



**Blue River Staff Report**  
February 2024

Town of Blue River  
0110 Whispering Pines Circle  
Blue River, CO 80424

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<https://townofblueriver.colorado.gov>



### **Election**

- The 2024 Regular Municipal Election is set for April 2, 2024.
- The Mayor and three Trustee seats are up for election. Mayor Babich, Trustee Fossett and Trustee Finley are up for election. Trustee Dixon will term out in April.
- The election ballot has been set. There are three candidates running for Mayor and five for Trustee.
- There will also be a question on the ballot asking citizens to be allowed to publish ordinances by title only with the full ordinance on the Town website. This will save the Town approximately \$8,000 a year.
- The Summit Realtors Association is sponsoring a candidate forum at Colorado Mountain College Auditorium, Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. All candidates running for elected office in Blue River will be in attendance. Questions for the candidates may be submitted to the Town Clerk/Election Official at [info@townofblueriver.org](mailto:info@townofblueriver.org). The forum will be live streamed and via zoom.

### **Right-of-Way Hazard Tree Project**

- Staff met with Red, White and Blue Fire and have begun to identify potential hazard trees in phase one of the three year project. Staff will be reaching out to homeowners to review the project and potential trees in the coming months.
- This is a voluntary project and homeowners are not required to participate although it is encouraged.
- Once agreements have been reached with homeowners, staff will work with foresters Beetle Kill Tree Guys and TSH Tree Services to schedule the work in summer 2024.

### **Goose Pasture Tarn**

- Outreach with the Theobalds continues.

- Draft ingress and egress plans are being submitted to CDOT for approval. The entrance and exits are identified on the CDOT Access Control Plan and will not be new access points.
- The Blue River Citizen Advisory Committee has set their March meeting to begin discussing a grand re-opening of the Tarn and 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

### **School Bus Stop**

- With agreement from the Theobalds, work has started to move the school bus stop to Blue River Road. Snowplow crews have been clearing snow in that area in preparation of the move.
- A formal contract between the School District, Theobalds and Town is being developed.

### **Broadband**

- Work continues on potential broadband funding. NEO Connect is continuing work to apply for federal grants.
- We will be submitting a challenge to the BEAD process as currently our community shows served. A discussion with the Colorado Broadband Office and ongoing communications with our State and Federal Representatives is ongoing to challenge the FCC data and what is actually experienced in our area.

## **Town Statistics**

Facebook Page Likes  
Town-1,300  
Police Department-908  
Instagram-1,257 followers  
Twitter (X)-77 followers  
Threads-127  
Residents on Email List-994  
Blue River News-1,1777  
TextMyGov-134

**Business Licenses-246**

**Lodging Registrations-220**

## **Municipal Court February 2024**

Total tickets written for January Court: 6  
Total on the February Docket: 1  
Total February Failure to appear(s): 0  
Total February OJW(s): 0

## **Building Statistics**

**January 2024**

**Permits Issued: 8**

**YTD: 8**

**Inspections: 35**

**New Construction 2024: 0**

**Certificates of Occupancy 2024:0**



## End of Month Report: January 2024

### **Calls for Service**

Total number of a calls: 179

Top 10 calls as follows:

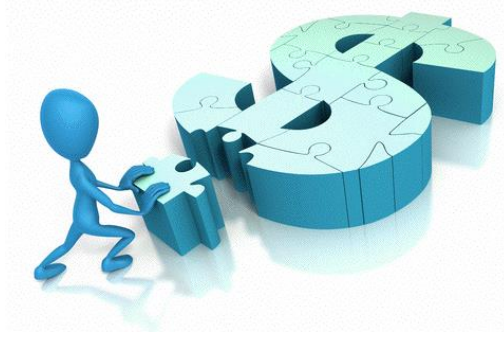
Area Patrol	79
Motorists Assists	21
Other Agency Backup	10
Traffic Stops	7
Road Hazards	5
Power Outage	5
Parking Violations	4
Suspicious Person/Vehicle	4
Medicals	3
Reckless Drivers	3

**Summary:** Snow and weather-related conditions effected January's type of incidents. Motor vehicle assists were higher than usual. Server weather caused multiple power outages and service-related incidents.

Arrests: 1 misdemeanor

### **Current Administrative Focus**

- Officer Safety – A major concern is officers responding to traffic related incidents along Hwy. 9. With no or very small shoulders and icy conditions on Hwy. 9, officers are attempting to mitigate this hazard.
- Training – Officers completed a 4-hour class on ice driving on Georgetown Lake to improve their skills with handling poor driving conditions.
- Vehicle Maintenance – The high alpine environment is hard on patrol vehicles.



## Financial Summary Report

Prepared by: Michelle Eddy, Town Manager

Month Ending January 31, 2024

### Revenues/Expenditures:

Revenues are starting slightly behind budget but for the start of the year are good. Expenses are on track with budget.

### Reserve Accounts \*As of 1/31/2024

#### Unrestricted

Reserve accounts Alpine Bank:	\$1,409,963.57
CD's Citywide Bank:	\$211,498.41
Colorado Trust Assigned to Capital:	\$3,044,820.11
Colorado Trust Assigned to Broadband:	\$204,499.52
CSAFE:	\$100.00
Illiquid Trust Funds:	\$1,187.42
<b>Total Unrestricted</b>	<b>\$4,872,069.03</b>

#### Restricted

American Rescue Plan Funds:	\$189,532.77
Conservation Trust:	\$143,984.49
<b>Total Reserves Restricted</b>	<b>\$333,517.26</b>

