



Federal broadband grant opportunities



a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50).

The EBB program has awarded benefits to about one in 12 eligible households, and in Colorado alone only 9% of eligible households have applied. We encourage you to let residents in your communities know about this excellent opportunity.

For more information on how households in your

city or town can apply, visit the program website at bit.ly/3x65i0u.

The Emergency Connectivity Fund (bit.ly/3rAT9iR) is a program that will help schools and libraries provide the tools and services their communities need for remote learning during the COVID-19 emergency period. ECF can help provide relief to millions of students, school staff, and library patrons and will help close the homework gap for students who currently lack necessary internet access or the devices they need to connect to classrooms. For eligible schools and libraries, the ECF program will cover reasonable costs of laptop and tablet computers; Wi-Fi hotspots; modems; routers; and broadband connectivity purchases for off-

campus use by students, school staff, and library patrons. Congress authorized the Emergency Connectivity Fund as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Schools, libraries, and consortia of schools and libraries (e.g., regional or statewide groups of schools or libraries that apply together) that are eligible for support under the FCC's E-Rate Program (bit.ly/3i7RdLT) and Tribal libraries eligible for support under the Library Services and Technology Act may request and receive support through the Emergency Connectivity Fund.

Review the eligible services list at bit.ly/3eXIZny for additional guidance on the equipment and services eligible for funding under the Emergency Connectivity Fund Program.

The initial ECF Program application filing window will close on **August 13**. During the application filing window, eligible schools, libraries, and consortia of eligible schools and libraries can submit requests for funding to purchase eligible equipment and services between **July 1, 2021**, and **June 30, 2022**. We encourage you to coordinate with your school districts and libraries to take advantage of this program!

If you have any questions about the programs, please contact Meghan MacKillop, CML legislative and policy advocate, at mmackillop@cml.org.

In 2020 and 2021, several pieces of federal legislation were passed to improve broadband infrastructure nationwide.

Below are some grant opportunities that are available for your communities. The Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program (bit.ly/3x65i0u) is a \$3.2 billion program that provides a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households. If a household in your municipality is eligible, they can receive:

- Up to a \$50/month discount on your broadband service and associated equipment rentals;
- up to a \$75/month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands;
- a one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer (with

Nominations for Phoenix Awards open through Sept. 3

After a short hiatus, the premier awards program for brownfields redevelopment is coming to Brownfields 2021 in Oklahoma City. This year's awards reflect the progression of brownfield redevelopment over more than twenty years by recognizing people in addition to projects. What was once a niche activity has grown into a

practice area of its own with public, private, and nonprofit practitioners across the country focused solely on brownfields as an essential function of planning, economic development, environmental quality, and community development.

The 2021 Phoenix Awards nomination process will close on **Friday, Sept. 3, 2021**. Winners will be notified on or before **Nov. 1, 2021** and will be announced at an evening event on **Dec. 10, 2021**. For more information or to submit a nomination, please go to bit.ly/3fgZJX9.

Member news

New Associate Members

CollegelInvest

Tami Foster

Employer Program Director

1600 Broadway, Ste. 2300

Denver, CO 80202

303-376-8853

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www.collegeinvest.org

At CollegelInvest our goal is to provide a variety of savings options that all meet the needs of Colorado families, regardless of saving and investment preferences. We provide expert information, simple financial planning tools, and tax advantaged 529 college savings plans to help Coloradans achieve their higher education goals.

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WESTMINSTER | SEPT. 22-24



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Scan this QR code with your smartphone to register.



COLORADO MUNICIPAL LEAGUE **NEWSLETTER**

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Velasquez becomes GFOA president-elect



Terri Velasquez, director of finance, City of Aurora, was elected as president-elect of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

on July 12, 2021. The election was held at the association's annual business meeting during its 2021 Virtual Conference.

As finance director in Aurora, Velasquez is responsible for the leadership and oversight of finance operations, including an annual budget of approximately \$920 million, accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, cash receipting, payroll, grants

administration, investing approximately \$715 million of city funds, debt management of approximately \$880 million, purchasing and contract services, tax collection and auditing, licensing of businesses including liquor licensing, and marijuana licensing and enforcement. Velasquez leads and manages a staff of 72 employees and department budget of \$8.3 million.

