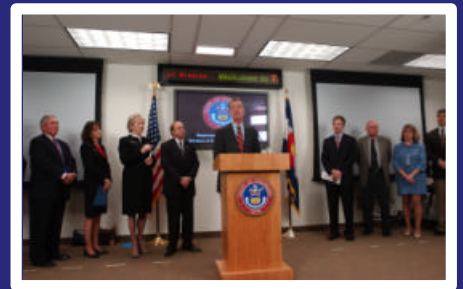


Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Report to the Joint Committee on Local Government January 17, 2006

www.dola.state.co.us



Bill Owens
Governor of Colorado

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Report to the Joint Committee on Local Government

January 17, 2006

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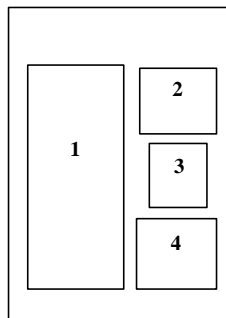
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On the cover - photos of projects funded by DOLA:

- 1. North Routt Fire Protection District Station*
- 2. Governor Bill Owens dedicates the state's new Emergency Operations Center, March 24, 2005*
- 3. A Colorado National Guardsman assists a young Hurricane Katrina evacuee arriving at Buckley Air Force Base*
- 4. Groundbreaking at Habitat for Humanity site funded by Division of Housing in Fort Collins*



Dedication ceremony of remodeled Victor Town Hall

A message from Acting Executive Director, Barbara Kirkmeyer

One word exemplifies how we view our work with local communities. *Partnership*. At the very heart of our department's mission statement, "Strengthening Colorado Communities," is the recognition that partnerships are key to our success.

Through financial and technical assistance, emergency management services, property tax administration and programs addressing affordable housing and homelessness, our department works in cooperation with local communities. It is through that work where we learn firsthand how to build on the strengths, unique qualities and priorities of Colorado.

Understanding how we can best serve local governments and their citizens is a powerful tool. It is instrumental in how we inform local leadership, build infrastructure and meet evolving needs on a day-to-day basis.

I'm proud I have been part of the Department of Local Affairs for more than five years. In my capacity, I've been able to apply former experience as a county commissioner to our work with local governments, addressing concerns ranging from rural healthcare, to road and bridge development, to making significant strides in public safety.

As the acting executive director of DOLA, I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with our Governor, our legislature, my fellow cabinet members, and most importantly, the heart and soul of Colorado, our local communities.

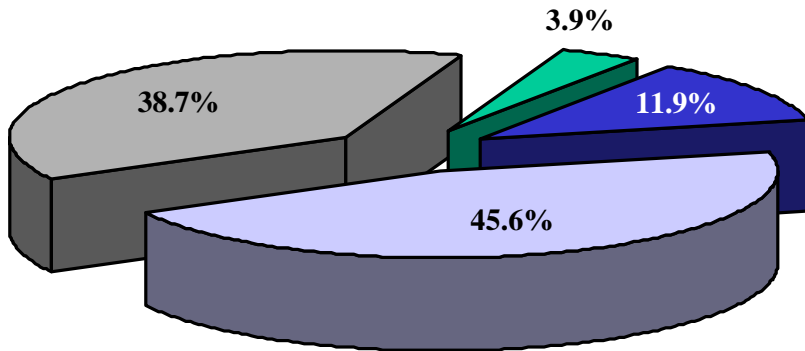
Sincerely,

Barbara Kirkmeyer
Executive Director

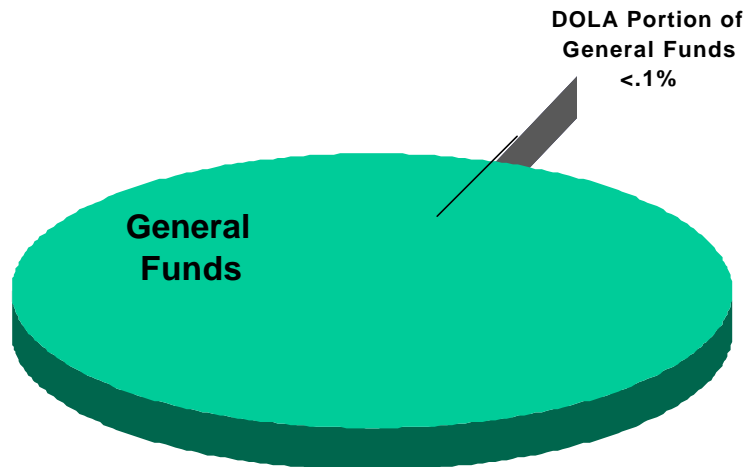
The Department of Local Affairs:
"Strengthening Colorado Communities"

Graphic Overview – Allocation of Funds

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



Funding for the department consists of 3.9 percent General Fund, 11.9 percent cash funds, 45.6 percent cash funds exempt, and 38.7 percent federal funds.



The department's budget accounts for **less than one percent** of the state General Fund.

Department Overview

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) is responsible for building community and local government capacity by providing training, technical, and financial assistance, to local communities. The department supports local government initiatives and activities by helping communities achieve the goals set by locally elected leadership. The department's divisions consist of the Executive Director's Office, the Division of Emergency Management, the Division of Housing, the Division of Local Government, the Division of Property Taxation and the Board of Assessment Appeals.

We continue to adapt our resources and approaches to meet the needs of local communities in addressing public service issues ranging from workforce development, homeland security, emergency management, housing, local government infrastructure, equity in taxation, and local government compliance with state budgetary requirements.

Looking ahead the department anticipates continual change in homeland security issues, emergency management, balancing the needs for affordable housing, and assisting local governments with their varying local requirements. We also are continually mindful local governments may have difficulty in meeting public demands, particularly in smaller, more rural communities.

The department anticipates major interest by local communities in these general areas:

- Homeland security funding
- Local/regional emergency response and recovery
- Continued financial assistance
- Training for public sector elected officials and staff
- Affordable housing and homelessness
- State and local taxation policy
- Increasing the skills of Colorado's workforce

The following report provides an overview of the Department of Local Affairs' accomplishments spanning from 1999 – 2005.

Rising to the Challenge in the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina: Operation Safe Haven

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

When Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005, the Department of Local Affairs' Division of Emergency Management (DEM) activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) for Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) operations. On September 2, the Multi Agency Coordination Center (MACC) was activated, and command was established, to mobilize federal, state, local and non-profit agencies around the sheltering and care of evacuees being re-located to Colorado. *Operation Safe Haven*.



Colorado's Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) located in the state's Multi Agency Coordination Center (MACC) was activated in response to Hurricane Katrina.

This disaster was a test of the human spirit, but overwhelmingly brought out the best in Colorado: citizens who donated truckloads of clothing and household items, volunteers and services from the faith-based community, non-profit and relief organizations providing care and compassion, and federal, state and local governments banding together to provide resources and the best possible solutions in short order.

The DOLA made staff available around the clock during its activation for Hurricane Katrina. In addition, DOLA staff worked with the Governor and the Colorado Community College System, and other state agencies to transform a vacant dormitory on the Lowry campus into shelter that saw more than 700 evacuees during its operation. While at the Lowry campus, DOLA Operations staff helped oversee the efforts of organizations providing donations, meals, counseling, transportation, job fairs, and housing services. In addition, DOLA also teamed up with the Department of Human Services and fellow state agencies to provide a one-stop Family Assistance Center, where families could access a variety of critical services.

A vital role for DOLA was providing interim housing assistance through its Division of Housing (DOH). Staff were available and onsite daily to help link evacuees with rental units funded by assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The DOH applied its longtime experience in addressing emergency housing along with established partnerships with federal and non-profit agencies, to provide a unique assistance model.

