



COLORADO
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

Newsletter

Vol. 47, No. 1, January 1, 2021

CML congratulates this year's MCAA award recipients



By Laurel Witt, CML associate counsel

Each year, the Metro City Attorney Association (MCAA) honors municipal attorneys who make significant contributions to their cities. This year's award recipients skillfully assisted their cities in the response to the pandemic and exceeded the expectations of their positions. Robert Sheesley, city attorney

for Commerce City, received the Outstanding City Attorney Award. Sheesley engages with the greater municipal community, represents Commerce City competently and professionally, and earns the respect of his colleagues and staff.

Two attorneys received the award for Outstanding Deputy or Assistant City Attorney – Kwali Farbes with the City and County of Denver and Nina Williams with Murray Dahl Beery & Renaud

LLP. As assistant director of municipal operations, Farbes works tirelessly to lead her team well. In addition to regular duties and responding to the pandemic, Farbes spearheaded the creation of an Equity, Race and Social Justice program for the City Attorney's Office.

Williams represents the City of Salida as city attorney and the City of Fort Morgan as

assistant city attorney. Williams cheerfully provides day-to-day service on a myriad of issues, all while thinking and talking twice as fast as the client does. This year, Williams worked on controversial affordable housing projects, fought frivolous Independent Ethics Commission complaints against councilmembers, and resolved a complex and fractious pay issue in the police department.

Jenna Roth, deputy city attorney with the City of Lakewood, accepted the Special Recognition Award for her excellent work with implementing new criminal laws in Lakewood and for being on the frontline in responding to the pandemic. In the words of Tim Cox, Lakewood city attorney, Roth has "risen to the occasion to help make life in the pandemic just a little bit easier."

CML extends a sincere and hearty congratulations to all award recipients. Well done!

Thank you, municipalities, for your work on the 2020 Census

By Pauline Nunez, U.S. Census Bureau regional coordinator

Local CCCs (Complete Count Committees) were key in delivering the Census message to your communities by displaying Main Street banners, fun social media posts, and fliers. Your localized census pens, bandanas, giveaways, and the mobile questionnaire assistance sites, where you joined us during the final months, placed Colorado 14th in the nation for self-response rates. Well done, Colorado!

Now that the data collection is completed, the Census Bureau is involved with data processing, which will provide state population counts to the president by Dec. 31 and/or as close to the statutory

deadline as possible. Redistricting will follow and data tables will be available in 2021. In the meantime, visit bit.ly/3alKKng for more redistricting information.

What is on the horizon? You still have a Colorado partnership specialist team. They are: Lily Griego (Denver Metro and Northern Colorado), Nadeen Ibrahim (Denver Metro and Eastern Plains), Joie Ha (Denver Metro), Brian Meinhart (Western Slope) and Renee Martinez (Southern Colorado). The regional coordinator is Pauline Nunez. Our plans are to provide you with Information Summits on topics such as:

- U.S. Census data and tribal nations,
- Data tools/tables for local governments, and

- Data for rural communities.

We also want to acquaint you with new resources like the Pulse Survey, which provides data on the social and economic effects of COVID-19 on American households. You may want to use this survey in your recovery planning. There is also the Small Business Pulse Survey that measures the impact of COVID-19 on small businesses.

Many of you are working at home with your children attending school virtually. We have recently published Statistics in Schools home and distance learning activities that include four toolkits.

We look forward to working with you in 2021 and thank you again.

Save the date

CML Legislative Kickoff Webinar

Jan. 13, 2021, noon to 1 p.m.

The CML advocacy team will discuss upcoming legislative issues for the 2021 Legislative Session.

Promoting Colorado With Care

Jan. 20, 2021, noon to 1 p.m.

In partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office, this presentation will include the fall campaign, their new school-cation program as well as their dual focus for winter: using campaign resources 1) to drive recovery in the most afflicted parts of our state and 2) to share important safety messages (winter backcountry safety and anti-super spreader). The safety messages are aimed at reducing impact on Colorado search and rescue operations and on rural public health resources. Register at bit.ly/2WNEDG6.