Velasquez will serve on GFOA's Executive Board for one year as president-elect. In June 2022, she will become the association's president at its Annual Conference in Austin, Texas.

CML releases 2021-2022 Policy Statement



By Meghan Dollar, CML legislative advocacy manager

The Colorado Municipal League (CML) supports cooperation among local, state, and federal officials to provide a strong partnership with Colorado's cities and towns. The CML Policy Statement has evolved throughout the history of the League and guides the CML Executive Board, committees, and advocacy team during the legislative session and throughout the year. The CML Policy Committee, which is open to representation from each municipal member and CML professional section, is charged with developing policy recommendations and

proposing amendments to the Policy Statement. During the business meeting (held each year at the CML annual conference), CML members consider any recommendations and adopt the Policy Statement for the next year. The CML Policy Statement consists of several major policy items, but is not exhaustive. When legislation or policy issues are considered, the CML staff, Policy Committee, and Executive Board look first to the Policy Statement to develop recommendations and formal positions. If a specific issue is not found within the Policy Statement, the Policy Committee and the Executive Board will consider and establish a CML position, if any. We welcome input and suggestions from members on CML policy and positions. For this year's CML Policy Statement, the CML Advocacy Team worked with a small committee made up of members of the Policy Committee to overhaul the document by adding more issue areas and removing outdated language. Now the CML Policy Statement is a stronger and more representative document of the positions of CML's municipal membership. We remain proud to be your source for advocacy, information, and training. You can view CML Policy Statement at bit.ly/3x3jUhM, if you have questions or comments, please contact Meghan Dollar, legislative advocacy manager, at mdollar@cml.org, 303-831-6411, or 866-578-8175.

Unleashing your HERO

By Kevin Brown, motivational speaker and author

Join Kevin Brown at CML's Special Conference Thursday General Session.

During the pandemic, we've heard the words **hero** and **essential** on a daily basis. We've watched as everyday people in communities, families, and organizations all over the planet rise to the challenges we've all faced during the crisis. And while we may not all be in the same boat, we have all most certainly been in the same storm.

One of the things that I have noticed during the past fifteen months is that crisis never makes heroes, **it simply reveals them.**

We have watched people and organizations use this season to create new opportunities to serve their customers. They are not bogged down trying to manage change, they are busy leveraging change and solving problems for the people they serve. They understand that the goals haven't changed, simply the path has changed. As leaders, they have gone to work managing human realities and corporate objectives. Focused on taking care of people and adjusting to the current circumstances while preparing to accelerate growth in the future ahead.

In the past decade, I have been around the world sharing an idea called **The HERO Effect®** with high achievers and world-class organizations. An idea that all started with one simple question. A question that changed my life forever. Here's the question:

What does a hero look like?

From our military men and women to world-changers and first responders, we all recognize and believe in heroes. In fact, if you ask most people what a hero looks like, they will define heroes as "ordinary people doing extraordinary things."

While that is a noble ideal, I respectfully disagree. After chasing down heroes all over the world, from every walk of life, I believe that the definition of a hero is just the opposite.

A hero is an extraordinary person who chooses not to be ordinary. This changed everything.

What I have learned is that heroes do certain things better than everyone else. They show up with a different mindset and focus. Specifically, I noticed four fantastic qualities that are evident every time a hero shows up:

Heroes help people—with no strings attached.

Everyone comprehends that heroes help people. We understand on some level that helping others is a key ingredient to success in life. We have heard from many sources that serving others is the pathway to making a difference and creating wealth. Yet, even though we are taught this idea of servanthood, it has been my experience that most people don't get it.

I have observed that most people try to be helpful to the extent that it's worth their anticipated return on investment. They evaluate if it is worth their time and attention to give something more for a greater something in return. In other words, there is a motive. There's quid pro quo. It is conditional upon another person's action. Many people bargain, negotiate and work an angle to get what they want. Heroes don't do that.

