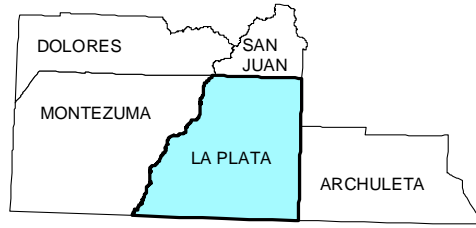








MAP OF LA PLATA COUNTY

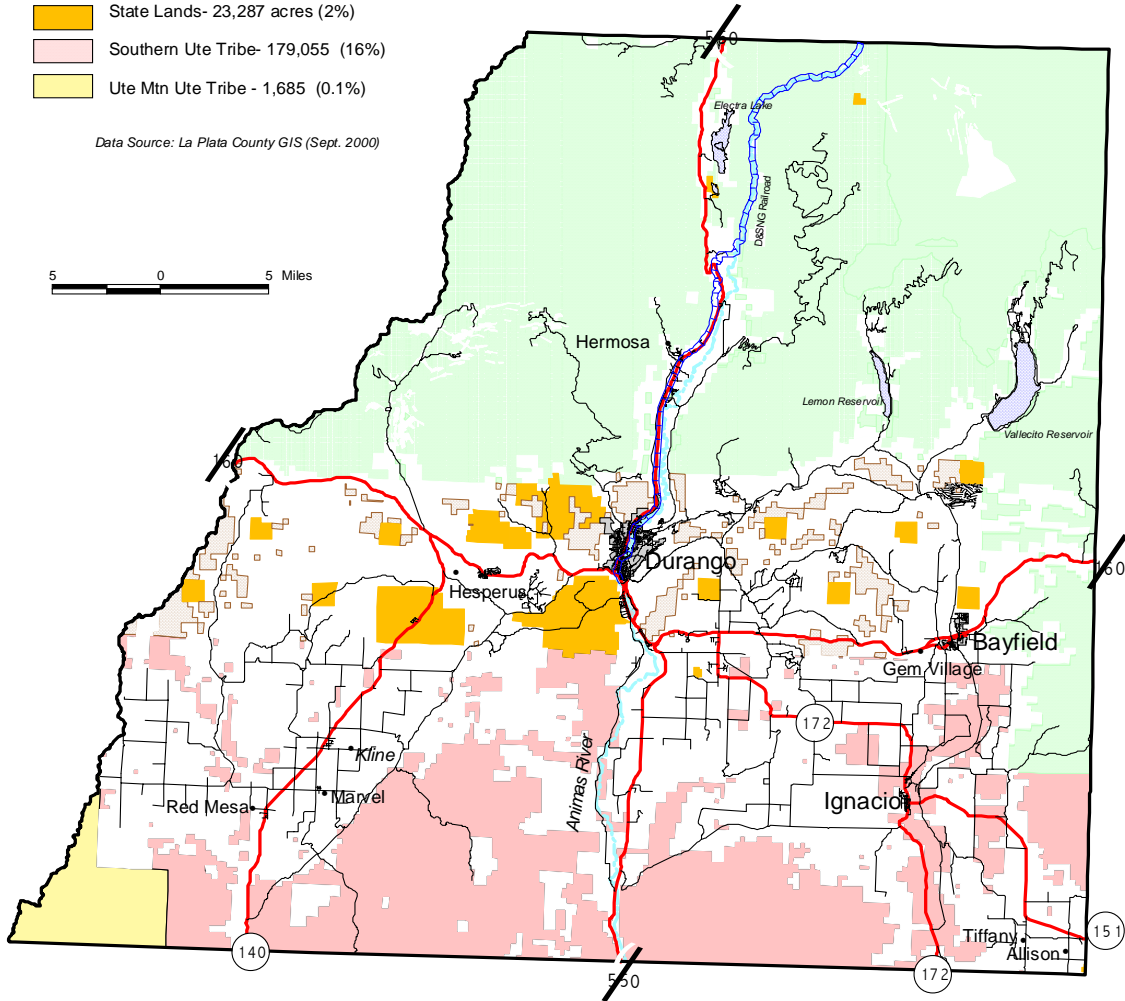
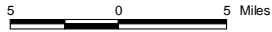
Information Services
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REGION 9

- Land Area - 1,083,085 acres (1692 sq. miles)
-  Private Lands- 461,185 acres (43%)
-  San Juan National Forest- 396,050 acres (37%)
-  Bureau of Land Management- 21,823 acres (2%)
-  State Lands- 23,287 acres (2%)
-  Southern Ute Tribe- 179,055 (16%)
-  Ute Mtn Ute Tribe - 1,685 (0.1%)

Data Source: La Plata County GIS (Sept. 2000)



La Plata County

Region 9 - CEDS

5. LA PLATA COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is to create a plan for retaining and creating better paying jobs, fostering stable and more diversified economies, as well as maintaining and improving the quality of life in Southwest Colorado and La Plata County. The purpose of this section is to provide specific information on La Plata County, and how it fits into the Southwest Colorado region.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

La Plata County has three major communities, the City of Durango (the county seat), and the Towns of Bayfield and Ignacio. Historically, La Plata County developed as a result of "traditional west" commodities such as minerals, cattle and timber. Since the 1970s, La Plata County has been in transition from a traditional rural county to a more urban environment in which tourism is the number one industry. People moving in for quality of life issues or "amenity migration" drove population growth in the 1990s. The natural environment, and the amenities it provides, are behind much of the growth and have become the larger region's chief economic asset.

The county is comprised of 1,083,085 acres (1,692 sq. miles). Of these, 43% are private lands, 16% are tribal lands (Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute), and 41% are state and federal lands. The foremost issue that the county currently faces is population growth. Implications of growth include increased demand for services; infrastructure needed to serve development; changes to the environment; and impacts on the overall quality of life in the county. Planners (county, city, and tribal) are in the process of developing strategies to cope with these issues.

Between 1990 and 2000, La Plata County averaged 3.13% annual growth, with most of the growth occurring in Durango and unincorporated areas of the county. The City of Durango grew by an average of 1.13% annually; in the Town of Bayfield there was 3.6% average annual population growth in the last decade. In the Town of Ignacio population has been slowly declining, but with the advent of casino gambling on the Southern Ute Reservation and other expanding tribal enterprises growth is expected.

Although there is a relatively low unemployment rate (3.9% in 2005), wages and employment are highly dependent on generally low paying retail and service sector jobs driven primarily by the tourist and resort industry. The service sector provides 42% of jobs and 35% of employment income. The Trade sector accounts for 14% of jobs and 12% of employment income. Government is also an important sector, providing 17% of employment and 21% of employment income in 2005. Proprietors (owners) make up 20% of total employment, while wage and salary jobs account for 80%.

Operation Healthy Communities (OHC) has determined that in 2003 a minimum of \$10.21/hr provided a livable wage in Durango; \$9.49/hr in Bayfield; and \$9.81/hr for Ignacio. Low wages and high housing costs affect potential homebuyers. In 2003 in Rural La Plata County the percentage of families able to purchase a median priced (\$190,750) home was 61%. In Bayfield the percentage of families able to purchase a median priced (\$180,000) home was 63%. In Durango the percentage of families able to purchase a median priced (\$257,250) home was 48%. In Ignacio the percentage of families able to purchase a median priced (\$100,000) home in 2003 was 80%.

In 2004, Total Personal Income (TPI) in La Plata County was \$1,486,584,000. This TPI ranked 14th in the state and accounted for 0.9% of the state total. The largest proportion of TPI is generated through employment.

In 2004, La Plata County had a Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI) of \$31,887. This PCPI ranked 20th of 64 counties in the state, was 88% of the state average (\$36,113), and 96% of the national average (\$33,050).

LOCAL ISSUES

Energy Impacts

Along with providing a substantial number of high-paying jobs, natural gas production in La Plata County generates a large stream of tax revenue to state and local governments. The natural gas industry also has a substantial indirect impact on other La Plata County industries due to the quantity of goods and services purchased from firms within the county. An Economic Impact of the Natural Gas Industry in La Plata County study was recently completed (November 2005) to take a close look at the oil and natural gas industry in La Plata County. The study was conducted by a team of economists at Fort Lewis College, in Durango, under a commission from the La Plata County Energy Council (www.energycouncil.org).

This industry provides the local community with many amenities that would not be possible if the natural gas industry did not produce as much as it does. The following provides a brief overview of the findings of the study:

- Direct spending by the natural gas industry in La Plata County for the year 2003 was approximately \$215.7 million.
- Each dollar spent by the natural gas industry in La Plata County generates approximately \$1.43 in additional sales (or output), or an additional \$308.4 million dollars spent on productivity in La Plata County in 2003. This represents over 22% of the total personal income (or output) of La Plata County. Direct earnings spent in La Plata County increased by \$42.6 million in 2003 because of natural gas operations.
- Total household earnings that can be attributed to the natural gas industry in La Plata County in 2003 equaled \$78.5 million.
- Direct employment by the natural gas industry in 2003 was about 305 jobs, which generates an additional 623 related jobs in La Plata County. This is approximately 4.2% of the total employment in the County.
- In 2003 the natural gas industry paid average salary was approximately \$84,000, as compared with the average annual wage in La Plata County in 2003 of over \$28,000.
- In 2003/2004 the natural gas industry accounted for about 48% all property tax revenue. The absence of the natural gas industry in La Plata County, would mean the average residential property taxes from 2004 would have to increase from an average of about \$465 to over \$1,000, an increase of 155%, to keep the same amount of tax revenues.
- As with the case of residential property taxes over the same two years, commercial property taxes would need to increase from approximately \$3,500 to just over \$23,000 in 2004, or 609%, to raise the same amount of tax revenues in the absence of the natural gas industry.

Environmental groups remain concerned that the county is “still a laboratory” and that the integrity of the experiment (the full impact of drilling) won't truly be known until years into the future when the field begins a dramatic decline. The economic benefits of development need to be weighed against increasing environmental and social consequences. The county is seeing more and more surface impacts from drilling, in order to maintain the current production level, more infill wells will be needed. Certain areas in the county have already been approved for infill at 80 acre spacing, down from 160 acre spacing. San Juan Citizens Alliance, a nonprofit group that focuses on environmental issues, has an Energy Issues Organizer who works with people impacted by oil and gas development, and sees those impacts increasing as the number of wells increases. This group and others are also waiting for the Record of Decision from the final draft EIS on impacts of oil and gas development in the Northern San Juan Basin, specifically in the HD Mountains. Concerns have been ongoing about impacts to wildlife; the geographic instability of the area; allowing drilling in No Surface Occupancy and roadless areas; drilling on or near the outcrop of the Fruitland formation; and that the downside of development, basin-wide, is being lost in the glitter of revenue.

Environment

La Plata County sits on the second largest field of coal bed methane gas in the country. Called the San Juan Basin, this field covers five Colorado and New Mexico counties, and includes the Fruitland, Mesa Verde, Dakota, Pictured Cliffs and Paradox geological formations. Over 15,000 new gas wells are planned for drilling in addition to the 15,000 that currently exist. In Colorado, the mineral rights are generally separate from the surface owner's property rights. Thus, a challenge is mitigating the impacts of drilling above ground while balancing the companies' rights to earn profits from their mineral estates. La Plata County Government is a state leader in regulating oil and gas company activities on non-Tribal lands having instituted rules regarding permitting, setbacks, performance standards, buffering, weeds, noise, health, and safety. Oil and gas production actually pays 61% of the county's property tax bill. The Southern Ute Indian Tribe is also a major leader in oil and gas development, but their drilling is not regulated by either La Plata County or the State of Colorado. The mining and utilities sector offers the highest average wage, paying \$79,480 in 2003.

The impacts of rapid growth and development are evident throughout the county. The population grew 3.6% from 1990 to 2000. From 1993 to 2001, 3,297 new residential lots were created. Two open space conservancy organizations have preserved 11,090 acres from 1993 to 2004. La Plata County has a revised draft Land Use Code that includes stronger regulations and tools for managing this fast-paced growth and development. As of August 2006, the Land Use Code has not been approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

With 39% of the lands in this county categorized as public lands, precisely how these lands are managed ties closely to the local economy. The San Juan National Forest and Bureau of Land Management's management plan revision will outline the types of uses that will occur, and other strategic land management decisions such as: identifying where commercial timber will be harvested, where grazing will occur and to what levels, and locations where motorized recreation is allowed. In public meetings, the following issues were identified as concerns in La Plata County: oil and gas development, wildfire hazards, Durango Mountain Resort's expansion, water rights, winter recreation access around the City of Durango, and wildlife corridors. The Office of Community Service at Fort Lewis College is leading the planning process and a draft document is expected by September 2006.

Since 2001, La Plata County has seen public interest around environmental sustainability grow with the formation of the Southwest Colorado Renewable Energy Society, the Green Business Roundtable, and other groups of local citizens and businesses advocating for greater energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts across the Four Corners area. The City of Durango is considering adding sustainability and green building policies and strategies in their Comprehensive Plan Update.

Sources:

- City of Durango Comprehensive Plan Update Web Site: www.durangocompplan2006.org
- *Durango Herald*. Archive reports: www.durangoherald.com
- La Plata County Energy Council Web Site: www.energycouncil.org
- La Plata County Government: *Abstract of Assessments*. 2005.
- Office of Community Services at Fort Lewis College – Forest Plan Web Site: <http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/forestplan/>
- Operation Healthy Communities – *Pathways to Healthier Communities* Report. 2005.

Housing

Housing is a growing concern in La Plata County, not just rising prices, but also part-time residents. A three-part study, financed by Region 9 and conducted by Donna K. Graves of Information Services, wanted to look at the impacts of part-time residents and second homes. Second homes have generated the need for more workers, but the rise in property values and subsequent housing costs have made it difficult for the workers to live within a reasonable distance of their place-of work. This is of particular concern in areas where developable land is in short supply. Housing data from La Plata County was acquired directly from the County Assessor office, and shows that though region wide, about 40% of residential properties, vacant lands and agricultural parcels are owned by non-locals, **29% of La Plata properties are owned by non-locals.**

In La Plata County, most of 2nd homeowners live out of state and their properties cluster near resort areas. The median and average value of properties is actually lower for non-locals, likely reflecting the condominium/townhouse market.

How much our communities will be affected will be determined when Phase 3 (economic impacts) is completed. The results of Phase 3 are expected to help guide the plans and policies of local decision makers. More information about the Social and Economic Impacts of 2nd Homeowners is available at www.scan.org, under Region 9 publications.

Another concern is rising home prices balanced with low incomes. In 2003, the *Pathways to Healthier Communities* Indicator report quoted between 20 to 39 percent of families (depending where they lived) in 2003 had less than the qualifying income needed to purchase a home. La Plata County has the highest housing prices in the region, but also the highest median income.

Healthcare

In La Plata County, notable health care access challenges exist. Every year, fewer primary care providers are available and this county has a well-documented shortage of 5.6 providers. A full 18% of La Plata County residents are uninsured. There are no provider openings for new patients on Medicare. At the same time, La Plata County is expecting a 21% influx of retirees on Medicare over the next five years.

The 2005 Primary Care Access Study recommended:

- Operating a viable primary care clinic
- That the La Plata County Medical Society begin a dialogue with its members to consider how to open up practices who are not accepting Medicare and Medicaid
- Recruiting internal medicine physicians to fill gaps
- Establishing a Health Service District (note: in May of 2006, a local ballot initiative to establish a county-wide Health Service District with a 1.7 property tax mill increase was defeated by 3.01%).

In May of 2006, attendees of a health care breakout session at the La Plata County Community Summit recommended expanding care for the geriatric population; utilizing the Health Fairs for more referrals; and exploring another Health Service District Campaign.

Progress in health care has occurred since the last CEDS report. The Durango Chamber of Commerce began offering a basic group health plan for Chamber members aimed at business owners priced out of the market. A new \$82 million dollar Mercy Regional Medical Center was opened June 27, 2006 in a 202,000 square feet facility. A **local group** has organized to plan for operation of a locally administered and operated Community Health Center. This center could serve up to 10,000 patients, and if established, would replace the services currently operated by Valley Wide Health Systems (which will close in July of 2007). In December of 2004, Animas Surgical Center opened to provide surgical, diagnostic, and emergency health care mostly to privately insured and paying patients.

In September of 2002, a coalition called the Citizens Health Advisory Council (CHAC) published, *A Picture of Health Care in La Plata County* that identified the gaps and assets in the county. The county is at a crossroads in providing essential primary care, preventive, and mental health services for growing number of people who have neither insurance, or access. These issues need to be addressed.

