

John Galusha, Chairman
Arica Andreatta, Commissioner
Karl Sporleder, Commissioner



HUERFANO COUNTY GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Date: March 28, 2023
To: Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners
From: Carl Young, County Administrator
Re: Report for the March 28 Regular BOCC Meeting

Commissioners please accept the following report of accomplishments, updates, and upcoming activities.

Community Development Funding Requests

On March 21st the application window closed for our Community Development Fund Requests. We have received 22 Funding Requests from 15 organizations totaling \$353,199.78. A committee of staff and elected officials will review the applications before presenting them to the Board of County Commissioners.

Legislative Update

The State Legislative Session is in full swing and the County is monitoring several bills that have the potential to impact Huerfano County. Last week I corresponded with representatives from Adams County on their proposed bill to allow the creation of County Development Authorities. This legislation will create a County version of the Urban Renewal Authority tool that municipalities can create. I recommend you support this legislation once introduced. I am also monitoring the following bills:

- HB23-1057 Amenities For All Genders In Public Buildings
- HB23-1066 Public Access Landlocked Publicly Owned Land
- HB23-1075 Wildfire Evacuation and Clearance Time Modeling
- SB23-166 Establishment of A Wildfire Resiliency Code Board
- SB23-108 Allowing Temporary Reductions in Property Tax Due
- SB23-213 Omnibus Land Use Bill

Huerfano River Bridge Rehabilitation Project

On March 22, KLJ Engineering led our Final Office Review Meeting on the Huerfano River Bridge Rehabilitation Project. This meeting with CDOT is an important step in completing the design phase of that project to replace the County Road 543 Bridge over the Huerfano River in Gardner. The current project cost estimate is \$636,719, including \$27K in contingency. This is approximately \$151K more than the previous estimate which was used for our Off-System Bridge Grant. Increases are primarily driven by unstable materials costs and significantly higher than usual contractor pricing on similar projects. We are exploring multiple ways to lower the cost or supplement funding, including additional grants, in-kind work, and extending times to complete.

Spanish Peaks Airfield Electrical Lighting

Over the past several weeks I have been working with Garver Engineering and the FAA to finalize funding for our Electrical Lighting Project at the Spanish Peaks Airfield. Earlier this year we

conducted a informal process under FAA rules to select an Engineer for this project as it was not listed on our solicitation for Airport Engineering issued in 2021. FAA rules state that design costs have to be less than \$100,000 to use an informal process and the actual cost to complete the design exceeded that amount. I am considering splitting the grant and completing design work this year and putting the construction portion, including construction management, out to bid later this year to be completed in 2024.

Proposition 123

Over the last two weeks I have participated in a couple of Proposition 123 Workshops with the Department of Local Affairs. At this point there are still more questions than answers, but I am optimistic that this is a program that Huerfano County can participate in and benefit from. At least in the first three years, before the requirements to deliver a certain number of units per year begin. Several hundred million dollars for affordable housing will become available in the second half of 2023 due to the enactment of Proposition 123 by Colorado's voters in 2022. This funding will be overseen by the Department of Local Affairs and the Governor's Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). OEDIT funds are being expended through the Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) and DOLA is preparing grant programs for their portion of the funding. More information is available at <https://engagedola.org/prop-123>

On-Call Engineering RFQ

On Monday, March 27, we interviewed 5 firms for our On-Call Engineering RFQ. We may hold a second round of interviews in the coming weeks for specialized firms. Bruce Roscoe will remain the County Engineer and GMS will remain our GPID Engineer. The firm(s) we select will primarily focus on federally funded, typically CDOT, projects.

Broadband

On Monday, March 27, we received the Broadband Availability Map from Colorado State University. This is part of a service provided by NeoConnect who is contracted with CSU to work with the University and the County simply to deliver on the CSU Chancellor's and Board's initiative to provide better support to rural Colorado as embodied in their land grant mission. This multipart service is provided at no cost to the County for our involvement and efforts. The next steps are: (1) look at potential project areas that will capture the most Unserved/Unserved addresses; (2) discuss priority areas for projects with county representatives and get direction on project areas based upon their priorities; and (3) draw boundaries around the areas of greatest need, etc. They will need direction from the County on projects so they can develop cost estimates for fiber to the premise and Middle Mile that will be sized correctly to be fundable.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Navigator

On Wednesday, March 29, I will be meeting with the South Central Council of Governments to be introduced to their grant navigator, a position funded to support local governments applying for infrastructure funds. I plan to discuss our desires around improving County Roads, Parks and Recreation improvements, broadband expansion, road and pedestrian safety projects along CDOT maintained roads, and post Spring Creek Fire recovery projects.

Best and Brightest Program

Earlier this year the County applied to host a Best and Brightest Fellow. On Wednesday March 29, we will participate in interviews for 3 candidates. If we are successful in recruiting one of these candidates, they will begin working with the County in July.

Fleet Management

On Thursday, March 30, Dustin and I will be meeting with Enterprise Fleet Management for our annual client review. We are still waiting on a couple of previously ordered vehicles and will be discussing how to better manage the size of the fleet. I am not planning to recommend any white fleet vehicle purchases in 2024.

Gardner Main Street Development

The County has been working with residents in Gardner to develop a mixed used development in Gardner. The project, which includes a gas station, at least 10 housing units, space for commercial or light industrial development, and community amenities, has entered the engineering phase.

Thorne Ranch

The Board of County Commissioners received a presentation from Electra Johnson on a project to develop the Thorne Ranch into a Park. The BOCC gave some feedback and expects to start gathering public input later this Spring. The Board has also been working with the Water Conservancy District to develop a cooperative effort to best utilize water on the Ranch for the benefit of Huerfano County Residents.

Redistricting

By law, all counties must review their commissioner district boundaries after each federal census to ensure the districts are as equal in population as possible. Traditionally, this review occurred in the year following the federal census and had to be completed by September 30. However, significant delays in availability of population data from the 2020 Census due to the COVID-19 pandemic led the State Legislature to pass SB21-1047, which extended the statutory deadline for counties to complete BOCC redistricting until September 30, 2023. The County has reviewed our Commissioner Districts and determined that redistricting is required. County staff is preparing a number of preliminary plans for public review and input and expect to have those ready for review in the next few months. Our goal is complete redistricting by the end of July 2023.