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Weld County Board of Commissioners
915 10th Street
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Board Members:

The Weld County 2010 proposed budget for operations and capital outlay totals a gross amount of \$171,989,334, with a net of \$168,417,173 when interfund transfers are excluded. The Internal Service Funds total an additional \$23,689,772. The budget has been prepared in accordance with your directives developed during the budget process. The budget is funded with revenue estimates of \$103,571,933, anticipated fund balances of \$42,015,927, and the maximum allowed property tax under Amendment One (TABOR) and the Weld County Home Rule Charter of \$96,940,646.

FINANCIAL PLAN

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND OUTLOOK

As we approach 2010, we stand more than a year into a grave economic crisis with a projected federal deficit of 13% of GDP. That is more than twice the size of the next largest deficit since World War II. This projected deficit is the culmination of a year when the federal government, at taxpayers' expense, acquired enormous stakes in the banking, auto, mortgage, healthcare and insurance industries.

In the short term there are worries of deflation until the economy recovers, but in the long term high inflation may well become a major problem. With the crisis and the ensuing economic downturn, the unfunded liabilities of federal programs, such as Social Security, federal pensions, Medicare and Medicaid, are all over the \$100 trillion mark. With U.S. GDP and federal tax receipts at about \$14 trillion and \$2.4 trillion respectively, such a debt all but guarantees higher interest rates, massive federal tax increases and eventually partial default on government promises in the long term.

With the fiscal picture the country faces and the monetary policies that have and will follow, we can expect rising prices and higher interest rates over the next four or five years. With the state tax limitations and Weld County's own five-percent property tax limitation, the inflationary

pressures from rising prices could make the financial challenges for Weld County very difficult, much like the late 1970's and early 1980's.

However, prior to facing those financial challenges we all must weather the current economic crisis of slow economic recovery and growing unemployment. The current economic crisis has taken its toll on the State of Colorado and Weld County. Historically, the Colorado economy has fared better than many other states during nationwide recession periods. Such decreased volatility in Colorado is attributable largely to the rather diverse nature of the Colorado economy. Both the national economy and broader global economy are in a state of disorder due to an unprecedented series of shocks to financial systems worldwide. The resultant difficulties posed by the current national recession have adversely impacted the Colorado economy and Weld County's economy. However, economic conditions in Colorado and Weld County are still generally expected to be more favorable than conditions nationally in 2010.

Weld County, like the rest of Colorado, has experienced job losses as consumer and corporate confidence dropped. This resulted in slower sales and significant corporate profitability losses that led to reduced production and ultimately to further job losses – continuing the downward cycle. While experiencing unemployment approaching 7.5-8.0%, Weld County is adding jobs in some industries, with the renewable energy economy being the prime example. Weld County has two Vestas wind blade manufacturing plants that will be open by the beginning of 2010 with over 2,000 new jobs, and Abound Solar, Inc. recently expanded into Weld County with 300 plus new jobs.

An area of major slowdown has been the construction industry in Weld County. The annual growth rate of three plus percent the last few years came to a stop in 2009, and is not expected to recover for at least two or three years as inventories of homes and commercial space are absorbed once the economy begins to recover. This has caused declines in revenues in the county on the negative side, but has also given the county a time to catch up in dealing with the past rapid growth which has already occurred.

The slowdown in the economy has also resulted in the local energy industry slowing down in the areas of exploration and production. This, coupled with the decline in energy prices, will adversely impact the county's assessed value in 2011. Plans have already been implemented in 2009 to deal with this problem in 2010-2011. Details of the response are in the 2010-2014 Budget Plan section of this document.

The State of Colorado government's budget woes will also impact Weld County government. As the recession causes a reduction in sales tax and income tax revenues, the state struggles to balance its budget. With many county programs tied to the finances of the state, the Weld County budget is always in jeopardy when the state begins to look for places to cut its budget. This problem will persist through 2010 and perhaps longer. Even if the economy rebounds, analysts are warning that income taxes from capital gains from sale of assets may lag several years due to the dramatic drop in the prices of equities and real estate. The portion of state and federal income tax from capital gains is significant.

