

SDA NEWS

FEBRUARY 2024

Supporting Community-Based Government

House Bill 23B-1003-
Property Tax Commission
**In Search of a Solution
to Property Taxes**





- Safe & Liquid Investment Options
- The Benefit of Two Funds
- Rated AAAM / AAAs-1
- Online Access
- Check Writing & Treasury Features

Bob Krug • bkrug@csafe.org
Tim Kauffman • tkauffman@csafe.org

www.csafe.org | (303) 296-6340

Board of Directors

President
Sue Blair
Independence Metropolitan District No. 4

Vice President
Bill Simmons
Eagle River Fire Protection District

Secretary/Treasurer
Ronda Lobato
Costilla County Conservancy District

Executive Vice President
Allison Ulmer
Collins Cole Flynn Winn & Ulmer, PLLC



Ross Blackmer
Thompson Crossing Metropolitan District
Nos. 3 and 5

James Borland
Fort Collins/Loveland Water District

Kent Bosch
Upper Thompson Sanitation District

Bill Clayton
West Metro Fire Protection District

Dick Cleveland
Eagle River Water & Sanitation District

Jodi Docheff
Kremmling Memorial Hospital District

Jim Kullhem
Prospect Recreation & Park District

Phil Thomas
Fountain Sanitation District

Staff

Ann Terry
Chief Executive Officer

Meredith Smith Quarles
Chief Operating Officer

Michael Valdez
Chief Governmental Affairs Officer

Megan Lippard
Editor and Communications Manager

Anthony Sandoval
Senior Program Manager

Karla Boughey
Membership Services Coordinator

Jamille Andres
Office Coordinator

Dianne Criswell
Chief Counsel

Evan Goulding
In Memoriam

SDA

225 East 16th Avenue
Suite 1000
Denver, CO 80203
(303) 863-1733
Toll Free (800) 886-1733
sdaco@sdaco.org
www.sdaco.org

Designed by Emmett Jordan

National Western photos courtesy of
National Western Stock Show, Volunteer
Photographer

We Want to Hear from You...

Submit Your Ideas for Speakers and Topics for the 2024 SDA Annual Conference!

The Call for Speakers and Topics for the 2024 SDA Annual Conference opened on **Monday, January 29**, and it's the perfect time to send us all your ideas!

Planning for the 2024 SDA Annual Conference is well underway, and now we need your help! As always, one of the most important pieces of the planning process is laying out the schedule of breakout sessions. And this is where you come in!

As you are thinking about what should be included in this year's breakout sessions, here are a few things that might help get those ideas flowing:

- » What are the hot topics that districts need to know more about?
- » Are there successful projects or case studies from which others could learn?
- » Is there a general subject that you could use a refresher course on (and maybe others could, too)?

- » Are you an expert who has suggestions on important topics to present?

Whatever ideas you have, big or small, we want to hear from you!

The process is super easy. Simply go to the SDA website at www.sdaco.org to share your suggestions for a breakout session, recommend a great speaker, or both!

Please remember that the more details you can provide with your suggestion, the better. We strive to bring you topics that are the most pertinent and relevant to the special district world so the more information we have about your idea, the easier it is to see if it might work for the Conference.

As always, please call our office at 303-863-1733 if you have any questions. **And make sure to mark your calendars to join us at the Keystone Conference Center, September 10-12!**

We look forward to receiving your submissions!

Attention, Associate Members!

Exhibitor Space for the 2024 SDA Annual Conference Opens February 21!

Do you want to be an exhibitor at this year's SDA Annual Conference, September 10-12 at the Keystone Conference Center?

Then make sure you mark your calendar and watch your emails on **Wednesday, February 21!** That's the day registration opens for exhibitor space, and you won't want to miss it!

This annual event is always an incredible opportunity to interact with SDA members from across the state.

But, don't forget the most important piece: make sure you renew your SDA membership by mid-February so that you are all set before the exhibitor sign-up opens.

The exhibitor space typically sells out in less than two weeks so you will need to act fast if you would like a space!



Keynote speaker Meagan Johnson and her hilarious presentation on generational differences was a huge hit at last year's SDA Annual Conference!



**Alliance
Association
Bank®**

Serving Special Districts Throughout Colorado

Offering Powerful Banking Solutions & Software Integrations

Alliance Association Bank's ConnectLive™¹ integration provides robust solutions enabling you to seamlessly manage the finances of your districts. ConnectLive™ integrates with the industry's leading accounting software providers, allowing you to see key financial information in one platform.

Specializing in:

ConnectLive™¹ Software Integration

No-Fee Lockbox Services²

Online Homeowner Payment Portal

Simplified Banking Transitions



David Ford-Coates, CMCA

Vice President, HOA & Special District Banking
(720) 885-1444

dfordcoates@allianceassociationbank.com



Joanne Haluska, CMCA, AMS

Senior Managing Director, Central Region
(216) 314-9100

jhaluska@allianceassociationbank.com



One of Forbes' "America's
Best Banks" Year After Year

Bank on Accountability® | allianceassociationbank.com

¹The ability to integrate with ConnectLive™ may depend on the accounting software used. Services and integration tools may differ by software. ²Funds deposited through the Lockbox will follow Western Alliance Bank's funds availability policy as outlined in the Deposit Account Agreement Disclosure. Alliance Association Bank, a division of Western Alliance Bank, Member FDIC. Western Alliance Bank ranks high on Forbes' "America's Best Banks" list year after year.



BUILDING AND PROTECTING COLORADO COMMUNITIES.



Providing general and specialized legal services for special district formation, board governance, public infrastructure development, contracting and finance, elections, employment matters, water law, and general operation of metropolitan, water, sanitation, fire protection, emergency and hospital, and recreation districts and other public service entities.