Heroes help people ... with no strings attached. No pretense. No conditions. No agreement. No contingencies. It's the dot, dot, dot that separates the hero from everyone else.

Heroes approach their work and their life very differently. They bring a passion and a focus on the outcome for their customer, student, co-worker, and friend that is different from almost everyone else. They are not caught up in transacting business. They are deeply caught up, however, in transforming moments and leaving the people they serve wanting more.

Heroes step up and deliver excellence every single time, and because of this, their fans evangelize their story to the rest of the world. In business, they drive new customers and more business to heroes again and again and again. You can become the hero whom people yearn to be around because they know that you operate with a "no strings attached" mindset.

Heroes create an exceptional experience for the people they serve.

Heroes make life better. They simplify things and are easy to do business with. Heroes know that the easier it is to do business with them, the harder it is for the competition to take their customers. Heroes dominate the emotional space between their customer's head and their heart. They know that if they make an emotional connection, people will

fight to find the logic to support their decision to do business with you.

Exceptional service is worth going out of my way to invest my time and money with someone who is amazing at their job. That is what I want for my business, and it's what I want for my personal life with my friends and family: to be the only choice; to be the obvious choice. Isn't that what you want?

The non-negotiables

The number one thing that keeps you from being your best is your decision to be ordinary. Deciding to show up and be like everyone else. Deciding to do the minimum required to get by.

If you want to be your very best, then decide on your non-negotiables. A non-negotiable mindset deals in absolutes—the things that won't be compromised—there is no bending or flexing. The things that you refuse to sacrifice at any price.

What do you stand for? Decide what will not be compromised in your life. Decide how others will define their experience with you. Decide your own operational philosophy for life that will reach beyond your professional life and into everything you do.

Heroes take responsibility for their attitude, their actions, and their results.

There's a motivational quote that says, "If it is to be, it is up to me!" How true it is.

Unfortunately, many people have modified that quote to say, "If it is to be, don't look at me!" Average people are content to move their own integrity outside of their responsibility. They look to the people around them and point the finger. They blame leadership. They spend more time looking for the reasons they can't get it done and zero time figuring out how to make it happen. Heroes act differently. Heroes are the epitome of what it means to take responsibility for their results. They own the moment and know that every moment matters. They spend their time looking for ways to make it happen and produce the best possible outcome for the people they serve. Heroes take responsibility and lead by example.

Heroes see life through the lens of optimism.

Optimism is different from positive thinking. Positive thinkers are great pretenders. If they encounter a challenge, roadblock, or

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obstacle, they pretend that it doesn't exist. They believe if they ignore it, it might just disappear. The optimist, on the other hand, encounters the same challenge, roadblock, or obstacle, and they face it head-on. They don't pretend it doesn't exist. They acknowledge it as a problem that requires focus and attention to conquer.

Optimism gives heroes a couple of secret weapons. First, it gives them a supernatural vision. It allows them to see what others cannot see. They see their jobs, their families, their communities, and their lives in a new light. They see things not as they are but as they can be—people not as they are but as they can be. They see situations and circumstances not as they are but as they should be.

Second, optimism is the great equalizer. It helps us process information differently—to see what others see but apply it in a different way. Heroes use this power as leverage to stay one step ahead of everyone else and

act in a manner that seems to give them a slight edge.

"[Optimism] is like a muscle: the more you use it, the stronger it gets." - Robin Roberts

In order to serve others, heroes rise above the challenges and adversities of everyday life. They have conditioned themselves to be bigger than their problems. They lift themselves and others up and provide a new perspective.

Heroes look for solutions instead of reasons that it can't be done. They learn how to look from above the fray where they can think, create, and decide on the things that are most important to move their highest priorities forward.

Becoming a HERO

All of these qualities seem so simple, don't they. However, if you were to be a champion of all four of these simple qualities, you would be a hero to everyone around you. That is a choice that you can make, starting now.