The current recession has posed unprecedented challenges to policymakers and corporate leaders alike. As difficulties from the financial crisis persist nationally, consumer confidence, credit availability, and labor market disturbances will likely persist in Colorado. A recovery of the Colorado economy will be closely correlated with improvements in the national economy, and improvement in the national economy is contingent upon a variety of volatile factors. Anticipating the effects of future monetary and fiscal policy actions is quite difficult. Additionally, the overall effect of the enacted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 remains unknown, as does the lag between the legislation's implementation and consequent benefits.

FOR THE FUTURE

The main purpose of county government is to be able to continue providing essential public safety, health, welfare services, and a county transportation system. The national and international economies are struggling under unprecedented uncertainties and challenges. With indicators of housing market performance dropping to depths that haven't been seen in years, volatile energy and commodity prices, and slow economic growth, many local governments are feeling financial pressures. Fortunately, Weld County is weathering this storm better than many other local governments thanks to our past prudent and conservative financial management. Over the years Weld County has taken a number of steps to restrict spending and safeguard taxpayer dollars. However, despite these sound fiscal practices, Weld County will not escape some of the consequences of the economic downturn and economic turmoil around it.

As Weld County policymakers and managers face the next three to four years, it will take extra efforts on everyone's part to deliver conservative and balanced budgets in fiscal years 2010-2014. Based upon some reasonable projections of future assessed values and demand for services, it will be essential to develop budgets that tighten county government's belt, focus on critical services, and reflect the needs of the citizens of Weld County. While weathering these economic times over the next few years, the budget must continue to deliver essential services and also make strategic investments in human capital management, as well as the county's infrastructure, so that our county is well-positioned for a strong economic rebound when the downturn becomes an upturn.

The main issue facing Weld County is the impact that the drop in housing prices and the volatility of the price and production of oil and gas will have on Weld County's assessed value, which generates nearly 70% of the property taxes to support nearly 40% of the county's budget. With a reappraisal year in 2009 for the 2010 budget, residential property in Weld County dropped as much as 15-30% with an average impact of over a 9% reduction. This drop is more than offset by the rise in oil and gas assessed value in the same year. The problem will come in configuring the 2011 budget, because with the drop in oil and gas prices in 2009 the oil and gas assessed value may well drop back to 2007 levels. In doing a reasonable forecast of assessed values due to the drop in housing values and volatility of oil and gas values, the structural and cyclical problem of the property tax revenues for the next three years must be dealt with as one budgetary issue, and not left to be dealt with in the individual years – thus creating a major problem for 2011 and 2012. Hopefully, by 2013 the assessed values will begin to stabilize.

Another area of concern is the continued State of Colorado budget crisis with the drop in sales tax and income tax resulting from the economic slowdown. Many of the county's programs are dependent upon our funding partnership with the state. As the state seeks to balance its budget the county can expect cuts to state programs impacting the county until the economy and state revenues improve.

Challenging fiscal times test the strength of an organization's backbone, but they also provide an opportunity to review and strengthen policies, enhance the analytical knowledge of the organization, and inspire fresh perspectives. It is an opportunity for departmental-level reviews and analysis. It is a time to align strategies and programs to maximize the positive impacts on services to the county's residents and find innovative ways to reduce costs and leverage resources. A major challenge or crisis can provide impetus to innovate and make changes that would nearly be impossible in better times. As someone once said, "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste."

