

ADAMS COUNTY | 2020 COMMUNITY REPORT



ADAMS COUNTY
COLORADO

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Left to Right: Eva J. Henry, Mary Hodge, Emma Pinter—chair, Steve O'Dorisio, Charles "Chaz" Tedesco

Letter from the *Commissioners*

If 2020 has been a year of anything, it has been a year of change. In the summer of 2019, we gathered for the Adams County Fair, hosted our first State dinner with the Governor, and enjoyed parades and parties with large groups of friends. This year looked very different.

In a year that has been like no other, your Adams County Commissioners are here for you. When our buildings closed in March, county leadership was responsive and quick, rapidly setting up staff to work from home so that YOU, the residents, never missed a day of service. The Human Services Center spent hours on the phone, sometimes with a single applicant, to ensure everyone who qualified for services – from employment resources to food assistance – was helped. Our community partners stepped up too, providing resources to businesses and implementing services and programs for our aging adults.

Our Parks & Open Space team never missed a beat, making sure open spaces were in good condition so you could get out and take a walk with family or catch a fish with a friend. We hope you will continue to walk with us along the trails or take a drive through Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

Throughout the year, free COVID-19 tests were offered in Aurora, Brighton, Commerce City, Northglenn, Federal Heights, and Westminster, with the Federal Heights Water World location set to continue free testing through March 2021. We have given away thousands of free masks and baskets of food. We also know that MANY of you went out of your way to help. You shopped for an elderly neighbor, made small childcare pods, dusted off your sewing machine, and thanked a truck driver.

Despite the hardship of 2020, hope continues all around us. Our firefighters

stepped up to save the state from disastrous wildfires, our farmers worked harder than ever, and our doctors and nurses have been steadfast in supporting their patients. All those doctors, nurses, farmers, and firefighters call Adams County home. It is more important than ever that we acknowledge our communal strength.

The stories are endless. You each have done all you can to show compassion and help a friend or help a new friend. We, your Commissioners, are incredibly grateful for the strength of our community.

We hope that in this community report you will find the many resources and services available in Adams County and one that may work for you, should you need it. We want you to know we are here, and we are committed to providing resources to our residents through the pandemic and well beyond.

Adams County *Elected Officials*



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Letter from the County Manager

There really are no words to adequately describe this year. When I was a student at Brighton High School in the 90s, we studied the Spanish Flu and the pandemic that plagued the globe 100 years ago. Reading about it in a history book was disturbing, and we all know living through the real thing has been the most challenging period of

our lives. As County Manager serving the community I grew up in, providing assistance to those of you directly impacted by COVID-19 has been my primary focus this year. As we (gladly) flip the calendar to 2021, we will continue to dedicate resources to these response and recovery efforts while maintaining our commitment to the core services we are proud to provide.

While there were many hardships this year, there were also stories of heroism. Many people stepped forward within our communities to support family, friends, and even complete strangers who needed help. Those kind acts inspire all of us, and I am grateful to the individuals and groups who rallied to support their communities.

We were the first county to close our buildings in March with the intention of reducing exposure to our employees and residents while keeping our community safe and healthy. Within days of closing, hundreds of employees were set up to work from home and modified service delivery methods were established. Our staff worked tirelessly so that we could continue providing essential services.

Over the next few weeks, as the need for assistance in our community grew, we implemented programs – from housing assistance, to resources for our small businesses, to free COVID-19 testing sites – to meet those needs.

The county received \$90,285,974 in CARES Act funding and immediately created a distribution formula to provide aid to our municipalities, school districts, and local partners. It was my goal to ensure all towns and cities in the county had funding to provide grants and loans to local restaurants and school districts could provide computers to students to help them connect to the online learning environment.