About the author

Kevin Brown's unconventional path to business and personal success has taught him that winning in business and in life requires anything but conventional thinking. With a streetwise aptitude and a never-quit attitude, he worked his way from the front lines in business to the executive boardroom. For two decades, Kevin was a sales and marketing executive that helped grow a little-known family business into an industry giant with annual revenues reaching two billion dollars. After a career in franchising, Kevin decided to retire from corporate America and pursue his passion for bringing **The HERO Effect®** message to as many people and organizations as possible. Kevin is on a mission to help people and organizations embrace a simple philosophy that separates world-class organizations and high-performance people from everybody else. He is passionate about helping people expand their vision, develop their potential, and grow their results. To learn more, visit KevinBrownSpeaks.com.

Biden administration announces historic investment in economic development

On July 22, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced \$3 billion in funding opportunities for distressed and underserved communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This historic investment, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) of 2021, will support bottom-up, middle-out economic development focused on advancing equity, creating good-paying jobs, helping workers to develop in-demand skills, building economic resilience, and accelerating the economic recovery for the industries and communities hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic. Local governments are eligible to apply for grant funding in each of the six programs, along with state agencies, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, unions, and Tribal communities. There are six programs included in this funding package:

- Good Jobs Challenge (bit.ly/2UHkdkJ) – \$500 million
- Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge (bit.ly/2TACZJQ) – \$500 million
- Indigenous Communities Challenge (bit.ly/3i3LI63) – \$100 million
- Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grants (bit.ly/374udH4) – \$750 million
- Statewide Planning, Research and Networks Grants (bit.ly/2VbIFvA) – \$90 million

As part of the six programs, the Department of Commerce and EDA, working with the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities, are making a Coal Communities Commitment, which allocates \$300 million in ARP funds to coal communities. This investment will ensure that these communities have the resources to recover from the pandemic and will help create new jobs and opportunities through the development or expansion of a new industry

sector. The EDA also will allocate \$500 million for the *Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge*. This is the most flexible program and will award grants to communities across the country, including local governments, to support efforts to plan, build, innovate, and put people back to work through projects tailored to meet local needs.

In addition, through *Regional Tourism Grants*, EDA is allocating \$240 million for competitive grants for local governments to further invest in infrastructure, workforce, or other projects to support recovery and resilience in the communities hardest hit by disruptions in the travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation sectors.

For more information about these programs and for application deadline information visit bit.ly/3i4FOMI, or contact Meghan MacKillop, CML legislative and policy advocate, at mmackillop@cml.org.

Arvada Resiliency Taskforce creates infrastructure to support businesses



As COVID-19 began to affect Arvada businesses and nonprofits, organizations across the community united to create the Arvada Resiliency Taskforce (ART). Members include the Arvada Chamber of Commerce, the City of Arvada, the Arvada Economic Development Association (AEDA), the Arvada Visitors Center and the Olde Town Arvada Business Improvement District (to name a few). With a cross-section of strategic partners, the goal was to understand the impact of the pandemic on the business community, support closures, and respond quickly with programs, resources, and policy shifts to support Arvada businesses. Examples of these activities included:

- Olde Town Arvada street closures to help local businesses expand operations;
- business grants provided by the City of Arvada;
- distribution of personal protective equipment to businesses;

- the launch of multiple PR and marketing campaigns including "Safe and Open."

The power of local partnerships in our community has never been more clear," said Arvada Mayor Marc Williams. "Through the efforts of the Arvada Resiliency taskforce and the hard work of business owners and workers, we have seen our local economy remain relatively steady during an unprecedented crisis and move quickly toward recovery."

In reflecting on the group's efforts to respond to the pandemic, the Taskforce has created a report to provide an overview of its activities, and outcomes of the work and programs implemented over the course of one year. The report also provides insight into benchmarking opportunities. To view the report, visit bit.ly/2Vc2hyz.

On June 21, 2021, ART pivoted from the pandemic to the tragedy that took place in Olde Town Arvada. Within 24 hours, the taskforce recruited key partners, including Jefferson County Mental Health and the Community First Foundation, and met to talk through what businesses needed and how best to serve.

"Although ART was set up to support businesses throughout the COVID-19 business closures, we quickly realized the partnership had inherent value beyond the pandemic, even indefinitely," said AEDA Executive Director Daniel Ryley. "The taskforce proved to be a significant asset

for the community, as businesses grappled with the recent tragedy in Olde Town."