Prioritizing services is essential in the dealing with the budgetary challenge. Services cannot be provided as they always have been. There is probably some fat that can be trimmed from the existing service mix, but more likely Weld County will have to do more with less, do less of, or simply stop providing some services to concentrate on a more limited number of high priority programs.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

Revenue for general government functions including General, Special Revenue, Capital Expenditures, Internal Service, and Enterprise Funds total \$200,512,579 in 2010, an increase of 5.36 percent over 2009. The amount of revenue from various sources and the changes compared to 2009 are shown in the following tabulation:

Revenue Sources	2009 Amount	2009 Percent of Total	2010 Amount	2010 Percent of Total	Increase - Decrease from 2009
Property Taxes	\$ 76,642,132	40.3%	\$ 96,940,646	48.4%	\$ 20,298,514
Other Taxes	7,475,000	3.9%	8,030,000	4.0%	555,000
Licenses and Permits	1,893,900	1.0%	1,860,400	0.9%	- 33,500
Intergovernmental Revenue	57,304,370	30.1%	47,121,030	23.5%	- 10,183,340
Charges for Service	5,153,111	2.7%	5,131,355	2.6%	- 21,756
Paramedic Fees	5,692,558	4.3%	5,791,647	2.9%	99,089
Miscellaneous Revenue	8,214,875	3.0%	6,285,729	3.1%	- 1,929,146
Fee Accounts	7,425,300	3.9%	7,412,000	3.7%	- 13,300
Internal Service Charges	<u>20,507,205</u>	<u>10.8%</u>	<u>21,939,772</u>	<u>10.9%</u>	<u>1,432,467</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 190,308,451</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$ 200,512,579</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$ 10,204,128</u>

Expenditures by function for the General, Special Revenue, Capital Expenditures, Internal Services, and Enterprise Funds total \$192,106,945 for 2010, which is a decrease of 6.12 percent from 2009. The amounts by function and the decrease from 2009 are as follows:

Expenditure Sources	2009 Amount	2009 Percent of Total	2010 Amount	2010 Percent of Total	Increase - Decrease from 2009
General Government	\$ 27,255,421	13.3%	\$ 27,353,420	14.2%	\$ 97,999
Social Services	24,724,150	12.1%	24,491,500	12.8%	- 232,650
Road and Bridge	29,213,402	14.3%	27,550,340	1.3%	- 1,663,062
Public Safety	38,675,080	18.9%	38,414,905	20.0%	- 260,175
Human Services	14,681,871	7.2%	8,648,349	4.5%	- 6,033,522
Health	8,217,130	4.0%	8,622,014	4.5%	404,884
Capital	16,400,000	8.0%	10,000,000	5.2%	- 6,400,000
Public Works	2,489,227	1.2%	2,135,967	1.1%	- 353,260
Contingency	12,400,000	6.0%	13,400,000	7.0%	1,000,000
Miscellaneous	1,202,367	0.6%	675,958	0.4%	- 526,409
Culture and Recreation	948,026	0.5%	938,147	0.5%	- 9,879
Auxiliary	483,895	0.2%	394,926	0.2%	- 88,969
Paramedic Services	5,692,558	2.8%	5,791,647	3.0%	99,089
Internal Services	<u>22,257,205</u>	<u>10.9%</u>	<u>23,689,772</u>	<u>12.3%</u>	<u>1,432,567</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 204,640,332</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$ 192,106,945</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>\$ - 12,533,387</u>

Enterprise Operations: The County's enterprise operation is comprised of the Paramedic Service. The Paramedic Service is a county-wide advanced life support emergency medical service. The program is totally supported by fees. The operation anticipates nearly 14,425 calls in 2010 and generated revenue of \$5,791,647.

Capital Expenditures Fund: The Capital Expenditures Fund accounts for various capital improvement projects for county buildings. The 2010 program is funded at \$10,000,000, with \$7,300,000 from property tax, \$100,000 from capital expansion fees, \$2,000,000 from Energy Impact Grants, \$500,000 from a federal criminal justice grant for the crime lab, and \$100,000 from interest. Anticipated projects include \$5,000,000 for a Regional Crime Lab Building, \$250,000 for remodels and upgrades of Public Works facilities, and \$100,000 for special projects. A carry-over beginning fund balance of \$2,500,000 is anticipated, and \$7,150,000 ending reserve fund balance is anticipated at the end of 2010.

