

Rep. Lauren Boebert Update

- Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert announced she is switching congressional districts from District 3 to District 4. Boebert announced she would enter the Republican primary in retiring Rep. Ken Buck's seat in the eastern side of the state.

Plastic Bag & Styrofoam Ban Update

- Single-use carryout plastic bags will be going away at the checkout counters of most places Coloradans buy groceries on January 1, 2024. Distribution of the bags will be banned at large grocery stores and chain convenience stores across the state. The only establishments that will still be permitted single-use plastic bags are small grocery or convenience stores that have three Colorado locations or fewer.
- As of January 1, 2024, retail food establishments can no longer distribute an expanded polystyrene (i.e. Styrofoam) product for use as a container for takeout and leftovers. Retail food establishments that purchase expanded polystyrene products before January 1, 2024, may continue to use the products until their supply is depleted.

Colorado Legislature Update

- The General Assembly in Colorado convenes January 10th and adjourns May 8th..

La Plata County Building and Planning Fees

- The cost of a building permit in La Plata County will rise from \$1.40 per square foot to \$2.25 per square foot effective January 1st. Proposed Land use permit application fees will increase as well.
- Under the plan approved by the Board of County Commissioners in early December, the fees will increase 5% every 2 years.

La Plata County Sales & Lodgers Tax

- Sales tax collections for July show an increase of \$68,748 or 2.81% in comparison to the same period in 2022.
- Year to date, Sales tax has increased \$235,644 or 1.60% as compared to the same period in 2022.
- Lodger's tax collections are earned Quarterly; Quarter 3 Lodgers tax increased \$33,375 or 12.26% in comparison to Quarter 3, 2022. Year to date collections for Lodger's tax increased \$45,859 or 6.51% as compared to the same period for 2022.

Broadband Update

- The La Plata County Board of County Commissioners has approved an agreement between La Plata County, Archuleta County, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, La Plata Electric Association, and the Region 10 League for Economic Assistance & Planning to fund a new fiber optic cable between Allison and Pagosa Springs. The cable will run along State Highway 151 and will improve accessibility and connectivity in the region. Under the agreement, the Tribe owns the fibers and will lease them to the other entities for 20 years. Commissioner Matt Salka said all parties came to an agreement that benefits all and that he looks forward to the fiber being installed next year.
- Meanwhile, the Colorado Transportation Commission approved a structure for fees that telecommunications firms and local organizations must pay to lay fiber in state highway right-of-way. CDOT leaders argue that developing this program will let broadband firms and economic-development organizations know an exact cost as they begin projects — a one-time permitting fee of five cents per foot of fiber, as well as annual fees of three cents per foot in rural counties and 10 cents per foot in counties with populations of more than 200,000 people. Commissioner Matt Salka testified that the fee will be prohibitively burdensome in counties that have significant road mileage but fewer residents who could divide up the cost of the fee.

La Posta Road Update

- City of Durango Director of Community Development Scott Shine met with La Plata County Commissioners this month to give an update on the La Posta Road project. The general plan is getting the property annexed into the city of Durango as soon as possible. That could happen in 2024, pending a petition by the landowners.
- The overall vision is for light industrial uses, workforce housing, some mixed commercial uses, river access and a park. La Posta Road itself needs work to serve the area and road improvements would be phased out in 3 phases. Each phase would open possibilities for development.

- La Plata county staff will work on a term sheet that would lay out all the topics that need to be covered prior to the work of creating an intergovernmental agreement. La Posta Road may be discussed again at the next City/County joint work session in January.

LPEA Solar Update

- LPEA will produce some modeling of what it would look like if La Plata County subscribed to shares from the community solar garden located near Sunnyside Elementary. The solar garden will generate enough power for about 600 homes, and at least 50% of the garden will be dedicated to low-income members at a reduced rate. If the partnership works out, the county could have solar power for some of its property and help reduce the cost of electricity for some low-income households. County Manager Chuck Stevens said it could help the county meet several of its goals, such as sustainability, community partnerships, and reduction of the cost of homeownership.

Durango Community Development Commission

- Durango is accepting [applications](#) for the recently created Community Development Commission, a combination of the Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and Board of Adjustment.
- The Community Development Commission will consider:
 - Land use, growth, development, and redevelopment within the City of Durango.
 - Adherence to adopt design guidelines.
 - Policies, plans, goals, and ordinances related to development and standards.
 - Land Use and Development Code amendments and policies.
 - Appeals on certain land use decisions.
- There are seven open positions for the Community Development Commission and the deadline to [apply](#) is midnight on Jan. 15, 2024.

2023 Durango Renewal Partnership (URA) Recap

- In 2023, Durango's Urban Renewal Authority built 11 new housing units with 3 carrying heavy deed restrictions and 1 carrying light deed restrictions. The URA invested \$550k towards 5 community revitalization and housing projects and cleared 1 outdated structure for future development. The URA also received 2 awards for the work it accomplished.

Durango's Fair Share Program

- Durango City staff is recommending changes to the Fair Share Program. The existing program requires that certain types of new residential developments include a share of affordable and attainable housing or pay a fee in lieu.
- The recommended changes include, in part, adding rental developments to the program, simplifying the program, making it more flexible for developers and raising the fee in lieu.
- The proposed changes will go before the Planning Commission for a public hearing in January.

Planning Projects

- Durango Planning Commission and the Design Review Board have recommended approval of the Durango Fire Protection District Fire Station at 1235 Main Ave. The project must go before the Design Review Board next. The plan is for River City Hall to be demolished this winter to make way for a new fire station with firefighter housing above.
- Durango Planning Commission recommended approval of the Durango Crossings Conceptual Planned Development, annexation and initial zoning. This is a public-private partnership for 149 residential units – a mix of condos, townhomes and apartments, plus some commercial uses. It's located south of the intersection of Florida Rd and County Road 250. At least 50% of the units will be restricted for workforce housing for individuals making 70-120% of the area median income. The project will go before the City Council in February and if approved, construction may begin next fall.
- La Plata County Commissioners approved the Promontory at Durango Mountain Resort Preliminary Plat. The project is for six single family lots on a total of 1.8 acres.

Meetings attended November 30 - December 29

11/30 - 9:30 am LAC Meeting	12/14 - 2 pm RHA Board Meeting
12/4 - 5 pm Durango Planning Commission	12/14 - 6 pm LPC Planning Commission
12/5 - 10 am BOCC Meeting	12/19 - 10 am BOCC Meeting
12/5 - 2 pm Durango City Council Study Session	12/19 - 2 pm Durango City Council Special Meeting
12/5 - 5:30 pm Durango City Council Meeting	12/20 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time
12/6 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time	12/21 - 6 pm - Joint Planning Commission CANCELED
12/11 - 1:30 pm BOCC Work Session	12/25 - HOLIDAY
12/11 - 4:30 pm Durango Renewal Partnership	12/26 - HOLIDAY
12/13 - 8:30 am BOCC Discussion Time	12/29 - LAC Meeting