Shareholders

Paul R. Cockrel
Evan D. Ela
Linda M. Glesne
David A. Greher
Matthew P. Ruhland

Associates

Joseph W. Norris
Madison D. Phillips
Dakota C. Spence-Zurek

Paralegals

Micki Mills
Sarah Luetjen

44 Cook Street, Suite 620, Denver, CO 80206
www.cegrlaw.com • 303-218-7200

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

in People's Lives & Their Environment



Infrastructure
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

www.TSTInfrastructure.com

303-799-5197

Greenwood Village, CO 80111

PLANNING. ENGINEERING. CONSTRUCTION. MANAGEMENT. OPERATIONS.

House Bill 23B-1003- Property Tax Commission

In Search of a Solution to Property Taxes

What is the future of property taxes for the state of Colorado? This was the main topic of the Special Session that took place over four days in November 2023, resulting in the passage of House Bill 23B-1003, **Property Tax Task Force**. This new Property Tax Task Force, also known as the Tax Commission, was in direct response to the state of Colorado's reaction to failed Proposition HH.

How Did We Get Here?

As you most likely recall, the 2023 Legislative Session ended with the dropping of a huge property tax bill in the last seven days of the Session. The surprise arrived in the form of Senate Bill 23-303, Reduce Property Taxes and Voter-approved Revenue Change. Senate Bill 23-303 carried with it Proposition HH, which was the referred measure on the November 2023 ballot that was defeated by a 40%-60% vote.

The defeat of Proposition HH led to the Governor calling a Special Session to address high residential property values. In the Special Session, several bills were introduced, including the “big” property tax bill, House Bill 23B-001, and House Bill 23B-1003 – Property Tax Task Force.

Structure and Role of the New Property Tax Task Force (a.k.a. Tax Commission)

The new Tax Commission is comprised of 19 members that represent the demographic and geographic diversity of the state, including:

- » Four members of the General Assembly;
- » The Property Tax Administrator;
- » A Mayor or elected City Council person;
- » A current or former County Assessor;
- » The Executive Director of the Special District Association of Colorado;
- » A Chief Financial Officer of a school district;
- » A representative of a statewide organization with expertise in school funding policy or that represents Colorado educators;
- » A representative of an organization that represents Colorado commercial or residential property owners;

- » A Fire Chief;
- » A representative of an organization with expertise in advocating for low-income individuals, seniors, individuals with fixed incomes, or residential tenants;
- » The Executive Director of a statewide or regional business organization; and
- » Five County Commissioners representing the Front Range, Mountain, Eastern, Southern, and Western regions of the state, respectively.

As you can see, this new group includes several individuals from various interest groups across the state, including our very own CEO, Ann Terry.

The Tax Commission is charged with identifying, considering, and evaluating legislative options for a more permanent and sustainable property tax structure. The Commission will consider local control of property taxes and how that control may impact property owners and local taxing jurisdictions in different areas of the state.

The Commission held its introductory meeting on December 22, and the first meeting of 2024 was held on January 5. During the introductory meeting, an independent consultant was selected to facilitate the Commission's work. The result of these sessions will be a comprehensive report for the General Assembly and the Governor that will include collection and analysis of property tax sustainability options and initiatives for the 2024 general election along with recommendations of viable solutions. This group of local lawmakers and officials within the Commission will not have the power to change the law itself, but they will provide guidance on potential changes.

We will of course keep you apprised of the Commission's work as well as the group's final report. 🍋



ABOUT US

Since 1995, the Colorado Employer Benefit Trust has partnered with the Special District Association of Colorado to provide benefit solutions that are superior and affordable. With more than 240 Special Districts participating in the Trust, CEBT is recognized for its comprehensive benefit offerings, exceptional customer service and consistently low rate increases.

MEDICAL - DENTAL - VISION - LIFE - LTD/STD



WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

By joining CEBT's self-insured pool you can enjoy:

- ✓ Lower Risk
- ✓ Reduced Administrative Costs
- ✓ A Long-term Stable Solution for Your District

OUR MISSION

"To provide quality health benefit options at a competitive cost with superior service to eligible employer groups."

For more information contact:

☎ 303-345-7730
✉ Terry.Rook@wtwco.com
🌐 www.cebt.org
[REQUEST A QUOTE NOW](#)

CEBT
Benefit by Trust
A Higher Standard of Quality



Innovation To Achieve A Brighter Future

for our clients, community, and the environment providing sustainable solutions in:

- Water and Wastewater Treatment
- Water/Wastewater Infrastructure Planning, Design and Rehabilitation
- Special District Engineering and Consulting Services
- Groundwater Wells
- Construction Management

Contact Jerry Peña

215 Union Blvd
Suite 500

Lakewood, CO 80228
(720) 744-2233

www.KennedyJenks.com

KJ | Kennedy Jenks

Western Slope coalition strikes historic \$98.5M deal with Xcel for Colorado River water rights

By Shannon Mullane

This story was originally published by Fresh Water News, a collaboration between the Colorado Sun and Water Education Colorado covering water stories of critical importance to Colorado and the West. Support and subscribe to the Colorado Sun at coloradosun.com and to Water Education Colorado at wateredco.org/fresh-water-news.

West slope residents along a stretch of the Colorado River are one step closer to greater water security thanks to a historic deal signed on Tuesday, December 19.

The Colorado River Water Conservation District and Xcel Energy formalized the agreement that will allow the district to buy long-coveted water rights for the Shoshone Power Plant from Xcel — as long as efforts to secure \$98.5 million in funding are successful.

The deal is a major step in a decades-long effort to ensure stable flows for water users and ecosystems below the power plant, from Glenwood Springs to the Utah border. “We’ve been talking about this potential acquisition for about 85 years,” Andy Mueller, the river district’s general manager, said during the special board meeting. “We’re very excited about this.”