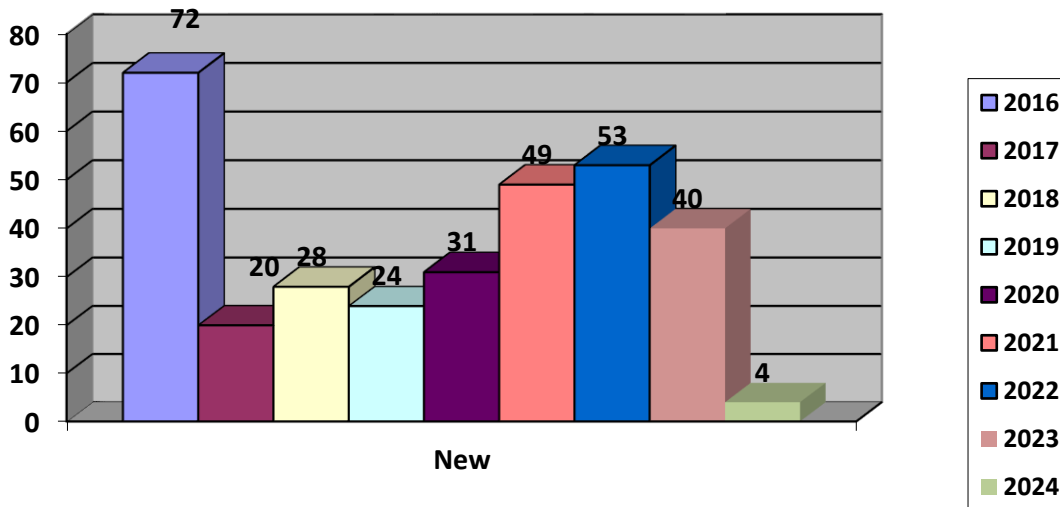


# Town of Blue River

**Staff Report**  
**Short-term Rental Update**  
**January 31, 2024**  
 Submitted By: Michelle Eddy, Town Manager

## Statistics

Total Active Licenses as of 1/31/2024: 220



## Annual Revenue

Year	Sales Tax	Lodging Tax
2016	\$264,757.05	\$123,742.00
2017	\$237,468.92	\$126,585.55
2018	\$286,968.54	\$155,511.07
2019	\$425,616.72	\$166,883.33
2020	\$842,141.13	\$176,339.81
2021	\$844,558.23	\$228,743.34
2022	\$1,002,256.27	\$327,762.62

2023	\$996,818.50	\$303,230.72
2024	\$103,027.01	\$0

### Percentage of STRs by Subdivision

***\*\*Please note the percentage of STRS is based on total homes built within each subdivision and NOT buildable lots.***

Subdivision	# STR	%STR **	% Build Out	% Full-Time Res.
96 Sub	9	24%	90%	30%
97 Sub	11	27%	84%	37%
Aspen View	7	44%	80%	13%
Blue Rock Springs	13	24%	93%	46%
Bryce Estates	1	25%	57%	0%
Clyde Lode	0	0%	50%	0%
Coronet	10	32%	78%	35%
Crown	22	33%	93%	28%
DOT Condo	5	14%	100%	31%
DOT Placer	0	0%	50%	100%
Golden Crown	3	60%	63%	20%
Lakeshore	12	30%	93%	23%
Leap Year	8	38%	91%	43%
Louise Placer	4	50%	73%	13%
McCullough Gulch	1	33%	43%	67%
Misc Sec TR7-77 Land	0	0%	22%	40%
Mountain View	13	27%	96%	34%
New Eldorado Sub	4	50%	73%	38%
New Eldorado Townhomes	1	11%	100%	56%
Pennsylvania Canyon	0	0%	100	0%
Pomeroy	0	0%	0%	0%
Rivershore	0	0%	63%	0%
Royal	16	24%	94%	31%
Sherwood Forest	21	27%	90%	23%
Silverheels	1	25%	67%	29%
Spillway	3	15%	90%	25%
Spruce Valley Ranch	0	0%	68%	20%
Sunnyslope	12	40%	86%	33%
Timber Creek Estates	29	41%	89%	7%



Wilderness	14	25%	96%	33%
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### General Statistics

- Total Percentage of short-term rentals 27%

### Code Violations 2024

**Total: 4**

- Advertising Violations: 3
- Dog Violation: 1



## Town of Blue River Memorandum

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TO: Mayor Babich & Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Town Manager Michelle Eddy

DATE: January 16, 2024

SUBJECT: **Blue River Snow-apocalypse**

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Mayor & Trustees

On Saturday, January 14, 2024, a severe wind and snow event occurred throughout the mountains of Summit County and Colorado. This event has highlighted the Town of Blue River's response to emergency situations including areas where things went very well and areas where improvements may be made to ensure a better process moving forward. Below is a synopsis of the events, identification of what went well as well as what can be improved with recommendations from the Staff for your consideration.

### **Saturday, January 14, 2024**

8:20 a.m.-Town Manager Eddy received a phone call from Officer Kruse that two trees had been blown over on Rustic Terrace blocking the road. Officer Kruse noted Red, White and Blue Fire were in route and asked for additional forestry assistance.

8:32 a.m. After confirmation of what was needed and where, Town Manager Eddy contacted Christian Nelson with Beetle Kill Tree Guys to respond to Rustic Terrace. It should be noted that the delay from the initial call included several call backs between the Town Manager and Officer Kruse due to poor cell phone reception. Mr. Nelson stated he could respond and it would be about one hour for him to get to the location from Silverthorne.

Over the course of the next several hours the following was observed and reported:

- Two trees blown over on Rustic Terrace.
  - The trees took out power poles and completely blocked the road.
- A tree fell across Hwy 9 taking out additional power as well as Comcast services attached to the same pole. This tree narrowly missed a car on the highway.
- Trees and power lines were observed down on Starlit and Blue River Road.
- Power was cut off to over 700 homes in the area for the next almost 24 hours.
- Crews from Red, White & Blue Fire as well as Beetle Kill Tree Guys worked to cut up the large trees and move them off of the roads. Beetle Kill Tree Guys also assisted with a resident on Blue River Road where a tree fell on the home.
- During this time there were several road closures on Hwy 9, Hoosier Pass due to

- trucks and passenger vehicles traveling over the pass without proper equipment.
- Photos of the incidents are included.

### **Sunday, January 15, 2024**

Power was restored by 6 a.m. to the entire area. Comcast was not able to restore services as this point. Weather conditions remained severe. With the high volume of visitors and with no internet connections, many did not have cell service and were unable to receive any updates. During this time, I-70 was closed and traffic along Hwy 9 was negatively impacted with vehicles and trucks trying to maneuver Hoosier Pass in near white out conditions.

