



County Fiscal Conditions: Communications Toolkit

Social media posts, visuals, and editorial
templates for counties

Based on survey responses from 60 Colorado counties

HOW COUNTIES CAN USE THIS TOOLKIT

What's Inside	How to use
• Shareable infographic • Social media post templates • Visual guidance for counties • Letter-to-the-editor template	• Copy and paste as-is or lightly customize • Add a brief local example if desired • Share on social media or submit to local newspapers

This toolkit is informational. It is designed to help counties share consistent statewide context while reflecting local realities. Access additional materials [HERE](#)

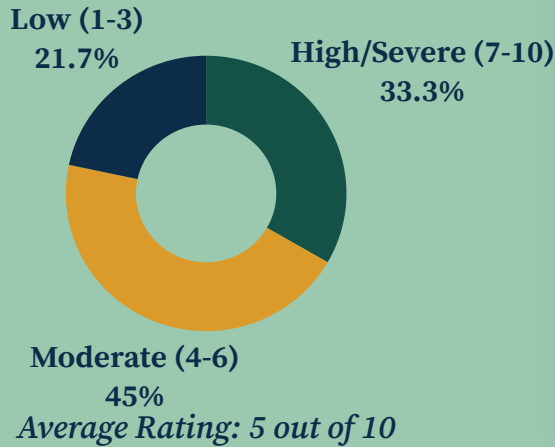


Colorado
Counties, Inc.

County Fiscal Challenges

Survey Insights from 60 Colorado Counties

County Fiscal Stress Levels



Top Budget Pressures



Inflationary Costs



Rising Personnel & Pension Costs



Declining Tax Revenue



Reduced State & Federal Funding

Capital Project Delays

12%

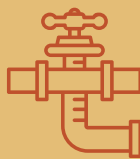
of Counties delaying projects



Road & Bridge
Repairs



Building
Upgrades



Infrastructure
Delays

Service Reductions

52%

of Counties experiencing service reductions



Hiring
Freezes



Position
Cuts



Benefit
Reductions

Key Concerns



Statutory Challenges



Depleting Reserves



Deferred Maintenance



Public Safety

County Fiscal Challenges

Survey Insights from 60 Colorado Counties

Colorado Counties Face Growing Budget Strain

A March 2026 survey of 60 Colorado counties shows that many local governments are under increasing financial pressure, even though most are still meeting required services. On average, counties describe their fiscal condition as moderately stressed, with about one-third reporting high or severe stress. Many counties note that their budgets are balanced only because of difficult, and unsustainable tradeoffs.

Counties across the state report similar challenges. Inflation continues to drive up every day operating costs, construction expenses, and the price of goods and services. Personnel costs—especially health insurance and pension obligations—are rising faster than revenues. At the same time, counties face uncertainty around state and federal funding, swings in sales and property tax collections, and increasing demand for health, behavioral health, and human services. Many counties emphasize that unfunded or underfunded mandates further stretch limited local dollars.

More than half of surveyed counties have taken steps to reduce costs or scale back services. Common actions include hiring freezes, leaving vacant positions unfilled, reducing employee benefits or increasing cost sharing, and, in higher-stress counties, layoffs or reduced service levels. The services most often affected include general government operations, road and bridge programs, and community services such as parks, libraries, and local grants. While public safety and human services are typically prioritized, some counties report growing strain even in these areas.

Budget pressure also affects long-term investments. About one in eight counties report delaying major capital projects to balance their operating budgets. Deferred projects most commonly include road and bridge maintenance, equipment replacement, courthouse and jail upgrades, public safety facilities, and routine building repairs such as HVAC systems. Counties stress that these delays do not save money in the long run but instead increase future costs, safety risks, and repair needs.

Despite these challenges, most counties report they are still meeting legal service requirements. However, this is increasingly done by operating at minimum service levels, cutting non-required programs, stretching staff workloads, using reserves, or postponing maintenance. Many counties caution that these approaches cannot continue indefinitely without additional risk to services and infrastructure.