The Shoshone Power Plant, located off Interstate 70 near Glenwood Springs, has the oldest water right directly on the Colorado River in Colorado. Under water law, in times of shortage, upstream water users with lower-priority rights must shut off their water early to fulfill Shoshone’s senior water rights. Since the plant releases all of the water it uses to generate electricity, it provides a steady flow to downstream users whether water is plentiful or scarce.

Local economies and communities from Glenwood Springs to Grand Junction depend on consistent flows out of the plant and have been worried for decades about another entity snapping up the Shoshone water rights and siphoning away their water supplies. The steady flows from Shoshone are also critical to avoiding low water levels in a 15-mile stretch of the Colorado River near Grand Junction where an endangered fish species recovery program operates.

“Anything that can maintain adequate flows in Shoshone for recreation—which is my future, my business—is a positive for the future of water recreation in our area,” said Ken Murphy, who owns the rafting company Glenwood Adventure Company which operates on the Colorado River below Shoshone. “This is a move in the right direction.”

The Colorado River District board unanimously



Shoshone Dam, here on August 13, 2021, near Glenwood Springs, generates electricity through its turbines on the Colorado River. The dam and power plant near the Hanging Lake parking area was constructed in the early 1900s. (Hugh Carey, The Colorado Sun)

approved the deal to buy Shoshone’s water rights in a room packed full of spectators and officials at Hotel Colorado in Glenwood Springs. Under the agreement, the Colorado River District will own the water rights and lease them back to Xcel so the facility can continue to generate hydroelectric power.

“This is an important agreement for the 1.6 million electric customers and communities we serve statewide by allowing us to continue generating clean electricity as part of our commitment to be good stewards of the Colorado River and all who rely on it,” Xcel Energy Colorado president Robert Kenney said in a prepared statement.

The river district also wants to keep Shoshone’s water in the river—not diverted to other uses—when-ever the power plant is not generating hydropower. To make that change, the Colorado River District has launched negotiations with the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). If the district, Xcel and the CWCB reach an agreement, the three entities will go to water court to legally change the rights. Xcel must also seek approval for the deal from the state’s utility commission, and the district will need to find \$98.5 million for the sale to be complete.

The Colorado River District board voted unanimously to allocate \$20 million toward the overall price, and its partners—a coalition of 19 local governments and water entities—plan to contribute another \$10 million. The coalition aims to secure the rest of the funding by 2027 and has requested \$20 million from the state. 🍷



& ASSOCIATES

Providing Special District Management and Accounting Services for Over 25 Years
Evergreen, CO | **303.674.3379** | SimonsonAndAssociates.com | mail@simonson.com



**McGEADY
BECHER**
Special District Law

450 E. 17th Avenue, Suite 400
Denver, CO 80203
303-592-4380
www.SpecialDistrictLaw.com

RELIABILITY. EFFICIENCY. CREATIVITY. DELIVERY.

Thank you to all the Special District's
we have partnered with under
Barney Fix's leadership. Our team
looks forward to continuing to provide
exceptional service in the future.

John Kuosman
303.800.9034
John.Kuosman@merrick.com



DISTRICT ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS

WATER, WASTEWATER, & REUSE
STORMWATER
ARTERIAL STREETS & ROADWAYS
GIS & SURVEY
FINANCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES



Experience • Integrity • Commitment

**Seter &
Vander Wall, P.C.**

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

303.770.2700 | www.svwpc.com | svw@svwpc.com

7400 E. Orchard Road, Suite 3300, Greenwood Village Colorado 80111

Representing and
advocating for
local governments

We have the tools to help you...

Engineering & Mapping
Facility Development
District Management
Accounting & Finance Services
Planning
Administrative Support



**Mulhern
MRE, Inc.**

Managing Resources thru Engineering

Mulhern MRE, Inc. | 303.649.9857
Visit our website at www.mulhernmre.com



**County
Health Pool**

A Better Healthcare Choice for *all* local governments

Medical
Dental
Vision
Life
COBRA
HIPAA

As an SDA member, take control of
health care costs by pooling with other
local governments, a long-term, cost-
saving option that has been meeting
insurance needs since 1984.

For more information or a quote, contact:

Meredith Burcham

County Technical Services Inc.

800 Grant Street, Suite 400

Denver, Colorado 80203

303-861-0507

mburcham@ctsi.org



The 2022 Water Fluency Program included case studies highlighting the Gunnison Basin. Pictured here is the full class on a site visit in Gunnison during one of their in-person learning days. Photo courtesy of Water Education Colorado.

Registration for the 2024 Water Fluency Program Opens Soon!

It is almost time for a new year of the ever-popular Water Fluency Program from Water Education Colorado (WEco)! And, SDA has once again partnered with WEco to provide 75% scholarships to existing SDA members who would like to participate. Our members continue to see the benefits of completing this program and bringing what they've learned back to their communities so we are excited to extend this opportunity to our members again this year!

The Water Fluency Program is a professional development course designed for anyone interested in gaining an in-depth understanding of Colorado water management and protection. This includes

non-water professionals in leadership roles intersecting with water, as well as water professionals who are newer to the field or the state of Colorado or who want to gain a broader view of the issues beyond their unique niche. Past participants have included elected officials, city/county staff, community and business leaders, special district staff, board members for water organizations, educators, and more.

Water is critical for every aspect of community vibrancy—from industry and commerce to agriculture, tourism, health and environment. But it isn't always clear how water policy and management decisions trickle down to other sectors. Developing tools for navigating water management and

policy issues, Water Fluency graduates take the language of water into their fields to lead with new confidence. The 2024 program will feature water management examples from the Upper Colorado River Basin, but participants from across Colorado will benefit from the content.