### **Monday, January 16, 2024**

- Comcast internet services remained off line. At 10:00 a.m., Chief Close received word from Comcast they would be on site at 11:00 a.m. The Chief contacted the Town Manager and alerts went out via Facebook (Town and PD accounts); Instagram; X; Threads; Email news blast; TextMyGov as well as Facebook groups for highway conditions.
- At 12:40 p.m. the Chief informed the Town Manager that he hadn't heard from Comcast and no road closure had occurred. It was at this time that Chief Close contacted Comcast and learned the crews were turned back due to the severe weather and road closures. No one from Comcast had contacted the Town with a change of plans.
- During this time, I-70 was closed and there were several incidents on Hwy 9 Hoosier Pass including multiple trucks being stuck and blocking traffic. All traffic was being diverted from I-70 to Hoosier Pass. This was inhibiting plow trucks from getting through and creating hazardous conditions. Being Monday of a holiday weekend, traffic volume was heavy.
- At 12:13 p.m. the Sheriff's Office issued an alert asking for residents to stay off the roads.
- Chief Close had contacted CDOT's Pueblo Office asking for an emergency temporary closure to allow for residents to get home and plows to clean up the highway. This request was denied.
- During this time, it was taking residents over two hours to travel from Park County to Breckenridge and in some cases four hours to travel from Blue River to Silverthorne. Traffic was congested on all highways and side roads throughout the County. Reports show it took some Blue River residents who had traveled to Breckenridge for cell service and internet over an hour to return home.
- On Sunday evening, Summit School District made the decision to cancel classes for Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>. Town Manager Eddy made the decision to keep Town Hall closed as there was no internet available.
  - Without internet, staff is unable to connect to work programs and files; phones do not work, and doors are unable to be unlocked for the public. Staff, including the Police Department do have the ability to access Town Hall manually.

### **Tuesday, January 16, 2024**

At 9:00 a.m. Chief Close let Town Manager Eddy know Comcast had stated they would be up to address the down lines along Hwy 9 and would give the Town a one-hour notice.

12:02 p.m. Chief Close called Comcast and they informed him they would be onsite by 12:45

p.m.

1:16 p.m. Notification went out that Comcast was onsite at Hwy 9 and Rustic Terrace. Road was reopened quickly and only closed for approximately 20 minutes.

2:26 p.m. Chief Close informed the Town Manager that the initial repair was complete, however, Comcast was unsure of the extent of the damage throughout Town. Their earliest estimates for restoration were late evening but most likely would not be fully restored until Wednesday some time.

7:00 p.m. Services to the area were restored.

### **Positives:**

- Communication between Town Staff and then to the public and the Board of Trustees was fluid and information was provided as it was available.
- Despite losing power, we did have the ability with each other and the PD were able to access Town Hall manually.
- The response by the Staff to the incidents was quick and emergency protocols were followed to allow for an efficient response.

### **Challenges:**

- The inability to temporarily shut down the highway to allow for clean up and to allow residents to return home.
- The severe lack of communication from Comcast.
- While this is not the first time it has happened, this was by far the most severe situation of I-70 shutting down and instead of instructing travelers and locals to remain in place, traffic was diverted through Blue River. With this, there was a lack of sufficient support from CDOT, CSP and the County who were focused on the interstate. This also caused safety issues throughout the county as vehicles congested all roadways including neighborhoods.
- In severe weather conditions, ALL truck traffic should be banned from utilizing Hoosier Pass and Hwy 9. The volume of ill prepared vehicles and trucks escalates the hazards and creates a dangerous situation.
- Without power and then without internet at Town Hall, we did operate on the fly and were able to continue business, however, it did pose challenges that can be easily remedied.

### **Recommendations:**

Town Manager Eddy, Chief Close and Interim Co-Chief Nelson met on Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> to review and discuss the events. In addition, a meeting with Town Managers, Chiefs, Fire Districts and Emergency Management is being convened to review the event and determine processes moving forward including training for staff and elected officials.

1. Town Hall needs a backup generator that can be turned on when there is a prolonged power outage. It is recommended to do something like what RWB has done at Station 7. Staff is working on getting an estimate of the need and cost from Colorado Electric and Power Systems. This should be available soon.
2. It is recommended the Town have the ability to connect a backup internet service, such as a Starlink service, for when Comcast loses services. Starlink does offer an "RV" Service that can easily be set up as needed and will work if there is power. There could also be the option of a switch or plug that is changed to a more

permanent service during an outage.

3. Protocols and the ability for emergency closures must be made available to prohibit the large volume of standing traffic through town. This becomes a safety issue for emergency vehicles and response. It is requested to potentially prohibit truck traffic along Hwy 9 and over Hoosier Pass in weather incidents affecting I-70 as this compounded the traffic issue. Staff is communicating with CDOT to ask for additional messaging to discourage CMV traffic over Hoosier during winter storm events. All of the Towns and the County are working together to find better solutions during winter storm events. There will be a Emergency Management 101 class for elected officials on February 27<sup>th</sup>. More information to come.



