

# Project Partners:



Lake County  
**Community Planning & Development**

## Community Learning Session: Government Roles & Services

Nov 17, 2025

**ONE COMMUNITY PROJECT**



# Today's Agenda

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**6 pm** - Welcome

**6:05 pm** - Learning Session

**6:50 pm** - Q&A

**7 pm** - Wrap Up



## How is this Learning Session connected to OCP?

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- Community engagement has repeatedly surfaced confusion about roles and responsibilities between the City and County.
- Clear understanding builds trust, reduces frustration, and sets realistic expectations.
- Better knowledge leads to better input
- Help community members see how values become decisions and how decisions become budgets and services.



# Community Learning Session

Government Roles & Services



# The Basics: How local government works in Colorado





# Statutory vs Home Rule Governance

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- **Statutory:** Governance type where governance structures and legislative powers are in line with state statute
  - 108 municipalities, 60 counties
- **Home Rule:** Governance type that allows for more control over matters of local significance
  - 108 municipalities, 4 counties
  - Authorized for municipalities in 1902, for counties in 1970





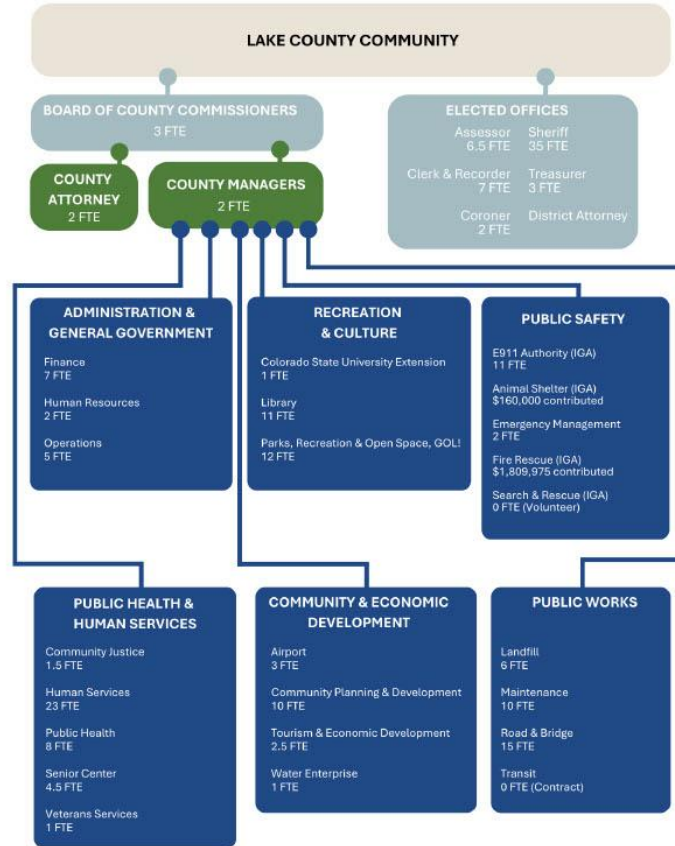
# County Governance (Statutory)

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- **Board of County Commissioners:**
  - Elected
  - Represent constituency through leadership, decision making, communication
- **County manager:**
  - Appointed
  - Oversees day-to-day operation of all departments, implementation of policy, etc.
- Other elected positions include **Clerk & Recorder, Sheriff, Assessor, Treasurer, Coroner, Surveyor**
- Appointed boards include (but not limited to) **Planning & Zoning Commission, Board of Review, Board of Adjustment**



## Organizational Chart



\*FTE = Full Time Equivalent Staff

\*\*Numbers reflect fully staffed departments



# Municipal Governance (Statutory)

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- **Strong Mayor/Council:**
  - Mayor (elected) serves as chief executive with oversight from City Council
- **Council/Manager:**
  - Manager (appointed) serves as chief executive with oversight from City Council (including Mayor)
- Common departments include **Administration, Police, Public Works**
- Common appointed boards include (but not limited to) **Planning & Zoning Commission, Historic Preservation Committee**



# Professionalization of Government

- **Lake County:**

- Employes around 160 FTE, 30 PTE (not including LLCFR)
- Departments created in the last 5 years include county manager, attorney, water resources, housing



- **City of Leadville:**

- Employes around 55 FTE and 4 PTE (not including LLCFR)
- Departments created in last 5 years include City administrator and planning



Who does what locally?