Registration for the 2024 program will open in February so make sure to watch for more details to come! Class size is limited to 35 people and scholarships are limited so once registration opens, be sure to register early to secure your seat and potential to receive a scholarship. You can also visit www.watereducationcolorado.org/programs-events/water-fluency/ for additional information. 🍷



SDA has once again partnered with WEco to provide 75% scholarships to existing SDA members who would like to participate.



**COLLINS | COLE
FLYNN | WINN | ULMER**

Serving Those Who Serve Their Communities

Colorado's Local Government Attorneys

- Special District General Counsel
- Special District Organizations & Consolidations
- Local Government Elections
- Authorities
- Municipal Law

www.cogovlaw.com

Delivering Sound Solutions and Exceptional Service

WE CAN HELP WITH »
District Management
District Administration
Finance & Accounting
Capital Management
Facilities Management
Municipal Services
Fire/EMS Admin. Management

LOVELAND 970.669.3611 | DENVER 303.333.4380
WWW.PCGI.COM



PINNACLE
CONSULTING GROUP, INC

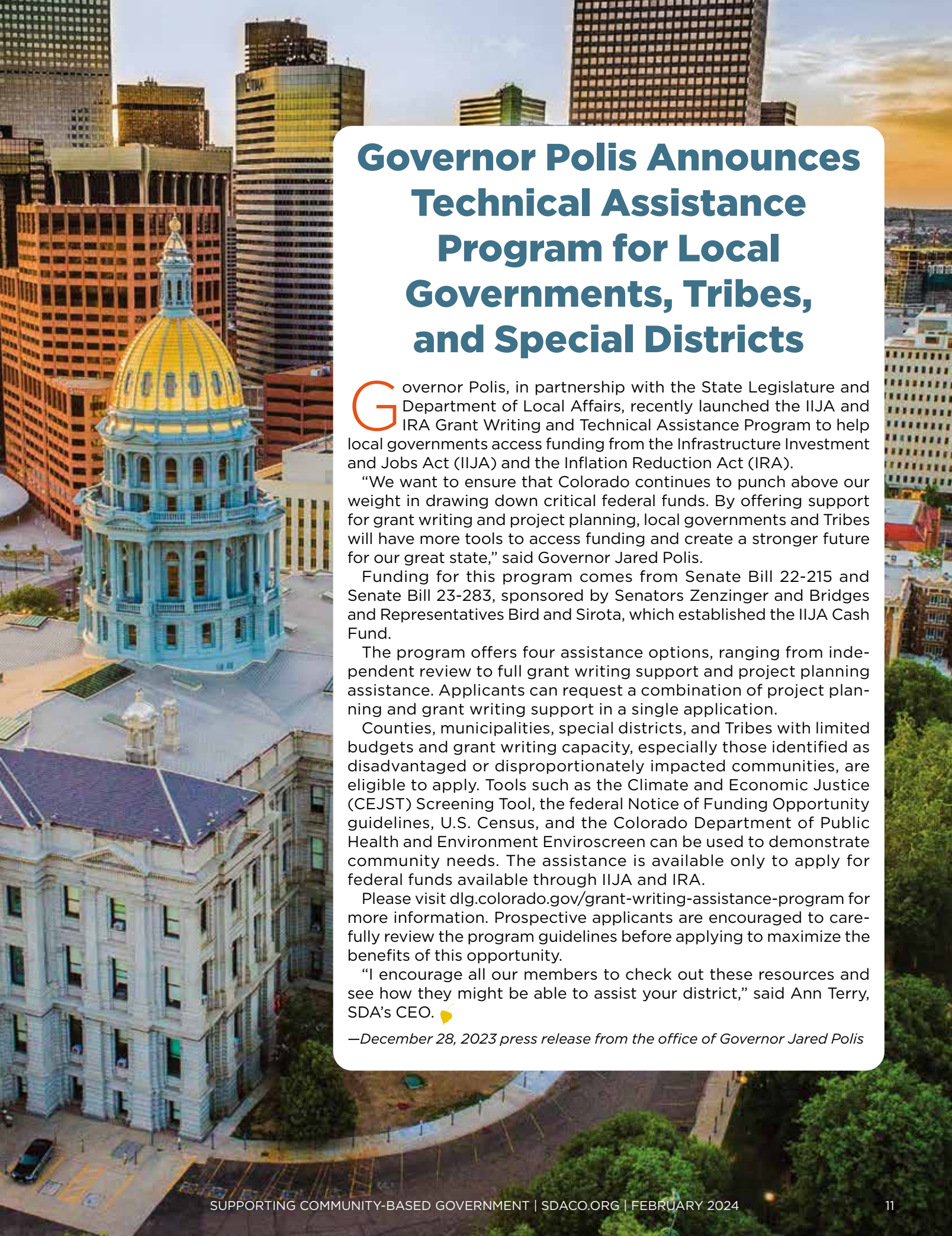


**PROVIDING WATER AND WASTEWATER SERVICES
FOR SPECIAL DISTRICTS IN COLORADO,
NATIONWIDE, AND INTERNATIONALLY**

303.431.6100

MARTIN/MARTIN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

martinmartin.com



Governor Polis Announces Technical Assistance Program for Local Governments, Tribes, and Special Districts

Governor Polis, in partnership with the State Legislature and Department of Local Affairs, recently launched the IJJA and IRA Grant Writing and Technical Assistance Program to help local governments access funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IJJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

“We want to ensure that Colorado continues to punch above our weight in drawing down critical federal funds. By offering support for grant writing and project planning, local governments and Tribes will have more tools to access funding and create a stronger future for our great state,” said Governor Jared Polis.