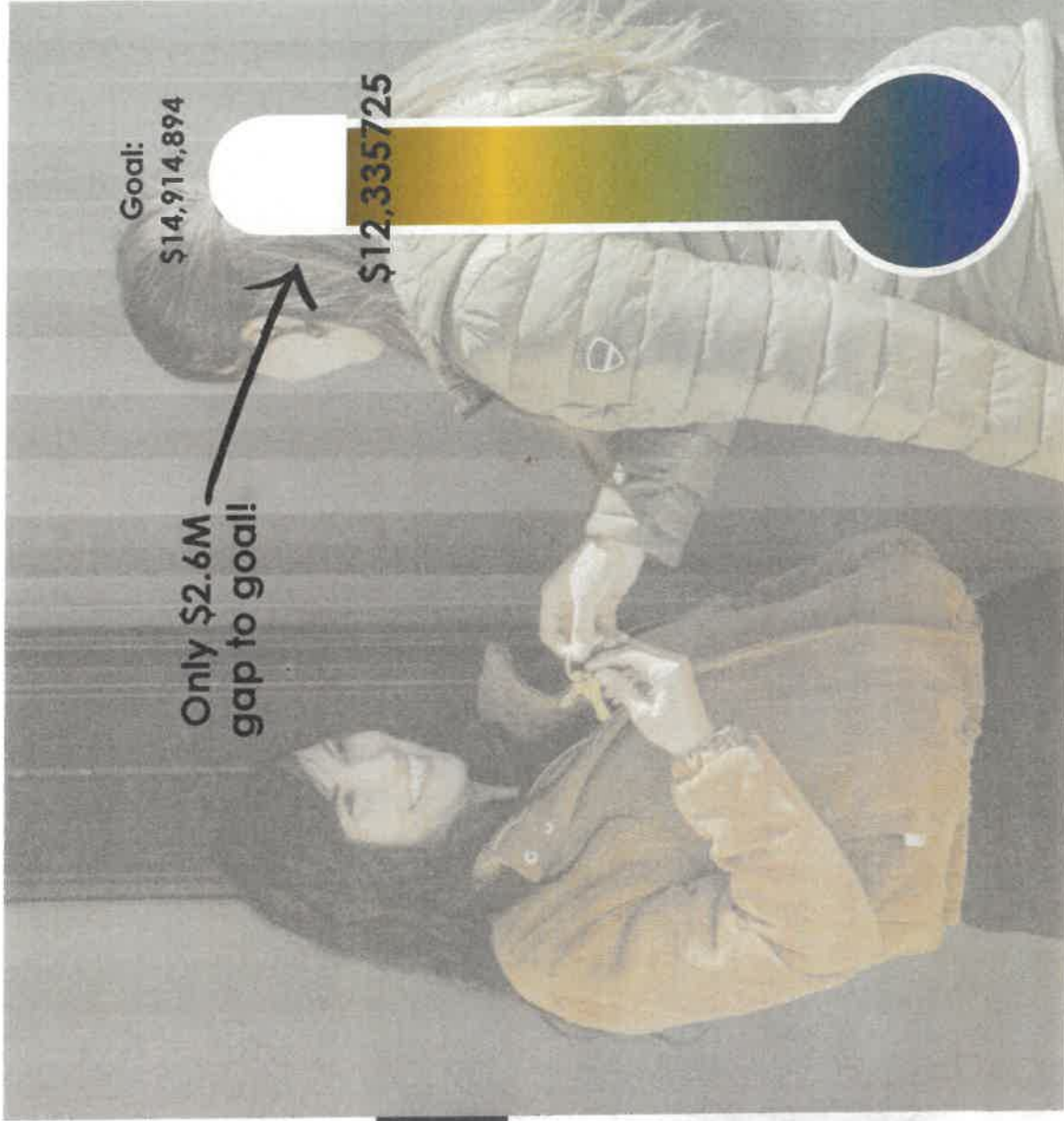
**sol center**  
at alta verde

Care. Collaboration. Community.



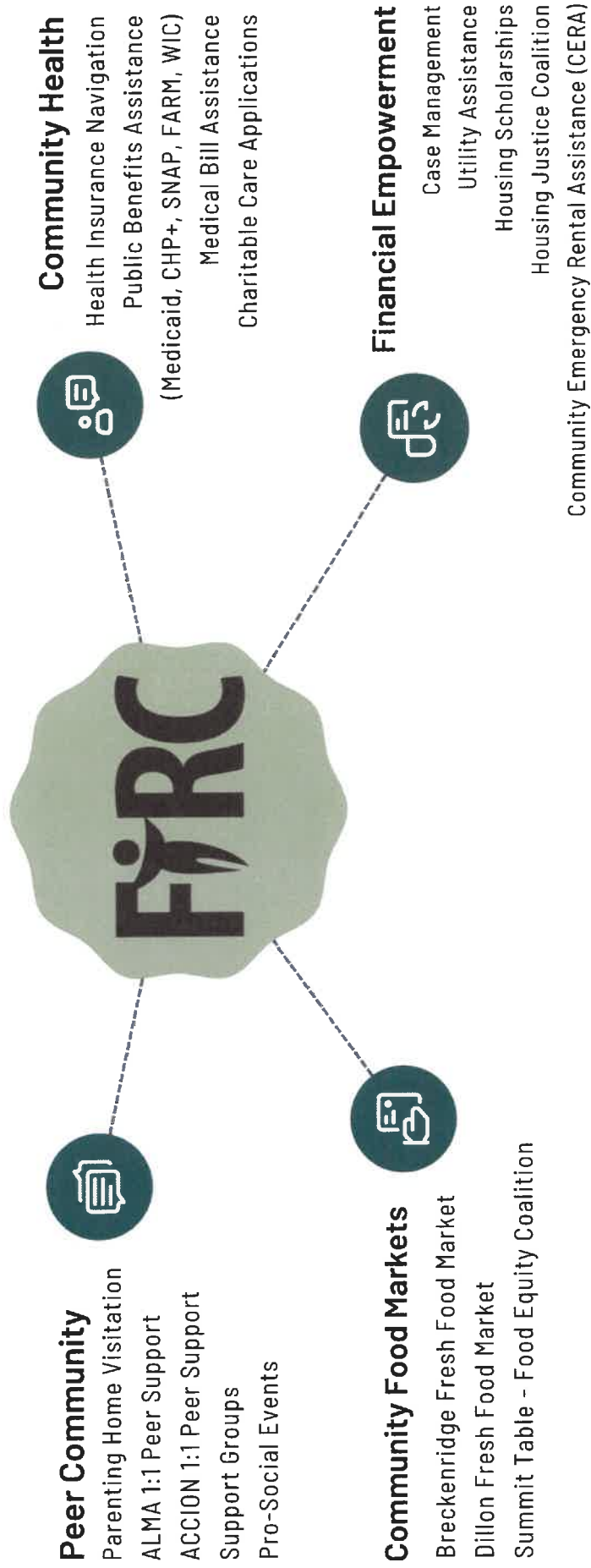
**FIRC** Family & Intercultural  
Resource Center

**BUILDINGHOPE**  
SUMMIT COUNTY





# PROGRAM OVERVIEW





# ECONOMIC LIVABILITY

Summit County has the second highest cost of living in Colorado (runner up to Aspen).

Summit County is home to approximately:

**31,055 year round residents**

The average household size for FIRRC family is:

**2.9 people**

The average income for a FIRRC household of 2.9:

**\$33,472**

A Summit County household of 2.9 needs to earn:

**\$103,255 to be self sufficient**

FIRRC clients primary language in 2023 was:

**64% Spanish, 35% English & 1% Other**

*2380 people*

FIRRC impacted a total of:

**12,433 people or 40% of the population**



The Federal Poverty Level (FPL)  
for a family of 3 in 2023:

**\$24,860**

The FPL is based on a formula developed in 1965 that considers poverty to be three times the expected cost of food, adjusted for family size. This formula ignores other basic needs such as housing, utilities, and transportation.