Debt Administration: In 2006, the county continues to have no bonded indebtedness. With the passage of HB1579 in 1981, Section 30-35-201, C.R.S., Weld County is now allowed the debt ceiling to be three percent of the assessed valuation of the county. Thus, Weld County maintains over a \$173 million allowable debt capacity in accordance with Colorado State statute. The 1997 Certificate of Participation Bond Issue for the construction of the Correctional Facility was paid off on the call date of August 1, 2007. Weld County currently has no debt of any type, one of only a few local jurisdictions which can make that claim.

Cash Management: Cash temporarily idle during the year will be invested in time deposits ranging up to 180 days to maturity. Interest earned on investments of cash held by the County Treasurer will be recorded as revenue in the General Fund, with the exception of interest attributed to the Insurance Fund, Capital Expenditure Fund, Health Insurance Fund, Trust Funds, and the interest earned on certain deposits held for other taxing authorities. The amount of interest anticipated in 2010 is \$2,538,000.

The county's investment policy is to minimize credit and market risks while maintaining a competitive yield on its portfolio. Accordingly, deposits are either insured by federal depository insurance or collateralized. All collateral on deposits is held either by the government, its agent or a financial institution's trust department in the government's name.

Risk Management: During 2010, Weld County will continue to be a member of Colorado Counties Casualty and Property Pool, therefore, all casualty insurance coverage is being provided via pooling with other Colorado counties. The pool offers full safety and risk management programs to minimize losses. Losses are funded on a self-insurance option basis. Worker's Compensation will be provided via a state approved self-insurance program.

Mill Levy: The mill levy will be 16.804, unchanged from last year. The assessed value for the 2010 Budget is \$5,768,903,016, which is up \$1,207,957,286 or 26.5 percent over last year. All classes of property increased in assessed value for the year, except vacant land, which is down \$11.1 million, or 9 percent and residential property, which is down \$110.96 million or 9%. The major increase is in oil and gas due to price and production being up. Oil and gas is up \$1,158.3 million, or 68 percent. Natural resources is up \$0.96 million, or 6 percent; agricultural property is up \$2.9 million, or 3 percent; industrial is up \$65.8 million, or 30 percent; commercial property is up \$48.4 million, or 7 percent; and State assessed property is up \$50.7 million, or 10 percent. There is an actual value increase of new construction of \$345.7 million.

Employee Compensation Pay: For the 2010 budget it is recommended not to provide any salary increase to Weld County employees. This is the first time in over 30 years this has happened, but is justified based upon the economic conditions, lack of turnover, labor market conditions, and salary survey data. Health insurance rates are anticipated to go up 9% for 2010. It is recommended that the county absorb the full rate increase, so employees do not have a reduction in net take home pay in 2010.

Fund Balances: County fund balances continue to remain very healthy, with an anticipated \$42,015,927 to begin 2010. This remains at one of the highest levels in many years. The strong fund balance figures have been sparked by a strong local economy the last few years, and the high assessed value from oil and gas revenues from the high prices in 2008. The ending fund balances are projected at \$50,421,561. However, the ending fund balance is actually understated because the Contingency Fund and Emergency Reserve Fund are appropriated, thus not showing up in the ending fund balance figure. These two amounts are not anticipated to be spent in 2010, and if no emergencies or unforeseen events happen, the amounts should be in the ending fund balance. There is no fund balance earmarked in the 2010 budget. All other fund balance amounts are undesignated. With the above projection, ending fund balances should be \$63,821,561.

MAJOR FACTORS IMPACTING THE 2010 BUDGET

The major factors impacting the 2010 budget are related to the economic slowdown. Revenues that are sensitive to the economy such as new construction, housing sales, car sales, and interest rates are all down. On the expense side the economic slowdown is impacting service demands in Planning and Building Inspection as growth slows. In addition, health and human services programs are seeing a rise in service demand as more citizens need assistance to cope with the economic conditions and job losses. As cited earlier, another area of concern is the continued State of Colorado budget crisis with the drop in sales tax and income tax resulting from the economic slowdown. Many of the county's programs are dependent upon our funding partnership with the state. As the state seeks to balance its budget the county can expect cuts to state programs impacting the county until the economy and state revenues improve.