Land Use Issues

In 1989, La Plata County adopted a land use permitting process (La Plata Land Use Code) to guide its review of subdivisions and development. The code, by itself, proved to be difficult to consistently administer, so in 1995, the County began a Comprehensive Plan process, intended to apply the policies and direction of the code to specific physical conditions in La Plata County. The Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2001 and focuses primarily on land use and development issues in the unincorporated areas of the county. It is used in conjunction with adopted land use district plans and other County plans and regulations. The county's three municipalities (Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio) have their own respective plans and regulations, but an intergovernmental agreement is in place for the lands surrounding Durango, and La Plata County is working on agreements with Bayfield and Ignacio.

In 2002, to implement recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan, the County initiated a comprehensive review of its land permitting system. A draft of a new land use code was prepared for public review in 2004. The draft underwent significant public review and revision, and will be considered for adoption in late 2006.

The Comprehensive Plan is an evolving document meant to allow new elements to be added and updated as necessary. The most intricate and recurring issue addressed in the Comprehensive Plan is growth - its impact and options to manage it. Implications of growth include: increased demand for services, infrastructure needed to serve development, changes to the environment, and impacts on the overall quality of life in the county. Suggested growth management strategies include:

- Increased intergovernmental coordination
- A higher level of coordination with service providers through the issuance of well permits, septic permits, etc.
- Directing denser developments to central areas that have infrastructure capable of supporting it.
- Ensuring that development maintains rural character and the integrity of the surrounding environment.

With La Plata County growing at such a fast pace and more and more land being subdivided every year, land use will continue to be a major economic development, community, and environmental topic of discussion.

Transportation

Transit is a prominent La Plata County issue. The 2006 La Plata County Community Summit, which addresses priority community issues, had transit as a topic. Residents, the county, and area municipalities, all recognize that increasing numbers of people are commuting longer and longer distances to work. The City of Durango is the central point for work and shopping, with the majority of commuters traveling in from Bayfield and Mancos. Roads, including Highways 160 and 550 are reaching capacity.

The county's area of greatest growth is expected to be in the Three Springs/Grandview area, increasing traffic between Durango and where the new Mercy Regional Medical Center is located off Highway 160. Currently, the average travel time between downtown Durango and Grandview is 15 minutes. The same trip is projected to be 24 minutes in 2030.

The City of Durango and La Plata County just completed the 2030 TRIP (Transportation Integrated Plan), a regional guide for investment and policy decisions to meet future transportation needs. The 2030 TRIP considered all transportation modes from motorized vehicles, public transportation, bicycling and walking.

The 2030 TRIP also looked at intersection improvements, transit systems and acquisition of right of way for future transit. The Smart 160 group hopes to expand trail systems between Durango and Bayfield, while another is looking at future light rail between the two communities. The City of Durango just received funding to construct a transit center that will provide a central hub for the Ignacio Roadrunner, Durango Transit and other community bus service connecting to and from Durango.

La Plata County is also a very popular bicycling area and thus the 2030 TRIP looks at increasing the shoulder width on highly utilized roads, and creating new and expanding existing bike paths.

The 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, done by the Colorado Department of Transportation, lists that in 2001, 74.2 percent of La Plata highway surfaces were rated as poor. CDOT officials say that when roads get to a certain point of wear, it is better to wait and reconstruct the entire road, than keep repairing it. The 2030 Transportation Plan is currently being updated, with new information available (The 2035 Transportation Plan) in 2007.

Airports

Animas Airpark is located in La Plata County, four miles south of the City of Durango, at an elevation of 6,690 feet. Access to the airport is from County Road 213. It is a privately owned general aviation airport open to the public and operated by Animas Airpark, Inc. The facility has a 5,000 foot long runway but does not have a terminal building.

Durango/La Plata County Airport - This facility is located in La Plata County, 14 miles southeast of the City of Durango. Access to the airport is from US Hwy. 172. It is a publicly owned commercial service facility operated jointly by the City of Durango and La Plata County. The airport also supports private aviation facilities, air freight operations and an interagency wildfire air tanker base. The primary runway is over 9,200 feet long, and is equipped with lights and navigational aids. Daily service includes flights to Denver, Phoenix and Salt Lake.

Intercity Bus Service - Currently, intercity bus service is severely limited in most of the region. Bus service is provided by TNM&O, a private carrier that serves as an "interline" to Greyhound Bus. TNM&O serves La Plata County from Durango, and San Juan County from Silverton. The service is a daily north/south run along US Highway 550 connecting to Grand Junction and Albuquerque, NM.

Specialized Transit - The *Durango T* provides year-round fixed route transportation using buses, trolleys and demand/responsive transit service minibuses. The fixed route buses and trolleys run within the city limits of Durango, and provide the most comprehensive bus service in the region. The *Opportunity Bus* is for those with ADA disabilities and for seniors aged 60 and over. The *Opportunity Bus* runs 6 days a week in the winter and 7 days a week in the summer, though arrangements for service must be made 24 hours in advance. The routes have recently increased to include two daily trips to Mercy Regional Medical Center.

The *Southern Ute Community Action Programs* (SUCAP) offers fixed route and demand-responsive transportation services to the Southern Ute Tribal community, and residents of Ignacio. The service area is expanding to offer daily routes between Bayfield and Durango. This program operates a fixed-route service four times daily between Ignacio and Durango. Two runs operate during commuter hours and are designed to link with the Durango T. The two mid-day run allows two hours in Durango for medical appointments and shopping. Demand/response service operates in the Ignacio area for one and one-half hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon.

Durango Transportation is a private company that also provides on demand services to locations in La Plata County, seven days a week.

Sources:

City of Durango and La Plata County -- *2030 TRIP Transportation Integrated Plan*.

Southwest Regional Planning Commission -- *Southwest TPR 2030 Regional Transportation Plan*, CDOT, November 2004.

La Plata County Community Summit website: www.communitysummit.org.

Operation Healthy Communities – *Pathways to Healthier Communities Report*. 2005.

Wildfire

On July 9th, 2002, the Missionary Ridge Fire broke out on a United States Forest Service road just north of Durango. This wildfire burned 70,085 acres, closed most of the public lands, and destroyed 57 homes. The fire also halted the area's main tourist attraction, the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, causing them a financial loss of \$3.3 million and a 33% reduction in this company's workforce.

La Plata County's fire risk remains high because of severe and extended drought, an abundance of forest, and the historic die-off of Piñon, Ponderosa and other types of trees that have succumbed to a prolific Ips beetle, and a pathogen called black stain root disease. There are also 152 subdivisions in La Plata County bordering forested areas deemed to be high risk for wildfire. This is known as the Wildland Urban Interface or "WUI."

In 2006, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was unveiled as part of the National Fire Plan and Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003. The CWPP was an update to the 2002 La Plata County - Community Fire Plan. A collaborative effort among federal, state and local fire fighting entities and governments, the CWPP outlines goals, strategies and partnerships to:

- Reduce risk in the WUI;
- Increase public involvement in wildfire prevention and education;
- Reduce ignitability of structures;
- Increase and strengthen the tools for local governments and fire departments to encourage firewise policies and practices; and
- Increase the number of fuel reduction projects on federal lands in the WUI and other priority areas.

Accompanying the CWPP is a *La Plata County Fire Risk - Communities of Concern* map that provides a county-wide risk assessment based on slope, aspect and vegetation, in addition to location of important structures such as reservoirs, watersheds and highways. This map is being used in the land use planning process and for fire/EMS purposes. The CWPP and map can be found at: www.southwestcoloradofires.org.

Some of the key actions the La Plata County CWPP calls for include:

- Expand the Firewise Council of Southwest Colorado's Neighborhood Ambassador Program.
- Initiate fire mitigation projects on federal lands identified in the CWPP planning process after appropriate review processes are completed.
- Continue working collaboratively across jurisdictions to institute La Plata County Government policies that, if implemented, will reduce the chances of catastrophic wildfires on private lands, and lands in the WUI, including adoption of driveway standards and fire mitigation policies as drafted in the proposed La Plata County Land Use Code Update.

LA PLATA COUNTY PROFILE

Background

Southern Ute Tribe

The planning and management area of Region 9 includes two Indian reservations, including the Southern Ute and the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribes. Historically, the Utes roamed throughout the Four Corners and Western Colorado in several distinct hunter-gatherer bands. The Southern Ute divisions were the Muache, Capote, and Weeminuche. As a result of the Dawes Act in 1887, and the subsequent Act of 1895, the previously defined Southern Ute reservation lands were broken into two distinct units. Most of the Muache and Capote Utes accepted farming allotments in the eastern portion, which became known as the Southern Ute Indian Reservation with agency headquarters at Ignacio, in La Plata County. The Weeminuche Utes, led by Chief Ignacio, refused to accept allotments and moved to the western portion, which became known as the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation with agency headquarters at Towaoc, in Montezuma County.

The Southern Ute Tribal enrollment is 1,305; with the majority of the members living on the reservation. The 2000 census shows the largest percentage of the members are in their early twenties and younger. The reservation land base includes 750,000 acres, seven major rivers, and the Navajo State Park. More recently, the Tribe purchased land near Durango (La Plata County) and is building the Three Springs housing and commercial center on 681 acres, which will have 2,283 homes and many thousands of square feet of new commercial/office space.

The Southern Ute Indian Tribe is a significant economic player in La Plata County and the region. Tribal headquarters are located adjacent to the Town of Ignacio, southeast of Durango (in La Plata County). The Tribe is one of the largest employers in the county. Their oil and gas operations, gaming enterprises at the Sky Ute Lodge and Casino, land and housing development, and tourism-related businesses bring jobs and income to Tribal and non-Tribal residents. A new casino hotel and convention center is slated to open in 2008. The Southern Ute Growth Fund was started in 1999 and has vast investments spanning America and Canada. The Growth Fund reports a portfolio of over \$1billion.

Natural resources on the reservation include extensive gas reserves, coal, timber, and agriculture. These resources provide the basis for a diversified Tribal economic base. Tribal energy resources, particularly in the form of natural gas, have played the largest role in the reservation economy over the past decade (more than 90% of Tribal revenues came from energy resource development in 1998).

Durango

The county seat of Durango was organized in 1881. The historic district of downtown Durango was platted by the railroad that established the narrow gauge Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. Durango became a rail hub because it had the combination of the Animas River and nearby coal sources needed to fuel a smelter and coal driven steam engines to process ore from the mines in San Juan County. With the dedication of the "Million Dollar Highway" in July of 1924, the transportation of gold, silver, lead, copper and zinc moved from the narrow gauge train to Highway 550 which connects Durango to Silverton. Beginning in the late 1950s, the rail line that had carried ore down from Silverton began, instead, to carry tourists up from Durango to enjoy the spectacular scenery. Train ridership to Silverton was 165,057 in 2005. Durango also developed as a hub for other modes of transportation. Durango is at the intersection of Highway 160, the major east-west arterial in Southwest Colorado and Highway 550 a major north-south arterial in Southwest Colorado. Durango / La Plata County also developed the most extensive air hub in Southwest Colorado. Because of its location within the larger region, Durango has become a tourist crossroads and regional trade center.

Bayfield

The early residents of the Pine River Valley were the Ute Indians. Their descendants are still in the area, primarily on the Southern Ute Reservation and in the Ignacio area at the south end of the valley. The Pine River Valley was settled by non-Indians in the late 1800s. The first cattle were brought into the valley in 1875. The area gradually opened up as ranchers discovered the fertile valley. Much of the land was homesteaded by squatters rights. The Town of Bayfield was incorporated in 1906. The town has experienced the tragedies of fire (1902, 1905, 1920, and 1946) and floods (1911, two in 1927, and 1957). After the floods of 1927, a proposal was written for a dam on the Pine River for flood control and irrigation. Vallecito Dam was started in 1939 and its lake now provides recreation as well as flood control and irrigation.

Bayfield has since served as a supply town and social center for area farmers and ranchers, and more recently as a bedroom community for Durango. It has remained a quiet town, riding the booms and busts that are typical of Colorado's economy. In recent years, it has experienced rapid growth and has become the fastest growing municipality in southwestern Colorado.

Ignacio

The early residents of the Ignacio area were the Ute Indians, primarily the Weminuche band. Their traditional territory extended west of the continental divide to the Blue Mountains and canyon lands of southeast Utah, and north of the San Juan River, which generally marked their boundary with the Navajos. Although the boundaries of the Ute Reservation have changed with the passing of various treaties, the Ignacio Agency for the Southern Ute Tribe was founded in 1877 amidst a permanent population of Spanish Americans (Hispanics), Navajos, Paiutes, Anglos and Jicarilla Apaches living in the area. Within a few months of the founding of the Ignacio Agency a greater influx of Spanish American settlers arrived from communities in northern New Mexico and the San Luis Valley to the east. In 1913, Ignacio was incorporated.

At present Ignacio remains a tri-ethnic community, composed of Southern Utes, Hispanics and Anglos. Today the town serves as a supply center for the surrounding reservation and ranches and is a crossroads for the gas and oil industry. The Southern Ute Tribal headquarters is located just north of the town limits and provides administration and services to tribal members. Services and facilities provided by the Tribe are, for the most part, separate from those provided by the Town of Ignacio and are not specifically addressed in this profile.

La Plata County Government

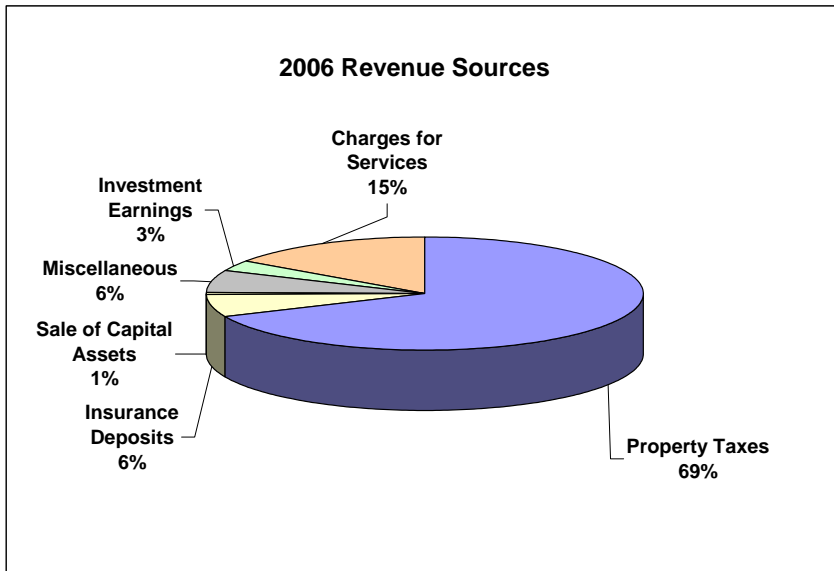
La Plata County is one of 64 counties created by the State of Colorado. The responsibilities of implementing state law and managing county business are shared by elected officials, including: Assessor, Clerk and Recorder, District Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer, Coroner and Surveyor. An elected three member Board of County Commissioners is the chief legislative and executive body of the County. Their duties include overseeing county budget, land use policy, social services, and road maintenance and construction, and public health programs. In addition to these 10 elected officials the county employed a staff of 375 in 2005.

Expenditures

La Plata County provides many different services to its citizens, including public safety, roads and bridges, and health and welfare. Estimated expenditures for La Plata County totaled \$70.3 million in 2006.

Revenues

The County expects to receive about \$62.7 million in 2006 revenues. Approximately \$20.2 million, or 43%, will come from non-local tax sources such as federal and state funding for social service programs, highway users taxes, grants and sales taxes generated by visitors to the county. The balance of \$21.0 million will come from sales and property taxes paid by local citizens. The \$7.5 million difference represents the fund balance carry forward from county monies saved in earlier years.



- Property tax revenues are distributed among municipalities, school districts and special districts (i.e. fire protection and sanitation). Special Districts set additional tax levies.
- The La Plata County property tax levy rate is 8.50.

Source: La Plata County 2006 Condensed Budget.

Infrastructure and Services

All information was provided by local sources unless otherwise noted in text.

Electric - The entire county is served by the La Plata Electric Association.

Natural Gas - Most of the area is served by Atmos Energy and various propane distributors. The Town of Ignacio owns and operates its own natural gas distribution system.

Water - Durango and Bayfield have municipal water systems. Ignacio contracts water through the Southern Ute Tribe. Others are served by Rural Water Districts or have their own wells. The proposed Vallecito Water District will cover much of the southeastern portion of the county, including the Florida Mesa and Bayfield areas.

Wastewater - Durango and Bayfield have municipal wastewater systems. Ignacio contracts wastewater treatment through the Southern Ute Tribe. Others are served by rural water districts or have their own septic systems.

Solid Waste - Most of the area is served by Waste Management. There are also a variety of private waste haulers. The City of Durango also provides trash pick up and curbside recycling services.

Police & Fire Departments - Durango, Bayfield and Ignacio each have police and fire personnel. The balance of the county depends on the Sheriff's Department and rural fire departments.