The strategic partners convened using the ART's existing framework to quickly identify and respond to information needs including consolidating relevant, timely resources for businesses and visitors, and developing programs to respond to emerging opportunities and information gaps.

A focus of the partnership's public relations efforts has been to establish that the area is safe and welcoming to everyone. Several examples of activities in the aftermath of the shooting include:

- Organizing walks in Olde Town Arvada to reaffirm support for area businesses and to learn about ways ART could assist;
- magnifying #ArvadaStrong in public relations efforts;
- working with Jefferson County Mental Health and promoting opportunities for people to receive services.

The vision for business resiliency in Arvada, including ART, is to develop a sound infrastructure in the community and a resilient DNA within Arvada businesses and nonprofits so they are best positioned to endure any external forces. Moving forward, the taskforce will continue to evolve, support, and take action on behalf of the Arvada business community.

To learn more about the taskforce's efforts, visit bit.ly/3BCDapj.

CML survey featured in the *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*

An article by Geoffrey Propheter, assistant professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado Denver, and CML Municipal Research Analyst Melissa Mata was published in a recent issue of the *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs* (JPNA). "Local government fiscal early warning surveys: Lessons from COVID-19" describes the advantages and challenges of using surveys as a statewide, rapid information collection strategy, examining the April 2020 survey conducted by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, the Colorado Municipal League, Colorado Counties, Inc., and the Special District Association of Colorado, which sought to understand immediate and projected

fiscal impacts of COVID-19 on local governments. The authors employ the Heckman correction technique to account for selection bias to illustrate how survey responses can improve state decision-making and offer evidence that the survey yielded relatively accurate data about local fiscal impacts.

The survey, conducted approximately two weeks after Gov. Jared Polis issued a stay-at-home order in response to COVID-19, informed the state's COVID-19 policy response as it concerned the fiscal health of local governments. State Division of Local Government staff used the survey results to evaluate policy proposals such as extending sales tax return deadlines

and to inform the design of federal aid disbursements through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

JPNA is a peer-reviewed, open-source journal sponsored by the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The journal is published by the Midwest Public Affairs Conference (MPAC). JPNA focuses on providing a connection between the practice and research of public affairs.

Read the full article at bit.ly/3BMg4g6. Find more information about the municipal responses to the survey analyzed in the article at bit.ly/2UPcReU.

CML LEGAL CORNER



Virtual, in-person, or hybrid municipal council/board meetings



By Megan Decker, CML law clerk

Just over a year ago, municipalities adopted virtual meetings out of necessity as a solution to the problem of how to continue to conduct government business in the midst of a global pandemic. However, now that most in-person activities have resumed, municipalities are deciding whether to continue virtual meetings, go back to in-person meetings, or switch to some form of a hybrid model.

Imbedded in this decision are several questions a city or town must carefully consider before making the final call. These include what format of meeting is going to encourage public participation, how can the municipality continue to comply with Open Meeting Laws, how should a municipality handle quasi-judicial hearings, should a municipality allow their council or board members to attend virtually, and if so, should their participation or the number of meetings they are allowed to attend remotely be limited?

Not surprisingly, the answers are not the same for each municipality. For example, Denver just passed an ordinance that allows the Denver City Council to hold its council and committee meetings in-person as well as online. The practice

of broadcasting a council meeting to the public is not new. In fact, under Colorado's Open Meeting Laws and a general desire on the part of municipalities to be transparent, several cities and towns have been broadcasting their council and committee meetings over Facebook or their local news

channel for years. However, allowing the public to participate online is largely a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Denver City Council found that the hybrid model has increased accessibility to Denver citizens by allowing both those who cannot be physically present at a meeting and those without access to technology to fully participate. Leadville also found that they get more public participation by allowing the public to participate virtually. However, other towns such as Eagle decided to go back to completely in-person meetings because they found they had less public attendance and participation when they offered a virtual option. Other towns found it infeasible to pursue hybrid meetings because of technical difficulties and preferred either an entirely virtual meeting or an entirely in-person meeting.