The General Fund is funded at the level of \$72,722,495, down \$1,554,847. The budget for

general government functions is only up \$97,999, even with an increase of \$441,101 in election costs since 2010 is a general election year with general and primary elections. Information Services increased \$265,488 in costs due to the contract cost-of-living, transfer of a GIS employee to the contractor's payroll, and added capital costs. GIS is down \$112,477 due to the transfer of the position to the contractor's budget. The District Attorney's budget is down \$40,592 due the elimination of a clerical position as the office moves more towards paperless filings. Victim Witness is up \$25,709 from additional grant resources for staffing. The Building and Grounds budget has been reduced by \$207,015 because of lower energy costs. The Assessor reduced one Office Tech III, two Data Collector positions, and one Residential Appraisal position for a savings of \$154,406, plus a reduction of \$60,300 in postage, printing, and other professional services, for a total reduction of \$214,706. Capital equipment was reduced \$50,000. Planning is down \$140,261 with the elimination of a Planning Tech and Long Range Planner position due to the department's workload being down. Other departments are stable or down only slightly.

Public safety functions are down \$232,650. An Investigator position for the White Collar Crime Task Force (\$84,567) was reduced. An additional 0.5 FTE for a school resource officer was added, but the additional costs will be reimbursed by Mead High School. One SO Deputy II position was eliminated in the Traffic Enforcement unit. In the North Jail budget significant costs have been deferred by opening only 64 of the remaining 122 secure confinement beds in the new jail wing. The added cost to open the 64 beds was approximately \$645,000 with the addition of six Correctional Officer positions, however, part of this cost was offset by eliminating two Commander positions. Inmate census trends during the nine month period prior to the development of this budget indicate the 683 bed capacity should be adequate in 2010. The approximately \$900,000 in deferred jail cost is not a permanent cost savings as additional staff and capacity will be needed in the future. The Centennial Jail budget reflects the transfer of two entire programs, Pre-Trial Services (PTS) and In Custody Alternative Placement Program (ICAPP) to the newly created Justice Services Department in the amount of \$453,072 across all budget categories, including four FTE's associated with those programs. Personnel services in the Centennial Jail was reduced an additional \$137,589 by the elimination of two client manager positions and an inmate work crew supervisor in the Work Release Program. The utilization of Work Release has declined reflected further by reduced revenues from client participation fees. On June 29, 2009, the Board of County Commissioners created the *Justice Services Division*. The proposed budget for the new *Justice Services Division* is \$478,821 for a savings of \$83,977. Even with this savings the resources budgeted allow for funding of the Director of the Division, three Pre-trial Client Managers, Pre-trial Services Supervisor, and a Criminal Justice Planner. The creation of this division should allow for improved pre-trial services that will positively impact public safety and more cost effectively deal with clients in the criminal justice system to minimize the need to incarcerate the clients in the county jail. The addition of the Criminal Justice Planner position will allow for a position to do system-wide analysis of the entire criminal justice system in Weld County and the 19th Judicial District to maximize its efficiency for all parties, while still protecting the public's safety. Pest and Weed is down \$251,347 as the department transferred prairie dog control and tree removal responsibilities back to Public Works. Communication costs are down \$215,802, primarily due to the new funding formula and E911 picking up overtime costs and tower maintenance.

Other significant changes include Engineering, which is down \$353,368 due to consultant contracts and lower engineering costs for projects. The General Fund's subsidy to the Public Health Department is down \$538,570 due to reduction in programs as part of the budget review process done in 2009. Transfer to the Retirement Fund of \$250,000 was eliminated in the 2010 budget since no cost-of-living will be granted to retirees in 2010. Extension Services were reduced \$75,870 with the new MOU with CSU. Funding to outside agencies was cut \$108,125. Finally, \$153,371 is included for health insurance rate increases for 2010. No employee pay increases are funded in the 2010 budget due to economic conditions.