Telephone - Most of the area is served by Qwest. The southeast portion of the county, i.e. Ignacio, is served by CenturyTel.

Medical Facilities - Mercy Medical Center has a new facility which provides ICU/critical care/cardiology services that are available 24 hrs. a day, 7days a week, as well as 135 physicians providing 34-35 other medical specialties. Mercy is a Level III trauma center and is licensed for 82 private beds. The newly constructed (2005), privately owned Animas Surgical Center provides facilities for elective surgeries and outpatient care, and operates an emergency room. There are also numerous family practices in the various municipalities.

Business Parks - Durango (Bodo Industrial Park and the Durango Tech Center): **Bayfield** (54 acres under development): **Ignacio** (Shoshone Addition under development). Preliminary approval has also been granted by the county for a new industrial park to be located near the airport.

Major Employers - 2005 Top 10 Employers: Durango School District 9R (787), Mercy Medical (704), Fort Lewis College (636), City of Durango (440), Wal Mart Stores Inc (405), La Plata County (375), Southern Ute Tribe (343), Purgatory Ski Area (341); Sky Ute Lodge & Casino (300); Bayfield School District 11JT (188). [Colo. Dept of Labor and Employment]

Educational Facilities - Durango District 9R; K-12 (fall 2005 enrollment was 4,660). Enrollment figures are not available for Durango non-public private schools. Bayfield District 10JTR K-12 (fall 2005 enrollment was 1,184). Ignacio 11JT K-12 (fall 2005 enrollment was 784), Pueblo Community College - Durango Campus (enrollment not available); Fort Lewis College (fall 2005 enrollment was 3,946). The Southern Ute Tribe has also constructed its own educational facility (The Southern Ute Academy) near Ignacio. [Colo. Dept. of Education]

Recreation Facilities – (2005) Durango community facilities include 7 soccer fields, 9 baseball and 3 softball fields. Facilities at Chapman Hill were upgraded to include a refrigerated ice- rink and a 5000 sq. ft. pavilion, as well as the existing ski hill. Construction of a Community Recreation Center in Durango was completed in 2002. Bayfield community facilities include a Community Recreation Center, and athletic fields (football, baseball) at the High School. Ignacio community facilities include access to the Southern Ute Tribal Recreation Center, and the Town Park. Surrounding public lands.

Livable Wage - (2003) Bayfield (\$9.49), Durango (\$10.21), Ignacio (\$9.81). [Operation Healthy Communities 2005]

Housing – (2003) In Rural La Plata County the percentage of families unable to purchase a median priced (\$190,750) home was 39%. In Bayfield the percentage of families unable to purchase a median priced (\$180,000) home was 37%. In Durango the percentage of families unable to purchase a median priced (\$257,250) home was 52%. In Ignacio the percentage of families unable to purchase a median priced (\$100,000) home in was 20%. [Operation Healthy Communities 2005]

Child Care Availability – 532 slots (infants to preschoolers) available in 2005. There are 3 facilities with 12 hour care, and 3 with 24 hour care. There are also 3 facilities with weekend care. [Operation Healthy Communities 2005]

Long term care facilities for Seniors - (2005) There are 5 facilities with a total of 247 beds. [San Juan Basin Area Agency on Aging]

Estimated number of persons without health insurance - 16.7% Statewide [Operation Healthy Communities 2005]

Population Trends

Between 1990 and 2000, La Plata County averaged 3.13% annual growth, with most of the growth occurring in Durango and unincorporated areas of the county. In 2000 the county's population was 43,941. According to the 2000 Census the median age was 35.6. Males comprised 51% and females comprised 49% of the total population. The average household size was 2.43 people.

	Census 2000	Estimates					Avg Annual % Change 2000-2005
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
La Plata	43,941	45,614	46,281	46,790	47,173	48,019	1.9%
Bayfield	1,549	1,695	1,708	1,731	1,705	1,728	2.3%
Durango	13,922	14,708	15,213	15,324	15,628	15,878	2.8%
Ignacio	669	704	708	704	754	752	2.5%
Unincorporated	27,801	28,507	28,652	29,031	29,086	29,661	1.3%

Source: Colorado Demography Section 8-06

Since 2000 the average growth rate has slowed down to about 1.9% annually, with most growth seen in the Durango area. A higher rate of growth has been forecast for the county in the years to come. These population figures, however, do not reflect the large number of seasonal residents in the area. A local study on 2nd homes indicates that about **29% of properties** are owned by people that live outside of the county. The social and economic impacts of these 2nd homes are still being assessed.

Forecasts							
La Plata	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Population	48,019	54,837	61,815	68,613	75,047	80,973	86,399
Avg. Ann. % Change		2.8%	2.4%	2.1%	1.8%	1.5%	1.3%

Source: Colorado Demography Section 8-06

The Local Economy

Unemployment Rates

The current strength of the economy supports a low unemployment rate, although seasonal fluctuations are seen in the winter months, when unemployment rises. La Plata County has seen lower rates than the state and the nation since 2002.

Unemployment Rates Compared 2000 - 2005						
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
La Plata	3.8%	3.7%	4.4%	4.7%	4.1%	3.9%
State Unemployment Rate	2.8%	3.7%	5.7%	5.7%	5.2%	5.0%
National Unemployment Rate	4.0%	5.3%	5.8%	6.0%	5.5%	5.1%

Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor

Employment and Income 2005

Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) employment and income statistics lag by about two years, thus 2004 is the latest year available for review by that agency.

La Plata County 2005 Total Employment	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (\$000)	% of Inc.	Avg. annual wage *
Agriculture	658	2%	\$ (1,357)	0%	**
Mining & Utilities	598	2%	\$ 68,918	6%	\$ 115,247
Construction	3,556	11%	\$ 162,129	14%	\$ 45,593
Manufacturing	781	3%	\$ 22,010	2%	\$ 28,182
Transportation & Warehousing	755	2%	\$ 40,619	3%	\$ 53,800
Retail Trade	3,846	12%	\$ 102,513	9%	\$ 26,654
Wholesale Trade	642	2%	\$ 30,018	3%	\$ 46,757
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2,001	6%	\$ 97,642	8%	\$ 48,797
Services	12,974	42%	\$ 415,085	35%	\$ 31,994
Government	5,350	17%	\$ 249,549	21%	\$ 46,645
Total	31,161	100%	\$1,187,126	100%	

However, the Colorado Demography Section makes local adjustments to these data using 2005 employment and income figures.

Source: Colorado Demography Section Sept. 06

*From BEA & ES 202-includes proprietor income

**Agricultural income reflects net losses from livestock and crop production

From this table we see that proprietors (owners) form a substantial part of the total number of jobs, especially in agriculture, and finance, insurance and real estate, sectors. Note – the differences in total jobs seen in these charts reflect changes made by the Demography Section to some proprietor's data.

# of Wage and Salary Jobs as Compared to # of Proprietors					
La Plata County Job Sectors	Wage/Salary Jobs		Proprietors		# of Total Jobs
	#	%	#	%	
Agriculture	119	18%	542	82%	661
Mining & Utilities	504	84%	99	16%	603
Construction	2,580	71%	1,030	29%	3,610
Manufacturing	598	76%	193	24%	791
Transportation & Warehousing	654	86%	107	14%	761
Retail Trade	3,253	84%	626	16%	3,879
Wholesale Trade	565	87%	81	13%	646
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,209	59%	836	41%	2,045
Services	10,294	78%	2,829	22%	13,123
Government	5,350	100%	0	0%	5,350
Total Employment	25,126	80%	6,343	20%	31,469

The service sector is composed of many types of jobs, and very different wage scales. These include highly paid professionals, as well as entry level wage earners.

La Plata County 2005 Service Sectors	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (\$000)	% of Inc.	Avg. annual wage
Information	569	4%	\$ 29,062	7%	\$ 51,076
Professional, Scientific, Technical	3,136	24%	\$ 129,537	31%	\$ 41,306
Education, Health, Social Assistance	3,295	25%	\$ 141,223	34%	\$ 42,860
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	1,062	8%	\$ 22,838	6%	\$ 21,505
Accommodation, Food Service	3,374	26%	\$ 56,697	14%	\$ 16,804
Other Services	1,538	12%	\$ 35,728	9%	\$ 23,230
Total	12,974	100%	\$ 415,085	100%	\$ 31,994

Many of the service jobs in La Plata County support tourism, in recreation, accommodations (lodging) and food services.

Source: Colorado Demography Section Sept.06. Includes wage labor and proprietors

Base Analysis

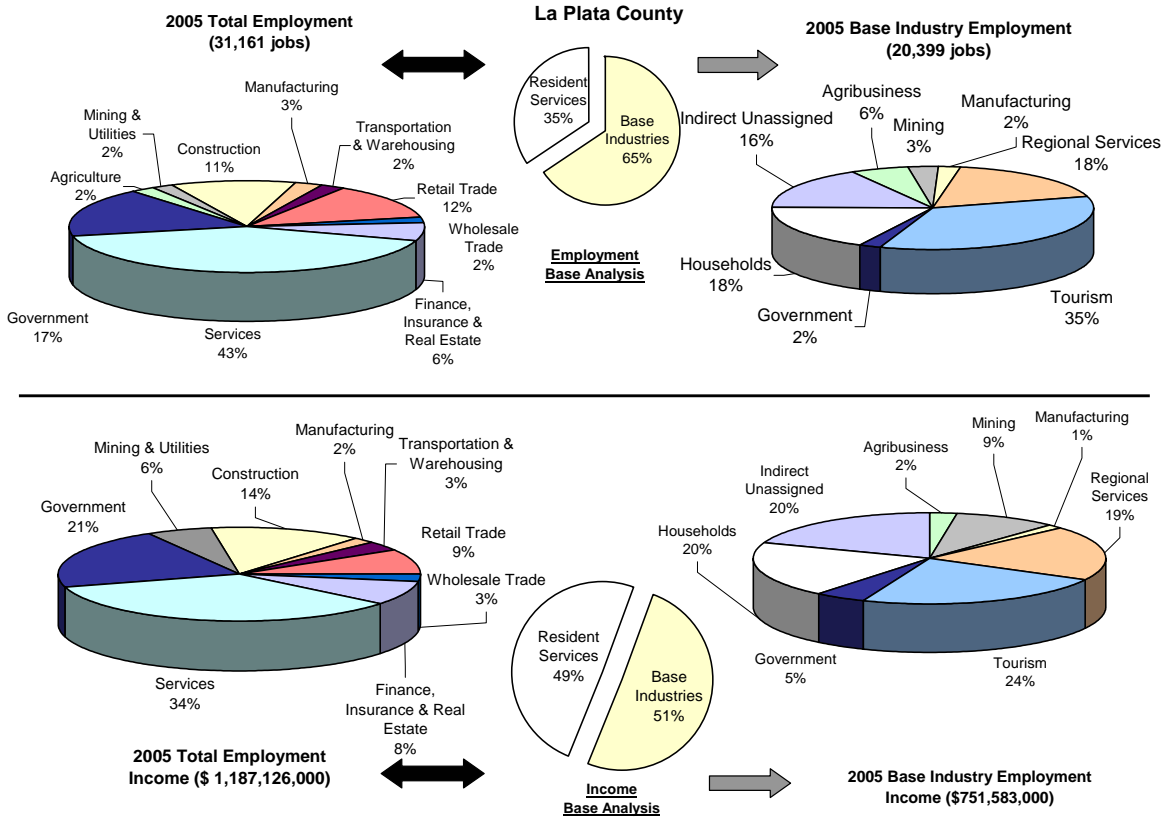
The Colorado Division of Local Government (CDLG) - Demography Section provides other types of analyses based on Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) and ES202 - Labor Market information.

Base Analysis distinguishes which industries and factors are **basic** to the economy and are responsible for overall growth and change. There are two types of regional industries:

Base industries produce exports or derive their sales or income *directly* from outside sources, or *indirectly* by providing supplies to export industries. These activities **bring in outside dollars** to circulate within the local economy. These industries include agriculture, mining, manufacturing, national and regional services, state and federal government jobs, and tourism.

Local resident services provide services to local residents and also **re-circulate dollars** within the local economy. Resident services include industries that take care of the local community, such as health services, education, and employment at the local grocery store. Residential industries are *industries* because they create jobs . . . which, in turn, create demands for worker housing and services.

The following chart illustrates the proportions of these two industries in the local economy, starting with total employment and employment income, and then isolating the estimated numbers of jobs and income within the base industries.



Base Industries

Some job sectors bring in outside dollars to re-circulate within the local economy. These are known as Base Industries (direct and indirect).

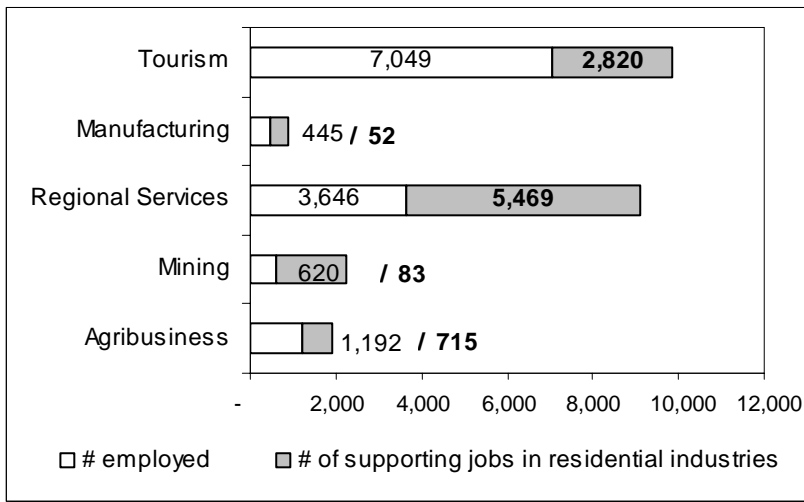
2005 Base Industries La Plata County	# of Jobs	% of Jobs	Income (\$000)	% of Inc.
Agribusiness	1,192	6%	18,558	2%
Mining	620	3%	\$ 70,957	9%
Manufacturing	445	2%	\$ 11,155	1%
Regional Services	3,646	18%	\$ 144,665	19%
Tourism	7,049	35%	\$ 177,043	24%
Government	480	2%	\$ 35,562	5%
Households	3,623	18%	\$ 146,784	20%
Indirect Unassigned	3,344	16%	\$ 146,859	20%
Total	20,399	100%	\$ 751,583	100%

- **Agribusiness** – activities related to agriculture including agricultural production, agricultural inputs, and agricultural processing.
- **Mining** – includes all mine operation and support activities. Mine operations include establishments operating mines, quarries, or oil and gas wells. Mining support activities include establishments that perform exploration and/or other mining activities, such as land clearing.
- **Manufacturing** – includes all activities that can be classified under manufacturing, except for food and kindred product manufacturing, which is under agribusiness.
- **Regional Center/National Services** – includes all establishments primarily engaged in providing services to a region (a group of counties) or the nation. Examples include utility companies, transportation (i.e. airports), construction companies, and some financial institutions.
- **Tourism** – all establishments with activities related to tourism, including accommodations, second homes (real estate and construction sectors), tourist services, and transportation. The tourism sector includes jobs from service, trade, insurance & finance, and transportation sectors.
- **Government** – includes all government-owned establishments regardless of activity.
- **Households** – earnings and employment associated with expenditures made by retirees, commuters, households with public assistance, and households with dividends, interest and rent.
- **Indirect unassigned** – an establishment is assigned as having indirect employment and earnings when a base industry purchases local supplies or services for the operation of their business from it. The distinction between direct and indirect basic is obvious in some cases, but imprecise in many others. Where a distinction could be made, we assigned the indirect to the basic industry, combining both direct and indirect employment. Where a distinction could not be made, but it was obvious that the establishment was serving a base industry, the employment and earnings were assigned here.

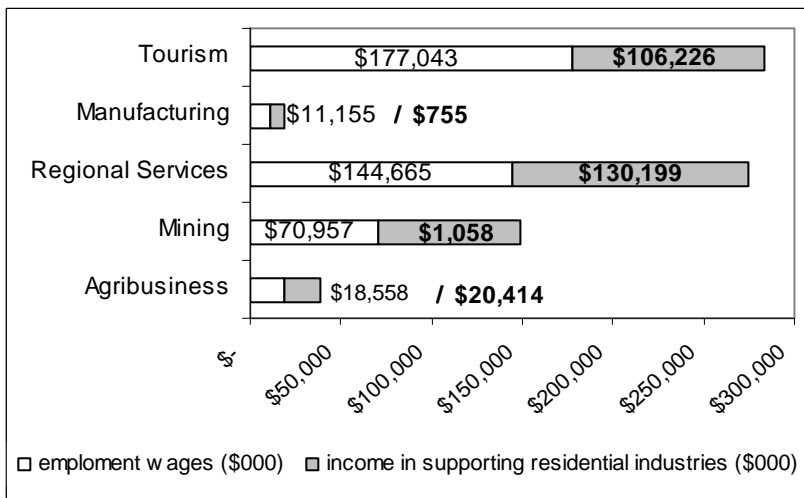
RIMS II Economic Model

In the 1970's, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) of the U.S. Dept. of Commerce developed a regional model for the United States known as the Regional Industrial Multiplier System (RIMS). The model was developed so that the regional effects of policy changes could be evaluated. In 1986, this model was refined and renamed the Regional Input-Output Modeling System, known as RIMS II. This model evaluates regional impacts across the country and is the best-known and most widely applied forecasting model for assessing economic impacts.