Funding for this program comes from Senate Bill 22-215 and Senate Bill 23-283, sponsored by Senators Zenzinger and Bridges and Representatives Bird and Sirota, which established the IJJA Cash Fund.

The program offers four assistance options, ranging from independent review to full grant writing support and project planning assistance. Applicants can request a combination of project planning and grant writing support in a single application.

Counties, municipalities, special districts, and Tribes with limited budgets and grant writing capacity, especially those identified as disadvantaged or disproportionately impacted communities, are eligible to apply. Tools such as the Climate and Economic Justice (CEJST) Screening Tool, the federal Notice of Funding Opportunity guidelines, U.S. Census, and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Enviroscreen can be used to demonstrate community needs. The assistance is available only to apply for federal funds available through IJJA and IRA.

Please visit dlg.colorado.gov/grant-writing-assistance-program for more information. Prospective applicants are encouraged to carefully review the program guidelines before applying to maximize the benefits of this opportunity.

“I encourage all our members to check out these resources and see how they might be able to assist your district,” said Ann Terry, SDA’s CEO. 🍷

—December 28, 2023 press release from the office of Governor Jared Polis



Drain Facts—A Sewer Backup Informational Campaign

Guest article by the Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool

Most CSD Pool members who are in our Property & Liability program have this coverage, with a per-event aggregate limit of \$200,000, limited to \$10,000 for any one premises, and a shared all-member annual aggregate limit of \$1,000,000.

The Colorado Special Districts Property and Liability Pool (CSD Pool) remains committed to our more than 2,500 public entities as *Your Risk Management Partner*. Each month, we are focusing on a different program or service we offer our membership, either at no-cost or at a discounted rate. This month's highlight is on our Drain Facts brochure and informational campaign, as well as resources meant to help members manage sewer backups.

Drain Facts: A Sewer Backup Informational Campaign

The **Drain Facts** campaign was created in partnership with numerous CSD Pool members to assist water and sanitation districts in educating their customers about lateral service line backups, which is a frequent top cause of loss. This campaign:

- » Provides homeowners steps to respond to a backup
- » Advises homeowners on lateral line responsibility and available insurance options
- » Offers preventative advice
- » Informs the public about efforts sanitation districts have to avoid backups
- » Highlights extensive 'Do Not Flush' lists

- » Provides examples of banner links to put on district websites
- » Provides downloadable PDFs of trifold flyers, one-page white papers, and information sheets

Members are free to copy any written content from the Drain Facts website, coveryourflush.com, to use in their own outreach efforts. In addition, members can purchase our newly printed Drain Facts brochures to distribute to their customers.

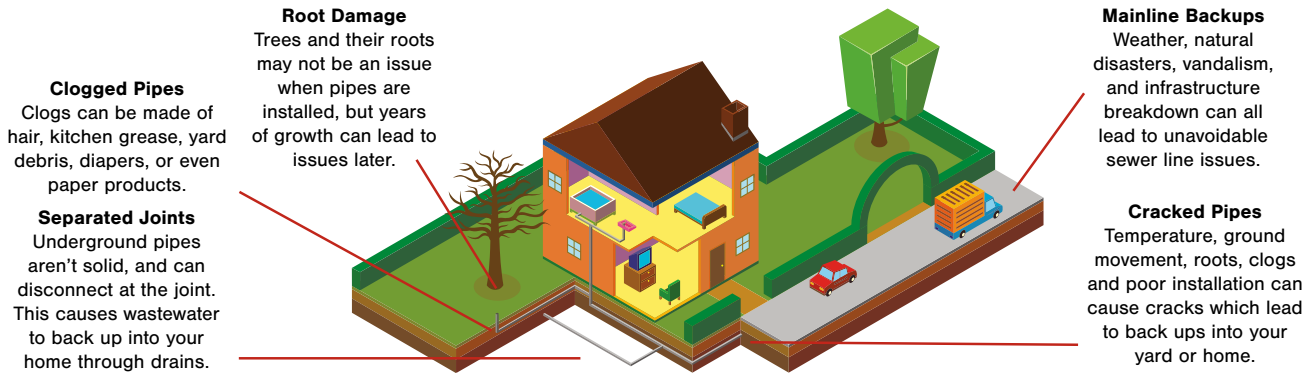
Brochures are available to members at a cost of \$0.20 per copy + free shipping. If you have Safety and Loss Prevention Grant funds available, you can bring down that cost to \$0.10 per brochure. To request a quote for brochures, visit csdpool.org/publications or email info@csdpool.org.

Sewer Backup Coverages and Additional Resources

Our No-Fault Water Intrusion and/or Sewer Backup coverage responds to damage to a district's customer's home or business, regardless of fault, and is excess of any other collectible coverage available. It pays reasonable expenses incurred for the immediate cleaning and restoration of an affected home or business for purposes of reducing the damage.

DRAIN FACTS

Preventing and Preparing for when Toilets, Sinks, and Drains Flow the Wrong Direction



Clogged Pipes

Clogs can be made of hair, kitchen grease, yard debris, diapers, or even paper products.

Separated Joints

Underground pipes aren't solid, and can disconnect at the joint. This causes wastewater to back up into your home through drains.

Root Damage

Trees and their roots may not be an issue when pipes are installed, but years of growth can lead to issues later.

Mainline Backups

Weather, natural disasters, vandalism, and infrastructure breakdown can all lead to unavoidable sewer line issues.

Cracked Pipes

Temperature, ground movement, roots, clogs and poor installation can cause cracks which lead to back ups into your yard or home.