For DOLA, the events following Hurricane Katrina highlighted how the partnerships within and external to our department helped make for a timely, coordinated response to this disaster -- a response that has been praised as a model -- nationwide.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



Gov. Bill Owens is joined in the new State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Policy Room by cabinet, members of the law enforcement community and the Center's construction coordinators

The Division of Emergency Management (DEM) administers a comprehensive emergency management program for the State of Colorado.

The Division helps local communities reduce losses from all disasters, such as floods, tornadoes, wildfires, and acts of terrorism. This is accomplished by providing local governments with financial assistance and technical assistance, planning, training, and exercise development.

The comprehensive emergency management program focuses on the four phases of emergency management: ***Preparedness, Mitigation, Response and Recovery.***

In the event of a major disaster or emergency, the DEM activates the State Emergency Operations/Coordination Center (SEOC) to support affected local jurisdictions. Emergency Response Coordinators from other state agencies and organizations report to the SEOC to coordinate response and recovery efforts for state and federal resources. The Division is also responsible for the ongoing development and implementation of the State Emergency Operations Plan.

Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC)/ Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) offers the ability for state, federal, and local agencies to come together in a central location to coordinate the response to emergencies and disasters throughout the state. Moved from an out-dated bunker in Golden to a state-of-the-art facility in Centennial in 2004, the EOC/MACC has 38 on-line workstations to accommodate all department emergency response coordinators, and our federal and local partners. It has the expansion capacity for an additional 56 stations. Updated equipment allows for information sharing among operational staff, and a non-secure video teleconferencing (VTC) capability allows outreach to other facilities. The Center is used for training and meetings when not activated for an emergency.

Through our partnerships with federal, state, and local governments and the private sector, the EOC/MACC ensures the highest level of protection and preparedness for the state and its citizens.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

The Division of Emergency Management provides services, programs, support and coordination in support of *Preparedness, Mitigation, Response and Recovery* through the following:

Response and Recovery

Operations:

- Four hundred and thirty-four (434) incidents have been logged in DEM's Internet-based incident reporting system since 2000. Types of incidents include wildland fires, aircraft and train accidents, hazardous materials incidents, landslides, and floods. The State's Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is activated for exercises and real emergencies on a regular basis. The most recent activation was for Operation Safe Haven when thousands of Hurricane Katrina and Rita evacuees sought refuge from the storm in Colorado.

Disasters and Emergencies:

- Since 1999, the State EOC has been activated in support of a number of State and Presidentially declared disasters. In 1999, there were two large events: the Columbine Tragedy and severe flooding, mudslides, and landslides along the Front Range that resulted in a presidential disaster declaration. The state, local governments, and eligible residents received funds from the FEMA Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs to rebuild and harden infrastructure and assist residents with recovery and mitigation actions.
- Over 4,500 wildfires burned more than 600,000 in 2002. Three hundred and eighty (380) homes and 624 outbuildings were lost and more than 80,000 people were evacuated. It cost \$306 million to fight and recover from the fires. Nine firefighters lost their lives – there is no price tag for this loss. It was also the first time in history that Colorado received a Presidential Disaster Declaration for wildland fires, triggering the FEMA Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant programs. The state also received 17 FEMA Fire Management Assistance Grants.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



Photos taken during the 2002 wildfire season are a powerful reminder of wildfire danger in Colorado.

- In 2005, Colorado, like many other states, received an emergency declaration to aid in the support of hurricane evacuees from the Gulf Coast. Through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), DEM deployed 124 emergency managers and first responders from across the state, and over 1,000 Army and Air Guard men and women to help with the recent hurricanes. The state also deployed DEM and local emergency management personnel in 2004 to assist with the hurricane recovery operations in Florida and Alabama.
- Since 1999, CDEM has awarded over **\$64 million** in disaster funds to assist Colorado communities respond to and recover from the impact of our natural disasters.

Mitigation

Mitigation Planning:

- Colorado became the first state in FEMA Region VIII to have a FEMA approved Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan, meeting all new requirements as set forth in the Disaster Mitigation Act (DMA) of 2000. The State of Colorado Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan is Part III of the State Emergency Operations Plan. In October 2000, the United States Congress passed the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, now referred to as DMA 2000. The Act amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1989 (Public Law 93-288, as amended) which serves as the mechanism through which the federal government delivers financial and technical assistance to state and local governments following presidential disaster and emergency declarations.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

DMA 2000 addresses our country's continuing need to reduce or eliminate the effects of natural, technological, and man-made hazards. Section 322 of DMA 2000 requires that all state natural hazard mitigation plans be updated to reflect the changes set forth in the Act. By amending the previous natural hazards mitigation plan, Colorado state agencies and local governments remain eligible to receive pre- and post-disaster assistance from the federal government, including Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs funds. The Division of Emergency Management (DEM) has the statutory responsibility to update and revise the Colorado Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan every three years or as necessary.

In order to complete the revision process, a planning team was developed, several group meetings were held, input was collected from various sources, and concurrent risk assessment projects for earthquakes, landslides, floods, wildfires, avalanche, rock fall, and severe weather were completed, reviewed, or updated. State agency issues and potential mitigation projects are addressed in the state plan and hazard annexes. Separate mitigation plans are not required from state agencies that participated in the process because they are subgrantees to DEM.

Local mitigation planning efforts were also integrated into the state plan. The results of the plan were based on best available data from the state agencies and local governments that participated in the planning process. In some cases, information from state and federal agencies did not exist in a usable format, however, all available and current data was utilized to meet the requirements.

Overall, protecting lives and new and existing development from the effects of hazards is a priority because it can be achieved on an individual community-by-community basis but at the same time can be integrated into an overarching plan goal.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Mitigation Projects:

- Throughout the six-year period from 1999 to 2005, local governments have received approximately **\$8 million** in post-disaster mitigation funds to complete hazard mitigation projects. Projects included local government acquisition and subsequent demolition of 90 substantially damaged properties in high-hazard areas (which will remain open space in perpetuity), flood proofing structures in 100-year floodplains, installing early warning systems for tornado and floods, building tornado shelters, and protecting critical infrastructure with structures such as ring dykes or lift stations.
- Throughout the three-year period from 2003 to 2005, Colorado has successfully competed for and received over **\$12 million** in federal funds to complete mitigation projects.
- Extensive local government and state agency public awareness campaigns have been technically and/or financially supported through DEM. Campaigns have included natural hazard awareness weeks, local public information brochures and mailings, student information programs, and homeowner awareness sessions. Many projects also supported include: natural hazard risk assessments; floodplain, landslide, rockfall, earthquake, and wildfire studies; ground-truthing and mapping natural hazards; and developing flood hazard mitigation plans, wildfire hazard mitigation plans, and natural hazard mitigation plans.
- Other projects involve training local experts on mitigation topics such as applying for mitigation funds, determining project eligibility for FEMA funds, conducting benefit/cost analyses to determine a project's financial feasibility, developing design and engineering to determine technical feasibility, reviewing projects for environmental and historical compliance, and determining appropriate alternatives to projects. Persons typically attending the trainings include floodplain managers, city/county engineers, firefighters, emergency managers, city/town managers, and public works and transportation professionals.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



Preparedness

Exercises:

- From October 2000 to October 2005, DEM played a key role in the planning, development, participation, and evaluation of **over 250** exercises statewide. Exercise scenarios ranged from natural hazards such as flooding and dam failures, to manmade hazards such as biological and chemical releases and terrorist events to include a continuity of government tabletop exercise for the Governor and his cabinet.
- All of these exercises have been invaluable in building state, local, and private partnerships and identifying areas where additional training might be focused.

