

Colorado Budget Law 101

Mia Gonzales
Budget Program Administrator
Division of Local Government



Overview

- DOLA as a Resource
- Budgeting Approaches
- Financial Policies
- Budget Law Components
- Amendments
- Legal Limits



Department of Local Affairs

Divisions

Division of Housing
Division of Local Government
Division of Property Taxation

Offices

Executive Director's Office
State Demography Office

Boards

Board of Assessment Appeals
State Housing Board
State Board of Equalization



Division of Local Government

- Funding Opportunities
- Disaster Recovery, Rebuilding, Resiliency
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Required Filing and Reporting



Main Street Program



Support for community-led downtown revitalization.



Meeker, CO



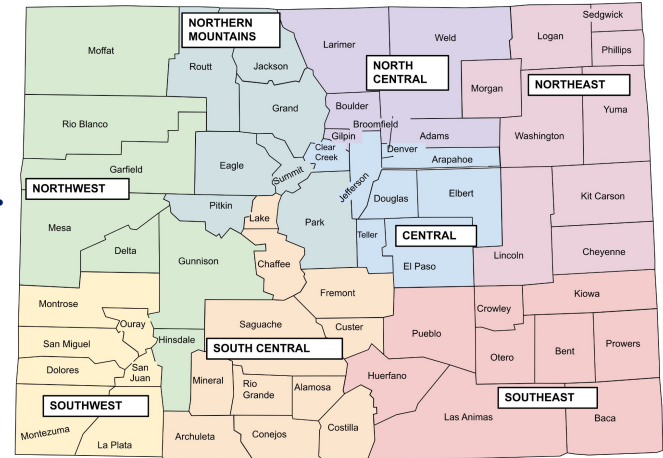
Ridgway, CO

Regional Team Services



Regional Managers can help local governments and community agencies:

- **Guide** strategic and capital improvement planning.
- **Facilitate** problem-solving to define issues and identify solutions.
- **Deliver** specialized technical assistance.
- **Train** leadership in good governance, management, visioning, and goal setting.



Colorado Local Governments



4,985 Active Local Governments

62 Counties

2 City & Counties

271 Municipalities

178 School Districts

247 Fire Districts

261 Water and/or Sanitation Districts

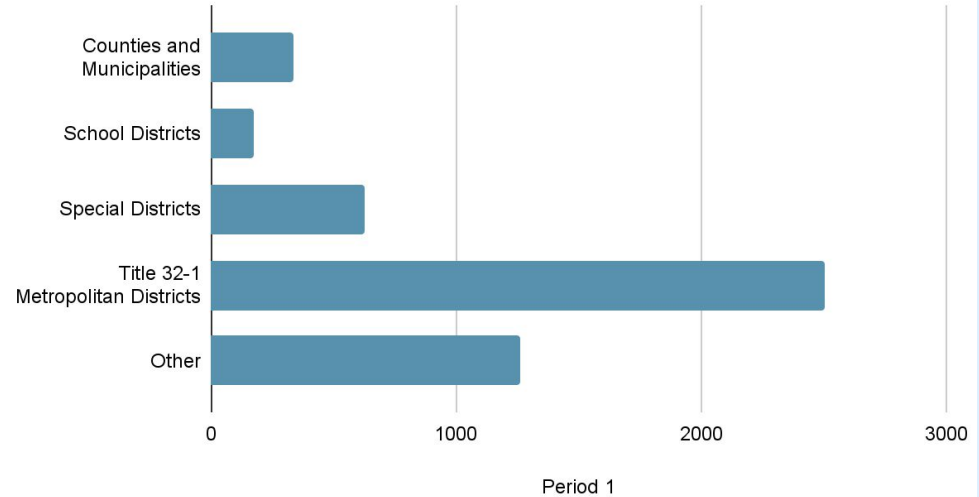
57 Library Districts

59 Park and Rec. Districts

2,563 Metropolitan Districts

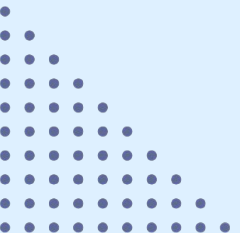
~ 1,000+ other districts of more than 60
different types

Types of Local Governments





Budgeting Approaches & Financial Policies



Board

“What to do?”