Although Denver's ordinance allows the public to attend and participate in council and committee meetings virtually, Denver's City Council agreed that councilmembers must attend council and committee meetings in person, but they do make an exception for general or personal emergencies such as inclement weather or business travel and allow councilmembers

to participate fully in those situations. Although in Denver there is no limit to how many meetings a councilmember can attend virtually, Eagle and Monument both limit the number of meetings a councilmember can attend virtually to two and four respectively. In Eagle, a councilmember must provide notice of their absence. In Monument, councilmembers attending remotely cannot participate or vote in quasi-judicial matters.

An in-person requirement for quasi-judicial matters is another option for a municipality to consider because in general a quasi-judicial decision requires a higher degree of formality, and a quasi-judicial decision is appealable immediately to district court by any aggrieved party. During a quasi-judicial decision, extra care must be taken to ensure (1) all parties with a legal interest are allowed to speak; (2) a record of the hearing is adequately preserved; and (3) overall the hearing can be conducted in an orderly manner and in a manner that closely parallels the way a municipality would conduct the hearing, receive evidence, debate, and vote on the decision, and preserve a record. Ensuring these standards are met is generally easier during an in-person meeting where the setting lends itself to a more formal occasion, participants are more likely to be prepared, and they do not need to worry about technology malfunctions.

Ultimately, each municipality will need to carefully consider how to hold council, board, and committee meetings in a post-pandemic world and will need to consult with their own attorneys and staff to implement a solution unique to their needs.

Note: This column is not intended and should not be taken as legal advice. Municipal officials are always encouraged to consult with their own attorney

Research Corner: 2022 Census of Governments

The Census of Governments (CoG) is conducted every five years and is the most comprehensive and precise measure of government economic activity. It identifies the scope and nature of the nation's public sector and provides authoritative benchmark figures of public finance, pensions, and employment. The CoG is comprised of three components—Organization, Employment, and Finance. The Organization phase of data collection for the 2022 CoG is currently underway. The second phase, Employment, will kick off in March 2022, and the mailing for Finance, the final phase, will begin in late 2022. In June, CML hosted a webinar on the CoG with representatives from the U.S. Census Bureau. View the webinar at bit.ly/3i5f2Ur. For more information about the CoG, please visit their website at bit.ly/3i2SDqU.

PUBLIC SECTOR STATISTICS INCLUDE:



EXPENDITURE



REVENUE



ASSETS



DEBT



EMPLOYMENT



ORGANIZATION

TIMELINE

The program will produce data targeted releases between July 2023 and September 2024. These CoG data products provide unique detailed national, state, and local level statistical measures.



THE 2017 CENSUS OF GOVERNMENTS COUNTED 90,075 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS COMPOSED OF



3,031 counties



19,495 cities



16,253 townships

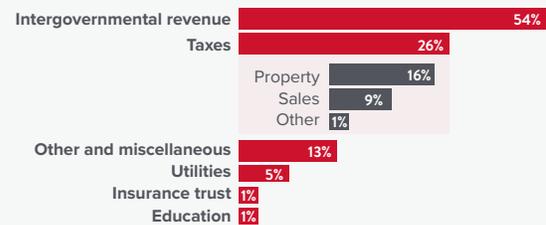


38,542 special districts

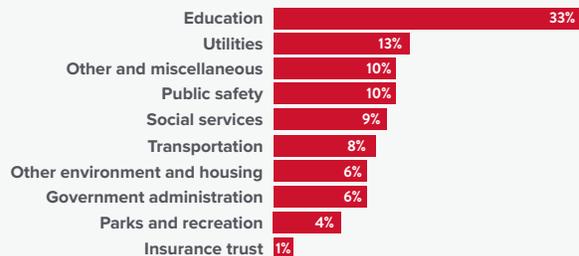


12,754 independent school districts

2018 REVENUE SOURCES FOR COLORADO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



2018 EXPENDITURE BY FUNCTION FOR COLORADO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS





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NEWSLETTER

COLORADO
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