Training:

- DEM has trained **over 15,000** individuals in Colorado since 2000. Disciplines include health professionals, public officials, first responders, emergency managers, floodplain managers, public works and transportation professionals, and the private sector. Course offerings cover response to Weapons of Mass Destruction, Mass Fatalities Incident Response, Exercise Design, and Developing an Effective Emergency Operations Center. Recent trainings have focused on the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in compliance with the Department of Homeland Security's National Response Plan. Governor Bill Owens signed an executive order on December 6, 2004, which established the NIMS as the state standard for incident management. In the last year the Division of Fire Safety and DEM have trained over 4000 train-the-trainers in NIMS. DEM also provides training sessions within other constituency forums, including outside conferences and workshops.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Colorado's domestic preparedness efforts began long before September 11, 2001. Local, state, and federal agencies, citizens, tribal nations, and the private sector have been working aggressively since 1996 to enhance Colorado's readiness to deal with terrorism. ***Homeland Security*** programs focus on assisting communities with training, planning, exercising, and identifying and procuring equipment.

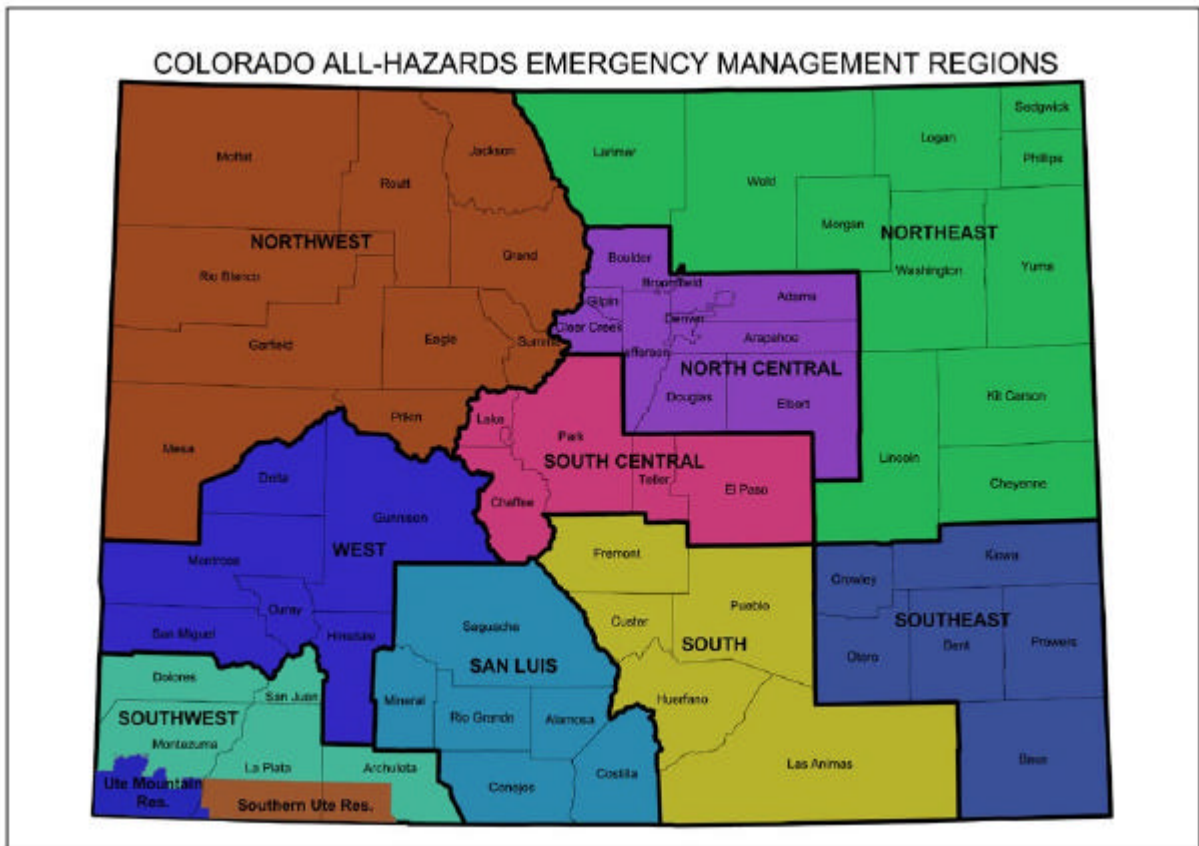
Homeland Security

- Fifty-five (55) communities completed their baseline risk assessments and established their eligibility for terrorism-related grant funds in 2001.
- More than **\$138 million** in homeland security grants has been awarded to agencies and jurisdictions throughout the state.
- The State Homeland Security Strategy was revised in 2005 by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs with extensive cooperation and input from the Colorado Department of Public Safety, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, local emergency managers, the regional Homeland Security Coordinators, the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado-Boulder and several other state agencies. This report reflects the data collected by all local jurisdictions during the 2003 Homeland Security Assessment and input from state agencies. The project was supported by grant funds from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office for Domestic Preparedness.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- Colorado benefits from an all hazards regional network enabling local jurisdictions to pool funding, equipment, planning, and training resources. Each of Colorado's nine all-hazard planning regions has an advisory committee that reviews and approves requests for homeland security grants from local entities. These committees include members representing local law enforcement, first responders, and local officials. The process ensures consensus on behalf of local interests and allows for extensive and thorough review.



Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



- The Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) was moved from the Department of Public Safety's, Office of Preparedness, Security, and Fire Safety to the Department of Local Affairs', Division of Emergency Management in 2004. The HSG program is the Office for Domestic Preparedness' (ODP) primary means of distributing dollars to states for anti-terrorism operations. ODP requires states pass these dollars through to local governments for a strictly limited set of functions, including:
 - Security and Law Enforcement Equipment;
 - Terrorism Preparedness Exercises;
 - Anti-Terrorism Planning;
 - Anti-Terrorism Training; and
 - Public Education.

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Key to the Division's work is its ongoing *local government support*, working in partnership with communities in areas such as coordination, technical planning assistance and financial assistance.

Local Government Support

- DOLA formed the State All-Hazards Advisory Committee (SAHAC) and hosted the initial meeting in the spring of 2004. The SAHAC facilitates the flow of region-to-region and region-to-state information, assists in resolving conflicts, supports regional and state emergency plan development, and advises state agencies on matters related to all-hazards emergency management. SAHAC membership is comprised of a representative from each of the nine All-Hazards Emergency Management regions, two Indian Nations, and key supporting associations representing law enforcement, fire services, emergency medical services, hospitals, emergency management, public works, and public and environmental health. Committee members serve as liaisons and conduits of information back to their respective regions, tribes or associations.

- DEM staff provided technical planning assistance and support to the nine regions in many ways, including:
 - Preparation of applications for DHS grant funds
 - Formation of new multi-disciplinary regional coordination groups
 - Completion of risk assessments
 - Resource mobilization guidelines, information management guidelines
 - County and regional plans for multi-casualty incidents
 - Local continuity of government plans

Division of Emergency Management

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- Since 1999, DEM has awarded more than **\$8 million** in Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG) to 57 counties, two city/county jurisdictions, and seven municipalities with a population greater than 100,000. The EMPG program's purpose is to encourage the development of comprehensive, risk-based, all-hazard emergency management programs at state and local government levels and to improve emergency planning, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities. EMPG funds are authorized by Congress annually and passed to state and local organizations through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). EMPG funding for local programs under the Local Emergency Management Support (LEMS) program is intended to cover up to 50 percent of costs for staff, travel, training, office maintenance, and other related costs. Common uses of the funds are to support activities in the areas of planning, training, exercises and public education.
- The DEM staff provides technical assistance to all local governments in the development of new or revised emergency operations plans. Emphasis is on multi-agency/multi-jurisdiction planning which crosses all disciplines and includes private, non-profit organizations. Through the EMPG program, DEM is able to provide ongoing support for local and statewide efforts to promote individual and family preparedness, improve communications interoperability, implement local mitigation projects, and develop plans for recovery that incorporate guidelines for damage assessment and continuity of government operations.
- Through DEM, DOLA has awarded over **\$222 million** to Colorado communities and agencies through various programs since 1999.