- Strategic Direction & Policy
- Accountability & Review

Key takeaway: Focuses on the **'What'** (Strategic Direction) and **'How Much'** (Financial Limits)

Manager/Staff

“How to do it?”

- Budget Creation & Detail
- Day-to-day execution
- Reporting and adaptation

Key Takeaway: Focuses on the **'How'** (Operational Execution) and **'Who'** (Staffing/Resources).

Budgeting Approaches

Program	Organized set of activities achieving a common purpose
Zero-Based	Each program restarts at \$0. Managers must justify all activities and the amount requested.
Target	Focuses on achieving a specific revenue target (\$X). Spending categories/agencies increase or decrease by a set amount (x%).
Traditional Line-Item	Detailed breakdown of spending at the fund level.
Priority-Based	Allocate revenue to solve community problems or prioritize needs.





- Policies related to budget and funding are crucial.
- Understand the vulnerability of operations to funding disruptions.
- Develop flexible processes for adaptation.

Key Financial Policies

Fund
Balance/Reserves

How much money must we keep in the bank to survive a crisis and take advantage of unexpected opportunities?

Revenue & Fees

Are our prices and revenue strategies fair, competitive, and sufficient to pay for everything we do?

Capital Planning

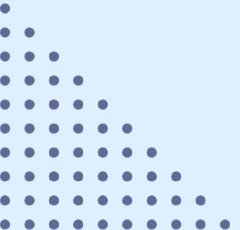
How do we decide what major assets to buy or fix, and how will we pay for them over the long run?

Debt Management

What is the maximum debt we can responsibly take on without jeopardizing our financial future?



Budget Law Components



Who must comply with the budget law?



C.R.S. 29-1-102(13). Definitions.

"**Local government**" means any authority, county, municipality, city and county, district, or other political subdivision of the state of Colorado; any institution, department, agency, or authority of any of the foregoing; and any other entity, organization, or corporation formed by intergovernmental agreement or other contract between or among any of the foregoing...**does not include**...any home rule city or town, home rule city and county, cities and towns operating under a territorial charter, school district, or local college district.

C.R.S. 29-1-113(2) Filing of budget.

...budgets shall be filed with the division by **home rule** cities, cities and counties, and towns and cities operating under a **territorial charter** for the purpose of information and research.

What is required?



CRS 29-1-103. Budgets required.

- 1) Each local government shall adopt an annual budget. To the extent that the financial activities of any local government are fully reported in the budget or budgets of a parent local government or governments, a separate budget is not required. Such budget shall present a complete financial plan by fund and by spending agency within each fund for the budget year and shall set forth the following:
 - a) **All proposed expenditures** for administration, operations, maintenance, debt service, and capital projects to be undertaken or executed by any spending agency during the budget year;
 - b) **Anticipated revenues** for the budget year;
 - c) Estimated beginning and ending **fund balances**;
 - d) The corresponding **actual figures for the prior fiscal year and estimated figures projected through the end of the current fiscal year**, including disclosure of all beginning and ending fund balances, consistent with the basis of accounting used to prepare the budget;
 - e) A written **budget message** describing the important features of the proposed budget, including a statement of the budgetary basis of accounting used and a description of the services to be delivered during the budget year; and
 - f) **Explanatory schedules or statements** classifying the expenditures by object and the revenues by source.

BUDGET MESSAGE

(Pursuant to 29-1-103(1)(e), C.R.S.)

City of Ouray

The attached 2025 Budget for the City of Ouray includes these important features: The City has budgeted to spend \$1,000,000 to complete construction of the new Water Treatment Plant, \$2,000,000 to complete construction of the new Wastewater Treatment Plant, \$1,400,000 for Springbox Rehabilitation, if grants are awarded, \$1,400,000 on Geothermal Projects if grants are awarded, and \$335,000 for Affordable Housing Projects.

Our budgetary and accounting practices for the City of Ouray are based on a Modified Accrual Basis accounting process, which identifies revenues as they become available and in turn records expenditures when liabilities are incurred. Copies of this budget are made available at City Hall for any interested citizens for review.