## Rent-to-Income Calculations

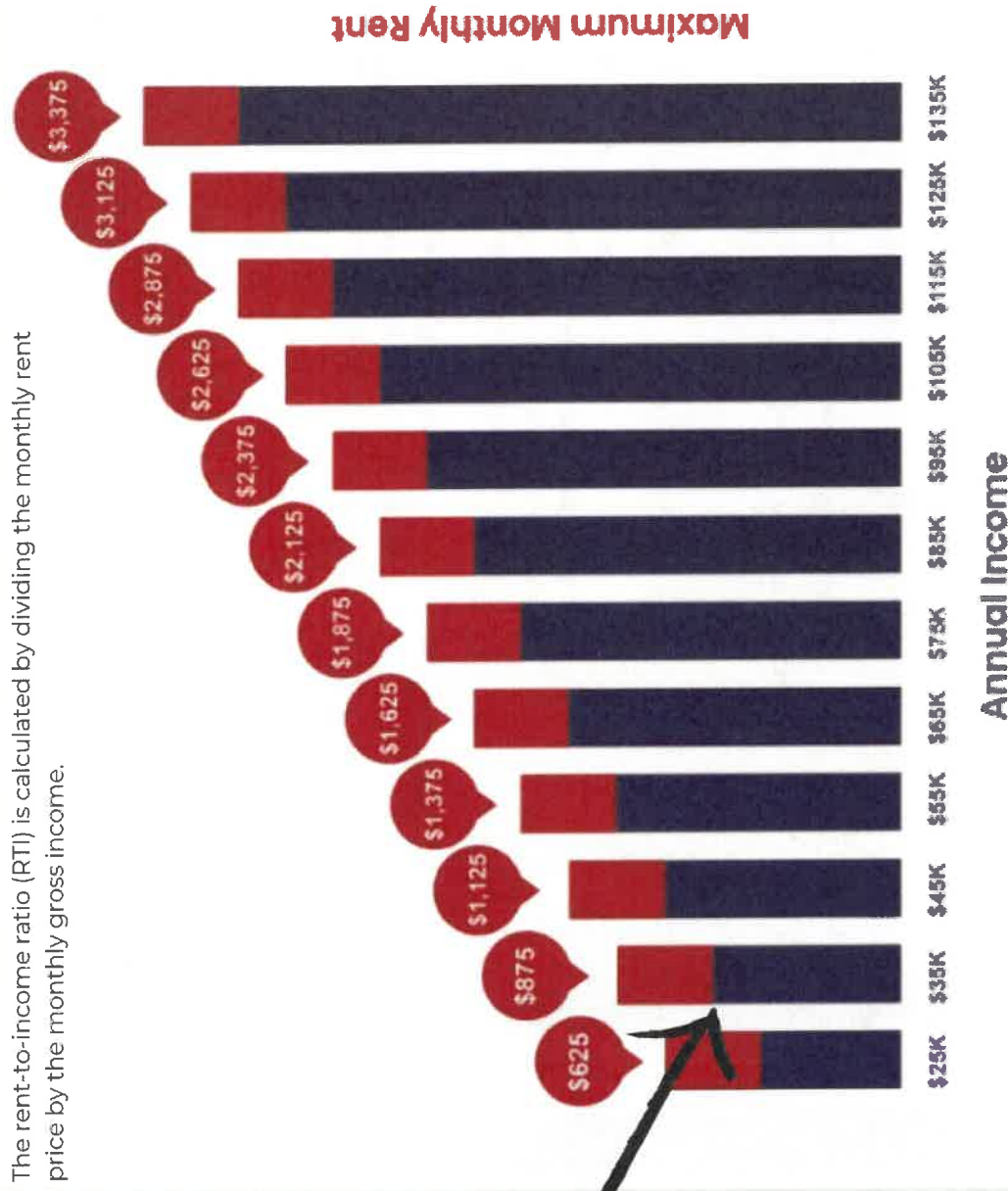
Max rent calculation based on 30% benchmark

FIRC clients earn on average \$33,472 for a household of 3  
 HOWEVER  
 the average 2 bedroom apartment in Summit County in 2023 cost \$1,860

MEANING  
 the rent to income ratio for the average FIRC family is more than DOUBLE the national average at

**66.7%**

The rent-to-income ratio (RTI) is calculated by dividing the monthly rent price by the monthly gross income.



(American Apartment Owners Association)