Division of Housing

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



"The mission of the Division of Housing (DOH) is to ensure Coloradoans live in safe, decent and affordable housing. The Divisions does this by helping communities meet their housing goals." The Division of Housing is a partner in providing financial assistance and services to increase the availability of housing to residents of Colorado who can least afford it.

The State Housing Board

The Colorado State Housing Board was created to advise the General Assembly, the Governor, and the Division of Housing on Colorado housing needs. The board reviews financing requests, adopts regulations governing factory built structures and multifamily housing in counties with no building codes.

Division of Housing Programs and Activities

- Manufactured Structures and Housing Codes
- Housing Choice Voucher Program – Section 8
- Blue Ribbon Panel & Statewide Needs Assessment
- Homelessness
- Affordable Housing Database
- Information Gathering, Publications, and Training
- Troubled Properties and Foreclosure Prevention
- Tenant Based Rental Assistance
- Development, Acquisitions, and Rehabilitation Training

Division of Housing

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Manufactured Structures and Housing Codes

Currently, the Division of Housing administers the following Codes Section programs:

- HUD State Administrative Agency (SAA)
- HUD In-Plant Inspection Agency (IPIA)
- Factory-Built Residential (FB)
- Factory-Built Non-Residential (FBNR)
- Manufactured Housing Installation (MHIP)
- Dealer Registration (sellers of Factory/Manufactured Homes)
- Hotels, Motels, and Multi-Family Structures (in areas without an adopted building code)

These programs are responsible for ensuring the protection of the life, health, and safety of Colorado citizens; ensuring compliance with construction codes and State and Federal regulations; resolution of consumer complaints; and effective and efficient delivery of services to citizens, consumers, and program participants. The programs are fully funded through service fees.

The programs standardize construction codes and compliance across the entire state, which allows the Factory/Manufactured structures industry to maximize materials and production efficiencies that results in a more affordable product for Colorado consumers.

The Codes Section also serves as an expert resource for local jurisdictions, building departments, and program stakeholders in resolving construction and compliance issues as well as offering guidance and insight with respect to responsibility and policy discussions at the local level.

Division of Housing

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Housing Choice Voucher Program – Section 8

In order to provide Section 8 rental assistance in the Denver metro and rural areas of Colorado, Division of Housing contracts direct services through local agencies, including housing authorities, non-profits, and Councils of Governments. The average annual income for families receiving Section 8 is \$9,361, with 71 percent of families earning less than 30 percent of Area Median Income and 12 percent earning between 30 percent and 50 percent of AMI. Most families enrolled in Section 8 receive SSI or SS (48 percent) or are working families (33 percent), with 22 percent reporting other sources of income, 19 percent receiving TANF, and 4 percent reporting no income. Eighty (80) percent of individuals enrolled in Section 8 stay in the program for five years or less.

While the proposed funding for Section 8 in the fiscal year 2006 is very close to the funding Division of Housing received in 2005, previous years have seen budget adjustments for the program, resulting in a 5 percent reduction in the number of families served by Section 8.

2005 Funding for the Federal Section 8 program is **\$18,148,797**.

Blue Ribbon Panel & Statewide Needs Assessment

The Blue Ribbon Panel finished its work and will be releasing its report on Housing in February. The Blue Ribbon Panel is the first broad-based statewide housing panel since 1998, provides guidance to the Division of Housing, local and federal officials, the General Assembly, and private housing providers.

The Panel developed the three-year Statewide Needs Assessment Plan recommending all regions of the state to be covered by an assessment; developing a rotating system of updating assessments; integrating assessments into State Housing Board Policy; compiling all assessments to create a statewide needs assessment; and making all information available to the public. The Division of Housing will take the lead on implementing some of these recommendations while working in partnership with communities where local agencies must take the lead on implementation.

Division of Housing

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Blue Ribbon Panel & Statewide Needs Assessment – cont.

The Plan requires the Division of Housing to focus on the regional approach to needs assessments, including identifying how communities function within larger regions and taking into account regional commuting patterns and mechanisms through which regions operate as economic units. In addition, the plan requires the Division to increase its effectiveness by forming and sustaining partnerships with public and private organizations, such as federal, state and local agencies, councils of governments and regional planning commissions, private financial and development firms, and economic development groups.

Homelessness

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines as homeless, “An individual who is sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation or in an emergency shelter; a person in transitional or supportive housing for homeless persons who originally came from the street or an emergency shelter; a person being released from an institution with no permanent place to stay, or a person fleeing domestic violence.”

The Division of Housing is planning to conduct two statewide Point-in-Time homeless surveys with dates yet to be determined.

The Colorado Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), established through Executive Order by Governor Owens, will use the information from the surveys to create a statewide plan to address housing and service needs of the homeless individuals. The ICH is comprised of government and elected officials, foundations, non-profit housing, and homeless providers, business representatives, and representatives from Colorado State Departments. The ICH is currently reorganizing to expand memberships to local government officials, businesses, and economic development organizations.

Affordable Housing Database **www.ColoradoHousingSearch.com**

The Colorado Division of Housing, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, Rural Development and the City and County of Denver have jointly sponsored a housing website that will help families locate affordable rental and for-sale housing in their community, www.ColoradoHousingSearch.com. The goals of the website are to provide a clearinghouse for information on rental and for-sale homes and for affordable housing and related services; to help Coloradans find and maintain quality, safe and decent places to live; and to facilitate operating efficiencies in the affordable housing market. Recently, the website proved to be extremely helpful in locating housing for victims of Hurricane Katrina who have come to Colorado.

Division of Housing

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Information Gathering, Publications and Training

Information is the basis for good decision-making. Division of Housing utilizes staff, as well as services of outside contractors and other Colorado state agencies to provide our partners with market and demographic information, such as the Statewide Vacancy Survey, Estimates of Household by Region, and Cost Burdened Renter Households. In addition, the Division disseminates information through presentations, publications, and its website,

<http://www.dola.state.co.us/doh/Publications.htm>

The Division of Housing staff provides a variety of training and technical assistance services to improve and enhance the delivery of housing services in Colorado. Among these services are: training sessions, such as the Developer's Tool Kit; workshops, such as Section 8 Contractors Workshop; one-on-one and small group training, such as Regional Housing Authority Design and Training; and web-based training, such as Housing Quality Standards Interactive Training.

Tenant Based Rental Assistance

Homeless families have multiple issues that prevent them from securing long-term housing, such as limited job skills and/or lack of problem-solving skills, evictions, poor credit, and criminal background. The goal of Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TABRA) is to provide temporary transitional housing assistance and case management services to homeless families who are employed or have job skills but are living in shelters in order to allow such families to stabilize, obtain long-term housing, and achieve other self-sufficiency goals.

Development, Acquisitions, and Rehabilitation Training

The Housing Development staff of the Division of Housing assists local governments, housing authorities, and developers in order to produce affordable housing units and programs that help communities achieve and maintain a healthy housing balance.

In addition, the Division maintains a pipeline of future projects and engages in on-going communication with other agencies in order to anticipate potential projects and to understand future funding requests. At the same time, Division of Housing accepts loan and grant application on a monthly basis in order to provide a flexible funding calendar.