The services to be provided by the City during Budget Year 2025 are general government, public safety, water, sewer, public works, and recreation.

The City has had five big financial years (mainly due to high tourism rates and sales tax revenue) and it is in a healthy place with approximately one year of revenue in savings. The goal is to maintain at least 6 months of revenue in savings to ensure it can withstand potential financial hard times in the future. The plan for 2025 is to spend down some of the fund balances on necessary projects for the City.

2025 Capital Budget Highlights (\$100,000+):

Item	Amount
<u>Springbox Rehabilitation (\$1.2M Grant Funded)</u>	<u>1,400,000</u>
<u>Amphitheater Fire Mitigation (Plus \$1M W Region Wildfire Council, \$50k County, \$138k USFS)</u>	<u>227,000</u>
<u>CDOT RMS Main Street Revitalization (\$50k from TF, \$720k Grant, \$130k Matching Funds)</u>	<u>900,000</u>

- Important features of the proposed budget
- A statement of the budgetary basis of accounting
- Description of the services to be delivered during the budget year.

Budget Schedules



- By fund and spending agency
- Expenditures
- Revenues
- Beginning fund balances
- Ending fund balances
- Prior year actuals
- Current year estimates

Budget Schedules



GENERAL FUND

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Adopted Budget	2025 Revised Budget	2026 Proposed Budget
Final Budget Adopted 12/10/2025						
REVENUE						
Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 3,543,068	\$ 3,910,071	\$ 4,374,096	\$ 4,920,393	\$ 4,920,393	\$ 5,319,247
Franchise Revenue						
DMEA	72,207	71,838	69,096	65,000	65,000	65,000
Black Hills Corporation	22,331	21,950	19,801	20,000	20,000	20,000
Elevate Fiber	\$ 2,508	\$ 1,965	\$ 2,269	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,750	\$ 1,500
Subtotal	\$ 97,046	\$ 95,753	\$ 91,166	\$ 86,500	\$ 86,750	\$ 86,500
Town Revenue						
Community Room Rental	1,200	1,630	1,015	900	1,245	900
Interest Earnings	57,764	207,693	255,045	80,000	228,500	80,000
Building Permits	27,366	23,442	24,835	15,000	22,500	15,000
Planning Commission	6,129	1,057	2,485	500	4,000	500
Other	1,157	5,081	2,471	100	10,800	100
Centennial Revenue	40	50	10	-	60	-
Liquor License Fees	1,401	1,504	975	900	550	550
Subtotal	\$ 95,057	\$ 240,457	\$ 286,836	\$ 97,400	\$ 267,655	\$ 97,050
County Sales Tax	371,629	370,475	383,105	300,000	324,600	300,000
State Revenue						
Mineral Leasing	20,386	35,177	18,497	3,000	14,525	3,000
Severance Taxes	11,622	13,426	11,974	2,000	5,870	2,000
Fuel Tax Refund	414	289	1,051	-	605	-
Tobacco Tax	1,404	1,867	1,369	1,000	1,180	1,000
Subtotal	\$ 33,826	\$ 50,759	\$ 32,891	\$ 6,000	\$ 22,180	\$ 6,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 597,558	\$ 757,444	\$ 793,998	\$ 489,900	\$ 701,185	\$ 489,550
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	\$ 4,140,626	\$ 4,667,515	\$ 5,168,094	\$ 5,410,293	\$ 5,621,578	\$ 5,808,797