# County & Municipal Responsibilities

	<b>Counties</b>	<b>Municipalities</b>
<b>Mandatory Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public health</li><li>• Human services</li><li>• Public works</li><li>• Jails</li><li>• Elections</li><li>• Weed control</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public safety</li><li>• Public works</li><li>• Administration &amp; land use</li></ul>
<b>Discretionary Powers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public safety</li><li>• Public transit</li><li>• Administration &amp; land use</li><li>• Animal control</li><li>• Landfills</li><li>• Airports</li><li>• Water &amp; sewer</li><li>• Libraries</li><li>• Parks &amp; Recreation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public transit</li><li>• Parks &amp; Recreation</li><li>• Libraries</li><li>• Community services</li></ul>



# Local Division of Responsibilities

Service Area	Lake County	City of Leadville	Overlap
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Land use and building permits in the County]</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Land use and building permits in the City</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>3 mile area around the city boundary</li><li>Shared building department</li></ul>
<b>Public Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Maintenance of County roads</li><li>Landfill/recycling center</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Maintenance of City roads</li></ul>	
<b>Emergency Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sheriff's Office</li><li>Lake County Jail</li><li>Dispatch</li><li>Emergency Management</li><li>Search &amp; Rescue</li><li>Coroner</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Police Department</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fire department</li><li>Animal shelter</li></ul>
<b>Courts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>County court</li><li>Hosts district court</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Municipal court</li></ul>	



# Local Division of Responsibilities

Service Area	Lake County	City of Leadville	Overlap
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinated elections</li><li>• Motor vehicle services</li><li>• Record keeping</li><li>• Tax collection</li><li>• Property assessment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Record keeping</li></ul>	
<b>Health &amp; Human Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disease prevention</li><li>• Environmental health</li><li>• Public benefits administration</li><li>• Veterans services</li></ul>		
<b>Recreation &amp; Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Park and open space management</li><li>• Recreational programming</li><li>• Ownership of golf course, Ski Cooper, MBT, and other assets</li><li>• Library</li><li>• Senior Center</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Park management</li><li>• Ownership of Tabor Opera House</li><li>• Mining Museum annex project</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• County managers several parks within City limits</li></ul>

How do local governments pay for  
it all?





# Revenue Sources: Taxes

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- **Property Tax:**
  - Primary revenue source for counties
  - In Lake County, several entities levy property taxes (County, City, LCSD, LSD, CMC, SVH)
- **Sales & Use Tax:**
  - Primary revenue source for municipalities
  - Municipal budgets are heavily dependent on commercial activity
- **Other Taxes:**
  - Lodging tax
  - Excise tax
  - Special district taxes



# Revenue Sources: Everything Else

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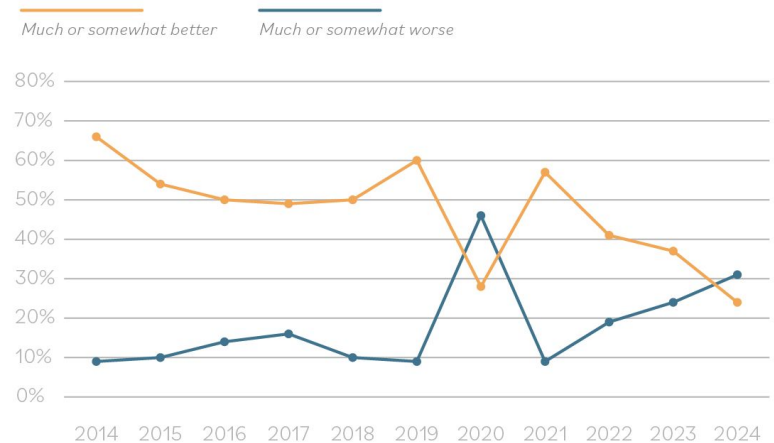
- **Fees:**
  - Licenses & permits (e.g. building permits)
  - Charges for service (e.g. recreational programming)
  - Fines (e.g. parking tickets)
- **Intergovernmental:**
  - State & federal funding
  - Reimbursements for shared programs with other local govts
- **Grants:**
  - Funding provided by external orgs to support specific programs, projects, and operations