Streetlight Municipalization

Jan. 27, 2021, noon to 1 p.m.

In partnership with HR Green, this webinar covers several aspects of streetlight municipalization including: legal aspects; municipalization, privatization and operations; engineering and technical issues; smart cities and emerging technologies; costs, benefits and alternatives and how cities can proceed. Speakers: Dave Zelenok, HR Green; Ken Fellman, Kissinger and Fellman and Paul Vesel, RealTerm Energy.

COVID-19 pandemic relief program provides assistance for small businesses



The passage of the bipartisan SB 20B-001 allocated \$35.15 million to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) for grants to certain small businesses across Colorado struggling from the COVID-19 pandemic. SB 20B-001 was sponsored by Sens. Faith Winter and Kevin Priola, and Reps. Leslie Herod and Shane Sandridge.

Businesses will obtain funding through their local governments from the DOLA Division of Local Government (DLG) Small Business Relief program (SBR), managed in collaboration with the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), who are working with local government associations and governments, regional councils of governments, and economic development agencies. "Small businesses are a critical component of our community and are essential to building Colorado's economy back stronger than before. As a person who has run a business, I understand the challenges our small business community is facing during this challenging time," said Gov. Jared Polis. "I'm thankful to the state lawmakers for their bipartisan action to help our communities build back stronger."

Eligible businesses are restaurants and bars, including distilleries, wineries and breweries, caterers, movie theaters, and fitness or recreational sports centers with revenues under \$2.5 million. The business must be a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, or sole proprietorship in good standing with all licenses and founded prior to March 26, 2020. Businesses must have at least one employee, unless they are a sole proprietorship, and they must have a reduced revenue of at least 20% due to capacity restrictions from public health orders.

Program funding is available to counties, councils of government, economic development districts and – if a county is unable or unwilling to administer the program – municipalities. It is open to those who are under state-mandated severe capacity restrictions that began on Dec. 10 or before, and are still under those restrictions through Dec. 31. The entity must be in compliance with all public health restrictions.

Local governments must apply to DOLA by **Jan. 8, 2021** using state agency applications. DOLA will allocate funds to local governments based on their population size, with all disbursements completed by **Jan. 15**. 10% of program funds are reserved for counties with the highest need and populations of less than 100,000. Local governments will allocate funds to approved businesses in their geography by no later than **Feb. 12**.

Also funded through SB 20B-001 is the Colorado Arts Relief Fund, which provides \$7.5 million to support arts, cultural and entertainment artists, crew members, and organizations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding through this bill will be distributed through two separate grant applications – Business/Organization and Individuals – and can be used to cover any personal or business expense. For individuals, grant awards are one-time flat amounts up to \$2,500. For organizations, the funding amount will be based on the size of the organization's cash operating revenue loss from 2019 to 2020. These funds are being distributed through the Colorado Creative Industries office. More information is available at bit.ly/37QQZDE.

Applications and information are available at the DOLA SBR website at bit.ly/3aQ1HMG.



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Colorado Challenge Communities make strides despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic

Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) celebrates the successes of Colorado Challenge Communities including Cañon City, Center, Durango, Old Colorado City, and Rocky Ford in moving objectives forward during the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic. DCI has been inspired to witness and provide support for these five communities with overcoming pre-existing challenges, creating a COVID-19 response, and building a plan to create stronger communities into the future. Each community has a unique profile and challenge. The Challenge Program approach has helped each community move the needle.

"It has been incredible to work with the Challenge Communities throughout 2020. The Colorado Challenge Program was created as a dynamic approach capable of adapting to specific community needs. The pandemic has showcased how this program, when paired with amazing community partners, is able to address unexpected challenges. The 2020 Challenge Communities have demonstrated innovation and provided their businesses and residents with hope during this time. The whole DCI team has been honored to be a part of it." said Katherine Correll, DCI executive director.