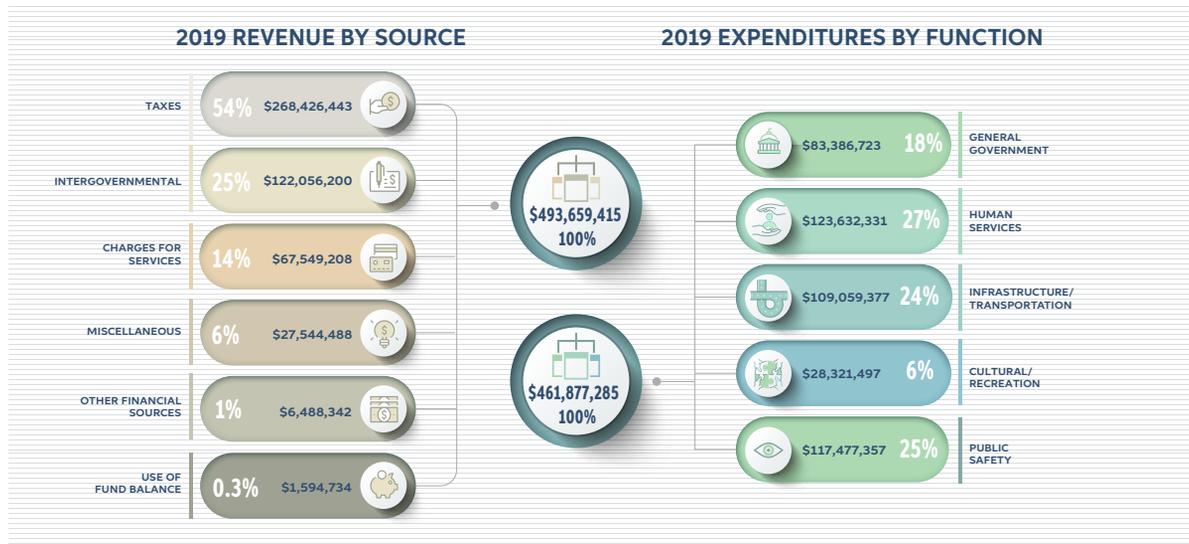
As we move into the new year, we know there is hope on the horizon, but until we get there, the need for resources remains in our community. We will continue our efforts to keep our community safe, our economy stable, and prioritize recovery efforts.

To help keep our residents informed, we will be launching an Adams County COVID View app in the coming days. The app shows real-time outbreak data for Adams County, along with current case stats and restrictions. In addition, the app provides free COVID-19 testing site locations and many other COVID-19 resources. I encourage you all to download the app to help make decisions that keep your family safe and healthy.

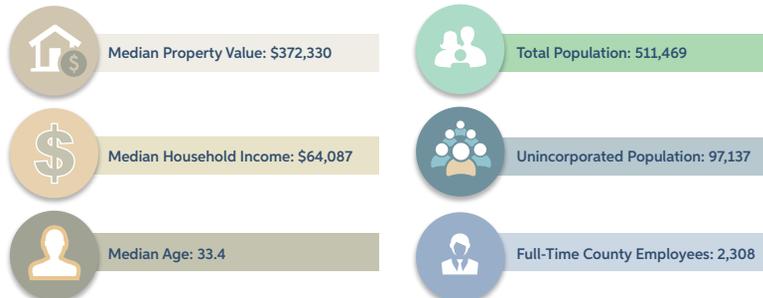
We are Adams!

- Raymond H. Gonzales

Your Tax Dollars at Work



Adams At-A-Glance



CARES

ACT FUNDING ALLOCATIONS



CARES ALLOCATIONS

\$90,285,974

In June 2020, Adams County received \$90,285,974 from the U.S. Treasury. To provide resources and help those in need in our community, the funds were allocated to county municipalities, school districts, fire districts, community partners, and used for personnel purposes.

FIRE DISTRICTS



\$1,000,000

to Fire Districts to support PPE, testing, etc.

TRI-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



\$3,071,421

for contact tracing programs, Community Navigators and Messaging Program, and Immunization Task Force

SCHOOL DISTRICTS



\$22,234,969

Supported eight school districts in Adams County by using a population/free and reduced lunch calculation, with additional requests.