# The Housing Crisis & Effects on the Summit County Workforce

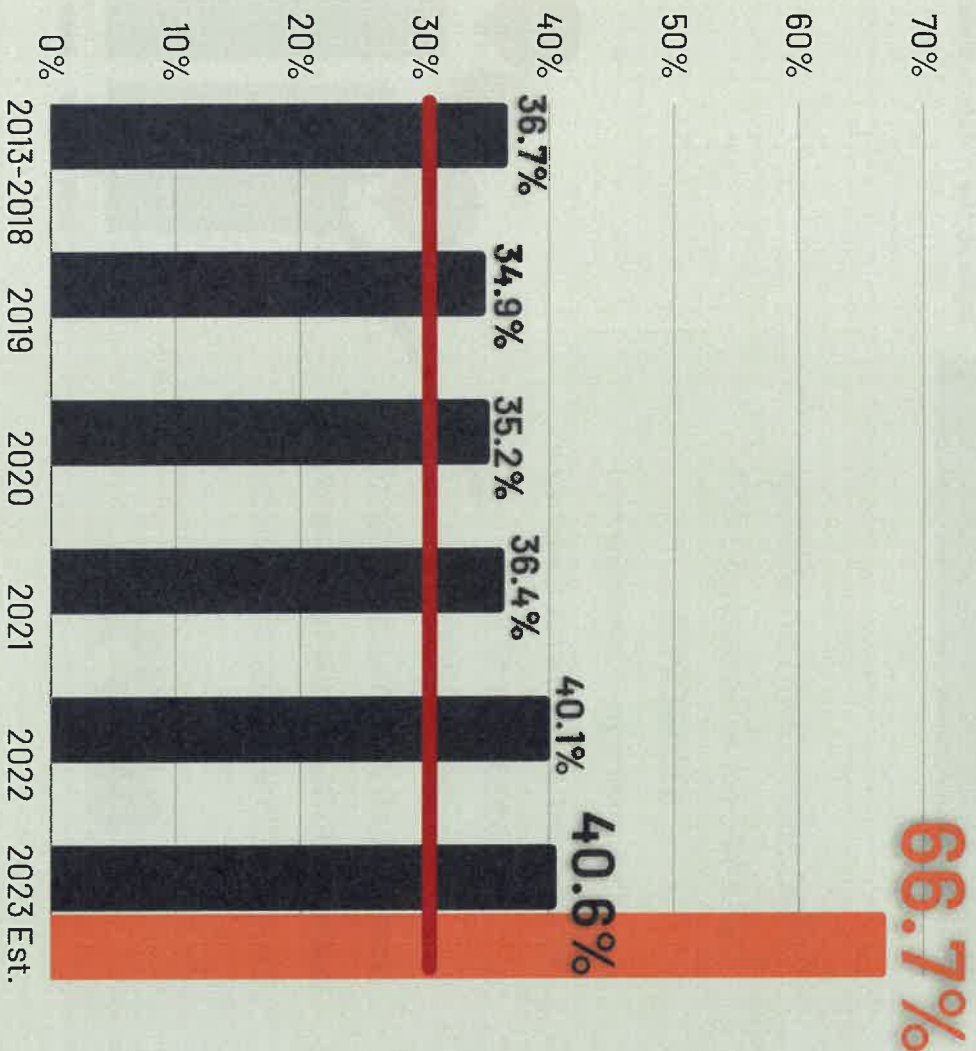
## Stable Housing

**46%** of CHA survey respondents think their monthly housing payment is higher than what is affordable.

**15%** of Summit County adults are worried that in the next 2 months they may not have stable housing, compared to 7% of all Coloradans.<sup>11</sup>

(S.C. CHIP, 2022)

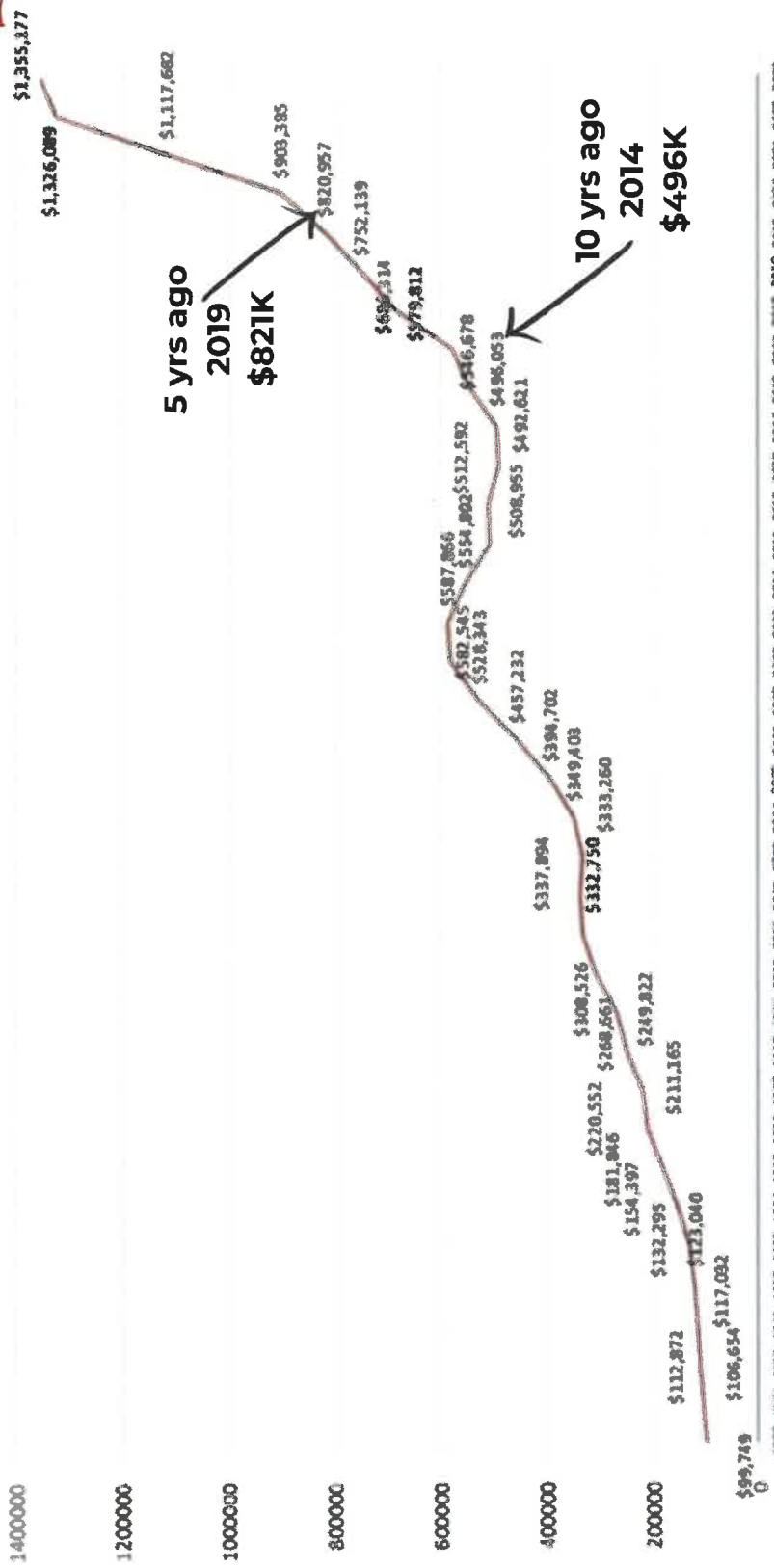
- **\$** Summit County families do not earn enough income to meet all their basic needs.
- Typically families are one emergency away from losing their housing and leaving the community.