Using a series of multipliers provided by the Colorado Demography Section, we can look at the base industry jobs and job income in our local area in 2005, and see how many supporting jobs and income from those jobs are associated. We can also measure the relative strength of our base industries, as shown below.



In La Plata County we see that tourism provides the most direct base jobs (those that bring in money from outside the area) and supporting jobs and job income (indirect base).



Sustainable economies should be diverse and balanced, so that if one industry declines it doesn't drastically affect the entire local economy.

La Plata County lacks this diversity thus far.

Total Personal Income

In addition to employment income, money enters the local economy from other sources. Total Personal Income (TPI) is the sum of all personal income that flows into the county. The following chart examines the components of TPI and how the proportions of this income have changed over time.



Transfer payments consist primarily of retirement and disability benefit payments, medical payments (i.e. Medicare and Medicaid), income maintenance benefits, unemployment insurance, veteran's benefits and payments to nonprofit institutions.



Dividend income is income that is paid in cash or other assets to stockholders by corporations in the U.S. or abroad. Interest income consists of monies received from money market mutual funds and interest from other sources. Rental income consists of income from the rental of real property, the net income of owner - occupants of non-farm dwellings, and the royalties received from patents, copyrights, and from the rights to natural resources.



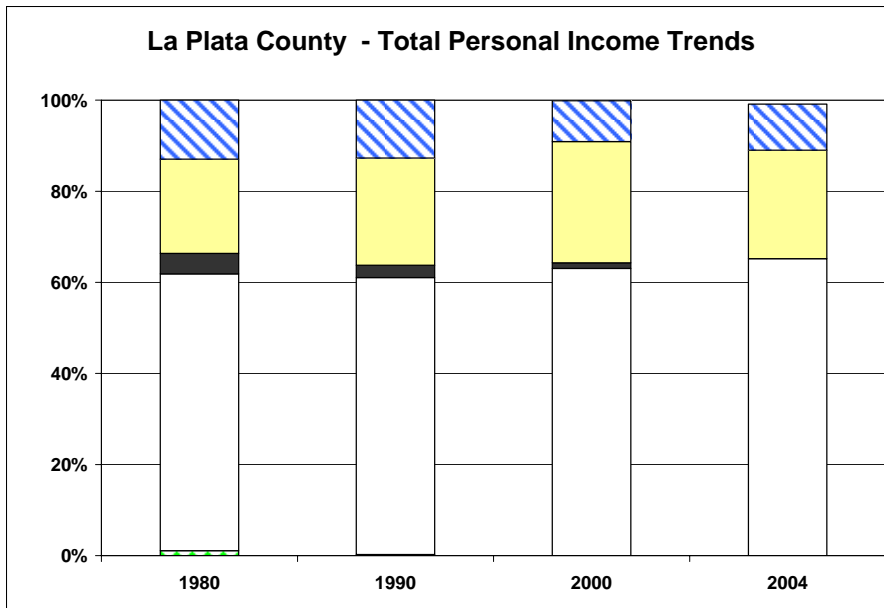
Residency adjustments are made when a person receives income for work performed and paid for from outside their place of residency, (i.e. commuters). Negative numbers mean that more people were coming into the county for work than were commuting out.



Non-Farm earnings are derived from (non-agricultural) employment within the region.



Farm earnings are from agriculture production within the region (farming, ranching).



Generally, we see a trend of increasing non-farm employment income, and increasing income from dividends, interest and rent, and transfer payments.

The negative (-1%) residency adjustment indicates that more people were commuting into the county for employment than were commuting out for employment.

Residency adjustments illustrate how the economy of each county is tied to others as people commute to where the jobs are, but take their paychecks home. For more information regarding commuter patterns go to <http://dola.colorado.gov/demog/WorkerFlow.cfm>.

In 2004 La Plata County had a TPI of \$1,486,584,000, including: transfer payments of \$152,976,000 (10%); dividends, interest and rent income of \$360,320,000 (24%); residency adjustments of - \$9001,000 (-1%); non-farm earnings of \$986,279,000 (66%); and farm earnings of -\$3,990,000 (-0.3%). Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Estimated 2005 Total Personal Income (\$000)		% of Total
Employment Earnings	\$ 1,187,126	70%
Residency Adjustment	\$ (9,419)	-1%
Dividends, Interest & Rent	\$ 358,413	21%
Transfer Payments	\$ 162,630	10%
Estimated TPI	\$ 1,698,750	100%

Source: Colorado Demography Section 11/06

The Colorado Demography Section also provides estimates for TPI in 2005.

Payments to retirees account for almost 13% of the estimated TPI in La Plata County in 2005.

Per Capita Income (PCI)

Total personal income divided by the total number of residents in the county gives us an estimate of per capita income (PCI).

	Per Capita Income					% change
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2003-2004
La Plata	27,408	28,500	28,363	29,699	31,887	7.4%
Colorado	33,370	34,491	34,228	34,561	36,113	4.5%
USA	29,845	30,575	30,804	31,472	33,050	5.0%

La Plata County PCI estimates are lower than state and national levels, though they are rising.

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

*Not adjusted for inflation

Employment Sector Trends 1980 - 2005

An employment "sector" groups jobs into categories that are alike and allows us to measure the relative strength of that industry in the local economy. Using "trend analysis" we can see how those industries have grown or declined within a specific timeframe.

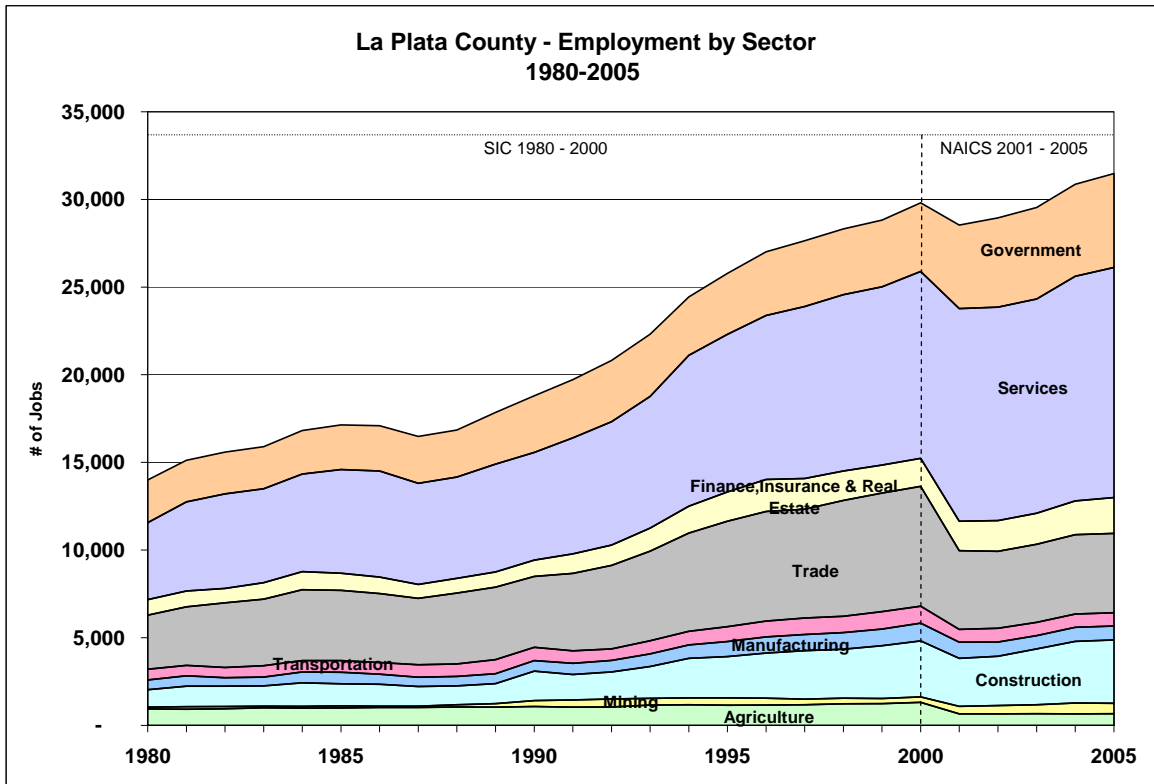
SIC Divisions (1980 - 2000)	NAICS Sectors (2001 - 2005)
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting
Mining	Mining Utilities
Construction	Construction
Manufacturing	Manufacturing
Transportation, Communications & Public Utilities (Utilities are now included in the Mining Sector)	Transportation & Warehousing
Wholesale & Retail Trade	Wholesale Trade Retail Trade (used to include Eating & Drinking Sector)
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	Finance and Insurance Real Estate, Rental & Leasing
Services	Information Professional, Scientific & Technical Services Management of Companies & Enterprises Administrative Support, Waste Management, Remediation Services Educational Services Healthcare & Social Assistance Accommodations (Lodging) Food Services (Eating & Drinking) Arts, Entertainment & Recreation Other Services (except Public Administration)
Government	Government (Including Public Administration)

The classifications presented below reflect the Standard Industrial Code (SIC) job classifications used from 1980 to 2001. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) replaced the (SIC) system. We will introduce the new system using local data from 2001 to 2005.

NAICS groups the economy into 20 broad sectors,

instead of the 10 divisions of the SIC system. NAICS was developed jointly by the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to compare business activity across North America.

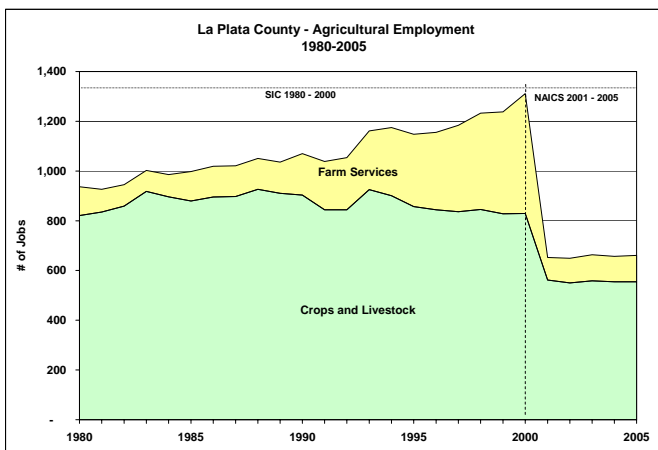
The primary differences between the two classification systems is that the mining sector now includes utilities; eating and drinking (food services) have been moved from retail trade to the service sector; and the service sector includes new categories. While it is difficult to show these changes in our trend analyses, we hope that you will bear with us as we attempt to integrate the differences.



When we compare job growth from 2001 to 2005 using the NAICS system, we see that the most growth has been in mining and utilities and construction sectors. There have also been declines in some job sectors since 2001, namely in manufacturing and wholesale trade. The dip in 2002 probably reflects repercussions of the widespread drought, local wildfires and impacts to the national economy from the terrorist attacks of 9/11/01.

Job Growth using NAICS Classifications						% change 01 - 05
La Plata County	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Agriculture	652	649	663	656	658	1%
Mining & Utilities	440	489	521	614	598	36%
Construction	2,732	2,805	3,170	3,523	3,556	30%
Manufacturing	925	812	765	799	781	-16%
Transportation & Warehousing	735	789	761	759	755	3%
Retail Trade	3,813	3,752	3,784	3,859	3,846	1%
Wholesale Trade	665	637	657	669	642	-3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,691	1,750	1,779	1,929	2,001	18%
Services	12,125	12,169	12,224	12,814	12,974	7%
Government	4,758	5,101	5,223	5,241	5,350	12%
Total Employment	28,536	28,952	29,547	30,863	31,161	9%

To fully understand the ups and downs of each sector, we need to look at them in greater detail. In the following pages each of these sectors is broken into subgroups for further definition of job type. Remember that the closure of even one business may appear to create dramatic "ups and downs" within sectors in the following charts. Be sure to notice the scale of the numbers of jobs. Differences can also arise from reclassification of jobs within a business over time.



While employment and earnings are traditionally used to measure the “strength” of an industry, there are some drawbacks with using employment data to measure the agricultural sector. Employment and earnings in non-agricultural sectors are derived from unemployment compensation reports of average wages and employment, which is supplemented by the sampling of tax returns to estimate proprietor employment and income. Family operated farms and ranches are not required to file unemployment compensation reports, and it is very difficult to accurately estimate earnings

from limited sampling of income tax returns. For example, there was about \$2,628,000 reported in farm services income in the county in 2005, but a net loss of -\$3,985,000 in crop and livestock production, resulting in a negative income of -\$1,357,000.

In light of the shortcomings described above, we see that the agricultural sector had fairly steady growth till about 2000, with sharp declines in 2001. This may be due, in part, to job reclassifications.

To provide a more accurate picture of the agricultural sector there is currently a state-wide effort to expand agricultural industry analysis by linking production to other segments of the economy that directly and indirectly support agriculture. These industries are known as *agribusiness*, and include services such as processing food products, trucking, storage, sales of farm equipment and supplies; as well as impacts on credit institutions and commodity brokers.

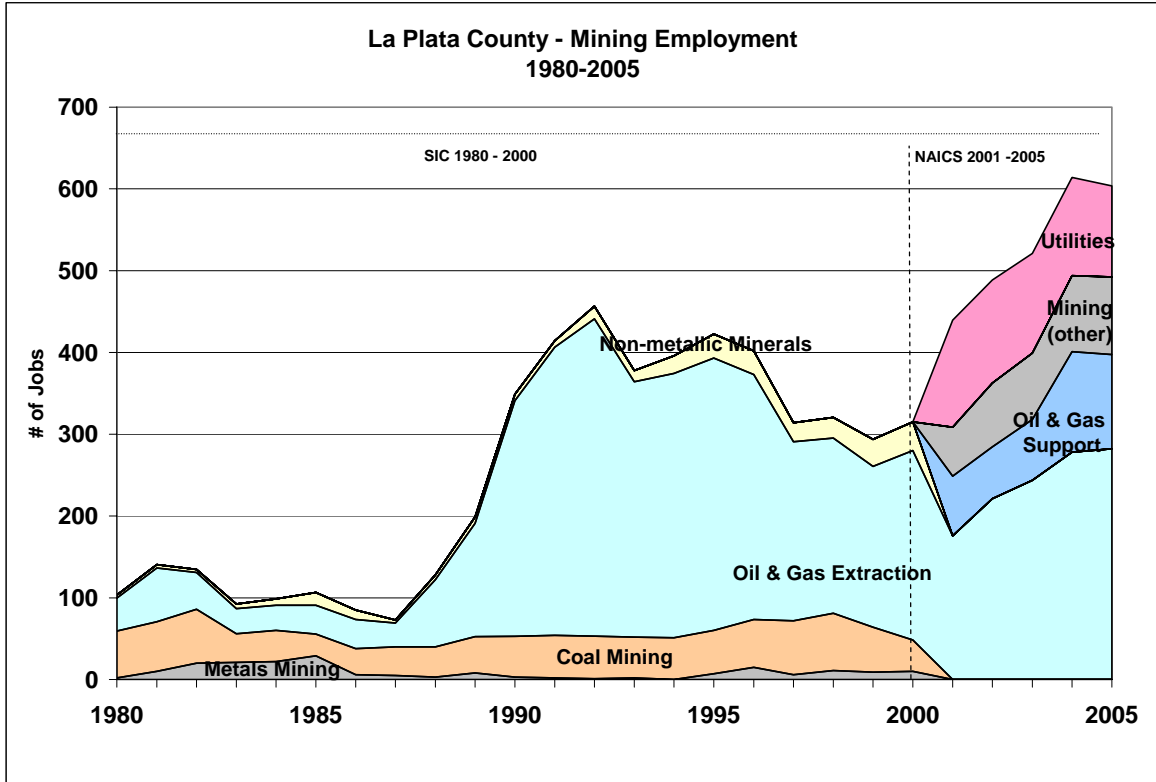
Components of Agribusiness La Plata County 2005	Number of Jobs	Job Income \$(000)
Agriculture-Crops & Livestock	543	\$ (3,905)
Agriculture-Farm Services	104	\$ 2,628
Agribusiness Transportation	20	\$ 714
Ag related Warehousing and Storage	6	\$ 314
Manufacturing-Food & Beverage Products	255	\$ 8,651
Wholesale Trade-Agricultural Inputs	100	\$ 3,535
Wholesale Trade-Agricultural Processing	146	\$ 5,446
Monetary Authorities and Credit Intermediation	16	\$ 818
Securities, Commodity Contracts and Investments	3	\$ 357
Total	1,192	\$ 18,559