Each Challenge Community worked with DCI to engage the economic development class at the School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver to identify and connect with stakeholders, outline opportunities, and establish a plan of action. When faced with COVID-19 mid-semester, the Colorado Challenge Communities, DCI, and the students adapted the plan and have demonstrated the resiliency of Colorado ingenuity! Below are some of the incredible accomplishments from these communities in 2020.

Cañon City challenge: Loving the local

Population: 16,750

Through Challenge Program assistance at the beginning of the pandemic, Cañon City established a recovery taskforce, an auction to support small business, and garnered \$70,000 worth of grants to support permanent restaurant patio expansions. Since then, the city has hired a Main Street Program manager who has worked to identify catalyst sites and incentives to

spur reinvestment and cultivate unique Cañon City events and symbols to get more businesses and people downtown.

"I am so grateful to be a member of the DCI Challenge Program," said Ashley Smith, mayor of Cañon City. "It has been a great asset to us in Cañon City to have DCI as intensive mentors and also all of the resources they've provided for us to help us get through COVID-19 and help us advise our small businesses. We've been able to secure funds and programming support for our small businesses during this pandemic."

Durango challenge: Affordable housing

Population: 18,985

The City of Durango was selected as a DCI 2020 Challenge Community to address the challenge of "creatively financing development." As the pandemic emerged, DCI and the City of Durango were able to quickly adapt to develop a strategic approach to slowly reopening the community to ensure economic viability of re-opening their economy once and responsibly. DCI and Durango are now exploring next steps for a strategic approach to affordable housing.

"Downtown Colorado, Inc. (DCI) played an integral role in La Plata County's economic recovery. The Challenge Program brought community leaders together during our Challenge Community Virtual Studio Workshop to plan for a safe and efficient economic reopening," Alex Rugoff from the City of Durango remarked. "The workshop led to the formation of the La Plata Economic Recovery Task Force, which has been instrumental in providing local businesses resources to survive and adapt to the changing environment. I would strongly encourage other communities to get involved in DCI's Challenge Community Program."

Once the recovery effort was well underway, the City of Durango was able to approve the formation of their Urban Renewal Authority in May. Since then, The Durango Renewal Partnership has been working closely with DCI to connect with DCI's network of statewide leaders in urban renewal and affordable housing development.

Durango has taken great strides recently to support place-sensitive, creative redevelopment to address pressing community needs such as attainable and affordable housing. DCI is excited to continue working with the City of Durango and the Durango Renewal Partnership.

Center challenge: Business attraction

Population: 2,304

The Town of Center in the San Luis Valley, a 2019 Colorado Challenge Community, has continued to flourish following a temporary placemaking installation to engage around attracting investment. The town has seen impressive impacts including change of ownership and investment in six long-standing vacant buildings, two commercial and two housing units currently under renovation, approval of funding for beautification, a partnership to bring an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub to the town, funding for a Downtown Capacity Building AmeriCorps VISTA, and connecting with property owners who will donate a property for youth run coworking.

"The Town of Center decided to shape our own future and stop kicking the can down the road," said Brian Lujan, town manager. "The Challenge Program and DCI have helped the town build a team of dedicated partners, consultants, and resources that keep momentum going and help us move our strategy forward."

The Town of Center has also embarked on a series of trainings for long-term financing mechanisms, taking part in a \$270,000 valley-wide housing study, and considering two annexations. The town will begin working with Mass Design, an international housing and design firm, to develop a proposal for assistance to plan for a 90 acre parcel the town owns with housing, broadband infrastructure, and a civic and educational campus.

Old Colorado City, Colorado Springs challenge: Community engagement

Population: 5,259 (district population)

DCI works with districts in larger cities, as well as smaller communities, and has worked with the Old Colorado City Partnership (OCCP) president for several years. The Old Colorado City 2020 challenge

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"Colorado Challenge Communities" continued from page 3

has been to build awareness, a unified voice, and resources for this historic, creative, and foodie district in Colorado Springs. One target focus of the challenge was to build stronger partnerships with Manitou Springs and Downtown Colorado Springs to link the physical districts and the dynamic leadership in this corridor.