# 35 Year Residential Average Price Housing Index: Summit County

Residential Units include All Improved Residential Property Types: Single Family, Duplex, Triplex, Townhome, & Condominium

last year  
2023  
\$1.4M

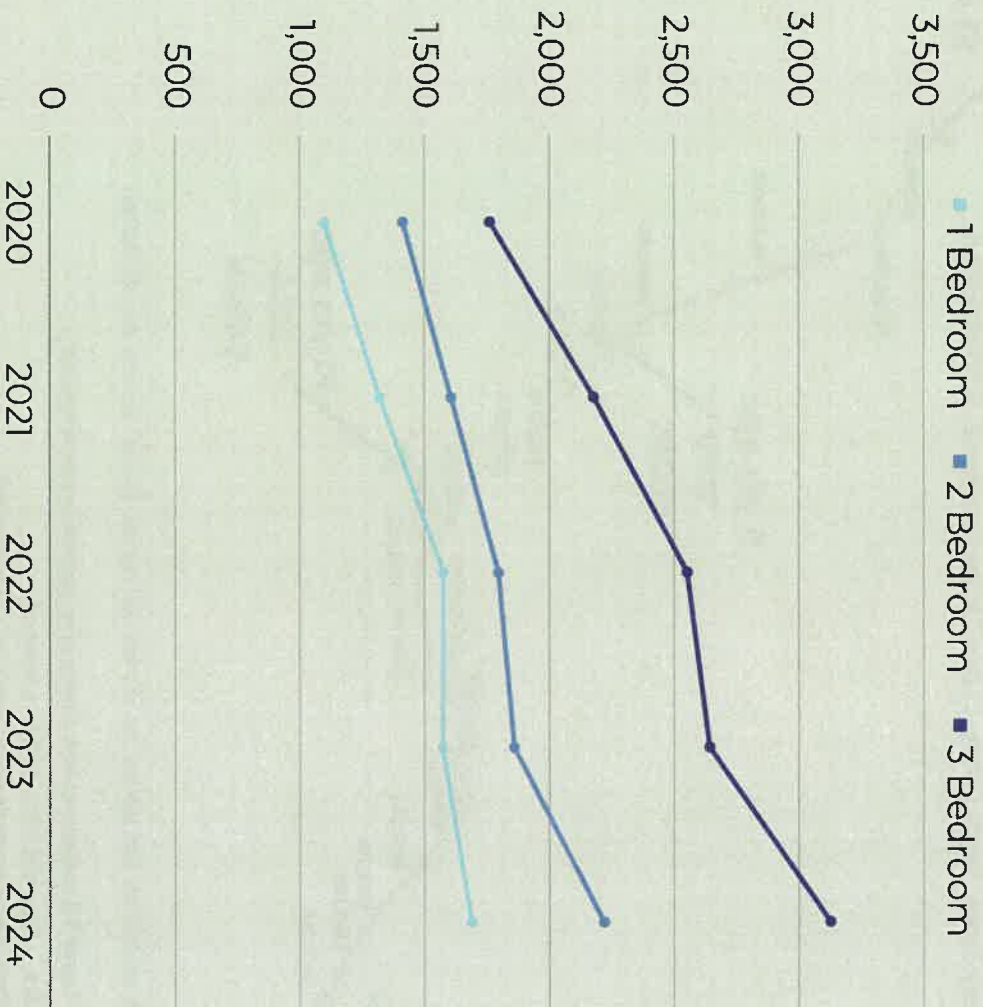


This report is provided to you Compliments of Land Title Guarantee Company, proudly serving our Community for over 50 Years. Copyright 2022. All Rights Reserved.

Data are collected from Summit County public offices, thus data are deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



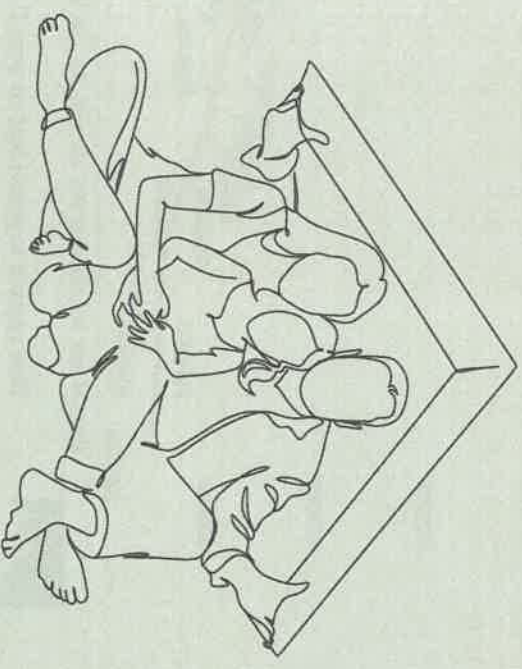
# FAIR MARKET RENT IN SUMMIT COUNTY - HUD



An average 2 bedroom apartment  
in Summit County went from

**\$1,414 in 2019** to  
**\$2,220 in 2024**  
an increase of

**64%**



# Community Food Report, 2023 - 2024 Summit County, CO

## WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?

Food insecurity is the condition of not having enough food - or access to quality and nutritious food - to meet a person's or family's basic needs.

### FOOD INSECURITY



Impacts nearly **one in ten** Summit County residents.