Budget Schedules



GENERAL FUND

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Adopted Budget	2025 Revised Budget	2026 Proposed Budget
Final Budget Adopted 12/10/2025						
EXPENDITURES						
Administration						
Salaries	53,414	55,884	65,787	89,070	89,070	93,850
Payroll Taxes	5,123	5,291	5,612	6,814	6,814	7,180
Retirement	1,715	1,801	1,912	2,107	2,107	2,190
Workers Compensation	5,197	8,192	9,303	5,500	5,500	6,000
Health Insurance	13,343	14,045	13,554	15,048	15,048	17,105
Dental Insurance	690	615	501	500	500	510
Life Insurance	561	561	560	730	730	830
Subtotal	\$ 80,043	\$ 86,389	\$ 97,229	\$ 119,769	\$ 119,769	\$ 127,665
General Operating Costs						
Utilities	3,549	3,405	2,882	3,500	3,500	3,500
Telephone	858	653	683	1,300	1,000	1,000
Office Supplies	4,002	4,246	3,880	4,000	5,000	5,000
Postage	689	614	224	1,000	700	1,000
Computer Support	5,364	4,729	5,049	9,000	9,000	9,000
Equipment/Computer Purchase	1,162	72	56	1,000	500	2,000
Records Management	-	-	2,454	3,000	600	3,000
Bldg Maintenance&Repair	5,560	10,598	1,444	6,000	6,500	6,000
Double J Disposal	1,243	1,028	1,181	1,475	1,475	1,475
Janitorial Services	10,561	11,970	11,970	11,970	16,100	16,100
GL, Facilities, Vehicles Ins.	8,862	9,693	13,899	14,751	14,740	13,765
City Clothing	668	232	244	1,000	500	1,000
Dues and Subscriptions	982	1,034	1,182	1,150	1,500	1,500
Newsletter	1,351	-	-	7,000	-	7,000
Website	2,508	2,609	2,640	2,772	2,772	8,500
Trustee Fees	16,144	14,287	15,645	22,000	22,000	22,000
Trustee Retreat	232	200	213	500	250	500
Conferences and Schools	3,215	1,817	71	5,000	3,000	5,000

Budget Schedules



GENERAL FUND

	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Adopted Budget	2025 Revised Budget	2026 Proposed Budget
<i>Final Budget Adopted 12/10/2025</i>						
Dolphin House	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
Juvenile Diversion	2,000	0	0	0	0	0
Other Donations	0	0	0	750	750	750
Code Enforcement	0	0	0	5,000	1,864	6,000
Subtotal	\$ 18,370	\$ 83,648	\$ 17,388	\$ 23,746	\$ 20,185	\$ 94,519
Contingency	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000
Transfer to Park	36,872	31,697	40,191	42,899	42,899	42,686
Transfer to Road						
Capital Reserve/Building						275,000
Subtotal	\$ 36,872	\$ 31,697	\$ 40,191	\$ 62,899	\$ 42,899	\$ 337,686
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 230,555	\$ 293,419	\$ 247,701	\$ 345,993	\$ 302,331	\$ 740,215
TABOR/Emergency Reserve				\$ 10,378		\$ 22,207
ENDING FUND BALANCE	\$ 3,910,071	\$ 4,374,096	\$ 4,920,393	\$ 5,053,922	\$ 5,319,247	\$ 5,046,375

Budget Hearing Notice



C.R.S. 29-1-106. Notice of budget.

(1) Upon receipt of the proposed budget, the governing body shall cause to be published a notice containing the following information:

- a) The date and time of the hearing at which the adoption of the proposed budget will be considered;
- b) A statement that the proposed budget is available for inspection by the public at a designated public office located within the boundaries of the local government, or, if no public office is located within such boundaries, the nearest public office where the budget is available; and
- c) A statement that any interested elector of the local government may file any objections to the proposed budget at any time prior to the final adoption of the budget by the governing body.

(2) If the governing body has submitted or intends to submit a request for increased property tax revenues to the division pursuant to section 29-1-302 (1), the amount of the increased property tax revenues resulting from such request shall be stated in such notice or in a subsequent notice in the manner provided in subsection (3) of this section.

Budget Hearing Notice



NOTICE OF BUDGET¹ (Pursuant to 29-1-106, C.R.S.)

NOTICE is hereby given that a proposed budget has been submitted to the Name of Government for the ensuing year of Year; a copy of such proposed budget has been filed in the office of Unit of Government, where the same is open for public inspection; such proposed budget will be considered at Regular or Special meeting of the Name of Governing Body to be held at Location on Date at Time.

Any interested elector of Name of Local Government **may inspect the proposed budget and file or register any objections thereto at any time prior to the final adoption of the budget.**

Budget Hearing Notice



C.R.S. 29-1-106. Notice of budget.