Division of Housing

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Leveraging

The Division of Housing is successful at leveraging the funds available for affordable housing in Colorado. For example, The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ranks each state on its ability to leverage their Home Investment Partnership(s) funds with other sources of funds through the “Performance Scorecard” measurement system. As of the 3rd Quarter 2005 report, Colorado is ranked 5th in the country in leveraging of funds for affordable housing projects with a leveraging ratio of 6.72 to 1 (\$6.72 for every \$1.00 of HOME funds in a project).

A review of all projects (funded from CDBG and HOME) receiving funds from the Division of Housing from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005 indicates an overall leveraging ratio of 7.2 to 1 (\$7.20 for every \$1.00 of Division funds) with over 70 percent of the projects leveraging over \$10.00 for every \$1.00 of Division of Housing funds. It is anticipated that the State General Fund dollars provided to the Division of Housing will provide a leveraging opportunity equal to that of these current funding practices.

Funding

The Division of Housing provides funding for many housing needs through out Colorado. These include

- Homeless shelters,
- Transitional housing,
- Affordable rental housing,
- Affordable homeownership,
- Down payment assistance,
- Single family rehabilitation,
- Housing for people with AIDS (HOPWA),
- Senior housing, and
- Farm labor housing

Division of Housing

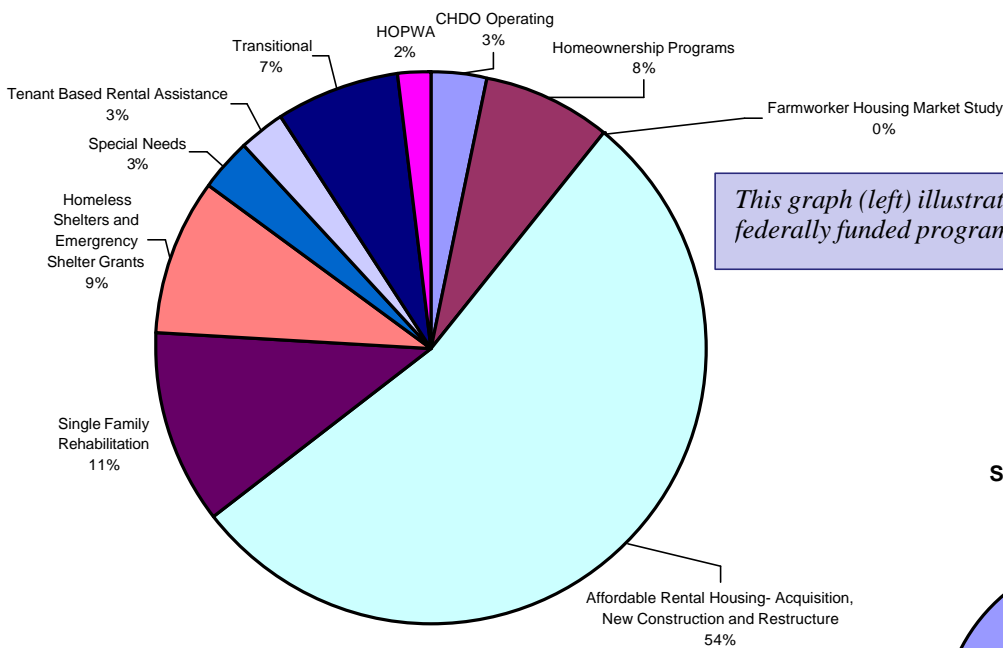
Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Funding – cont.

Additionally, the Division assists local housing non-profits called Community Development Housing Organizations (CHDO's) with operating funds. CHDO's are located in the many communities of our state and are important partners to the Division of Housing.

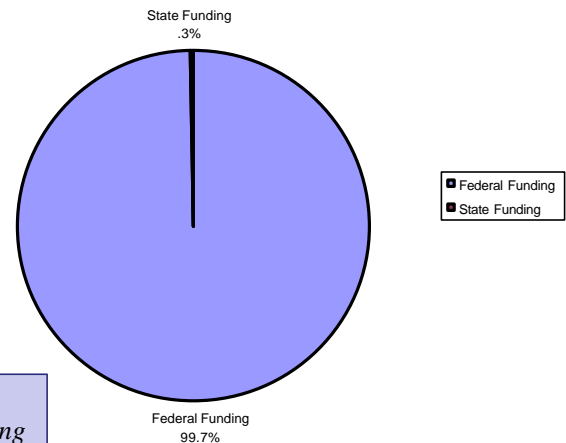
The funding for these programs comes from the federal government through five main programs.

- Emergency Shelter Grants
- The Home Program
- Housing for people with AIDS (HOPWA)
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- The Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)



This graph (left) illustrates the break down of 2005 federally funded programs of the Division of Housing.

State vs. Federal Funding



The Division of Housing receives the majority of funding from the federal government.

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

The Division of Local Government was created in 1966, as a recommendation of the Governor's Local Affairs Study Commission. The Division is statutorily responsible for:

- Assisting the Governor in coordinating the activities and services of those departments of the state having relationships with units of local governments.
- Providing technical assistance and information to local governments on available federal and state programs and act as a liaison with other state agencies concerned with local governments.
- Advising the Governor and the General Assembly on local government needs and problems.
- Performing research on local government issues.

Every Coloradan lives within three governments' jurisdictions: the state, a county and a school district, and over 70 percent also live within municipal boundaries. Many hundreds of special districts bring the total to over 2100 local jurisdictions, adding immeasurably to the complexity of government in Colorado. By having an agency to help manage the intergovernmental relationship between the state and local governments, the citizens of Colorado can expect a more seamless system of governance from their state and local governments. In addition, by creating the Division of Local Government, the State demonstrated its commitment to assuring local governments have the tools they need to provide high quality services to their citizens, and to help citizens better understand Colorado's complex public sector.

The Division provides services through the following organizational or functional areas:

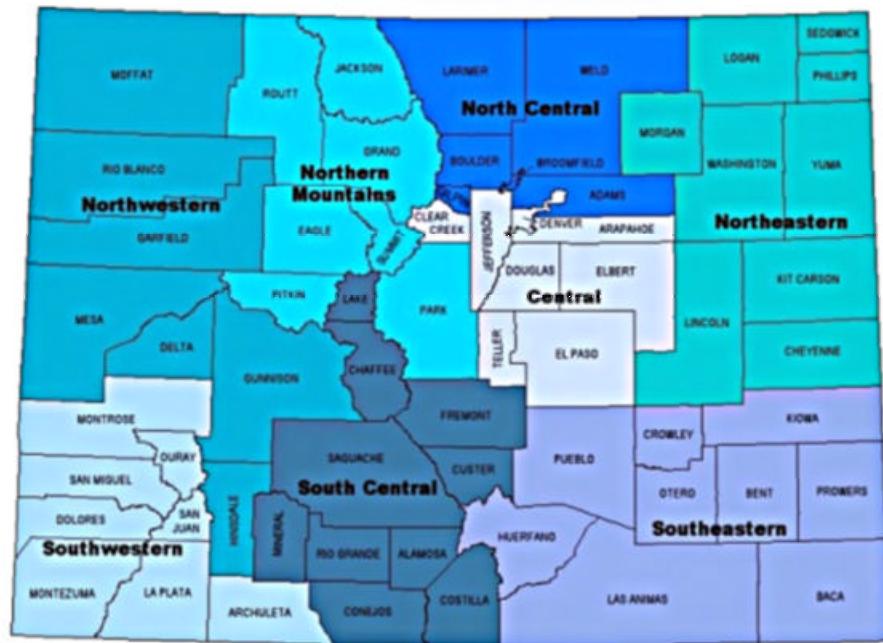
- **Field Services**
- **Financial and Technical Assistance**
- **Demography**
- **State Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator**
- **Office of Smart Growth**
- **Office of Workforce Development**

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Field Services

One of the department's key assets in carrying out its mandate is its team of field staff, who live and work in designated regions throughout the state. Their day-to-day activities enable DOLA to have a thorough understanding of the unique needs, goals and accomplishments of Colorado's diverse communities. These local field representatives are extremely knowledgeable about their communities and are a valuable resource to Colorado. The following map outlines the department's regions:



Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Financial Assistance

Provided mostly for a variety of community and infrastructure development needs through the following programs:

- **Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF)**

The Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance program provides grants for construction and maintenance of public facilities and the provision of public services. Eligible recipients are municipalities, counties, school districts, special districts and other political subdivisions socially or economically impacted by the development, processing or energy conversion of minerals and mineral fuels.