"The Old Colorado City Partnership is excited to be a part of the Colorado Challenge Program and partner with Downtown Colorado, Inc. as part of the continued effort to connect OCC with regional partners and revitalize the district," said Jonathan Neely, OCCP president. "The work done through DCI this past year has created a foundation for the OCCP to enhance our advocacy efforts and connect with regional efforts."

The OCCP is now engaged in the corridor planning, participating in collaborative events and marketing, and supported businesses through the pandemic with events like Virtual First Friday. To date the OCC Partnership has completed a utility-box wrap program, created a welcome center

in a historic building in Bancroft Park, and secured over \$148,000 in grants to create appealing and engaging outdoor spaces and options for business expansion and social distancing.

Rocky Ford challenge: Building identity

Population: 3,828

The City of Rocky Ford is dedicated to building a stronger sense of place and sustainable job economy that supports job growth and opportunities for the community to invest and grow. The Colorado Challenge Program has worked with a dedicated team to establish a strategy for engagement and inventorying opportunities so the city emerges from the pandemic stronger than before. The City of Rocky Ford has established a broad working group that brings expertise and training and identifies resources to support potential entrepreneurs, property owners, accessing information technology, and helps employees upskill for enhanced work opportunities in the future. "The City of Rocky Ford is seeing more interest in

skills that allow residents to invest in the community." said Shannon Wallace, city manager. The role for the city is to help build public private partnerships that will empower our citizens to make the change they want to see with businesses, buildings, and collaboration for a sustainable economic future.

The City of Rocky Ford is establishing partnerships and resources to eventually foster new business development through a business incubator. For the initial phases of the work, the city has received a grant to guide property owners and real estate professionals in conducting due diligence and marketing vacant opportunity spaces and another grant to facilitate training and business creation within the community. An initial training was held in Rocky Ford in November, and a virtual session was held on Dec. 11. In 2021, the city will host a wide range of training, expanding dialogue around entrepreneurship, information technology, workforce training and upskilling, development readiness, and building and construction trades.

Colorado Resiliency Office announces Climate Adaptations and Futures Webinar Series

Join the Colorado Resiliency Office and their partners for the Climate Adaptations and Futures Webinar Series to discuss timely, actionable solutions for Colorado's local governments seeking to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change. The series

focuses on Colorado-specific solutions, including background on how to get started, resources your local government can access today, perspectives from national experts in the field, and highlights and advice from communities across Colorado.

The series includes eight webinars held on the first Wednesday of each month from noon - 1 p.m. More information, registration, recordings, and printable "key takeaways" from each webinar are all posted online at: bit.ly/37TUtVW.

In memory



CML learned of the recent passing of longtime Aspen City Clerk Kathryn Koch, who retired in 2014 after 43 years with the city.

Koch started in Aspen with the police department, but served most of her 43 years as clerk. She was a pillar in the clerks' community and staff and colleagues alike have many fond memories of her.

CML Municipal Clerk Advisor and retired city clerk, Karen Goldman, reflected on a memory from a past CML annual conference.

"We bought matching outfits, black and white polka dots," said Goldman. "My blouse was black with white dots, my skirt was white with black dots, and Kathryn's were opposite. While getting dressed for the opening reception, we laughed so hard that I was afraid we'd never make it out of our room. At the reception, someone asked if we knew we were dressed alike. We feigned surprise

and then burst into laughter, almost to the point of tears."

Koch's family hopes to schedule a memorial at a later date when public health guidelines allow gatherings. The family has requested anyone wishing to make a donation in her name do so to the Hospice of the Valley (bit.ly/3aPhc7C), Christ Episcopal Church of Aspen (bit.ly/3nUMf1T), breast cancer research, or a local charity of their choice.

The CML family extends our condolences to Koch's family and her many colleagues and friends.