(3) For any local government whose proposed budget is more than fifty thousand dollars, the notice required by subsection (1) of this section shall be published one time in a newspaper having general circulation in the local government.

Any local government whose proposed budget is fifty thousand dollars or less shall cause copies of the notice required by subsection (1) of this section to be posted in three public places within the jurisdiction of such local government in lieu of such publication.

Proposed Budget Threshold	Public Notification Method
Over \$50,000	Newspaper
\$50,000 or Less	Posting in three public places

Adopting the Budget and Appropriations



29-1-108. Adoption of budget - appropriations - failure to adopt.

- (1) The governing body of the local government shall hold a hearing to consider the adoption of the proposed budget, at which time objections of the electors of the local government shall be considered. The governing body shall revise, alter, increase, or decrease the items as it deems necessary in view of the needs of the various spending agencies and the anticipated revenue of the local government. Adoption of the proposed budget shall be effective only upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the governing body.

- (2) **Before the mill levy is certified** pursuant to section 39-1-111 or 39-5-128, C.R.S., the governing body shall enact an ordinance or resolution adopting the budget and making appropriations for the budget year. **The amounts appropriated shall not exceed the expenditures** specified in the budget. Appropriations shall be made **by fund or by spending agencies within a fund**, as determined by the governing body. Changes to the adopted budget or appropriation shall be made in accordance with the provisions of section 29-1-109.

Adopting the Budget

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-13

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF ORCHARD CITY, COLORADO, APPROVING THE BUDGET FOR 2026.

WHEREAS, the annual budget for the Town of Orchard City, Colorado, for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2026 and ending December 31, 2026, has been prepared and submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees held a public hearing on said proposed budget on the 10th day of December 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

WHEREAS, whatever increases may have been made in the expenditures, like increases were added to the revenues or planned to be expended from reserves/fund balances so that the budget remains in balance, as required by law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF ORCHARD CITY, COLORADO THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED AND HEREIN SUMMARIZED BY FUND IS HEREBY APPROVED AND ADOPTED AS THE BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF ORCHARD CITY FOR THE YEAR 2025:

That the estimated revenues for each fund are:

General Fund	\$489,550
Road Fund	\$214,700
Water Fund	\$1,281,200
Water Capital Construction Fund	\$1,143,720
Water Acquisition Fund	\$121,671
Park Fund	\$47,286
Conservation Trust Fund	\$28,300

That the estimated expenditures for each fund are:

General Fund	\$740,215
Road Fund	\$366,482
Water Fund	\$2,057,499
Water Capital Construction Fund	\$1,810,000
Water Acquisition Fund	\$50,000
Park Fund	\$69,261
Conservation Trust Fund	\$60,000

THIS RESOLUTION was introduced and adopted this 10th day of December, 2025 by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Orchard City, Colorado.



Town of Orchard City, Colorado


Richard Kirkpatrick, Mayor

Attest: 
Melissa Oelke, Town Clerk

Appropriating Funds

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF ORCHARD CITY, COLORADO, APPROPRIATING SUMS OF MONEY TO THE GENERAL FUND, ROAD FUND, WATER FUND, WATER CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION FUND, WATER ACQUISITION FUND, PARK FUND AND THE CONSERVATION TRUST FUND FOR 2026 BUDGET YEAR.

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has adopted the annual budget in accordance with Local Government Budget Laws, on the 10th day of December, 2025, and

WHEREAS, it is not only required by law, but also necessary to appropriate the revenues provided in the budgets to and for said expenditures, so as not to impair the operation of the Town of Orchard City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE TOWN OF ORCHARD CITY, COLORADO;

THAT \$740,215 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the General Fund for the expenditures of the General Fund;

THAT \$366,482 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the Road Fund for the expenditures of the Road Fund;

THAT \$2,057,499 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the Water Fund for the expenditures of the Water Fund;

THAT \$1,810,000 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the Water Capital Construction Fund for the expenditures of the Water Capital Construction Fund;

THAT \$50,000 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the Water Acquisition Fund for the expenditures of the Water Acquisition Fund;

THAT \$69,261 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the Park Fund for the expenditures of the Park Fund;

THAT \$60,000 is hereby appropriated from revenues and reserves/fund balances of the Conservation Trust Fund for the expenditures of the Conservation Trust Fund.