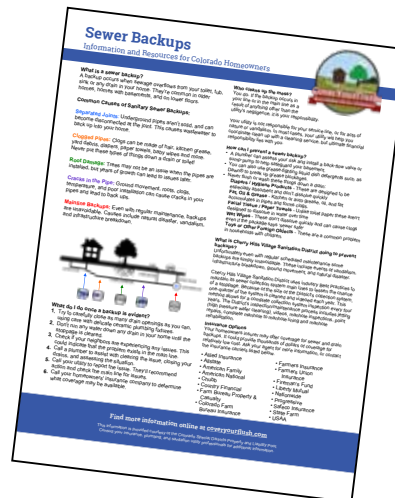
We pay a preset amount to initiate the cleaning and restoration, without accepting responsibility for the event.

Most CSD Pool members who are in our Property & Liability program have this coverage, with a per-event aggregate limit of \$200,000, limited to \$10,000 for any one premises, and a shared all-member annual aggregate limit of \$1,000,000. Districts can elect to opt out of the coverage by signing an opt-out endorsement annually. However, we recommend that any district that operates water or wastewater public works (Water, Sanitation, Conservancy, Irrigation, Metropolitan, etc.) should have this coverage.

Beyond this coverage, we have additional sewer backup resources available to members including:

» Discounted condition-based sewer maintenance:

The CSD Pool has partnered with RH Borden to provide discounted condition-based sewer maintenance, an approach that allows collections system managers to identify pipes which are at the highest risk for backups in order to direct resources



accordingly. Members who use this service as a best practice may qualify for a 33% discount on their General Liability contribution.

» Sewer Backup Standard Operating Procedure:

For use at your district, we have created a Sewer Backup Standard Operating Procedure that details what districts should say to homeowners, provides documents to provide to homeowners, and outlines our Drain Facts campaign. This is available to view at csdpool.org/documents.

» SERVPRO cleanup services:

For fast and reliable cleanup services, we have partnered with SERVPRO to help districts manage a variety of severe weather emergencies. SERVPRO offers extensive services, including repair for damages from sewer backups, fire and vandalism, and treatment for contaminants and toxic materials like mold or asbestos. Call 303-494-2000 to ensure the CSD Pool's partner rates, and identify yourself either as a CSD Pool member or a constituent of one to benefit from our preferred pricing, regardless of whether or not the damage is the result of a covered loss.

As Your Risk Management Partner, we remain committed to providing specialized coverages tailored for public entities, exemplary claims support, and safety and loss prevention services to ensure everyone within the organization—from Board members to supervisors and staff—has the tools they need to succeed. If you have any questions about the recourses mentioned here, please visit csdpool.org or email us at info@csdpool.com.



View your Landscape Differently

Creating beautiful metro districts requires a strategic partner with foresight and an unwavering attention to detail. BrightView combines the resources of a national provider with the local attention you deserve. Our team maintains Colorado's most notable metro districts, giving us the experience to provide your property the world-class service it deserves.

Shad Parrish
308 841 3003
shad.parrish@brightview.com



Design | Develop | Maintain | Enhance



Spencer Fane LLP | spencerfane.com
1700 Lincoln Street, Suite 2000 | Denver, CO 80203
Phone: 303.839.3800 | Fax: 303.839.3838

Spencer Fane is the law firm where your leaders work with our leaders. With over 120 combined years of special district experience in Colorado, we can handle all of your district's legal needs. Advancing the interests of your district is our priority.



... contributing to a cleaner, safer Colorado through low-cost loans to governmental entities for all types of water infrastructure projects.

Call 303-830-1550 or e-mail info@cwrpda.com | www.cwrpda.com

Lessons on Local Government

Helping to Increase Civic Literacy

The Lessons on Local Government (LOLG) program is a resource developed to assist elementary, middle, and high school teachers in finding curriculum that meets Colorado's social studies and civics standards. The online program, developed through a partnership between SDA and the Colorado Municipal League (CML), was created to increase civic literacy. Given that local governments directly affect the lives of local communities across Colorado, the curriculum encourages students to learn more about local government and find diverse ways to be involved in their community.

Lesson plans on the website are designed to be used as they are or easily customized to better resonate with students, saving teachers time in researching and trying to create lessons on their own. Every lesson and all the materials are prepared by practicing Colorado teachers, each with over 15 years of teaching experience. The curriculum created allows students to think critically, creatively, and allows for students to connect personally to different forms of government. Through the lesson plans, students learn about social studies and civics while feeling empowered to ask quality questions that allow them to become exceptional leaders along the way.

A highlighted course in the elementary civics curriculum is entitled *Larry the Lion on the Loose*. This activity features Larry the Lion who escaped from a visiting circus. Students are appointed to a government role and must work together to respond to the issue of the escaped lion. In this lesson, students get to explore the separate ways in which governments can work together to solve a problem. They learn what services each type of government provides along with learning how they keep our communities safe, all in a fun and interactive environment.

In the middle school curriculum, the lesson plan entitled *What Should New Residents Know About Their Local Government* is a wonderful way for students to dive deeper into the origins, functions, and structure of their local government. This is a fantastic course that allows students to practice their research and communication skills in a way that can also display their artistic skills. This activity becomes a fun yet informative way to learn about their local government.

The high school curriculum includes lesson plans that go deeper into the world of government. In *Federalism and Types of Governments*, students watch two videos created by Professor Kenneth Bickers, Chair of the University of Colorado's Political Science Department, as part of his Campaign and Elections course. This lesson plan allows more advanced government students a chance to review

a more complex and analytic perspective of federalism and types of government in the United States. Not only does this course allow for students to experience a college lecture, but they also have the opportunity to be thinking and discussing materials at a college level.



In addition to the many different lesson plans that can be found on the website, the LOLG program also holds a "Local Governments in Action" poster contest aimed toward helping students in kindergarten through 5th grade think about how important local government services are and then expressing that in a drawing. The winning entries are then featured in a yearly calendar and distributed to teachers and local government officials across the state.