✓ Mapleton 1	\$4,566,297.84
✓ Adams 12 Five Star Schools	\$6,855,346.90
✓ Adams County 14	\$1,748,518.97
✓ School District 27J	\$1,323,531.82
✓ Bennett 29J	\$72,639.49
✓ Strasburg 31J	\$255,873.06
✓ Westminster Public Schools	\$3,960,559.67
✓ Adams-Arapahoe 28J	\$3,452,201.25

CITIES & TOWNS



\$34,012,424

Supported all cities and towns in the county by providing funds based on population for each municipality to provide grants and loans to restaurants and support programs to meet the needs of the community.

✓ Arvada	\$242,993
✓ Aurora	\$3,757,2100
✓ Bennett	\$167,211
✓ Brighton	\$4,191,233
✓ Commerce City	\$4,646,885
✓ Federal Heights	\$1,107,884
✓ Northglenn	\$3,186,617
✓ Thornton	\$11,205,301
✓ Westminster	\$5,507,090



Responding to COVID-19

RESPONSE & RECOVERY TEAMS

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, seven Response & Recovery Teams were created to gather resources and implement programs for Adams County residents who have been affected by COVID-19. Each team is spearheaded by an Adams County commissioner and a partnering co-chair and includes county employees and members of the community who have expertise in each respective area. The seven focus areas include:

AGING ADULTS SERVICES



This team focuses on meeting the needs of older adults during the COVID-19 crisis. Partnering with local agencies, the team implemented the Well Elder Program, which provides services to aging adults. The program consists of structured, regularly scheduled calls to aging adults in Adams County. During each call, volunteers will provide telephone companion support, reassurance, resource triage, and cross-agency referrals.

BUSINESS SUPPORT



Working to support businesses during the COVID-19 crisis, this team established several programs to help keep businesses open.

CHILDCARE



The primary focus of this team is ensuring all people who live in Adams County have access to sustainable, affordable, and high-quality childcare during the COVID-19 crisis. Resources include a guide for parents to safely send children to daycare, guidance for childcare providers, free and

low-cost childcare for frontline workers, and information on where to find and purchase personal protective equipment (PPE).

UNINSURED AND HEALTHCARE ACCESS



This team focuses on providing uninsured residents with access to healthcare and other needs during the COVID-19 crisis. This team helped establish several testing sites across the county providing free COVID-19 testing to those who do not have health insurance or are experiencing homelessness. Testing sites are located in Aurora, Brighton, Commerce City, Federal Heights, Northglenn, and Westminster. Other resources include mental health assistance, Medicaid guidance, and general resources on how to stay healthy.

HOUSING STABILITY



The team's goal is to keep people in their homes and ensure residents' housing needs are met.

SUPPORT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED AND FUTURE WORKFORCE



Supported all cities and towns in the county by providing funds based on population for each municipalities to provide grants and loans to restaurants and support programs that met the needs of the community.





Riverdale
ANIMAL SHELTER



Riverdale Animal Shelter - Now Open

After months of planning and construction, the new Riverdale Animal Shelter (formerly Adams County Animal Shelter/Adoption Center) opened in early October. The shelter staff worked with community partners to transition the animals into the new 43,000 plus square foot facility, surrounded by beautiful new outdoor space and walking paths – something the old shelter lacked.

The new shelter is located at 12155 Park Blvd. – the newly created main thoroughfare that runs north from 120th Pkwy. through Riverdale Regional Park in Brighton. The shelter will take a holistic approach, focusing on the animals and the families who adopt them, as well as offering a range of animal welfare services for residents.

The facility boasts state-of-the-art features that aim to improve the experience for its animal residents, as well as those looking for their next furry family member. Expanded features include ample and modernized kennel spaces for cats and dogs and additional housing for small mammals and exotics.