# Revenue Trends

- Municipal revenue growth in Colorado has been on a **slight decline** since 2021
- Majority of Colorado’s municipalities reported revenue as **“about the same”** when comparing FY24 to FY23
- Lake County is forecasting **reduced revenues** in FY26

Changes to municipal revenue over the past decade



\*Source: Colorado Municipal League



# Public Budgeting: Process

- **Purpose:** A financial plan and tool to communicate with community about a local government's financial health, future priorities, and how to get there
- **Components:** Expenditures, revenues, fund balances, actual and estimate figures, budget message
- **Timeline:**
  - Presented to board/council in Oct
  - Certify mill levy & adopt budget in Dec
  - File with State by Jan 31





# Public Budgeting: Key Questions

Public budgeting is all about **tradeoffs**:

- Given our revenues, what services do we **prioritize**?
- How do we **effectively allocate** funding?
  - **Unrestricted funds:** Money appropriated each year that can respond to community contexts (e.g. General Fund)
  - **Mandatory funds:** Money with special conditions governing use (e.g. Road & Bridge Fund, Mine Closure Fund)
- **Capital** investments vs **operational** investments?
- How do we **share costs** across a community?





# Rural Fiscal Challenges

- **Limited revenue growth** due to smaller, more stagnant tax base:
  - Lower property values
  - Less active purchasing economies
  - Lack of public support for tax increases
- **High infrastructure & service costs** due to dispersed population
- **Reliance on grants** = hefty administrative load
- **Expiration of state/federal funds** (e.g. ARPA)
- Local relevance:
  - **Dependence** on Climax Mine (property tax), tourism (sales tax)





# Why Does Public Budgeting Matter?

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- Because financial resources are **limited**, every budgetary decision involves **trade-offs**
- Budgetary decisions (should!) reflect **community values and priorities**
- **Understanding constraints helps set expectations**, making for more productive conversations
- Budgets are an example of **policy meeting implementation**

How do local governments and other partners work together?





# Intergovernmental Partnerships

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- Collaboration between governments to improve **efficiency and effectiveness of public services** and to respond to **cross-jurisdictional challenges**
  - Regional planning initiatives
  - Regional service authorities and task forces
  - Resource sharing, including joint funding
  - Co-management of facilities and assets
  - Co-delivery compacts for services
  - Joint applicants for grant funding
- **Formal** (e.g. Intergovernmental Agreements & Memorandums of Understanding) and **informal** partnership structures



## Case Study: LLCFR

- **Consolidated fire rescue** service jointly funded by City and County
- Formed in 1970s to **merge** City fire department with County volunteer fire department
- Structure:
  - LLCFR employees are on **City payroll**
  - **County owns** Fire Station II
  - Fire chief reports to both **BOCC and City Council**





## Cross-Sector Partnerships

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- Collaborations between **local governments** and **nonprofits, educational institutions, private businesses, and more** to respond to community challenges
- **Formal** and **informal** partnership structures are common
- **Local governments** offer:
  - Authority & credibility
  - Funding
  - In-house donations (staff, facilities, equipment)
  - Large platform
  - Collaboration on grants
- **Community groups** offer:
  - Assistance filling service gaps
  - Ability to respond quickly to change
  - Volunteer mobilization
  - Grassroots connections
  - Collaboration on grants



## Case Study: SNAP Freeze

- **SNAP benefits are halted** due to federal government shutdown, leaving more than **500 households in Lake County at risk**
- **County donates \$8,000** to St. George Community Meals & Pantry
- Local nonprofits conduct **grassroots outreach** to affected households
- Local nonprofits **promote food donation requests** to community
- St. George temporarily **expands food relief efforts** to meet community needs





# Areas of Collaboration

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- **Traditional** areas of collaboration:
  - Emergency services
  - Transportation
  - Infrastructure
  - Utilities
  - Elections
- **Emerging** areas of collaboration:
  - Housing
  - Wildfire preparedness & response
  - Climate resilience & sustainability
  - Economic development



# Why Does Collaboration Matter?

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- Potential **benefits**:
  - Improved quality of services
  - Reduced costs
  - Resource efficiency
  - Policy alignment
  - Public trust
- Potential **challenges**:
  - Conflicting priorities
  - Territorial mindsets
  - Unequal resources & capacity
  - Effective communication & coordination

Questions?