Measure	La Plata			% Change 92 - 02
	1992	1997	2002	
# of Farms	508	832	923	82%
Land in Farms	587,339	580,165	562,664	-4%
Cropland Acres Harvested	44,460	41,616	34,820	-22%
Average Size of Farms (acres)	828	610	685	-17%
Average Age of Farmer	53.5	54.2	54.9	2.6%

Source: Census of Agriculture www.nass.usda.gov/co

One of the most important sources of agricultural data is the **Census of Agriculture**, which takes place every 5 years (most recently 2002). Overall, a comparison of selected characteristics from 1992 to 2002 shows an increase

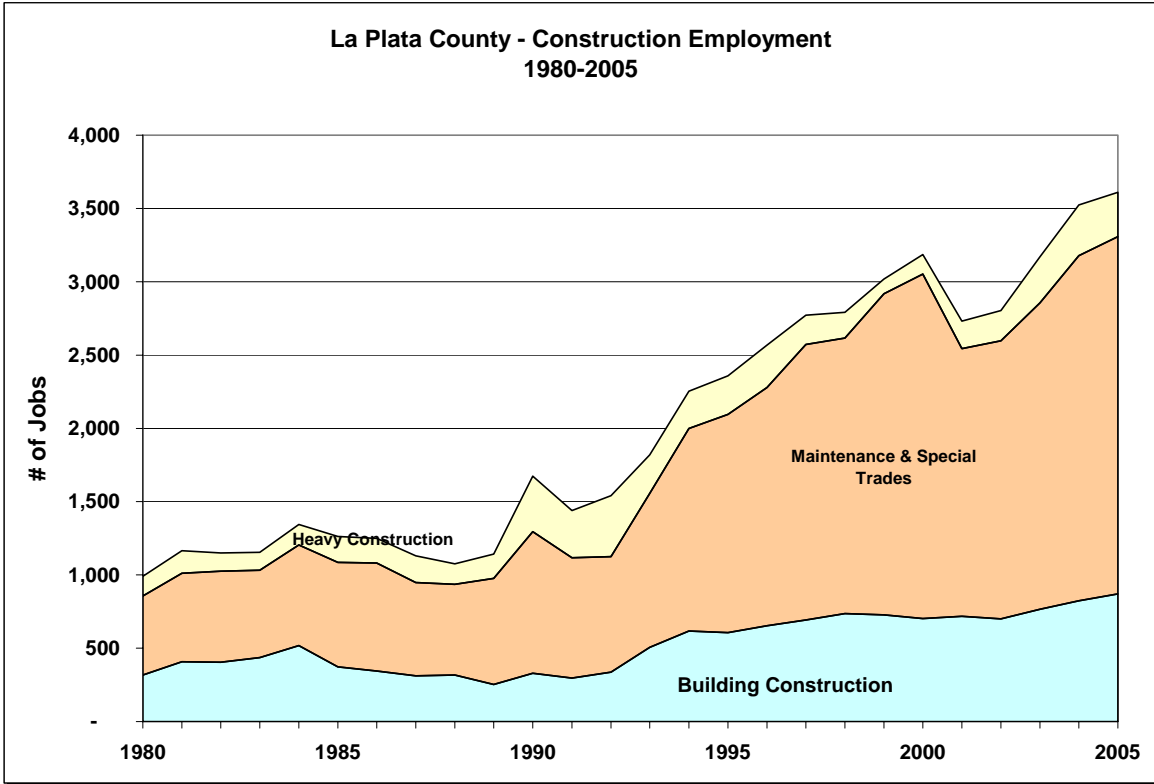
in the numbers of farms, and a decrease in the size of farms. This may be the result of County subdivision rules in which 35 acres were the smallest portion allowable. Many of these 35 acre tracts remain classified as agricultural lands since land owners report some agricultural activities (agricultural lands are taxed at a lower rate than residential properties). It may also be more economically viable to focus resources on smaller, more productive acreages – depending on the crop. The age of farmers in our area remained fairly constant during this time period.



Utilities have been moved from the transportation sector to the mining sector in the NAICS system and have been declining since 2001. Coal mining, once an important source of employment, pretty much vanished by 2001 (or has been moved to the other mining category). Oil and gas extraction sees periodic booms and busts, dependant upon the national and global economy. Oil & gas extraction support is also a new category in NAICS. Other types of mining, such as gravels and other non-metallic minerals, becomes an important source of employment as La Plata County rides the development boom of the 1990s and beyond.

Although the numbers of jobs in the mining sector are relatively low, average annual income in the mining sector was \$115,247 in 2005, the highest wages of all sectors in the local economy. About 16% of employment in the industry is through proprietors (owners).

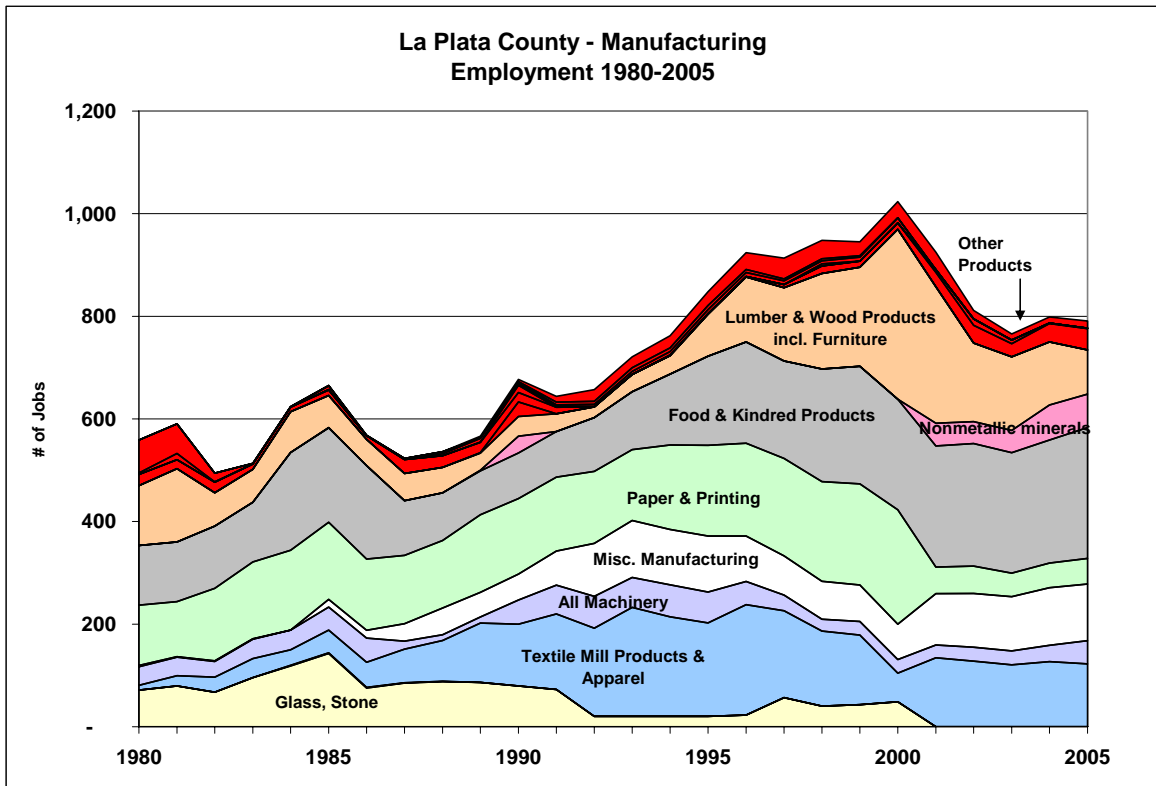
Mining & Utilities Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Oil and gas extraction	176	221	244	278	278	58%
Mining (other)	60	78	81	93	97	62%
Oil and gas extraction support	73	64	74	123	112	54%
Utilities	131	126	122	120	111	-15%
Total	440	489	521	614	598	36%



In the 1990s there was substantial growth in the construction sector, supporting rapid population growth, and providing housing for 2nd homeowners who are buying land, building new homes, and taking advantage of the quality of life found in SW Colorado, also known as "amenity migration". A study conducted by Region 9 found that 29% of property in La Plata County was owned by non-locals in 2005. A substantial number (681) of construction jobs, and \$30,704,000 in employment income are attributed to the building of 2nd homes in 2005, according to a base analysis provided by the state. This sector continues to see strong employment growth from 2001 to 2005.

Average annual income in this sector was \$45,593 in 2005. About 29% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

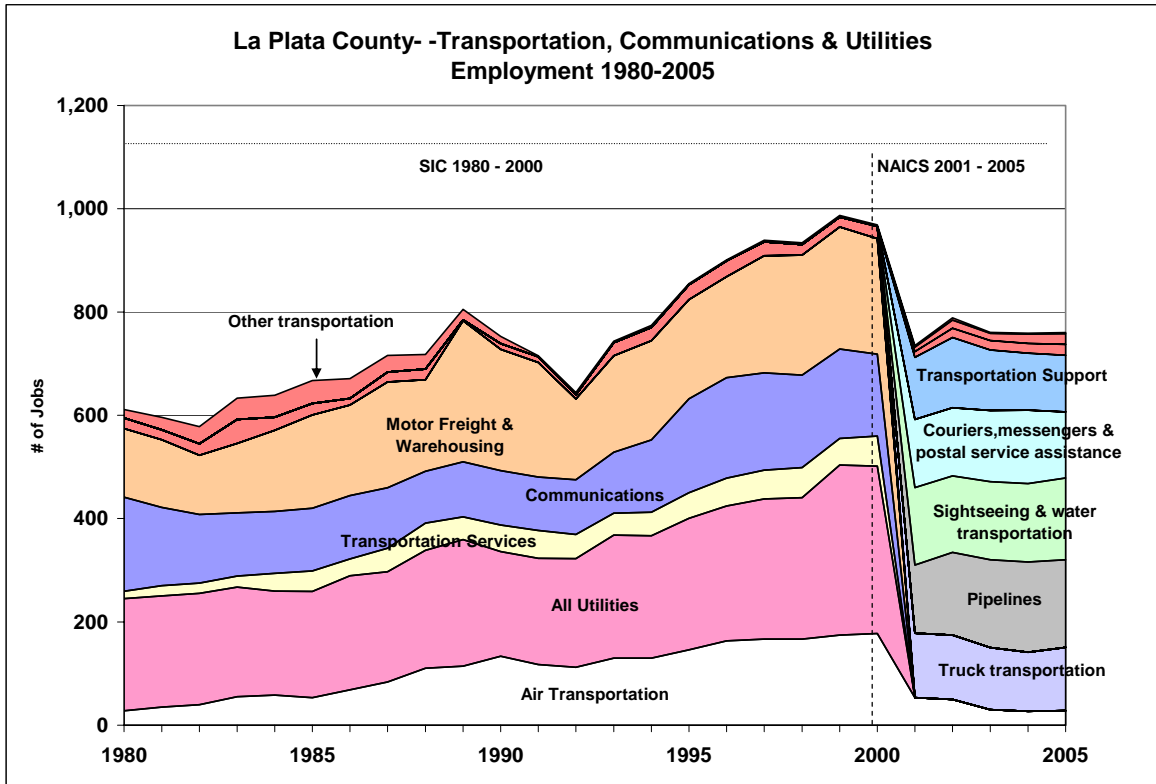
Construction Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Construction of buildings	718	700	766	824	853	19%
Heavy Equipment and civil engineering construction	188	207	314	345	301	60%
Special trade contractors	1,826	1,897	2,090	2,354	2,403	32%
Total	2,732	2,805	3,170	3,523	3,557	30%



Many jobs in the printing industry (i.e. publishing) have been moved into the Information segment of the service sector in NAICS. Lumber and wood products has fluctuated but is still going strong in 2005. Stone, clay and glass emerged as a strong segment in the mid 90's, but dropped out of the local economy in recent years. Growth industries include machinery manufacturing and nonmetallic mineral production. Overall, there has been about a -16% decline since 2001.

Average annual income in this sector was \$28,182 in 2005. About 24% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

Manufacturing Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Food and Kindred Products	236	239	235	240	255	8%
Textile mills and product, apparel, leather	134	128	121	127	117	-13%
Lumber and Wood Products incl. Furniture	266	153	143	123	85	-68%
All Paper Printing	52	53	46	48	50	-4%
Nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing	44	43	43	68	64	45%
Primary and Fabricated Metals	28	35	25	36	41	45%
All Machinery Manufacturing	25	27	27	32	45	80%
Transportation Equipment	34	17	12	12	14	-59%
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	100	105	106	112	109	9%
Computer and Electrical Equipment Manufacturing	5	12	7	1	1	-80%
Total	925	812	765	799	781	-16%

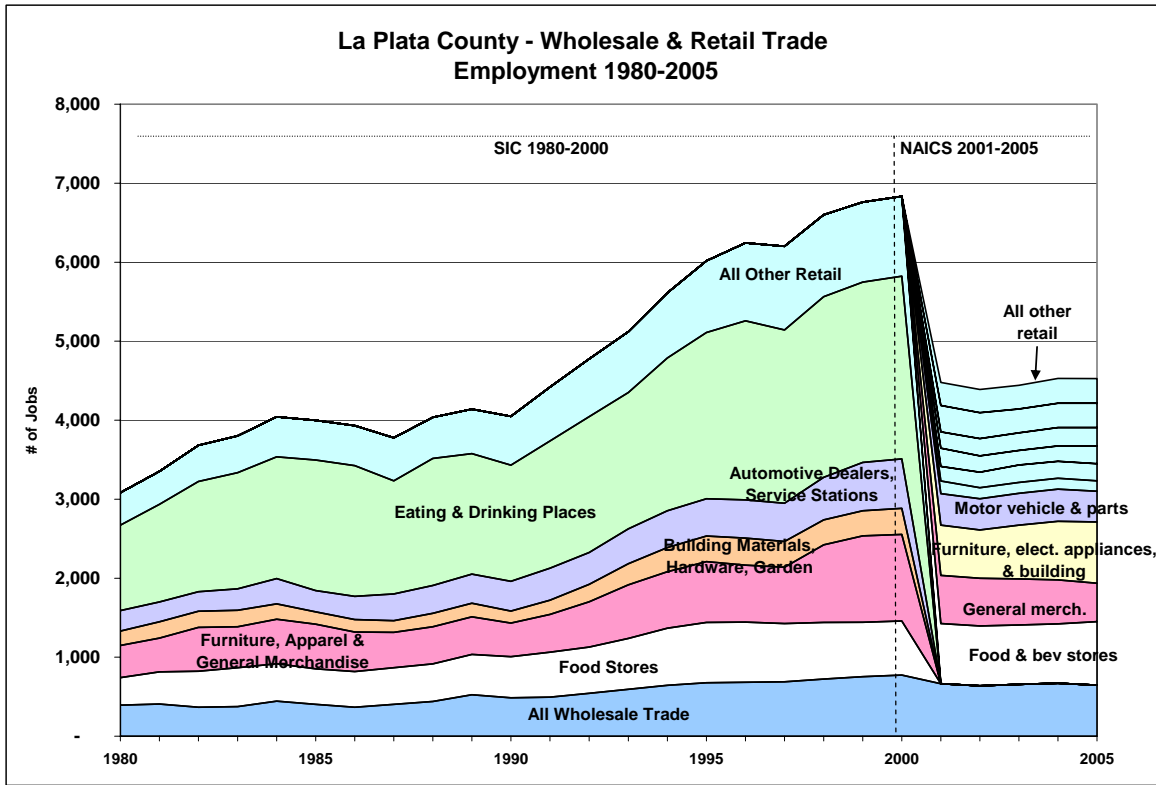


Utilities were moved to the mining sector under the NAICS system in 2000, and many other jobs were reclassified into new categories. The communications segment of this industry is now included in Information, in the Service sector. Thus the rapid decline of this sector in 2000 probably does not necessarily reflect job losses. Overall, we see 3% growth in the sector from 2001 to 2005.

Average annual income in this sector was \$53,800 in 2005. About 14% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

Transportation & Communication Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Air transportation	53	50	30	27	28	-47%
Rail transportation	3	4	2	2	2	-33%
Truck transportation	125	125	120	114	121	-3%
Support for transportation	120	136	117	110	107	-11%
Transit and ground passenger transportation	11	18	18	19	21	91%
Pipeline transportation	132	160	170	175	170	29%
Scenic, sightseeing, and water transportation	150	148	151	152	158	5%
Couriers and messengers and postal service assistance	132	132	138	142	127	-3%
Warehousing and storage	9	16	14	18	21	133%
Total	735	789	761	759	755	3%

NAICS redefines the boundaries between Retail and Wholesale Trade. The new NAICS definition emphasizes what the establishment does, rather than to whom it sells. The SIC system defined retailers as those establishments that sold primarily to consumers while wholesalers were those establishments that sold primarily to business customers.