In addition, the curriculum writer for LOLG travels across Colorado to conduct training for teachers on how to maximize their use of the LOLG curriculum materials. This is a terrific way for teachers to learn about helpful tips in keeping their students engaged in learning the importance of being active, involved citizens in their communities.

Another great resource that LOLG provides educators with is the e-newsletter. These quarterly newsletters contain new lesson announcements, opportunities to connect with local officials, tips for tying current events into classroom lessons, and much more.

SDA's CEO, Ann Terry, is thrilled with the continued success of the LOLG program. "We are so proud of the valuable information and resources that the LOLG program provides to teachers and students around the state. It is wonderful to see how kids of all ages can learn about the vital roles that local governments play in their communities."

Please visit www.lessonsonlocalgovernment.org to learn more and to access any of the resources and lesson plans. 🍌

COMMUNITY RESOURCE SERVICES



(303) 381-4960 • www.crsocolorado.com

Providing cost-effective, customized
management and accounting services

Over 200 Clients & Growing!



ICENOGLE SEAVER POGUE

A Professional Corporation
Attorneys at Law

Serving Colorado Special Districts & Other Political Subdivisions

4725 South Monaco Street, Suite 360, Denver, Colorado 80237
www.isp-law.com | 303.292.9100

GMS
INC

CONSULTING
ENGINEERS

Water

Supply
Treatment
Storage
Distribution

Wastewater

Collection
Lift Stations
Force Mains
Treatment

Funding Assistance

Grant & Funding Assistance
Feasibility Studies

Drainage

Hydrology
Detention
Conveyance Systems

Facilities Management

GIS Mapping
Operations Consultation

Utility Consultants

Municipalities
Special Districts
Non-Profits

Utilities

Planning
Permitting

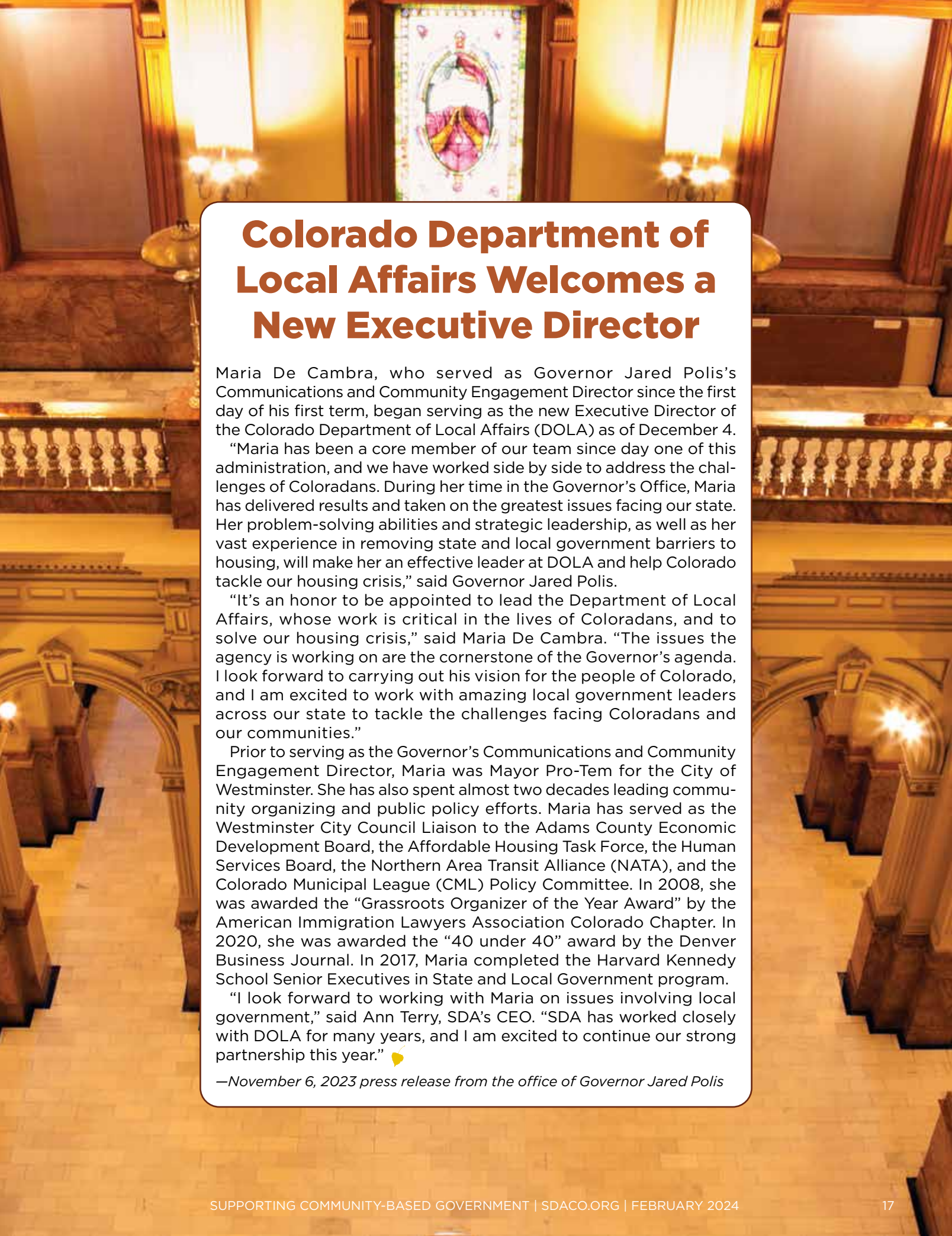
GMS Inc.

Serving Colorado and Kansas

(719) 475-2935

Colorado Springs, CO

jmeyer@gmsengr.com



Colorado Department of Local Affairs Welcomes a New Executive Director

Maria De Cambra, who served as Governor Jared Polis's Communications and Community Engagement Director since the first day of his first term, began serving as the new Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) as of December 4.