THIS RESOLUTION was introduced and adopted this 10th day of December, 2025 by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Orchard City, Colorado.



Attest:
Melissa Oelke
Melissa Oelke, Town Clerk

Richard Kirkpatrick
Richard Kirkpatrick, Mayor

Setting the Mill Levy

Resolution 19, 2025

A RESOLUTION LEVYING GENERAL
PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE YEAR OF 2024
TO HELP DEFRAY THE COSTS OF
GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY OF DELTA,
COLORADO, FOR THE 2026 BUDGET YEAR

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Delta, Colorado, has determined that the amount of money necessary to balance the 2026 budget for general operating expenses is \$0.00; and

WHEREAS, the 2025 valuation of assessment for the City of Delta, Colorado, as certified by the County Assessor, is \$116,074,415.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DELTA, COLORADO:

Section 1. That for the purpose of meeting all general operating expenses of the City of Delta during the 2026 budget year, there is hereby levied a tax of 0 mills upon each dollar of the total valuation for assessment of all taxable property within the City for the year 2026.

Section 2. That the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to immediately certify to the County Commissioners of Delta County, Colorado, the mill levies for the City of Delta as here in above determined and set.

Adopted this 2nd, day of December, 2025.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk

Filing the Budget



29-1-113. Filing of budget.

- (1) No later than thirty days following the beginning of the fiscal year of the budget adopted pursuant to section 29-1-108, the governing body shall cause a certified copy of such budget, including the budget message, to be filed in the office of the division. The budget of a special district shall include any resolutions adopting the budget, appropriating moneys, and fixing the rate of any mill levy. Copies of the budget of a local government and of ordinances or resolutions authorizing expenditures or the transfer of funds shall be filed with the officer or employee of the local government whose duty it is to disburse moneys or issue orders for the payment of money.



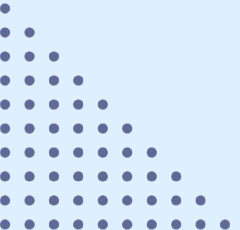
Budgeting Law Deadlines

Budget [Calendar](#)

October 15	Present the budget to the board, publish or post hearing notice
December 15	Certify the mill levy (adopt the budget and appropriations first)
December 31	Adopt the budget and appropriations, if there is no mill levy
January 31	E-file the budget



Amendments



Amending the Budget



Increasing Appropriations

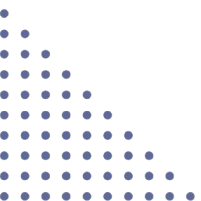
Transfer

Supplemental

Contingency

Decreasing Appropriations

Revision



Reduction of appropriation to reduce expenditure levels

Example: Local Walmart shuts down and staff or board recommends amendment

Procedural Requirements:

- Optional notice and hearing
- Optional resolution or ordinance

Moving money from one appropriated fund to another

Example: General Fund □ Capital Fund

Procedural Requirements:

- Publish/Post notice and conduct a hearing
- Adopt resolution or ordinance
- E-file resolution or ordinance with DLG

Receiving unanticipated revenue to spend in the budget year

Example: Receiving a grant

Procedural Requirements:

- Publish/Post notice and conduct a hearing
- Adopt resolution or ordinance
- E-file resolution or ordinance with DLG

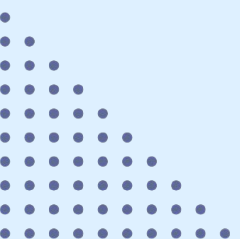
The governing body may authorize the expenditure of funds in excess of the appropriation in emergencies

Example: An unanticipated repair project requires dipping into reserves.

Procedural Requirements:

- Adopt resolution or ordinance at a public meeting
- E-file resolution or ordinance with DLG

E-filing



What can be e-filed?

Annual budgets
Budget amendments
Election documents

How to set-up an account?

Go to dlg.colorado.gov/account-login Click “Login Instructions”

User IDs: Create your own

Use the same login credentials for all DLG portals.