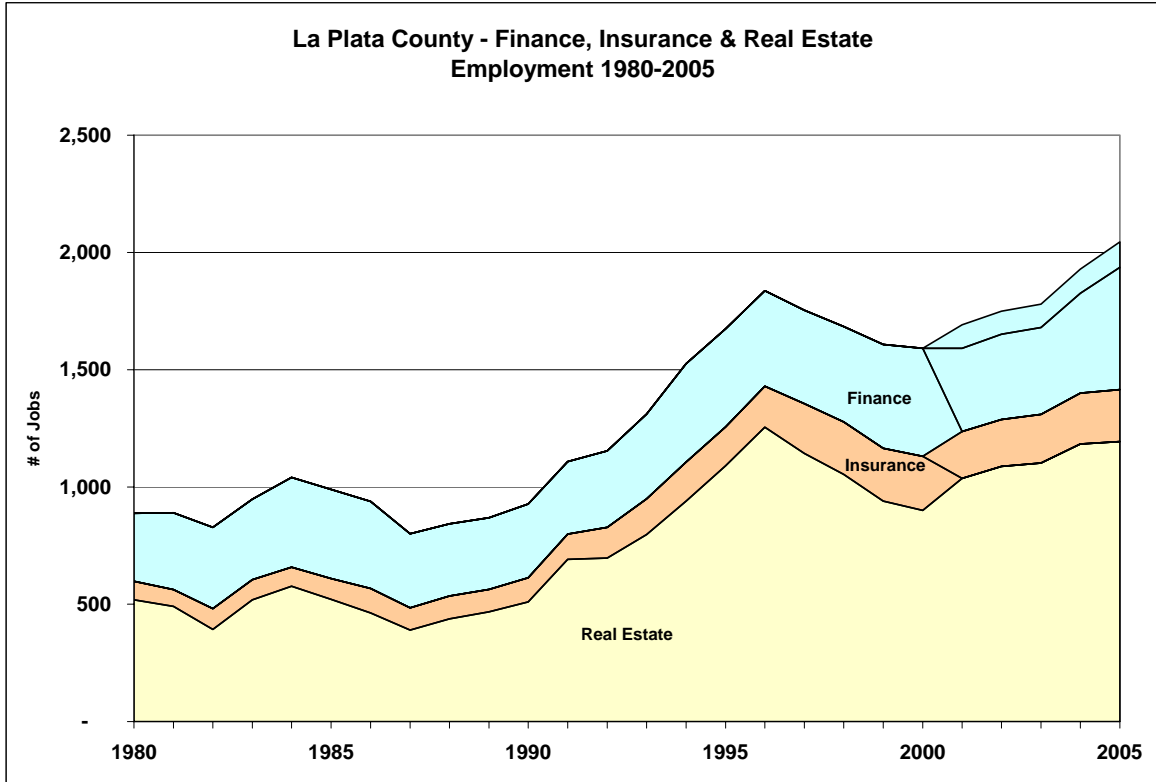
The trade sector changed dramatically under the NAICS system. The primary difference is the removal of restaurants from retail trade. Restaurants are now combined with accommodations to form a new sector in NAICS, Accommodation and Food Services. In addition, many of the general groups have been split into finer detail, so it is difficult to compare trends in the various retail sectors. When we consider the newly defined sectors, however, we see a 1% increase from 2001 to 2005.

Average annual income in retail trade was \$26,654, in wholesale trade it was \$46,757 in 2005. About 16% of those employed in retail trade are proprietors (owners); for wholesale trade this figure is lower at 13%.

Wholesale & Retail Trade Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Wholesale	665	637	657	669	642	-3%
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	399	394	405	406	386	-3%
Furniture, electronics, appliances, building materials	634	612	679	742	770	21%
Food and beverage stores	761	757	752	752	791	4%
Health and personal care stores	162	140	138	137	131	-19%
Gasoline stations	185	197	221	216	215	16%
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	229	208	182	195	225	-2%
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	291	292	297	314	310	6%
General merchandise stores	610	605	581	557	489	-20%
Miscellaneous store retailers	335	329	303	307	304	-9%
Nonstore retailers	207	218	224	233	225	8%
Total	4,478	4,389	4,440	4,528	4,488	0%

For more information on retail sales, visit the Region 9 website at www.scan.org to see an updated report (2006) on *Retail Data for Decision Makers*. This report uses retail sales data to provide insights for decision making regarding business expansion, relocation, marketing, government finance, and community development. County-wide many of the retail sectors are strong (exceeding their sales potential), particularly those sectors that benefit from tourism and the large number of seasonal residents, many of which own 2nd homes in the area.

La Plata County Retail Trade Sectors 2005	Estimated # of Firms	Average Sales per Firm	Actual Sales	Percent of Actual Sales
Electronics/Appliances	17	705,882	\$ 12,000,000	2%
Health Care Products	9	\$ 1,331,778	\$ 11,986,000	2%
Furniture, etc.	37	\$ 445,676	\$ 16,490,000	2%
Clothing	58	\$ 355,397	\$ 20,613,000	3%
Motor Vehicles/Parts	40	\$ 3,475,125	\$ 139,005,000	20%
Food/Bev Stores	54	\$ 1,954,407	\$ 105,538,000	15%
Misc Retail Stores	78	\$ 425,436	\$ 33,184,000	5%
General Merchandisers	24	\$ 5,483,083	\$ 131,594,000	19%
Sport/Hobby Shops	58	\$ 653,345	\$ 37,894,000	5%
Bldg Materials/Gard	34	\$ 2,435,118	\$ 82,794,000	12%
Gas Stations	19	\$ 4,348,947	\$ 82,630,000	12%
Non-store outlets	102	\$ 245,078	\$ 24,998,000	4%
Total	530	\$ 1,318,351	\$ 698,726,000	100%



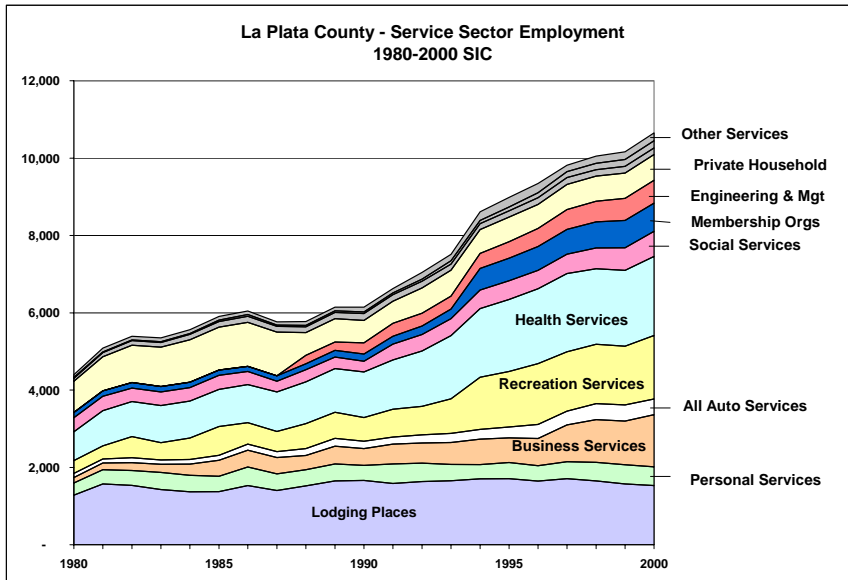
The large numbers employed in the real estate sector may reflect the way jobs are reported, (i.e. all employees of a resort area).

In the 1990s there was substantial growth in the real estate sector, supporting rapid population growth, and providing housing for 2nd homeowners who are buying land, building new homes, and taking advantage of the quality of life found in SW Colorado, also known as "amenity migration". A study conducted by Region 9 found that 29% of property in La Plata County was owned by non-locals in 2005. A substantial number (578) of jobs, and \$23,298,000 in employment income are attributed to the building of 2nd homes in 2005, according to a base analysis provided by the state. This sector continues to see strong employment growth from 2001 to 2005, especially in the finance sectors.

Average annual income in this sector was \$48,797 in 2005. About 41% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

Finance, Insurance & Real Estate Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Monetary authorities and credit intermediation	354	363	370	425	520	47%
Securities, commodity contracts and investments	100	99	100	103	106	6%
Insurance carriers, funds, trusts, and other	200	200	208	218	219	9%
Real estate	1,037	1,088	1,102	1,183	1,156	11%
Total	1,691	1,750	1,779	1,929	2,001	18%

The service sector is the largest single segment of all sectors in the local economy, accounting for 38% of total employment. For historical perspective we have included the SIC system showing trends from 1980 to 2000. The new categories of services under the NAICS system are grouped into separate charts for 2001 to 2005.



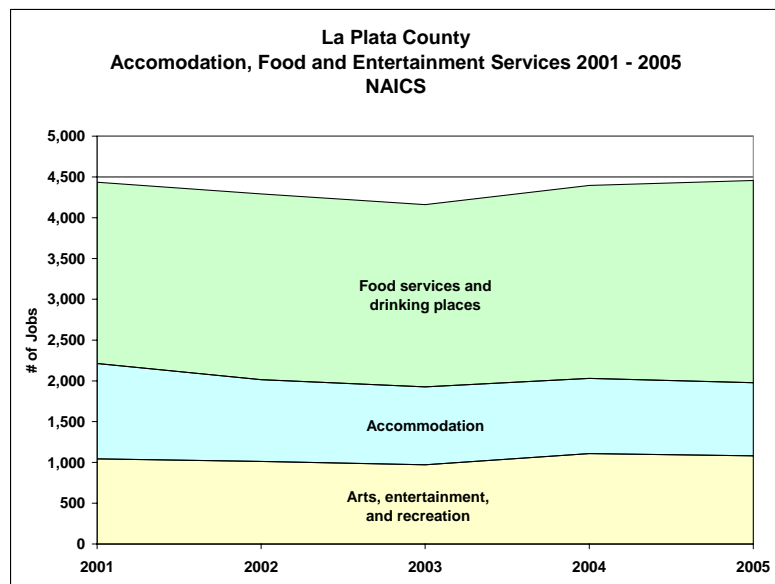
The service sector is the largest employment sector in La Plata County.

The appearance of engineering and management services reflects a new element in the local economy.

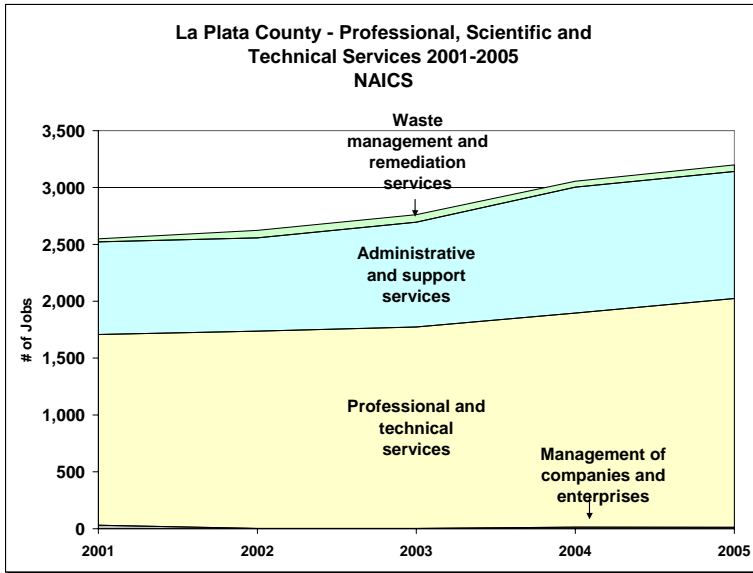
Membership organizations include members of the Southern Ute Tribe.

The service sector has undergone a transformation under the NAICS system. The primary difference is that food services (previously included in SIC Retail Trade - eating and drinking), is now in the service sector, and linked with accommodations and entertainment.

Average annual income in the accommodation and food services sector was \$16,804 in 2005. For recreation it was \$21,504.



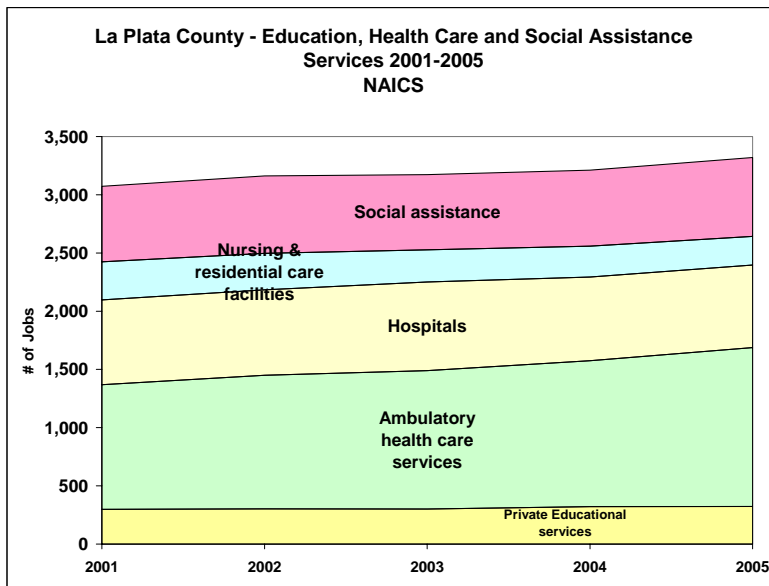
Accomodation, Food & Entertainment Service Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1,044	1,013	971	1,108	1,062	2%
Accommodation	1,170	1,002	957	922	895	-24%
Food services and drinking places	2,221	2,278	2,234	2,367	2,479	12%
Total	4,435	4,294	4,162	4,397	4,436	0%



Average annual income in this sector was \$41,306 in 2005.

About 37% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

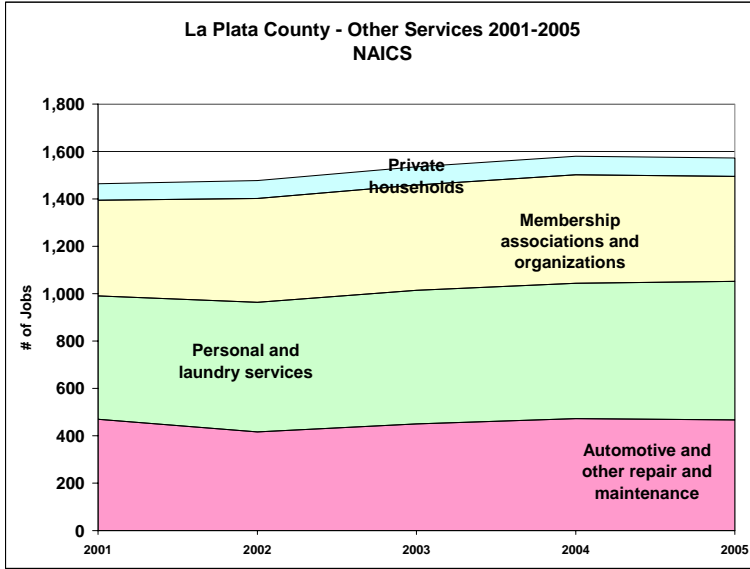
Professional, Scientific and Technical Service Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Professional and technical services	1,677	1,735	1,770	1,880	2,523	50%
Management of companies and enterprises	30	2	3	15	13	-57%
Administrative and support services	814	821	922	1,108	542	-33%
Waste management and remediation services	28	65	66	52	58	112%
Total	2,549	2,623	2,761	3,055	3,136	23%



Average annual income in this sector was \$42,860 in 2005.