Best And Brightest Program

The program received an International City and County Management Award for local government partnerships in 2004. This program is a partnership with the Colorado local governments (municipalities and counties), the University of Colorado at Denver Center for New Directions, and the Department of Local Affairs. The program has placed 35 interns in Colorado jurisdictions since 2004. The interns assist local government managers with projects as well as learning management techniques. Salaries for these interns are paid for by the local government and matched with Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance funds.

Wireless Interoperability Network (WIN) Initiative

First-responders, including law enforcement and firefighters received a boost in their ability to communicate through the state's Digital Trunked Radio Network through grants from the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). Governor Bill Owens directed the Department to provide funding to rural communities to build digital trunked radio infrastructure, microwave towers and site equipment. The WIN initiative has strengthened the local and state 800 MHZ Digital Trunked Radio system by providing over \$18 M in grant funding for 70 tower sites and related equipment throughout the state in 2005 through Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance funds.

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance Fund (EIAF) - cont.

Rural Healthcare Initiative

During 2004 and 2005, the Governor's Rural Healthcare Initiative has awarded nearly \$16 M in grant funds for facilities and major equipment that improve healthcare services in rural Colorado. Projects are intended to improve primary, dental and mental health care services in rural Colorado. Funds are primarily from the state Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance funds.

Road and Bridge Initiative

The Department recognized the growing energy impacts for the top 13 energy impacted counties in the state and offered over \$19 million in immediate assistance through the Energy and Mineral Impact Assistance funds.

- **Conservation Trust Fund (CTF)**

The department distributes over \$45 million dollars of Conservation Trust Fund monies from net Lottery proceeds to over 450 eligible local governments: counties, cities, towns and eligible special districts that provide park and recreation services in their service plans. CTF funds can be used for acquisition, development and maintenance of new conservation sites; for capital improvements or maintenance for recreational purposes on any public site; and for operation, use, acquisition, equipping and maintenance of a system of television relay and translator facilities. (CRS 29-21-101). Last year the program expanded to include monitoring of all dollars distributed.

- **Waste Tire Grants (Waste Tire Disposal and Recycling)**

The department provides funding for the clean up of illegally disposed waste tires. The program also provides incentives to local governments and the private sector to re-use or recycle waste tires for projects such as surfaces for playgrounds, erosion control and asphalt re-surfacing.

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Waste Tire Grants – cont.

The Waste Tire Clean-up program has seen the number of applicants increase over the past 4 years. It is anticipated the demand will continue to increase as a coalition of local governments have taken it upon themselves to develop a program to shred the tires in their landfills to reduce the volume and reuse as landfill cover.

- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

The “Small Cities” Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program provides grants and loans for housing, public facilities and business assistance projects primarily benefiting low/moderate income persons or to eliminate slums or blight. Eligible recipients are all municipalities and counties except those larger jurisdictions that receive CDBG funding on an “entitlement” basis directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- **Community Services Block Grants (CSBG)**

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program provides formula-based block grants to alleviate poverty in communities. Grantees receiving funds under CSBG are required to provide services and activities that address a) employment; b) education; c) better use of available income; d) self-sufficiency; e) housing; f) nutrition; and g) emergency services and/or activities to meet needs of low-income families and individuals.

- **Search and Rescue Fund (SAR)**

Each year, Colorado search and rescue teams perform over a thousand missions helping those who get caught in emergency situations in the backcountry. The Colorado Search and Rescue (SAR) fund is managed by DOLA and reimburses county sheriffs and search and rescue organizations for costs incurred in search and rescue operations. It also provides funding for the purchase of related equipment and training.

Division of Local Government

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Search and Rescue Fund – cont.

The program is funded by surcharges on hunting and fishing licenses, boat registrations, off-highway vehicle and snowmobile registrations and the sale of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue (CORSAR) card. This user-funded approach to financing backcountry search and rescue has been used as a model by other states looking for ways to pay for this critical public service.

Since 1996, the fund has paid almost \$1 million to counties for 682 missions conducted under the supervision of Colorado's county sheriffs. The fund has also awarded over \$3 million in grants to counties thus ensuring that Colorado's search and rescue teams have access to some of the best equipment and training in the nation.

- **Local Government Limited Gaming Impact Program (LGLGI)**

The Local Government Limited Gaming Impact Program provides grants to finance planning, construction and maintenance of public facilities and for the provision of public services related to the impact of gaming. Grants may only be provided to local governments in gaming counties and counties that are geographically contiguous to the two gaming counties and the tribal lands.

Technical Assistance

Training, data, information and services are provided to municipalities, counties, and special districts on a variety of key issues including budgeting, financial management, special district elections and drinking water and wastewater systems.

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- **Demography**

As the primary state agency for demographic information, division staff prepare, maintain, and interpret population statistics, estimates and projections. This includes distribution of the state's population by age, racial and ethnic groups for political and administrative subdivisions. In addition, special data profiles are available for every county and municipality. This data is also available to the general public on our web site. In 1999 the office was receiving around 10,000 web hits per month. In 2005 web hits have grown to 43,000 per month. Demographic information is also available through the Colorado Economic and Demographic Information System (CEDIS), an online service provided by the department.

The State Demography Office designed a program called Local Economic Information and Forecasting Assistance (LEIFA). This program creates county level economic and base industry data that are used to improve the office's population forecasts and are used by local governments to better understand their economy and improve county and regional planning. The data have also been used by economic development organizations to better understand and target opportunities for the state.

- **State GIS Coordinator**

Statewide GIS coordination began approximately one year ago focused on developing GIS for homeland security prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in the state and on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of GIS activities in Colorado including the exchange of geospatial data.

A survey of geospatial data and activities is underway to inventory what data is available and where to enhance the possibilities for data sharing and collaborative efforts. A geospatial data repository is being built at the state's Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) using data available from state and federal agencies and local governments.

Division of Local Government

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State GIS Coordinator – cont.

This repository includes information on special needs populations such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and day cares.

A pilot project testing the mechanisms for integrating local data into a statewide repository of data to be housed at the MACC has begun. Access to view (and download) this data will be provided to the emergency management community

- **Office of Smart Growth (OSG)**

Proposed by Governor Bill Owens in his Smart Growth initiative, the Office of Smart Growth (OSG) was created within the Colorado Department of Local Affairs during the 2000 legislative session to assist local governments in addressing the unique public impacts of growth (C.R.S. 24-32-3201, et. seq.).

Since its inception in 2000, the Office of Smart Growth (OSG) has awarded more than \$1.8 million in Colorado Heritage Planning Grants (CHPG) to over fifty communities around Colorado to assist in cooperative growth management/land use plans and projects. These projects include water efficient landscape ordinances; transferable development rights programs, open space preservation efforts, wildfire mitigation plans, impact fee studies, and intergovernmental agreements on growth boundaries. These plans have garnered both local and national awards.

Since 2000, OSG has conducted over 60 workshops and conferences around the state. These training workshops focus on land use tools such as comprehensive plans, zoning, subdivision regulations, intergovernmental agreements (IGAs), transferable development rights, clustering and regulatory permitting systems.