### EQUITY AND FOOD



**Three in four** Food Market shoppers are afraid they'll run out of food before they can buy more.

### OF THOSE WITH FOOD INSECURITY



**One in three** earn too much for federal food assistance programs.

In August 2022, the rate of inflation for food was the highest since 1979

# 11.4%

USDA average inflation rate of food is 3%

# \$4.92

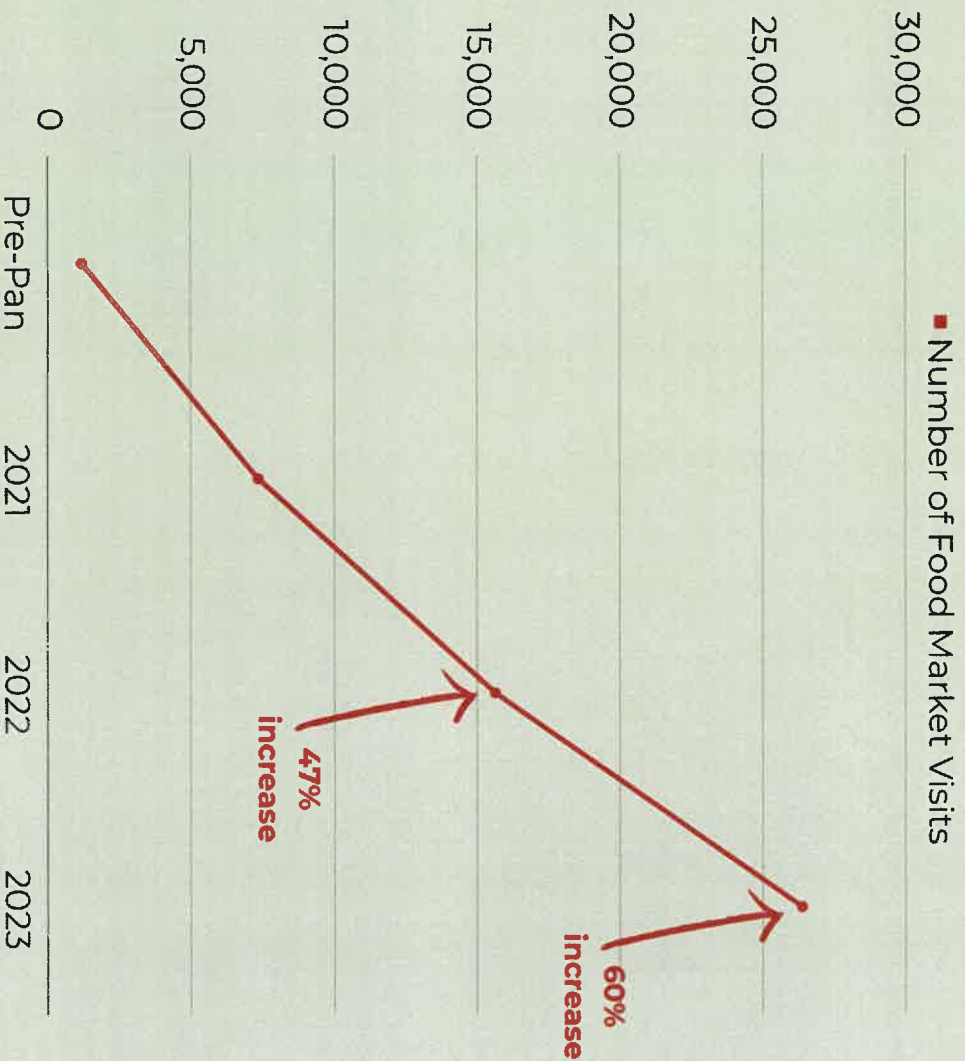
is the average cost of a meal in Summit County, compared to **\$3.35** in Colorado

The average cost of groceries per month in Summit County for a household of 3 in 2023

# \$1,240

(USDA 2023, CHIP, 2023-2028 & Feeding America 2021)

# FIRC FRESH FOOD MARKET TRENDS



In 2023 served the Summit County community with over **26,378** visits to our food markets alone

FIRC provides 80% fresh food and up to \$200 worth of groceries every visit

If a family were to visit every week they could save up to **\$800** a month in groceries - saving on food costs by **65%**

# FIRC FRESH FOOD MARKET'S IMPACT IN 2023

The community invested

**\$452,000**

into the FIRC for the  
purchase of food

The FIRC reinvested

**\$5,277,400**

dollars worth of food back  
into the community





# TO COMBAT THE NEED AND FIND SOLUTIONS

FIRC is guided by the voice of the community in all the work we do. We adopt a “with us” vs. “for us” approach and hold equity as a core value.

## THE SUMMIT TABLE

### **FOOD EQUITY COALITION (FEC)**

This group was convened by FIRC prior to the pandemic to work towards the goal of improving the local food system through a grassroots, community centered approach.

There are 13 resident members who have lived food insecurity firsthand. Members receive a housing scholarship to participate and must volunteer and use community food resources monthly, to guide feedback and strategies.

## HOUSING SCHOLARSHIPS

### **Housing Justice Coalition (HJS)**

This group is new created, having met only twice, with the goal of elevating residents voices with lived housing insecurity and identifying simple goals for housing justice in Summit.

There are 12 resident members who have lived housing insecurity firsthand. Members receive a housing scholarship to participate and must sign an agreement to attend 11 meetings over the course of a year to guide feedback and strategies.

## WORKFORCE RETENTION

### **The Community Emergency Rental Assistance Program (CERA)**

FIRC convened and administers this newly created community program that will run from Sept. '32 - March '24. Four towns, SCCG, the Summit Foundation and FIRC contributed to a pool of money for the workforce that are seeking assistance for emergencies.

So far \$27,780 has been distributed through CERA to 52 unique households (not counting January '24) experiencing various emergencies from illness, injuries, loss of hours, lack of child care, child birth, moving costs, and more.



# STRATEGIC GOALS

2023 - 2028

## GOALS

### COMPLETE THE SOL CENTER

Ensure Sol Center is funded, completed, and a seamless transition of operations occurs

Complete capital campaign

Complete construction

Complete transition of operations

### OBTAIN FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ensure FIRC has diversified revenue streams to fund current operations and build reserves

Fund annual budget

Increase unrestricted funds

Increase grants, donations, and funds for operations

Closely manage expenses

### BECOME A TOP WORKPLACE

Be recognized as a top non-profit workplace in Summit County

Enhance FIRC's culture

Develop talent acquisition and retention plan

Expand leadership and management capabilities

### EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

Ensure social determinants of health are met through effective programs, partnerships, and collaboration

Deliver needs based, high outcome programming

Drive systems change through partnerships and collaborations

Reimagine/reopen Thrift Store

Establish a robust and sustainable volunteer system

### LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY

Utilize technology to increase FIRC's impact

Strengthen use of technology platforms

Build organizational capacity for technology and data

Continue along the HIPAA compliance pathway

### STRENGTHEN FIRC'S REPUTATION

Strengthen FIRC's reputation as the county's premier non-profit health and social services provider

Increase awareness and understanding of FIRC's value to the community

Refresh FIRC's brand identity

### IMPROVE BOARD GOVERNANCE

Improve governance and processes to help FIRC deliver optimal results

Ensure Board and committee size and makeup is appropriate for FIRC's needs

Recruit diverse Board members to bring broader experiences to Board

Update FIRC's Bylaws and Board materials

Move from an operational Board to a Governance focused Board

All Strategies and Goals will be rooted on equity and inclusion as the framework.

**Thank You!**

**ERIC**