Account Login

Filing and Reporting Home Page
Account Login
Create an Account
Existing User ID
Update My Information
File and Refile a Document
Special Districts - Director Information
Audits and Exemptions
Civil Asset Forfeiture Reporting
Direct Distribution - Severance Tax & Federal Mineral Lease
Local Government Information Systems



Updates to E-Filing Portal and Local Government Information System

The Division of Local Government (DLG) has implemented a new e-filing portal to be used by all local government entities, requiring some current users to create new login credentials. [Learn More](#)

NEW E-filing Portal

Use this portal to file:

- Annual Budget Documents
- Election Documents
- Special District Documents
- Update Contact Information

[Log into the E-Filing Portal](#)

[Webinar Recording: New E-Filing Portal Demonstration](#)



Grants Portal

Use this portal to:

- Apply for available funding through open applications
- Manage existing projects funded through the division

[Log into the Grants Portal](#)

Formulaic Programs Portal

Use this portal for the following programs:

- Conservation Trust Fund
- Firefighter Casualty Benefit
- Volunteer Firefighter Pension
- Direct Distribution

[Log into the Formulaic Programs Portal](#)



Request access to your local government to begin e-filing and view past and current submissions.

Local Government E-Filing Portal - Main Menu

[My Profile](#) [Password](#) [Logout](#)

Local Government E-Filing Portal - Main Menu

[→ Request access to an organization or view existing requests](#)

You are associated with multiple local governments. Please select which local government you would like to view from the following list:

Action	Local Government: ▾
→	TEST
→	Test Abbreviated Fire Protection District

Review your Local Government Profile and Officials to verify the contact information on file is accurate and up-to-date.

Local Government E-Filing Portal

Local Government: TEST
Local Government ID (LGID): 68032



Local Government Profile Officials

Main Menu

Main Budget Finance Elections Organizational Contacts Other Filings



FILE A DOCUMENT

DOCUMENTS NEEDING ATTENTION (0)



SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS: PENDING REVIEW BY DLG (0)



RECENT ACTIVITY (1)




Update the Budget Officer Official via the E-filing Portal to ensure timely receipt of critical Division communications, including reminders, updates, and past-due notifications regarding budget filing.

Local Government E-Filing Portal - Officials

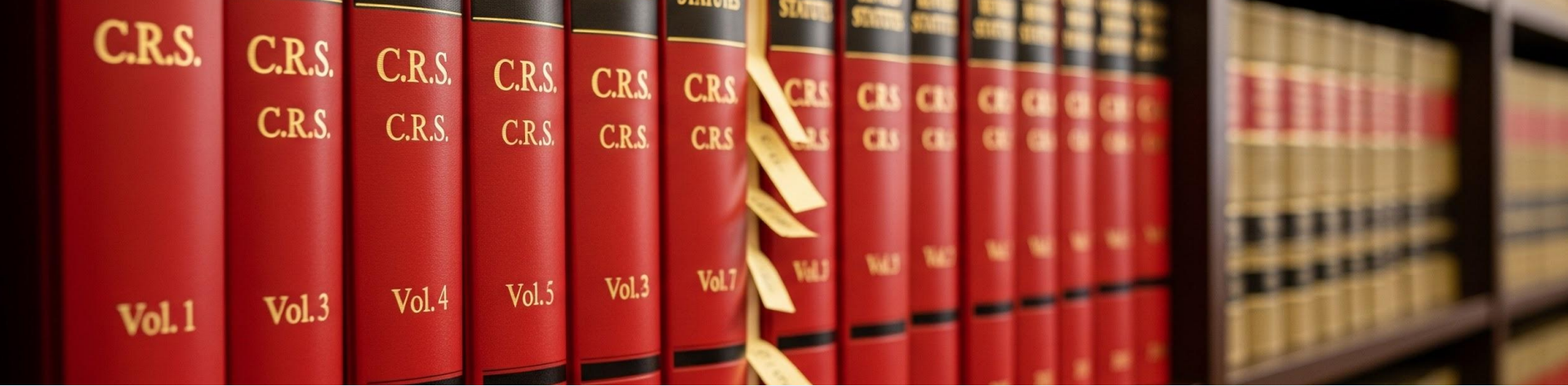
Local Government: TEST
Local Government ID (LGID): 68032