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Office of Smart Growth – cont.

OSG also acts as a clearinghouse for innovative planning practices around the state. The office has published a series of best practices reports detailing success stories in the areas of land use planning and growth management, IGAs, preservation of open space and agricultural lands and natural hazard mitigation.

The Governor has placed a request in his budget proposal for \$400,000 to restore funding to the Colorado Heritage Planning Grant (CHPG) program. Due to the economic downturn and resulting budget shortfalls, funding for the CHPG program was cut in 2004 and 2005. As Colorado communities prepare for the significant population growth predicted (an additional one million people in the Front Range alone by 2020), this planning grant program is essential if local governments are to prepare responsible growth management plans.

- **Office of Workforce Development (OWD)**

The Office of Workforce Development is charged with collaborating with several state agencies in the implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The main functions of the office include the staffing of the Colorado Workforce Development Council, which recommends workforce policy to the Governor. The office also manages key statewide workforce issues, manages and requests federal grants and provides support for local workforce boards, manages and oversees state and local youth councils, and creates operational standards for one-stop centers around the state.

Among the focus, is the OWD's collaboration with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment on several workforce initiatives, including the e-Colorado Portal, the Job Vacancy Survey through LMI, Governor's Summer Job Hunt, E3 Business and Career Forum, "Think Big" Youth Forum.

Division of Local Government

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Office of Workforce Development – cont.

Other initiatives include:

- Support of innovative healthcare projects through grants totaling \$1,951,660 to the state's workforce centers, and most recently providing \$500,000 to support the new WELLS Center at the Fitzsimmons campus of the University of Colorado Hospital.
- The Youth Transition Grant is a five-year, \$2,257,000 project funded by the USDOL/ODEP. The goal of the grant is to develop, implement, and evaluate a cross-agency, multi-year state plan to improve transition outcomes for youth with disabilities through the blending and braiding of state, federal and community resources and local intermediary organization.
- For over three years, the OWD has managed Project TRAIN (Training Resources And Incentive Networks); a statewide initiative driven by a 100-member coalition including; state and federal agencies, Workforce Center personnel, community based organizations, employers and people with disabilities.
- Since 2002, the Colorado Workforce Development Council has received over \$4,000,000 from the USDOL/ETA for the Disability Program Navigator project. Colorado currently has 20 Disability Program Navigators, whose primary objective is to assure full access for jobseekers with disabilities to program and services that enhance successful entry and reentry into the workforce.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Through its Division of Property Taxation (DPT), the department coordinates and administers the implementation of property tax law through the state's 64 counties. It operates under the leadership of the property tax administrator, who is appointed by the State Board of Equalization (state board).

In promoting equalization of property valuation for property tax purposes and providing assistance to county assessors, DPT's activities are divided into several sections:

- **Administrative Resources**
- **Appraisal Standards**
- **Exemptions**
- **State Assessed Properties**

Administrative Resources

This section prepares and publishes administrative manuals, administrative procedures and instructions. It conducts schools and seminars regarding the administrative functions of the assessors' offices. It conducts field studies and provides statewide assistance in title conveyance, mapping, abstracting valuations, certification of values to taxing entities and feasibility studies. The section also investigates taxpayer complaints. It is responsible for various studies and reports such as the residential assessment rate study and the property tax administrator's annual report to the General Assembly and state board. It also coordinates with agencies that have an interest in property taxation. In addition, the field staff work closely with assessors in all areas of property taxation.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Appraisal Standards

The Appraisal Standards section prepares and publishes appraisal manuals, appraisal procedures and instructions. It conducts schools and seminars regarding all areas of appraisal. It conducts field studies; provides statewide assistance in agricultural land classification, natural resources and personal property valuation in addition to assistance in the valuation of residential, commercial and industrial properties. The section assists in reappraisal efforts, reviews internal appraisal forms used by assessors and investigates and responds to taxpayer complaints.

Exemptions

This section is responsible for determining qualification for exemption from property taxation for properties that are owned and used for religious, charitable, and private school purposes. Currently exempt property owners are required to file annual reports with DPT in order to continue exemption. The section provides assistance to counties and taxpayers with inquiries about exempt properties, conducts hearings on denied exemption applications and revocations of exemption and defends appeals of such denials and revocations.

State Assessed Properties

This section values all public utilities and rail transportation companies doing business in Colorado. The company valuations are then apportioned to the counties for collection of the local property tax. The section conducts research projects in connection with state assessed companies, assists counties and taxpayers with inquiries on the assessment of public utilities and rail transportation companies, hears protests of the assigned values, and defends appeals of such valuations.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Division Accomplishments, Activities and Programs

- ***Business Personal Property Tax Refund/Credit***

In 2000, the Division facilitated meetings involving county assessors and treasurers, counties' computer vendors, county IT employees, and personnel from the Department of Revenue, to assist with the process for refunding business personal property tax from TABOR surplus. The meetings were convened because state and county computer systems were having significant problems communicating. The meeting participants developed a format for submitting computerized information to Revenue that would be accepted by the Department's computer system. Then, when the data was submitted to the Department of Revenue for refund in 2001, the Division acted as an intermediary between the counties and the State. The same communication process was used when the Senior Homestead Exemption was implemented in 2002.

- ***Training County Assessors and Staff***

Real estate appraisers, including county assessor staff, must be licensed in Colorado. One of the required classes to acquire the license is Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). The Division has five staff members certified to instruct the USPAP one and two day classes. There are approximately 560 instructors nationwide to provide instruction to more than 80,000 licensed appraisers. The Division instructors, however, only hold classes for county assessors and their staff. DPT had the individuals certified to save the counties money in educating their staff. In DPT's classes, the assessor personnel only pay for the materials plus a small fee to help pay for the facility. Taking classes sponsored by other groups would cost much more. During 2005, DPT provided instruction to 429 students -- saving counties between 60 percent and 75 percent of the cost of a third party provider. In looking at the retirement plans of the individuals certified to instruct USPAP, we plan to send a minimum of two staff members to the instructor certification course in 2006.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- ***Expanded Educational Offerings Since January 1999***

DPT staff developed and presented two courses at the International Association of Assessing Officers Annual Conference in Alberta, Canada. (Appraisal (APR) 215 - Hotel/Motel Valuation for Assessment Purposes & APR 030 – Environmental Property Appraisal).

Since 1999, DPT has been invited by, and traveled to, other states to instruct a variety of the Division's courses to other state assessment personnel.

The following courses have been developed or extensively rewritten and instructed in order to provide direction and required education to Colorado County Assessors and their staff.

All Division courses are approved through the Colorado Board of Real Estate Appraisers.

- ADM 913 – Abstract Compliance and Certification to Taxing Entities
- ADM 930 – Advanced Title Conveyance
- ADM 933 – Basic Title Conveyance
- ADM 936 – GIS for Assessment
- ADM 934 – Manufactured Homes
- ADM 931 – Mapping Procedures
- ADM 949 – Ownership, Legal Descriptions, and Mapping
- ADM 912 – Tax Increment Financing
- ADM 702 – The Assessor's Role in Local Government
- APR 030 – Environmental Property Appraisal
- APR 230 – Golf Course Valuation
- APR 114 – Property Design and Measurement
- APR 150 – Gross Rent Multiplier
- APR 180 – Valuation of Complex Residential Properties
- APR 206 – Advanced Income
- APR 310 – Performance Evaluation Analysis
- APR 515 – Valuation of Possessory Interest
- APR 520 – Narrative Report Writing
- APR 580 – Cost, Market, Income Review

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

The following courses will be developed for presentation in 2006

- Administration and Valuation of Severed Minerals
- State Assessed Property Valuation
- Conducting a Reappraisal

The entire appraisal curriculum will be reexamined in 2006 to ensure conformance with requirements of the Appraiser Qualifications Board of the Appraisal Foundation.