The enhanced health clinic, improved noise abatement, additional public parking, private adoption rooms, and a dedicated lost and found lobby will help streamline the adoption process and improve efforts to reunite more lost pets with their families. A large multipurpose room will allow for more frequent public vaccination clinics, behavior support for new adopters, and humane education programs for youth to learn more about animal safety and care.



Due to COVID-19 the grand opening celebration has been postponed to a later date, but the new shelter will continue to provide services with modified operations by appointment. For more information, please call 720.523.PETS (7387).



Adams County Trail Clean-Up

In 2019, the Board of County Commissioners approved \$1.5 million for the clean-up and restoration of the trail systems and waterway habitats along riparian corridors throughout the county, with the ultimate goal of safer trails and waterways for residents.

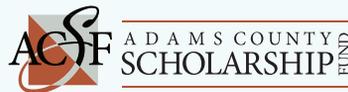
There are three main components to the cleanup. The first is removal of Russian Olive trees, an invasive, non-native species that has overtaken the landscape, creating hiding spaces, erosion issues, and is blocking growth of native species. Clearing these overgrown areas will create cleaner and safer trails for families, friends, and the community to enjoy.

The second piece of the initiative includes cleaning up debris left behind from homeless encampments and putting in place ground cover material that will help keep out the Russian Olive trees and promote growth of native plants.

The final piece of the plan is to replace outdated benches and picnic tables throughout the trail system and restore the riparian waterways along the Clear Creek and South Platte River trails in hopes of stimulating economic growth in these areas. While walking, running, or biking on the South Platte River Trail, visitors can check out the new carved wood sculptures recently added.

Trail clean-up isn't the only thing happening along the trails. The new park ranger program was implemented to ensure the trail system remains safe through daily outreach along all trails, which will include interactions with those experiencing homelessness and other trail patrons. Initially – in response to the COVID-19 pandemic – the Community Safety & Well-Being Department provided outreach and resources, hygiene kits, and even a peanut butter and jelly sandwich when needed, to those experiencing homelessness along the trails. In the coming months, the park ranger program will shift back to its original focus of ensuring the safety of all patrons along the trails.

Providing safe and clean trails and waterways for patrons is our goal. Combining efforts to make our trails and waterways accessible to all, while providing resources and assistance to those in need, is one way we can meet the collective needs of our community to create beautiful and safe recreational spaces to enjoy for years to come.



Something to Celebrate!

Adams County Scholarship Fund Celebrates First Cohort Graduates

This spring the inaugural 2016 Adams County Scholarship Fund cohort had a lot to celebrate, despite not being able to walk across the graduation stage. 44 of the original 57 students awarded scholarships in 2016 graduated. Five additional students graduated early in 2019, bringing the total to 49 students who graduated in four years or less – a graduation rate of 85%, which exceeds the national average of 33% for four-year graduation rates. We knew these students were impressive in 2016 when they received the scholarships, and they continue to amaze us four years later. They have a lot to be proud of!

Even through the pandemic, the program is moving forward. In 2021, \$1,050,286 will be allocated in student scholarships. For scholarship recipients, please check the following school district websites: Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Adams County District 14, Bennett School District 29J, Mapleton Public Schools, School District 27J, and Westminster Public Schools. In 2022, an additional \$37,258 will be available for a total of \$1,087,544 for scholarships.

The scholarships are funded with the voter-approved 3% sales tax on retail marijuana sales in the county. In addition, the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative matches the sales tax funds to increase the scholarship pool.

High-achieving students enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program are eligible to apply for one of the scholarships.





Night of Lights

Holiday Lights across the County

Lights at the Parks

For the first time ever, Twin Lakes Park and Rotella Park will have lights up in the park for the holiday season. Guests can enjoy the festive lights while taking an evening stroll through the two parks.

Twin Lakes Park: 226-318 W. 70th Ave., Denver

Rotella Park: 1824 Coronado Pkwy. N., Denver

Riverdale Regional Park

Guests can drive along Park Blvd. and enjoy a the festive lights throughout the park. Don't forget to check out the animated Christmas tree at the park entrance. There is no cost to enjoy the lighted drive through the park, and the displays will be up through Jan. 1.