OVERALL

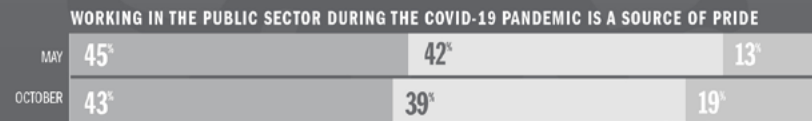
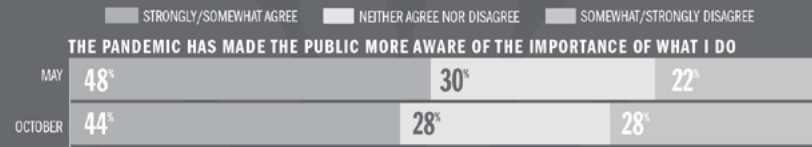
PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEE VIEWS ON COVID-19

MAY 2020 VS OCTOBER 2020

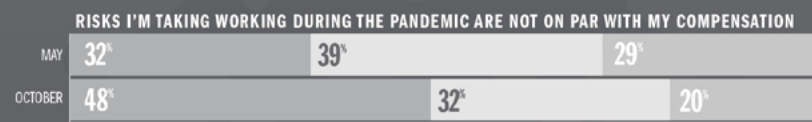


FEELINGS ABOUT WORKING IN PUBLIC SECTOR DURING COVID-19

Positive feelings about working in the public sector during COVID have decreased from May to October 2020.



Negative feelings about working in the public sector during COVID have increased from May to October 2020.



FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Overall, there has been **little change** in state and local government employees' financial outlook from May to October.



Concerned that the pandemic and the related economic crisis will impact being able to save enough to be financially secure throughout retirement

Have been negatively impacted financially by the COVID-19 pandemic



Have been able to get the help, information, and resources need to make smart financial decisions during the pandemic and related economic crisis

Will reduce the amount saving for retirement over course of next year (May) / Have reduced retirement savings since the start of the pandemic (October)

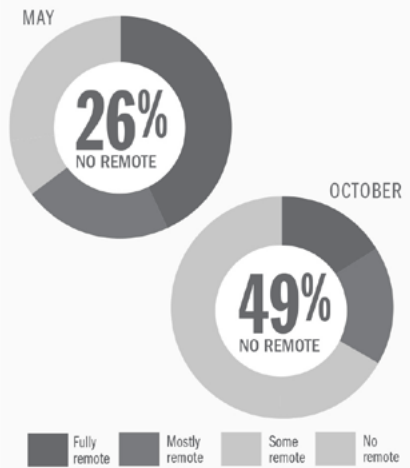


The most significant change was for spending: **In May, 59% expected to spend less than normal** (on either essential or non-essential expenses) in comparison to what would have spent had the pandemic not occurred. **In October, only 46% said they had reduced the amount they are spending.**

VISIT SLGE.ORG IN JANUARY 2021 TO VIEW THE FULL REPORT

JOB OUTLOOK

Respondents were nearly **2x more likely** to report no remote work in October as in May.



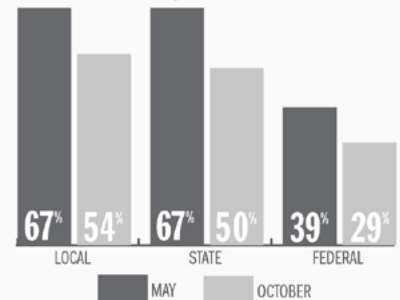
Consider their job at least somewhat risky in terms of potential exposure to people who may have COVID-19



TRUST IN GOVERNMENT LEADERS

Trust in government leaders to make appropriate decisions about employee safety during the pandemic **has decreased** for all levels of government from May to October.

% WITH FAIR AMOUNT/GREAT DEAL OF TRUST



Information for this infographic is from an online survey of full-time state and local government employees fielded by Greenwald Research in May 2020 (n=1,008) and October 2020 (n=1,205). Final data were weighted by gender, age, household income, and industry type to reflect the distribution of the state and local government workforce as found in the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey.

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