- ***Time Trending and Performance Evaluation Assistance Since January 1999***
 - Colorado Statute requires county assessors be audited every year to determine whether or not they are following the Constitution, statutes, and Division of Property Taxation manuals in valuing property. The State Board of Equalization can order counties found to be out of compliance to reappraise a class or classes of property that are not valued properly.
 - For the 1999, 2001, and 2003 reappraisal years the Division developed and provided a time trending and performance evaluation assistance program for the Colorado County Assessors. This program was designed to proactively assist the assessors with the use of statistical tools to ensure fair, equitable, and uniform valuation.
 - For the 1999 reappraisal year, the Division provided time trending and/or performance evaluation assistance for (17) seventeen individual counties. None of the seventeen individual counties assisted received reappraisal orders in 1999.
 - For the 2001 reappraisal year, the Division provided time trending and/or performance evaluation assistance for (27) twenty-seven individual counties. None of the twenty-seven counties assisted received reappraisal orders for 2001.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Time Trending and Performance Evaluation Assistance – cont.

- For the 2003 reappraisal year, the Division provided time trending and/or performance evaluation assistance for (26) twenty-six individual counties. None of the twenty-six counties assisted received reappraisal orders for 2003.
- For the 2005 reappraisal year, the Division provided time trending and/or performance evaluation assistance for (26) twenty-six individual counties. None of the twenty-six counties assisted received reappraisal orders for 2003.
- ***Supervision of State Board of Equalization Ordered Reappraisals in 2004***

The state board ordered reappraisal of Fremont County commercial property. This reappraisal was supervised by Division staff beginning in November 2004 and was completed in July 2005.
- ***Supervision of State Board of Equalization Ordered Reappraisals in 2005***

The Division will supervise the reappraisal of residential property in Costilla County, as ordered by the state board. DPT anticipates this will involve two – three staff persons, for an estimate of eight weeks. This reappraisal is currently underway. The initial work began in November 2005 and completion is expected by July 2006.
- ***Workforce Analysis***

Division staff developed a template that can be used by Division staff or an assessor in reviewing and analyzing the workload of the assessor's office and staffing needs, resulting in an estimated number of administrative and appraisal staff needed to support the workload. The results are often presented to boards of county commissioners by Division staff. A demonstration of the software was made at the 2000 International Association of Assessing Officers Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- ***Residential Assessment Rate Study***

Division staff completes the Residential Assessment Rate Study in the fall of even-numbered years. The documented study estimates the residential assessment rate, for the action of the General Assembly. A report of the findings is prepared and presented to the General Assembly in January of odd number years.

- ***Senior Homestead Exemption***

A 2000 constitutional amendment created a homestead exemption for qualifying seniors. Legislation was passed in 2001 to implement the program. The Division coordinated the implementation of the program with county assessors, county treasurers, county IT personnel and computer service providers, and the state treasurer's office. By statute, the Division reviews all applications approved by the counties in order to prevent homestead exemptions being applied to more than one property owned by seniors. DPT reviewed 128,443 applications, and only denied 111. Because all parties worked closely, the counties' reimbursement reports (total dollars lost the local taxing entities due to the exemption) were timely submitted to the state treasurer, and the reimbursement to the counties occurred with very few problems. Although the funding for the senior homestead exemption was suspended by the legislature in 2004, counties and the Division continue to process applications and review for applicants who apply on multiple properties, as the funding is slated to return for 2007.

- ***Mobile Equipment Manual***

The Division is required by statute to publish a manual for county clerk and recorders that provides data on special mobile equipment. DPT worked closely with the Department of Revenue to provide the manual by Internet to the county clerks and recorders and ports of entry. In 2005, the DOLA IT Division developed a new database application, making data compiling, publication, and use of the information more efficient.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- ***Division of Property Taxation's Web Site***

The DPT web site contains information regarding property taxation, which includes weekly bulletins to assessors, public notices, manuals, brochures, course descriptions and education schedules, information for seniors, reporting forms, and our annual report. The public can access the Division's website to review its manuals. The site also includes useful links to organizations such as the Colorado Assessors' Association, Colorado Board of Real Estate Appraisers, International Association of Assessing Officers, the Colorado assessment auditor, and The Appraisal Institute.

- ***Abstract of Assessment***

In 2004, the DOLA IT Division developed a new Internet-accessed database application for furnishing property class and subclass count and value data to the Division. The new database streamlined the process, eliminating the mailing of disks or CDs.

- ***Certification of Levies and Revenues***

In 2003, the DOLA IT Division developed a new database application for tracking and compiling entity levy and revenue data reported to the Division. The new database streamlined the process. In 2005, the database was enhanced, allowing counties to access the program via the Internet. Ten counties were selected to test the system for 2005. The goal for 2006 is for all counties to use the program. Division and IT staff will conduct regional workshops to provide training for county staff on using the software.

- ***Court Case Database***

A court case database, housing summaries of Supreme Court and Court of Appeals decisions regarding property tax issues, was developed in conjunction with the DOLA IT Division. County assessors, county attorneys, and the public use the database.

Division of Property Taxation

Colorado Department of Local Affairs

- ***State Assessed Property***

The section has not implemented any new programs since 1999. However, DPT has improved its existing discovery, valuation, and protest evaluation procedures to increase effectiveness within the section. Since 1999, the section has calculated and defended assessments that increased from a total of \$3,151,248,200 assessed in 1999 to \$4,095,944,100 assessed in 2005. Total number of companies increased from 484 in 1999 to 556 in 2005.

The section has leveraged the information-gathering abilities of the Internet to better discover new taxable companies and validate economic issues affecting individual companies and specific state assessed industries. The Division has developed closer ties with its respective state assessed agency in Wyoming for the purpose of capitalization rate data sharing and for discussion of valuation issues common to companies operating in both states. Utilized more face-to-face meetings with industry representatives for evaluation of taxpayer protest issues affecting their industry. This resulted in reducing electric company appeals from 8 to 1 for the 2005 assessment year.

- ***Exemptions***

Since 1999, five pieces of legislation have expanded exemptions for preschools and residential properties, created a fund for filing fees, and simplified the process of reviewing religious exemptions or requests for exemption. While these new statutes have required some adjustments to procedures, DPT's basic programs remain much the same as in 1999. However, during this time, the Division has worked to streamline and standardize the process for reviewing new applications, thereby reducing its backlog of pending applications by 39 percent. DPT also streamlined the process of reviewing residential exemptions by developing an electronic means for housing administrators to annually report on the occupancy of their properties. The Division is currently working with OIS to develop online versions of the annual report filings that are required of owners of currently exempt property.

Board of Assessment Appeals

Colorado Department of Local Affairs



The Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) hears appeals filed by real and personal property owners on the valuation placed on their property. The property owner can appeal decisions from county boards of equalization; the property tax administrator on state assessed properties; county boards of commissioners and the property tax administrator on prior year abatement/refund cases; and the property tax administrator on exempt property. Appeals also can be filed when a county assessor or county board of commissioners/equalization fails to make a decision on a matter properly presented.

Appeals must be made in writing to the three-member board, which is appointed by the Governor and approved by the state Senate. Through state legislation, the Governor appoints additional members to one-year positions.

Appeals Processed Through the Board of Assessment Appeals

In FY 2005, the Board of Assessment Appeals received 1,124 appeals from taxpayers, primarily encompassing property tax valuations from the calendar year 2004 reappraisal cycle. In FY 2006, 1,614 appeals have been filed to date. As calendar year 2006 is not a reappraisal year, the Board of Assessment Appeals expects to receive 1,100 appeals in FY 2007.