About 15% those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

Education, Health and Social Assistance Service Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Private educational services	298	303	301	321	316	6%
Ambulatory health care services	1,071	1,147	1,189	1,254	1,349	26%
Hospitals	728	734	762	719	710	-2%
Nursing and residential care facilities	327	314	276	265	246	-25%
Social assistance	650	665	646	652	674	4%
Total	3,074	3,163	3,173	3,211	3,295	7%

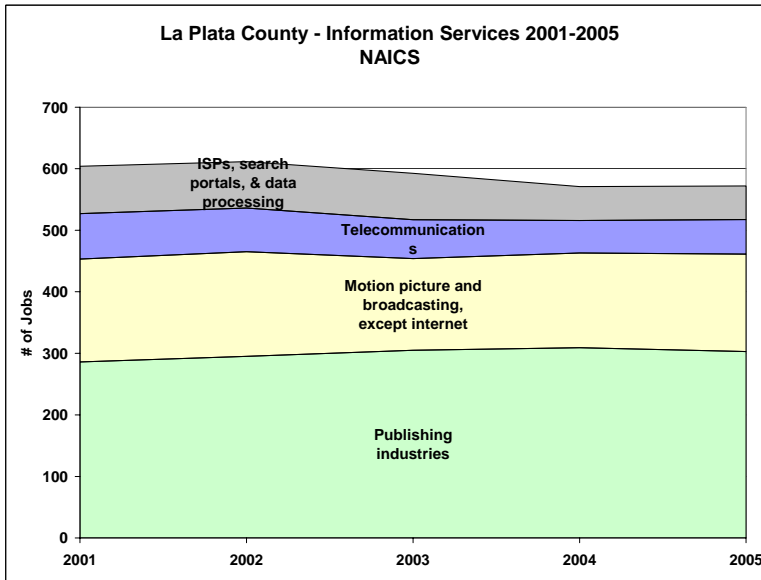


This is a growing service sector, showing 7% growth from 2001 to 2005.

Membership organizations include unions, chambers of commerce, business and fraternal organizations, humane societies, and in La Plata County, the Southern Ute Tribe.

Average annual income in this sector was \$22,230 in 2005. About 41% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

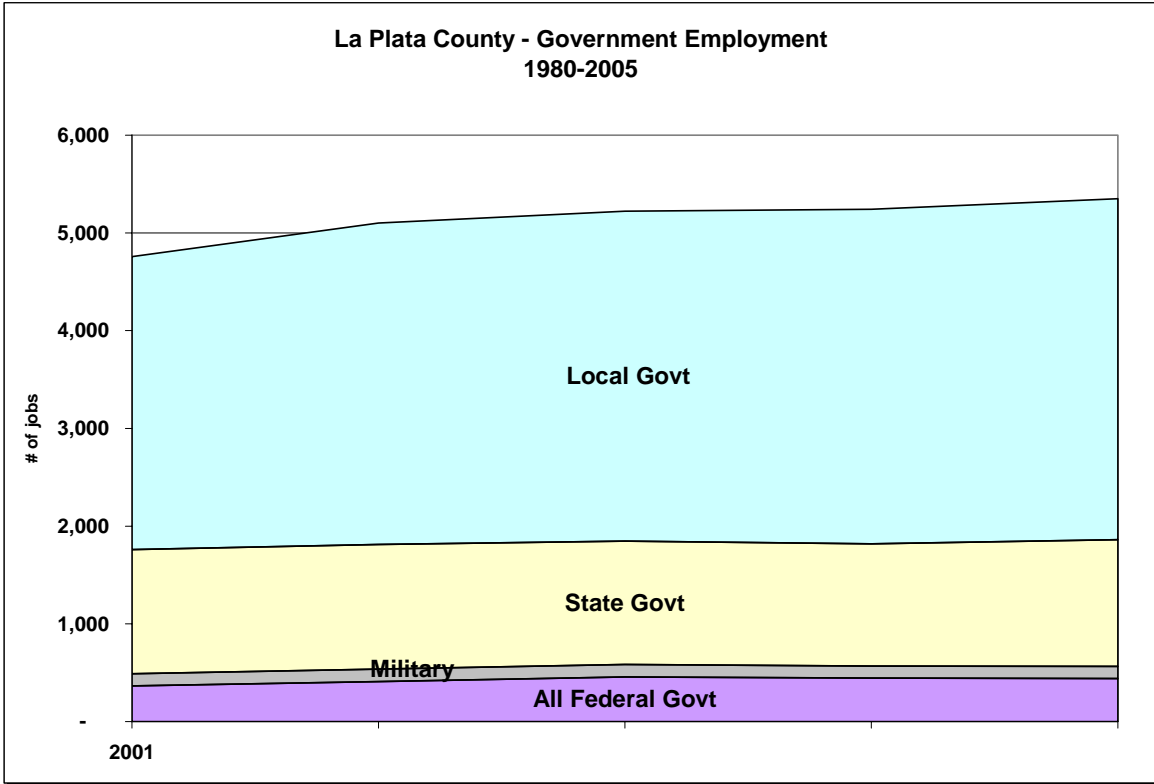
Other Services Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Automotive and other repair and maintenance	470	416	450	472	455	-3%
Personal and laundry services	521	548	564	572	565	9%
Membership associations and organizations	404	438	445	458	441	9%
Private households	70	76	77	78	78	11%
Total	1464	1,218	1,501	1,580	1,539	5%



Perhaps the most important change in NAICS is the recognition of a new Information sector. This sector includes establishments that create, disseminate, or provide the means to distribute information, and establishments that provide data processing services. Since most of these categories are drawn from services, we are including them in this discussion of the service sector. Average annual income in this sector was \$51,076 in 2005.

About 11% of those employed in this sector are proprietors (owners).

Information Service Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Publishing industries	286	295	305	309	132	-54%
Motion picture and broadcasting, except internet	167	170	149	154	157	-6%
Software publishing	74	71	63	53	171	131%
ISPs, search portals, and data processing	77	76	75	55	52	-32%
Other Telecommunications	0	0	0	0	56	
Total	604	612	593	571	568	-6%



Government employment, particularly local government, increases in response to growing population and management needs.

The average yearly income in 2005 was \$46,645.

Government Sectors	# of Jobs					% change 01 - 05
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
Federal government	364	409	456	444	440	21%
Military	125	128	129	124	124	-1%
State government	1,272	1,276	1,261	1,252	1,297	2%
Local government	2,997	3,288	3,377	3,421	3,489	16%
Total	4,758	5,101	5,223	5,241	5,350	12%

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statement

A vision statement must encompass a shared vision - one that is a broad but concise description of what we as a community want to be in the future in regards to economic development. The vision statement describes the assets and values and focuses on moving the community toward achieving our goals for the future. Through a recent community visioning process and volunteer effort, the following vision was created for La Plata County:

“A healthy community that invests in sustainable systems while pursuing local economic development and environmental stewardship for the benefit of future generations who will call this place home.”

Mission Statement

If the vision sets the direction for our community and its organizations, then the mission statement should clarify the purpose and function for our community and its organizations in relation to economic development. It is the filter that we use to ensure everything we do is focused on achieving the vision. The economic development mission for La Plata County is the following:

“To educate, advocate, and oversee the implementation of ongoing economic development in La Plata County, that achieves a community vision of overall prosperity and a sustainable quality of life.”

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis

The starting point for a credible economic development strategic plan is an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the county. This is the baseline by which a community begins to understand where they are in relation to their vision. Once the SWOT analysis is completed, strategies for solutions can be identified. By working with the La Plata County community, the following was identified:

Strengths

- La Plata County’s visibility on the statewide and national levels in terms of quality of life (e.g. abundance of recreation, scenic beauty, small-town living)
- Current oil and gas development keeping property taxes low
- Scenic and vast public lands and resources
- Highly educated workforce

Weaknesses

- Increasing reliance on tourism and amenity migration sectors
- Lack of livable wage jobs and diversification of the economy
- Growth and the county’s ability to “keep up” with resulting infrastructure demands
- Loss of open space and a decline in the agriculture sector
- Lack of telecommunications infrastructure in the outlying areas
- Identification of and cost of land for commercial, and business recruitment and/or expansion
- Improvement of workforce to meet business and community needs

Opportunities

- Geographic proximity that serves as a regional “hub”
- Healthy lifestyles
- Development of telecommuter businesses
- Widely diverse, well-educated population contributing to sustainability and growth of anchor businesses and institutions in the community in areas such as education, health care, higher education, agriculture, etc.
- Continuous stream of college graduates who would like to stay in the area

Threats

- Future decline of oil and gas development
- Funding cuts in higher education, transportation, public health and human service programs
- Aging population
- Natural Resource Management
- Drought and other natural disasters
- National Healthcare crisis

Key Economic Development Directions

- 1) Forge collaborative relationships and increase governmental cooperation dealing with intra-county growth issues.
- 2) Work with Region 9 to explore developing a regional government organization.
- 3) Direct growth in “hub” areas (e.g. Bayfield).
- 4) Increase efforts to facilitate and promote affordable housing.
- 5) Develop telecommunications infrastructure, and the services and training that will be needed for technological advances.
- 6) Improve local capacities and leadership to strengthen agriculture sector by promoting agribusiness, and implementing value-added and niche marketing strategies for farmers and ranchers to make a viable living.
- 7) Identify and lobby for critical road improvements to keep pace with growth.
- 8) Improve air travel including cost, services, airport improvements, and capitalize on opportunities for regional cooperation (e.g. buying power).
- 9) Ensure that the current level of health care services is maintained.
- 10) Ensure the well-being of all “vulnerable” populations.
- 11) Strengthen the network of support services to help families deal with economic challenges.
- 12) Determine strategies and funding for a new light industrial and commercial center.
- 13) Maintain tourism base with focus on the developing the “shoulder seasons”. Ensure continued solvency and viability of major employers.

- 14) Conduct formal target industries study and develop strategy to attract and grow desirable business.
- 15) Promote Region 9 and Fort Lewis College Center for Entrepreneurship Growth Company Initiative.
- 16) Continue to develop the vibrant arts and cultural attractions and organizations for tourists as well as existing and future residents.
- 17) Incorporate results of community visioning process that provided visions for healthy community, sustainable systems, economic self-reliance, and environmental stewardship.

Goals, Action & Implementation

Ideally, the goals of a community should reflect its vision statement. A goal is a specific statement of what the community would like to be or achieve. Goals should be focused on the priority issues impacting the development of the community. The actions should then reflect the steps needed to accomplish the goal. Through utilizing the work done by the La Plata County Economic Development Action Partnership, the Community Visioning Council and the La Plata County Community Summit, the following goals and actions have been established for La Plata County:

Goal 1: Achieve a diversified, sustainable and growing economy in La Plata County that is compatible with the local environment and small town atmosphere.

Actions:

1. Work with partners in the community to create economic indicators, and meet annually to review and develop strategy plans for the county's economic development direction.
2. Determine what industries will diversify the economy, provide higher direct based, livable wages, and are compatible with La Plata County.
3. Work with the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, town, and county to provide incentives to businesses that are direct based in nature, support the local environment, provide higher, livable wages, and fill needed niche markets in County.
4. Work with County to ensure the success and profitability of regional air service.
5. Support and recruit home-based businesses or home occupations that allow people to live and work from home. Telecommuting can produce many community benefits including new business opportunities, such as information technology development, reduced traffic congestion and reduced air pollution.
6. Support county initiatives that target and promote "green industry". Attract industries that preserve and enhance the county's natural and environmental features, whose processes require minimal water consumption and generate nominal ambient air or water degradation, and where applicable, recycle waste products.
7. Provide advocacy on projects that have significant economic benefits to the County.

8. Study the impacts of the 2nd homeowners, and determine what effect this will have on La Plata County's economy.

Goal 2: La Plata County contains a vibrant, growing, and sustainable tourism industry.

Actions:

1. Monitor the tourism-based businesses to ensure all tourist needs for products and services are met.
2. Work with partners in the community to create economic & marketing indicators for the tourism industry, and review and develop strategic plans. Measure and monitor current marketing efforts using these indicators to establish performance measures for the expenditure of public monies.
3. Support the arts organizations of La Plata County by providing mentoring and Technical assistance to ensure their success.
4. Grow and sustain the tourism industry by ensuring tourism-related land uses, and attracting, creating, or expanding tourism-related businesses, events and marketing.

Goal 3: Business mentoring and support will be available to expand and sustain local businesses.

Rationale – Fostering a business climate that helps retain & grow local businesses is crucial. Having the necessary training and mentoring programs to aid business owners increases the chances of ensuring local business owner success.

Actions:

1. Continue to work with the Small Business Development Center at Fort Lewis College to mentor local business owners, and offer opportunities for business trainings.
2. Expand local business networks and inform local business owners about business mentoring services being available, and the services Region 9 and LEAD offers.
3. Assess the needs of local business owners, and work to provide solutions.

Goal 4: A well-trained, skilled workforce will be available to support business employment needs.

Rationale –Providing a well-trained, skilled workforce is vital to any economy. Without the necessary educational and training facilities to train workers, it is very difficult for any business to succeed. Knowledge of available workforce, and the ability to find workers, is just as important.

Actions:

1. Work with the local public schools and the CO Workforce Center to provide on-the-job training opportunities for students in an effort to keep them in the county.

2. Work with the CO Workforce Center, local business owners, and education partners to identify training needs of employees, and support programs that offer the basic education, and life skills needed to secure gainful employment.
3. Make use of the Colorado First Training Program to aid in training employees of companies.

Goal 5: The necessary facilities and programs are available to meet the socio-cultural needs of the community.

Rationale – Socio-cultural needs are an important part of any community. Facilities such as affordable housing, recreational centers, health care centers, aged care facilities, childcare facilities, etc., are necessary to ensure a high quality of life in any community.

Actions:

1. Support opportunities for the Regional Housing Authority.
2. Work to promote solutions to area health care crisis.
3. Study the impacts of the aging population to ensure the proper services are available.
4. Support the creation of new activities & programs for youth where needed.

Goal 6: Adequate infrastructure, such as roads, water, electric, gas, Internet, telecom, etc; is ready and available for commercial use.

Actions:

1. Support LEAD in their efforts to target infrastructure improvements that increase the desirability of downtown as a tourist and shopping destination.
2. Identify potential grants for the purpose of promoting available infrastructure.
3. Support local businesses in their infrastructure needs by being a conduit with the utility companies, CDOT and other agencies to improve process time.
4. Support development of Business Park, located by Durango-La Plata Airport.
5. Provide support in the expansion of telecommunications, including fiber optic internet connections in rural areas of La Plata County, so that the capacity exists for future business developments.

Goal 7: Support the completion of all projects listed in the La Plata County Community Development Action Plan.

Rationale – The Community Development Action Plan (CDAP) is a list of short-term projects that may need assistance from Region 9 EDD or other community and economic development agencies. Maintaining a current Community Development Action Plan (CDAP) for each community is a process to assist communities with strategic planning.

Actions:

1. Work with Region 9 EDD, town and county to find the resources, technical assistance, and political will to complete CDAP projects.

Implementation Plan

Strategic planning is an on-going process. As the local economic development organization begins to work with other organizations, towns and county, it is clear that modifications and adjustments are necessary.

The ultimate success of any strategic plan depends on how well the organizations implement the various strategic actions. It is critical, therefore that a solid implementation plan be created to ensure the proper priorities are given to each task, and the suitable owners for each task are assigned. Only then will the vision begin to come to life.

For La Plata County, the La Plata County Economic Development Action Partnership (LEAD) along with Region 9 is charged with ensuring the completion of the plan. This will be done by coordinating, participating and/or overseeing the various committees and organizations working in each of the key areas.

LA PLATA COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
1. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES: Expand City of Durango Recycling Services	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango Recycling Center • San Juan Basin Recycling Association (SJBRA) • San Juan RC & D • Fort Lewis College Environmental Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User fees • San Juan RC & D 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase recycling efforts to reduce solid landfill waste. • Look at increasing hazardous waste and computer disposal days.
2. Public Infrastructure: Increase capacity of Bayfield Sanitation system	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Bayfield • Southern Ute Indian Tribe • Developers • Bayfield Sanitation District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • Developers • Federal appropriations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide enough capacity to meet number of already approved water taps and future growth. • Build new mechanical plant.
3. Public Infrastructure: Domestic Water System for East La Plata County	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • City of Durango • Town of Bayfield • Pine River Irrigation District • Southern Ute Indian Tribe • BBC Research & Consulting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water rights • USDA funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create rural water system to deliver water to east La Plata County.
4. Public Infrastructure: South Durango Sanitation District	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Durango Sanitation District • San Juan Basin Health • State of Colorado • Environmental Protection Agency • Southern Ute Tribe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User fees • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand sewer service to Koshak Mesa and Animas Airpark so that development can occur.
5. Public Infrastructure: Rural Water System for West Side of County	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata West Water Company • SW Water Conservation District • Animas/La Plata Water Conservation District • San Juan RC & D • S. Ute Indian Tribe • Ute Mountain Indian Tribe • Durango West II Metro Water District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW Water Conservation District • Animas/La Plata Water Conservation District • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create rural water system supplying water from Hesperus. to the New Mexico state line. • Feasibility study completed. • Form special district.
6. Public Infrastructure: Upgrade Town of Ignacio Water Lines	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • S Ute Indian Tribe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOLA • Town • S Ute Indian Tribe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity, water pressure and delivery. • Replace current water line materials in old part of town.

