairman Melvin J. Baker was invited by President of the Senate, James Coleman to provide remarks during the opening session.

Housing and Building

- [HB25-1030](#) - Accessibility Standards in Building Codes - requires building code meets or exceeds the accessibility standards in international building codes.
- [SB25-020](#) - Tenant and Landlord Law Enforcement - Gives the attorney general the power to initiate and bring civil and criminal actions to enforce certain state landlord-tenant laws.
- [SB25-016](#) - Updating Escrow Disbursement Practices
- [SB25-035](#) - Limitation of Actions Against Appraisers - The bill requires a claimant to bring an action against a real estate appraiser or individual performing a real estate appraisal practice within 5 years after the date the appraisal report is completed and transmitted to a client.
- [SB25-002](#) - Regional Building Codes for Factory-Built Structures - the development of regional building codes that account for local climatic and geographic conditions for the construction and installation of residential and nonresidential factory-built structures.

Energy and Environment

- [HB25-1042](#) - Air Quality Control Regulation Workforce Impact - the establishment of a workforce advisory council to consider air quality control rules that impact workforce issues in affected industries.
- [SB25-037](#) - Coal Transition Grants

Business

- [HB25-1021](#) - Tax Incentives for Employee-Owned Businesses
- [HB25-1001](#) - Enforcement of wage and hour laws.

Labor and Employment

- [SB25-005](#) - Concerning the elimination of the requirement for a second election to negotiate a union security clause in the collective bargaining process. **CO Chamber Opposes.**

Retail

- [HB25-1051](#) - Repeal Recycled Paper Carryout Bag Fee - Under current law, retail establishments are prohibited from providing plastic carryout bags at the point of sale, but may provide recycled paper carryout bags for a fee of at least 10 cents per bag. The bill repeals the requirement that retail establishments charge a fee for providing recycled paper carryout bags.

Insurance

Legislative Action Coalition Report for January 16, 2025

- [HB25-1002](#) - Medical Necessity Determination Insurance Coverage - The bill clarifies that the health benefits coverage for the prevention of, screening for, and treatment of behavioral, mental health, and substance use disorders must be no less extensive than the coverage provided for any physical illness.

La Plata County Sales Tax Update

- Sales tax collections for September show an increase of \$68,140 or 2.71% in comparison to the same period in 2023. Year to date sales tax shows an increase of \$295,840 or 1.98% over 2023.
- Sales tax collections for October show a decrease of \$114,898 or -4.62% in comparison to the same period in 2023. Year to date sales tax shows an increase of \$180,942 or 1.04% over 2023.
- Sales tax collections for November show a decrease of \$79,263 or -3.28% in comparison to the same period in 2023. Year to date sales tax shows an increase of \$101,680 or .51% over 2023.

La Plata County Lodgers Tax Update

- Lodger’s tax collections are earned Quarterly; Quarter 3 Lodgers tax increased \$26,566 or 8.69% in comparison to Quarter 3, 2023. Year to date Lodgers tax shows an increase of \$34,725 or 4.63% over 2023.

La Plata Land Use Code Update

- The Board of County Commissioners approved a resolution updating Chapter 73, regarding setbacks. Setback requirements were modified from 500’ down to 100’ for salvage yards, recycling facilities, and junk yards.

Durango Affordable Housing Update

- Residences at Durango will bring on 72 affordable housing units expected to be ready for occupancy by the end of January. The first phase of the project involved renovation converting the old Best Western motel located at 21382 US Highway 160 into 44 studio apartments, 27 one-bedroom apartments, and one two-bedroom apartment. The second phase of the project involves the construction of two new buildings and will provide a total of 48 affordable housing units. Construction on the second phase is expected to be completed in 2025 and will consist of 28 two-bedroom units and 20 three-bedroom units. The affordable housing was developed to target residents earning 30% to 60% of the area median income, which equates to \$26,520 to \$53,040 for a two-person household.
- HomesFund was awarded \$3,545,000 in Proposition 123 funds by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs. These funds will allow HomesFund to continue providing critical Mortgage and Down Payment Assistance Loans to households earning at or below 120% of the Area Median Income across La Plata, Montezuma, Archuleta, San Juan, and Dolores Counties. Over the next two years, this grant will help approximately 42 households achieve affordable and sustainable homeownership in Southwest Colorado.

Planning Projects

- The Board of La Plata County Commissioners approved the Trumble Ridge Subdivision Preliminary Plat, a development application to subdivide about 169 acres into eighteen residential lots located in the Florida Mesa area on Highway 550 South.

Meetings attended December 26 - January 16

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| 12/26 - 1/2 Out of Office | 1/9 - 8:30 am Southwest Economic Outlook |
| 1/7 - 10 am BOCC Special Planning Meeting | 1/14 - 10 am BOCC Business Meeting |
| 1/7 - 2:45 pm City Council Study Session | 1/15 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time |
| 1/7 - 5:30 pm City Council Regular Meeting | 1/16 - 4pm LAC Meeting |
| 1/8 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time | |