"Maria has been a core member of our team since day one of this administration, and we have worked side by side to address the challenges of Coloradans. During her time in the Governor's Office, Maria has delivered results and taken on the greatest issues facing our state. Her problem-solving abilities and strategic leadership, as well as her vast experience in removing state and local government barriers to housing, will make her an effective leader at DOLA and help Colorado tackle our housing crisis," said Governor Jared Polis.

"It's an honor to be appointed to lead the Department of Local Affairs, whose work is critical in the lives of Coloradans, and to solve our housing crisis," said Maria De Cambra. "The issues the agency is working on are the cornerstone of the Governor's agenda. I look forward to carrying out his vision for the people of Colorado, and I am excited to work with amazing local government leaders across our state to tackle the challenges facing Coloradans and our communities."

Prior to serving as the Governor's Communications and Community Engagement Director, Maria was Mayor Pro-Tem for the City of Westminster. She has also spent almost two decades leading community organizing and public policy efforts. Maria has served as the Westminster City Council Liaison to the Adams County Economic Development Board, the Affordable Housing Task Force, the Human Services Board, the Northern Area Transit Alliance (NATA), and the Colorado Municipal League (CML) Policy Committee. In 2008, she was awarded the "Grassroots Organizer of the Year Award" by the American Immigration Lawyers Association Colorado Chapter. In 2020, she was awarded the "40 under 40" award by the Denver Business Journal. In 2017, Maria completed the Harvard Kennedy School Senior Executives in State and Local Government program.

"I look forward to working with Maria on issues involving local government," said Ann Terry, SDA's CEO. "SDA has worked closely with DOLA for many years, and I am excited to continue our strong partnership this year." 🍷

—November 6, 2023 press release from the office of Governor Jared Polis

You Only Have Until March 1 to Receive a 25% Discount on Your SDA Membership!

Did you know that you can receive a 25% discount on your SDA membership for this year? All you have to do is renew by March 1!

If you are a district and you renew your membership by March 1, 2024 (and pay by July 1, 2024), you will receive a 25% discount! It's that easy!

If you are an associate member and are interested in a booth

at this year's SDA Annual Conference, make sure you renew by mid-February so that you are all set before the exhibitor sign up opens in late February (please see page 3 for the exact date).

To begin the quick renewal process, simply go online to the SDA website at www.sdaco.org (if you are a district, remember to have your 2024 budget information handy as you go through the

process).

If you have any questions or need any assistance, please feel free to contact Karla Boughey, Membership Services Coordinator, at 303-863-1733. (And if you don't remember your login and/or password, please don't create a new account; just give us a call and we can get you all squared away.)

Don't delay; go online and renew today! 🍌

Standard IRS Mileage Rate Increases for 2024

The Internal Revenue Service has issued the 2024 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical, or moving purposes. As units of local government, special districts do not need to calculate deductions for income tax purposes. However, many districts follow the standard IRS business mileage rate to reimburse Board members and employees for miles driven for district business.

Beginning on January 1, 2024, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups, or panel trucks) are:

- » 67 cents per mile driven for business use (up 1.5 cents from 2023)
- » 21 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes for qualified active-duty members of the Armed Forces (a decrease of 1 cent from 2023)
- » 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations (this rate is set by statute and remains unchanged from 2023)

These rates apply to electric and hybrid-electric automobiles as well as gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles.

The standard mileage rate for business use is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile. The rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs.

It is important to note that under the Tax Cuts

and Jobs Act, taxpayers cannot claim a miscellaneous itemized deduction for unreimbursed employee travel expenses. Taxpayers also cannot claim a deduction for moving expenses, unless they are members of the Armed Forces on active duty moving under orders to a permanent change of station. For more details see *Moving Expenses for Members of the Armed Forces* on irs.gov.

Taxpayers always have the option of calculating the actual costs of using their vehicle rather than using the standard mileage rates.

Taxpayers can use the standard mileage rate, but generally must opt to use it in the first year the car is available for business use. Then, in later years, they can choose either the standard mileage rate or actual expenses. Leased vehicles must use the standard mileage rate method for the entire lease period (including renewals) if the standard mileage rate is chosen.

Notice 2024-08, posted on irs.gov, contains the optional 2024 standard mileage rates as well as the maximum automobile cost used to calculate the allowance under a fixed and variable rate (FAVR) plan. In addition, the notice provides the maximum fair market value of employer-provided automobiles first made available to employees for personal use in calendar year 2024 for which employers may use the fleet-average valuation rule in or the vehicle cents-per-mile valuation rule. 🍌

—Internal Revenue Service



HIGHSTREET

TCW Risk Management

We offer comprehensive insurance solutions specializing in Colorado's public sector, providing the level of service you deserve.

Mark Carlson

President

Cindy Myers

President, Employee Benefits

Employee Benefits

Property and Liability

Workers' Compensation

303.368.5757 | 800.530.3001

www.hsip.com/tcw

384 Inverness Parkway, Suite 170, Englewood, CO 80112



Innovation ~ Creativity ~ Fiscal Responsibility ~ Integrity



Water & Wastewater Treatment Solutions

Serving Colorado & Wyoming

Maintenance ~ Operations ~ Management

Special Services ~ Problem Solving



Call 866-333-9383 or visit www.RECinc.net



Scan this QR Code with your 'smart' phone to visit us on the Web

DRAIN FACTS

Brochures and Resources Available
for **Water and Wastewater Districts**

Educate Homeowners on Sewer Backups:

- Steps to Respond
- Lateral Line Responsibility and Insurance Options Available
- Preventative Advice
- Detailed List of "Do Not Flush" Items