[Go Back](#)

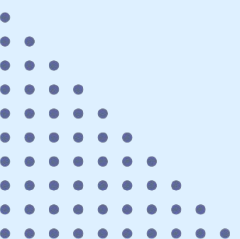
(1 of 1) << << >> >>			
Name:	Official Type:	Title:	Action
<i>Information not on file. Please update.</i>	Budget Officer A person designated to prepare the budget a...		
(1 of 1) << << >> >>			

Visit our [website](#) for step-by-step instructions, brief video tutorials, and a recorded webinar to help navigate the portal such as:

- Account set-up
- Organization access
- Changing contact information
- Filing and refiling
- Special district directors



Legal Limits



Legal Limits on Budgets



TABOR

Debt

Mill Levy

Fiscal year spending

Property tax revenue

STATUTORY

5.5% property tax revenue limit

5.25% (or 10.5% over two years)
revenue limit - NEW

TABOR Art. X, Sec. 20 (4)(b) requires voter approval in advance

“Except for refinancing district bonded debt at a lower interest rate or adding new employees to existing district pension plans, creation of any multiple-fiscal year direct or indirect district debt or other financial obligation whatsoever without adequate present cash reserves pledged irrevocably and held for payments in all future fiscal years.

Fiscal Year Spending Limit



TABOR Art. X, Sec. 20 (4)(a)

The maximum percentage increase allowed is percent change of “inflation” + “local growth”

“ . . .all district expenditures and reserve increases except. . .”

Gifts

Federal funds

Collections for another government

Pension contributions by employees

Pension fund earnings

Reserve expenditures or transfers

Damage awards

Property sales

Conservation Trust Fund distributions

Property Tax-Related Limits

Mill Levy

Voter approval required to raise the mill levy above the prior year's rate.

TABOR Property Tax
Revenue

Property tax revenue growth is capped at the prior calendar year's inflation (US Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI for Denver-Aurora-Lakewood) plus annual local growth.

Local growth = net percent change in actual value of all real property from construction, minus destruction and additions to and deletions from taxable real property



Property Tax-Related Limits

5.5% Limit

All statutory tax levies shall be reduced to prohibit levying greater revenue than the preceding year plus 5.5% and plus allowances for growth.

Growth: Assessed value increases from new construction, boundary changes, etc.

5.25% (or 10.5%) Limit

Locally calculated, starting budget year 2026.

- Excludes: School districts, home rule, entities with the 5.5% limit (unless waived), and entities without voter-approved removal of some TABOR restrictions.
- Excludes Revenue From: New construction, annexation/inclusions, specific ownership revenue, etc.



Which Limit Applies?



TABOR (Art. X, Sec. 20 (1))

- When multiple limits conflict, the most restrictive limit applies.
- The most restrictive limit results in the least property tax.

Managing the Mill Levy



“Preserving” the Existing Mill Levy

Existing Levy = 9.265 \$88,018

Temp. Reduction = -0.089 -\$846

Net Levy = 9.176 \$87,172

Form DLG 70 Certification of Tax Levies for Non School Governments

Legal Limits on Budgets



Voters can approve an allowance to one or more of the limits.

TABOR

Debt

Mill Levy

Fiscal year spending

Property tax revenue

STATUTORY

5.5% property tax revenue limit

5.25% (or 10.5% over two years)
revenue limit - NEW

DOLA Resources

[Budgeting and Finance](#)

[Regional Managers](#)

[Colorado Resiliency Office](#)

[Property Tax Revenue Limits](#)

Local Government List/Filings

[Local Government Information System](#)

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CO Government Finance Officers Association

[cgfoa.org](#)

Government Finance Officers Association

[Materials Library \(gfoa.org\)](#)

[Best Practices & Resources \(gfoa.org\)](#)

[Financial Policies \(gfoa.org\)](#)

ICMA - City and County Managers Association

[Finance and Budgeting \(icma.org\)](#)



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Thank you!

