



## GET THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

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## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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### COLORADO MUNICIPALITIES LEADING THE WAY OUT OF RECESSION

**December 30, 2009, Denver, CO** – Nine out of ten cities are investing in activities specifically aimed at pulling Colorado's economy out of the current recession. The *2010 State of our Cities and Towns* report released today by the Colorado Municipal League reveals municipalities statewide are actively engaging in economic development activities. These investments include tax incentives, tourism promotion, site redevelopment, business incubators, "buy-local" campaigns, technical assistance to businesses of all sizes, and heavily marketing their communities.

Economic development is the key to recovery from this recession. The partnership that municipalities have developed with the business community is paying off as cities and towns help existing businesses to expand and new businesses to relocate to Colorado. Municipal attention to the business community is a major reason Colorado consistently ranks among America's most business friendly states in rankings by Forbes, CNBC, The Tax Foundation, and others.

#### Examples cited in report:

- The City of Fort Lupton landed Bach Composite Industry for its first North American manufacturing site. Bach manufactures composite products for the wind industry. Employment is expected to top 100 at full production. The City worked with the Upstate Colorado Economic Development Council and the governor's office to develop an economic package. **Media Contact:** Mike Konefal, City Administrator, City of Fort Lupton, [mkonefal@fortlupton.org](mailto:mkonefal@fortlupton.org), (303) 857-6694
- The City of Westminster launched a program that provides small businesses with assistance for capital projects. Businesses with 25 or fewer employees can qualify for grants up to \$5,000 for capital expansion. **Media Contact:** Becky Nelson, Economic Development Specialist, City of Westminster, [bnelson@cityofwestminster.us](mailto:bnelson@cityofwestminster.us), (303) 658-2110
- The City of Evans implemented a plan to boost residential and commercial building. With nearly 1,500 vacant platted lots awaiting activity, the City held a half-price sale on building and electrical permits. Residential construction in the first nine months of 2009 more than doubled, and multi-family construction also recorded a healthy up-tick. **Media Contact:** Aden Hogan, Jr., City Manager, City of Evans, [ahogan@ci.evans.co.us](mailto:ahogan@ci.evans.co.us), (970) 475-1119
- The City of Brighton invested \$4.1 million in funds from the Brighton Urban Renewal Authority to transform its abandoned armory into a community cultural center — the first cultural venue to open in the community since 1955. The renovated space will host exhibits, performances, and art and cultural programs. **Media Contact:** Cathie Johnson, Communications Coordinator, City of Brighton, [cjohnson@brightonco.gov](mailto:cjohnson@brightonco.gov), (303) 655-2061

#### Dozens of Colorado municipalities developed "buy local" campaigns to stimulate their local economy, including:

- City of Lamar: **Media Contact:** Ron Stock, City Administrator, City of Lamar, [ron.stock@ci.lamar.co.us](mailto:ron.stock@ci.lamar.co.us), (719) 336-1364
- City of Durango: **Media Contact:** Sherri Dugdale, Special Projects Coordinator, City of Durango, [DugdaleSL@ci.durango.co.us](mailto:DugdaleSL@ci.durango.co.us), (970) 375-5002
- The Town of Snowmass Village: **Media Contact:** Leslie Compagnone, PIO, Town of Snowmass Village, [lcompagnone@tosv.com](mailto:lcompagnone@tosv.com), (970) 923-3777

If none of the above communities are in your coverage area, and you'd like to feature one that is in your area, contact Mark Radtke, CML's legislative and policy advocate, at 303-831-6411 or via email at [mradtke@cml.org](mailto:mradtke@cml.org).

The full report can be found online at [www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org) > media room.

CML is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization established in 1923 and represents the interests of 262 cities and towns. For more information on the Colorado Municipal League, or to view the report, please visit [www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org) or call 303-831-6411.

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## **Key findings from CML's 2010 State of Our Cities & Towns Report**

Colorado municipalities are coping with decreased revenue:

95% of larger cities and 65% of all municipalities believe their financial situation will be worse or much worse in 2010.

- Sales tax is a primary source of revenue for cities and towns. 59% expect a further decrease in sales tax revenue in 2010.
- The top five challenges facing municipalities are a decrease in tax revenue, unfunded street maintenance, adverse local economic conditions, increase employee health costs and unfunded water/wastewater needs.

Reduced revenue has meant budget cuts and service reductions:

- Hiring freezes have been put in place in 41% of cities and towns
- 30% have reduced the staff positions
- Regular maintenance of equipment has been deferred in 56% of municipalities while capital projects have been put on hold in two-thirds of municipalities

No service has been untouched. Average reductions for all cities and towns:

- Police (-13%)
- Fire (-2%)
- Parks (-21%)
- Recreation (-14%)
- Street maintenance (-31%)

The good news is that Colorado's cities and towns are leaders in economic development:

- 56% of mid-sized municipalities engage in tourism promotion activities
- 63% of large cities are currently engaged in redevelopment projects with 68% offering tax incentives to business.
- 84% of large cities and 49% of all municipalities dedicate resources toward economic development