Looking ahead, counties expect fiscal pressure to continue due to ongoing inflation, rising personnel costs, and the growing impact of deferred capital needs. Many respondents warn that, without more stable funding, greater flexibility, or cost relief, no county services can be considered fully protected in future budget cycles.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAPTIONS FOR COUNTIES

LINKEDIN

Colorado counties are navigating growing fiscal pressures driven by inflation, personnel costs, and funding uncertainty.

A recent statewide survey with responses from 60 counties highlights common challenges, including service reductions and delayed capital investments, that local governments are addressing while continuing to meet core responsibilities.

The infographic below offers a snapshot of what counties across Colorado are experiencing today.

These trends reflect conversations happening here in [COUNTY NAME] as well.

INSTAGRAM

County budgets are under pressure statewide.

Colorado counties recently participated in a statewide survey highlighting rising costs, staffing challenges, and delayed infrastructure investments.

More than 60 counties responded, showing these pressures are being felt across rural and urban communities alike — including here in [COUNTY NAME].

FACEBOOK

What's happening with county budgets across Colorado?

More than 60 counties recently participated in a statewide survey examining current fiscal conditions. The results show growing budget pressure driven by inflation, rising personnel costs, and funding uncertainty.

Like many counties, [COUNTY NAME] continues working to balance essential services while managing these challenges locally.

The infographic below highlights what counties statewide are experiencing.

X (TWITTER)

County budgets are under pressure statewide. A recent survey of 60+ Colorado counties shows rising costs, staffing challenges, and delayed infrastructure investments, challenges many counties are navigating locally.

VISUALS COUNTIES CAN SHARE

All shareable visual materials referenced in this toolkit are available through the County Fiscal Conditions Communications Resources Google Drive folder.

The folder includes the full statewide infographic as well as individual charts and stat graphics cut from the infographic that counties may use depending on platform and audience.

Access materials [HERE](#)

Full Infographic (Recommended)

Counties may share the full statewide infographic as-is on social media, in newsletters, or on county websites to provide comprehensive context.

Infographic Segments & Stat Graphics

The Google Drive folder includes pre-cropped sections of the infographic, such as individual charts, key statistics, and call-out graphics. These segments are designed for easy posting and may be used independently.

Common uses:

- Instagram and Facebook posts
- X (Twitter) graphics
- Carousel or story formats
- Newsletter highlights

TEMPLATE: LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Headline (customized by county): Colorado Counties Are Feeling Budget Strain: Here's What That Looks Like Locally

By: [Name], [Title – e.g., County Commissioner], [County Name]

Coloradans are hearing a lot about the state budget, a \$1.5 billion shortfall, difficult tradeoffs, and a reliance on one time solutions to balance the books. What may receive less attention is that counties across Colorado are navigating many of the same pressures at the local level

Recently, Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI) surveyed counties statewide to better understand current fiscal conditions. Sixty counties responded, offering a clear and compelling picture of the challenges facing local governments that deliver essential services every day. According to the survey, about one third of counties report high or severe fiscal stress, with an average fiscal health rating of 5 out of 10 statewide. Just over half of responding counties have already implemented cost saving measures or service reductions, and roughly one in eight have delayed capital or facility projects to maintain balanced budgets.

These pressures are driven by familiar forces. Counties cite inflationary cost increases, rising personnel and pension expenses, funding uncertainty, and growing demand for critical services such as public safety, health, and human services. Like the state, counties are balancing competing priorities while facing costs that continue to rise faster than revenues.

Here in [COUNTY NAME], these challenges are not abstract. [INSERT 1–2 LOCAL EXAMPLES]

Examples might include:

- Delayed road, bridge, or facility maintenance
- Hiring freezes or vacant positions left unfilled
- Scaling back non statutory programs to protect core services
- Increased pressure on staff to do more with fewer resources

At the end of the day, counties want the same thing as the state: a Colorado where communities can thrive, infrastructure is maintained, and essential services remain strong. Achieving that goal will require continued collaboration, transparency, and long term fiscal solutions at every level of government.

The full CCI infographic summarizing county fiscal conditions is available here [[LINK](#)].