



NEWS RELEASE

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GUNNISON COUNTY WINS VOICE OF THE PEOPLE AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN MOBILITY AND TRANSFORMATION IN BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Gunnison County, Colorado – Gunnison County, CO was presented the 2014 Voice of the People Award for Excellence in Mobility and the 2014 Voice of the People Award for Transformation in Built Environment at the 100th annual International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Conference in Charlotte, NC earlier this month. Based on responses from The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS™), residents of Gunnison County reported the highest levels of satisfaction with mobility and the highest increase in satisfaction with built environment compared with responses from all other jurisdictions participating in The NCS™.

In May 2008, Gunnison County began a process of integrated organizational and departmental strategic planning to change the culture and language of the County staff from focusing on what we do to a focus on what we provide to our customers. "These awards are especially gratifying because they are completely based on the opinions of the customers we serve. As such, they represent a significant milestone in the County's efforts to focus on delivering results to our customers," said County Manager Matthew Birnie.

With the County's strategic plan serving as a major driving force, the following results related to Transformation in Built Environment and Mobility were achieved:

- In January 2013, the Gunnison Valley Regional Housing Authority (GVRHA) was created to further advocate, promote, plan and provide the long-term supply of desirable and affordable housing in Gunnison County. In May 2014, the GVRHA received an award of \$5.3 million in tax credits over a 10-year period from the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority for a future low-income housing project involving 30 one- and two-bedroom units located in central Crested Butte.
- Community Development, Gunnison County's land use and planning department, underwent many staffing and procedural changes. A new director with a strong background in management, development review services and long-range planning was hired. Additionally, the department's business plan was revised, customer service was enhanced and staff members were empowered.
- The Gunnison Valley Rural Transportation Authority, which provides ADA-accessible bus transportation at no cost to as many as 87,000 travelers each year to/from Gunnison, Crested Butte and Mt. Crested Butte, successfully coordinated with the Colorado Department of Transportation and municipalities and counties along the route to create affordable bus service between Gunnison and Denver. Responding to customer requests, the RTA will be doubling summer season bus trips, adding a stop at the CB South subdivision, and increasing service by 45% to help reduce overcrowding.

By adoption of the current iteration of the County's strategic plan in June 2013, these new goals were established:

- By 2015, Gunnison County will begin a courthouse project, securing funding not derived from new taxes, in order to address operational and energy efficiency, employee productivity, access, safety and judicial needs. *(Note: By capitalizing on the timely low cost of borrowing and construction, the County is scheduled to complete this project by mid-2015.)*
- By 2015, residents and visitors of Gunnison County will enjoy the benefits of a sound and well-managed infrastructure, as measured by:
 - 75% of County residents rate the quality or ease of use of roads and trails as "excellent" or "good".

- By December 31, 2017, Gunnison County will have hard-surfaced 14 miles of County roads in order to reduce maintenance costs and improve the travel experience.
- By December 31, 2017, 90% of County maintained road miles will meet the identified maintenance service level.

The Voice of the People Awards are presented by ICMA and National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to recognize the highest quality from the perspectives of the residents themselves in the areas of community engagement, safety, mobility, foundations of livability, recreation and wellness, education and enrichment, natural environment, built environment, and economy.

The NCS™ is a community assessment tool that reports resident opinions and satisfaction with local government and services based on a scientific and representative sample to inform budgeting, performance measurement and program planning. Communities winning the Voice of the People Award for Excellence had the highest ratings in service delivery, satisfaction with local government and positive perception among residents compared to all other jurisdictions that administered The NCS. Those winning the Voice of the People Award for Transformation displayed the most improvement since previous surveys compared to all other jurisdictions.

For more information, contact County Administration at (970) 641-0248. Biennial Citizen Surveys can be found on the County's website at <http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/285/Citizen-Surveys>.