Riverdale Regional Park

9755 Henderson Rd., Brighton

A Night of Lights Dec. 18

On Dec. 18, we lit up the night to share some joy, come together as a community, and show support for our frontline workers. Municipalities, businesses, and residents turned on their lights so families driving around could enjoy the festive lights on a chilly winter night, while showing appreciation to our frontline workers.

We appreciate you and your commitment to keeping our community safe. Thanks for your help in making this a really special night in our community.



2020 | Coming Together for the Community



COVID-19 testing sites across Adams County



Helping our aging population by providing food and resources



County employees preparing to deliver personal protective equipment to senior centers



A shelter cat enjoying the new Riverdale Animal Shelter while waiting to be adopted



Passing out fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, bread, and diapers to residents in need



Opening of the new Leader Blade Station to serve residents in eastern Adams County



Adding safety measures in county buildings to better protect residents and staff



New wood carvings along the trails for residents to enjoy



Festive lights in Twin Lakes, Rotella, and Riverdale Regional Parks



IT passing out computers to Head Start families



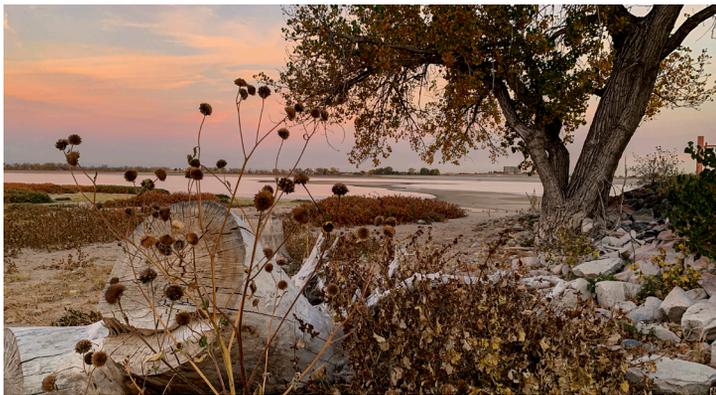


ACCESS ADAMS ONLINE

ADCOGOV.ORG

Access Adams Online to take care of many services from the comfort of your own home. Select offices are open to the public by appointment only. Most services can be completed online. Visit adcogov.org for specific office information.

- [Apply for Assistance](#)
- [Driver's License Information](#)
- [E-Permit Center \(apply for permits online\)](#)
- [Get a Ballot](#)
- [Look Up Property Information/Zoning](#)
- [Pay My Taxes](#)
- [Perform Public Records Search](#)
- [Renew Vehicle Registration](#)
- [Schedule a Building Inspection](#)
- [OpenGov](#)
- [Pay My Stormwater Utility Fee](#)



Passage of Ballot Measures 1A and 1B

Thank you, Adams County residents, for passing ballot measures 1A and 1B, which continue the previously voter-approved one quarter of one percent sales tax to provide Adams County the needed resources to plan for growth, including protecting water quality; maintaining and improving roads and bridges; protecting wetlands, rivers, streams, and open spaces; and maintaining and improving parks. We appreciate you supporting our community!



COVID VIEW App Coming Soon

The COVID View app shows outbreak data for Adams County, along with current case stats and restrictions. In addition, the app provides free COVID-19 testing site. Users can also find local restaurants offering curbside and takeout services under the AdCo To Go section. If you're a local restaurant, add your restaurant to the list. The app will be available soon at the Apple Play Store and Google Play.



EXPLORE ADAMS COUNTY

- adcogov.org
- adamscountycovid19.org
- adamscountyfair.com
- coloradoairandspaceport.com
- epermits.adcogov.org
- riverdaleanimalshelter.org
- riverdaleregionalpark.org

STAY CONNECTED

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