La Plata County - Community Development Action Plan 2006

Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
7. Public Infrastructure: Construction of new Bayfield Town Hall	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Bayfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Bayfield • DOLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of larger Town Hall with additional capacity for growth.
8. Public Infrastructure Van Den Berg Metro District	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Ignacio • Southern Ute Indian Tribe • Region 9 EDD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of Ignacio • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install and upgrade treated water main. • Connect Town to tribes water treatment facility.
9. Public Infrastructure: Provide Infrastructure for Animas Air Park	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners • LEAD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete necessary water, road and infrastructure improvements to meet demands of usage and future growth.
10. Public Infrastructure: Seek Site for New La Plata County Fairgrounds/Event Center	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA • County • Potential sponsorships & grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established Task Force to make recommendations on new fairgrounds special event center facility. • Look at new site to address space & and facility shortcomings.
11. Public Infrastructure: Develop Light Commercial Industrial Park	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEAD • Region 9 EDD • DCD • DIDF • Airport Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region 9 EDD • Department of Local Affairs • USDA • Bank participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete sewer, water, road access, telecom. • Use completed conceptual plan to develop plats for sale by 4/07. • Begin construction in fall 07.
12. Transportation: Expand Public Transit Routes and Frequency Between Communities	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County • Region 9 EDD • Transit Providers • Municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit funding sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide transit service between Bayfield in Durango by 2007. • Expand transit routes between Durango and rural areas

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
13. Transportation: Construct City of Durango Transit Center	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City • Transportation providers • County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Transit Administration 5309 funds • City of Durango 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a 2500 sq. foot facility on Camino Del Rio between 7th & 8th by 2009. Facility will include public restrooms, driver facilities and training room, bays for up to 8 buses, and parking. • Provide a facility to serve private shuttles, Interstate bus lines, the Durango Transit system and other area bus systems.
14. Transportation: Construction of Bus Barn	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUCAP – Roadrunner Transit • Southern Ute Indians • County • CDOT • Town of Ignacio/Bayfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct heated transit facility to store and protect buses from elements.
15. Transportation: Expand And Renovate Durango / La Plata County Airport	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • City of Durango • CDOT • FAA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fed. Airport Improvement Funding • Colorado Discretionary Aviation Grants • Airport passenger facility charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve airport facilities with sewer system expansion, additional parking spaces and a taxiway and runway expansion. • Completion of Master Plan.
16. Transportation: Maintain And Improve Reliable Air Service Between La Plata County And Connecting Hubs	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport Commission • Air Carriers/Delta • Durango Mountain Resort • Local Businesses • LEAD • La Plata County • City of Durango • Durango Area Tourism Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sector incentives • Federal Air Transportation grant • Local businesses • Local governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded regional air service. • Provide better access to East bound destinations. • Increase capacity. • Provide more competition and lower fares to desired destinations.
17. Transportation: Highways 160 And 550 Improvements Plans	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • Municipalities • CDOT • Regional Transportation Planning Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal and State funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add 4th lane to Farmington Hill.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
18. Transportation: Development of Commuter Trails between Durango and Bayfield	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • Trails 2000 • County • CDOT • Durango & Silverton Railroad • Town of Bayfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a bike path from Durango to Grandview and eventually extend into Bayfield. • Extend existing bike path in Durango to connect to Wildcat Canyon.
19. Telecommunications: Provide Rural Areas with High Speed Connections	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Telecommunications Companies • State Multi-Use Network • Region 9 EDD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of redundant broadband telecommunications connections. • Fiber connection to airport and rural areas.
20. SERVICES – Arts & Culture: Art In Public Places	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • Durango Arts Center • Local Artists • La Plata County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations • 1% of all budgeted capital projects (goal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a city/county 1% for the Arts program for all non road/bridge projects involving city/county dollars. • Include public art as a consistent line item in City of Durango's budget.
21. Arts & Culture: Continue to Develop Art and Cultural Attributes to Enhance Community	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durango Arts Center • Ft Lewis College • School Districts • City of Durango • Local Merchants • Gallery Assoc. • Durango Area Tourism Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax revenues • Local businesses • Private donations • Durango Arts Center membership fees • Fort Lewis College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Durango's image and marketability as an arts and cultural center. • Development of diverse cultural and artistic opportunities for community and generate community support.
22. Childcare: Permanent Facility for Bayfield Early Education Program	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bayfield Early Education Center Board • Bayfield School District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek a permanent facility for the 10 year-old Bayfield Early Learning Center.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
23. Childcare: Work to Expand the Quality and Availability of Infant/Toddler Care in the County	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County Dept of Human Services • 4-C Council • Licensed providers and centers • School Districts • Tri-county Head Start • Pueblo Community College • Local businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado Division of Child Care • Colorado Dept of Education • Community Dev Block Grants (CDBG) • State and federal grants • Private Foundations • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased quality in local early childhood programs. • Increased slots for non-traditional child care. • Increased pool of qualified child care providers. • Increased reimbursement for non-traditional child care and quality programs. • Availability for non-traditional work hours. • Create public/private partnership to fund quality ECE programs in county.
24. Health & Human Services: Build New Alcohol Treatment Center/Peaceful Spirit	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Ute Indian Tribe • SUCAP • Town of Ignacio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDBG funds • Native American CDBG funds • Southern Ute Tribe land donation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote long term sobriety. • Expand in and outpatient clientele.
25. Health & Human Services: Mercy Hospital Telemedicine	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Medical Center • Local health providers and physicians • Telecommunications / Internet Service Providers • Region 9 EDD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants • User charges • Fast Track fiber runs by new hospital site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide medical outreach to rural areas of region via telephone and internet. • Provide trainings for medical personnel via the same methods.
26. Health & Human Services: Establish Medical Research Program at Mercy Regional Medical Center	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center • Fort Lewis College • Area higher education providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevate medical center credibility by establishing program where physicians can get involved in research and publication of projects. • Increase retention and high quality reputation. • Provide opportunities for student internships, undergraduate research, faculty research through FLC.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
27. Health & Human Services: Develop a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center • Fort Lewis College • Pueblo Community College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student fees • Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet demands for nursing care by providing local source of education.
28. Health & Human Services: Build a Medical and Staff Education Center	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center • Grants & donations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a center on the Mercy campus that will offer education for the community and medical personnel on a regional basis.
29. Health & Human Services: Enhance Management Information Systems for all Medical Programs	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercy Regional Medical Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep abreast of technology changes and expansions.
30. Health & Human Services: Construction of Crossroads Psychiatric Facility –EZ Project	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southwest Colorado Mental Health Center • Mercy Medical Center • La Plata County • Area municipalities • SW Memorial Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State funding • County • City of Durango • Southwest Colorado Mental Health Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of an inpatient facility and detox center.
31. Health & Human Services: Low Income Adult Dental Care	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Juan Basin Health • La Plata County • Mercy Medical Center • Housing Solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley Wide • State funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a dental care program for individuals over 18 who are uninsured or on Medicaid to receive dental care.
32. Health & Human Services: Develop Community Plan to Meet Health Care Needs for Underserved Groups	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valley Wide • Health care providers • San Juan Basin Health Dept. • Community organizations • Public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community donations & volunteers • Medical field • Community organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure current level of health care services are maintained in the county. • Meet service demands for Medicare and Medicaid.
33. Health & Human Services: Construction of Senior Center in Bayfield	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County – Dept of Human Services • Town of Bayfield 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • Town of Bayfield • USDA • DOLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a facility to serve senior citizens in Bayfield and the surrounding area. • Provide programs and meals on site.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
34. Health and Human Services: Upgrade and Expand Senior Center in Durango	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • County Senior Services • City of Durango 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add additional meeting rooms for growing needs and population. • Enlarged kitchen will allow for capacity to grow the Meals on Wheels program and center nutrition activities. • Offer more programs
35. Land Use: City of Durango Comprehensive Plan	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • Citizens • Interested groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Commission adoption of a document to guide growth & development decisions in City by 2007.
36. Land Use: Natural Heritage Program Biodiversity/Ecosystem Mapping	NR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado Natural Heritage Program • County • San Juan RC & D • Nature Conservancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest Service/BLM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, inventory and map plants, animal habitats and unique natural features in the county.
37. Public Lands: San Juan National Forest Plan Revision	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Forest Service • Office of Community Services • BLM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressional allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce revised Management Plan for the Forest, including guidelines for recreation, timber, mining, wildlife, grazing, etc. • Draft plan and EIS report due Sept. 2006.
38. Public/Private Lands: Maintain Sustainability of Ponderosa Pine and Pinon Forest	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado State Univ. • Colorado State Forest Service • US Forest Service/BLM • Office of Community Services – FLC • Montezuma County Federal Lands Program • State Forestry • Fire Protection Districts • Timber Industry • Ute Mountain Ute Tribe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Comprehensive Plan • National Fire Plan funds • Fire hazard mitigation contractors • RLF- Region 9 EDD • USDA if private land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire risk mapping completed. • Fire risk is reduced and timber products industry is strengthened. • Improve forest health. • Control Pine Beetle infestation • Reduce risk to life and property and protect watershed/community water supplies. • Defensible space education resulting in defensible space created around residences.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
39. Public Safety: County Jail Expansion	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement phase one to construct 84 additional beds for 7 different prisoner classifications, and 3 discipline/segregation cells. Estimated cost is \$16 Million. • Renovate facility to accommodate growing population demands, and wear and tear. • Look at feasibility/timing of Phase 2, that would add another 128 beds.
40. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT– Business Expansion / Retention: Strengthen Durango Central Business District	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • LEAD • Downtown Durango Partnership • Business Improvement District • DATO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • BID • DATO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a thriving, economically stable downtown Durango. • Expand buy local campaign.
41. Business Recruitment: Maintain and Administer the Southwest Colorado Enterprise Zone Boundaries and Marketing Plan	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Region 9 EDD • Area Accountants • Local Businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado Economic Development Commission • OED -- State Enterprise Zone Coordinator • Economic Development Administration (EDA) Planning and Technical Assistance program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide incentives for business expansion and relocation through EZ tax credits.
42. Economic Development: Enhance Fort Lewis College <i>Econometer</i> Publication	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Lewis College Office of Economic Analysis & Business Research • Region 9 EDD • Durango Herald 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Lewis College • Region 9 EDD • Durango Herald • LEAD • Area Banks • Real Estate Companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Gross National Product for the region. • Identify, analyze & predict key contributors to regional economy. • Create Regional Consumer Price Index.
43. Business Recruitment: Beautification of Mill Street in Downtown Bayfield	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • Downtown Business Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Historical Funds • Town 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place signage, historic plaques, benches and trash containers along Mill Street.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
44. Business Capital: Revolving Business Loan Fund (BLF)	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • Local Banks • Region 9 EDD • SM. Business Dev. Ctr. • LEAD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Business Admin. • State Office of Economic Dev. (OED) • CDBG • EDA • CAPCO • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide “gap” financing for local businesses.
45. Business Development & Expansion: Expand Small Business Development Center & Create Fort Lewis College Entrepreneurship Center Services	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort Lewis College • OED • DIDF • LEAD • Region 9 EDD • Area Banks • SBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBA funding • Community support • DIDF • LEAD • Local Banks • Rural Business Opportunities Grant • CDBG Revolve Dollars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the Small Business Development Center at Fort Lewis College to provide technical assistance to existing & new businesses. • Grow the business advisor group to meet with businesses. • Create Growth Company Initiative.
46. Business Development & Expansion: Recruit General Merchandise Store to Ignacio	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • Ignacio Chamber 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • Region 9 EDD • EZ Tax Credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit a general merchandise store to either build or open in existing space in Ignacio.
47. Business Development & Expansion: Recruit National Chain Grocery Store to Bayfield Business Park	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • Region 9 EDD • Bayfield Chamber • Area businesses • Gem Village 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town • LEAD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase town tax revenue and address substantial source of retail marketing leakage.
48. Infrastructure: Renovate Historic Power plant into Durango Discovery Museum – EZ Project	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durango Discovery Museum • City of Durango • County • Area businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Historical Fund • Co. Dept. Public Health & Environment • DOLA • Private Foundations • National Parks Service • Rebuild Colorado • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate and clean up former electrical powerhouse building to open a science and technology museum. • Utilize popular riverfront location.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
49. Infrastructure: Establish Durango Community Learning Center Partnership by 2010	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pueblo Community College • San Juan Basin Technical College • Southwest Conservation Corps • Durango Latino Education Coalition • CU Denver for Masters Degree in Social Work and new programs • Durango Adult Education Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOLA • Donors • Durango Adult Education Center • Southwest Conservation Corps • Private Foundations • La Plata County Department of Social Services • SW Colorado Workforce Centers • Land from the City of Durango 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase former Mercy Medical Center to house Pueblo Community College, San Juan Basin Technical College, Durango Latino Education Coalition, other nonprofits and regional educators. • Pre-school through graduate school educational and workforce programs at one location. • Family Literacy Programs & childcare for parents during class 24-7. • Classrooms to support schools, including allied health programs, police academy, fire academy, early childhood education, AA, and MA programs. • Office & meeting space for smaller nonprofits. • Computer resources for on-line education. • Academic and guidance support for GED and non-traditional students entering college. • Poly-com suite for CU graduate studies and other trainings.
50. Infrastructure: Create Additional or Alternative Space for County Departments such as Human Services & Judicial Center.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax revenues • Potential general obligation bond revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient use of county office space to better serve the public and adequately house county employees. • Comfortably house all county employees.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
51. Youth Development: Durango Boys and Girls Club in Durango	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Durango • La Plata County • Southern Ute Community Action Partnership (SUCAP) • Southern Ute Indian Tribe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys and Girls Clubs of America • Corporate & foundation funds • DOLA • Local donors & volunteers • USDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced alcohol and substance abuse. • Increased academic performance. • Stronger families. • Decreased juvenile crime.
52. Tourism: Maintain & Improve County Tourism	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durango Area Tourism Office (DATO) • County, city, towns • SW Colo. Travel Region • Colo. Tourism Office • National Tour Operators • Region 9 EDD • Local Businesses • Fort Lewis College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lodgers Tax revenues • Fort Lewis College • DATO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue marketing & promotion efforts to make La Plata County a tourist destination.
53. Tourism: Build Convention/ Conference Center	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durango Conference Center Business Improvement District • City of Durango • DATO • Fort Lewis College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plan and location for a modern, high capacity multi-use/conference center. • Creation of a Visitor Convention Bureau.
54. Work Force Development: Local Work Force Development And Retention	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durango Area Tourism Office • School Districts • Higher education institutions • Local businesses • Region 9 EDD • LEAD • Homebuilder's Association • SW Colorado Workforce Board • La Plata County Dept. of Human Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TANF • Job Works Program • Wagner Pfiser • EZ Project Designation • Small BIZWorks Grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded local work force. • Better retention of local workers in the community. • Local workforce better qualified to meet needs of local businesses.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
55. Work Force Development: Meet Non-Traditional Education Needs in the County	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durango Adult Education Center • Women's Resource Center • 9R School District • La Plata & San Juan Counties Dept. of Human Services • SW Colorado Workforce Centers • Pueblo Community College • San Juan College, Farmington NM • American Hotel & Lodging Association • Los Companeros 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Way • Grants • Co. Dept of Education • Co. Dept. of Labor & Employment • Co. Dept. of Human Services • Donations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to help adults without High School diplomas pass General Education Diploma (GED) and develop basic math, writing, & computer skills. • Teach English to non English speakers. • Teach hospitality skills pre-employment and to incumbent workers. • Support oil/gas compression students in San Juan College. • Support CDL students in San Juan College. • Support parents with free childcare while in class.
56. Agriculture: Farm to School Program	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9R School District • Local growers and producers • Farmer's Market • Sustainability Alliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9R School District • Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide locally produced food for area school lunches.
57. Agriculture: Strengthen / Support The County's Agricultural Economy	Med.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local growers and producers • La Plata County • La Plata County Extension Office • La Plata Cattlemen's Assoc. • San Juan Woolgrowers • San Juan RC&D • LEAD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colo. Dept. of Ag. Technical assistance • USDA • National Resource Conservation Service • Farm Service Agency • San Juan RC&D 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of strategies to diversify the county's agricultural economy. • Development of measures to encourage protection of agriculture.
58. Housing: Affordable Housing Advocacy	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • La Plata County • Housing Solutions for the Southwest • City of Durango • Community Development Corp. • Habitat for Humanity • Colorado Housing Inc. • Affordable Housing Task Force • Regional Housing Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOLA • BLF • Colo. Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) • Community Reinvestment Act • USDA • Colorado Depart. of Housing • Private Foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase affordable housing opportunities and projects in the county. • Build collaborations and coordination among housing groups.

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Project	Rank	Primary Partners	Available Resources	Expected Outcomes & Action
59. Housing: Fair Housing Equally Available On A Non-Discriminatory Basis	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Solutions • Legal Aid • HUD • Regional Housing Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling and referral by Housing Solutions • Legal representation • HUD enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair Housing practices observed throughout the County.