In the area of Public Works the Motor Grader budget supplies are up \$69,000 for additional dust palliative chemicals, and motor grader lease costs are down \$13,672. \$175,000 for tree trimming has been budgeted in the Bridge budget, steel costs for bridge construction and repair are down \$100,592. The Other Public Works budget is down \$819,422 based on the Capital Improvement Plan. Strategic Road improvements are down \$1,504,200. Contract Payments increased \$810,950 to \$1,721,000, based on the capital improvement plan. There are no right-of way purchases in 2010, so that line item is down \$134,500. Mining has included \$541,027 for gravel purchases. Pavement Management is funded at the current year level, but with the drop in the costs of petroleum products more projects will be able to be done for the same cost.

On the revenue side of the budget, property taxes are budgeted at \$96,940,646, the maximum amount under the Weld County Home Rule Charter's 5% property tax limitation and TABOR. Revenue from interest earnings are down \$807,000 at \$2,393,000 for 2010. Oil and Gas Royalties are up \$175,000. Fines are up \$189,110 from traffic enforcement. Planning and Building Inspection fees are unchanged due to the slowdown in development and residential construction. Charges for services are up \$150,090. The Treasurer's fees are anticipated to be up \$400,000 due to the volume of activity and conservative estimates in the past. Clerk and Recorder's fees are down \$250,000 due to slowing motor vehicle sales and slow down in recording fees from new construction and mortgage refinancing activities. Recovery of indirect costs to grant programs is up \$67,935. Other revenues are stable or only slightly changed.

In Public Works' revenues specific ownership tax is estimated to be \$6,330,000, down \$445,000 due to car sales being lower. Regular HUTF is down \$360,000 at \$8,040,000 due to people driving less and more fuel efficient vehicles. However, with the passage of SB 09-109 Weld County will receive \$1,490,000 from the added HUTF revenue resulting from this new legislation. Grant revenue is anticipated to be \$675,000 from an Energy Impact Grant for the project on Weld County Road 7 from State Highway 56 to Weld County Road 48. Other revenues include \$680,000 from transportation impact fees. Permit revenues are down \$45,000 at \$325,000 due to less oil and gas drilling activity.

Two pieces of state regulation, Senate Bill 08-218 and House Bill 08-1083, restructured the formulas for direct distribution of Severance Tax and Federal Mineral Lease revenues to cities and counties. As a result of the new formulas and weight factors, Weld County will receive substantially more direct distribution funding than it did under the old formula. Since the major impact of the energy industry to Weld County government is on the county roads in 2008 the Board of Weld County Commissioners made the policy decision to dedicate all of the direct distribution of Severance Tax and Federal Mineral Lease (FML) revenues to the Public Works Fund, especially since the major factor in determining the revenue amount received in the formula is miles of road maintained. In the 2010 Budget, \$1,500,000 is budgeted for Severance Tax revenue. In the Public Works Mon-Departmental Budget (Budget Unit 2000-90199) there is a detailed discussion on the Severance Tax policy to be followed by Weld County.

The Social Services Fund is funded at \$24,491,500. As consumer costs for fuel, utilities, and food continue to rise, and as homeowners face mortgage foreclosure situations, more Weld County citizens are being placed in a position of requiring assistance. Food Assistance, Medicaid, and LEAP caseloads have experienced significant increases in the past year. Quality day care, at an affordable cost, will continue to be a challenge for working families to obtain. The Department continues to develop methods of increasing the rate paid per child/per day to providers who undergo trainings and assessments to enhance the quality of the care provided. The demand for Child Welfare services continues to expand in Weld County, as it has throughout the state. The Department is continuing to seek out and encourage the provision of services, with their associated costs, early in the involvement with families, in order to avoid the need for more costly services as the involvement continues.

The Human Services Fund is funded at \$8,487,338 for 2010, which is down \$4,582,957 from the previous year, primarily in the area of educational programs. The final budget has been reduced by \$4,935,010 because on October 19, 2009, the Board of Weld County Commissioners formally notified the federal government that effective December 31, 2009, that Weld County will be relinquishing the Head Start (\$3,172,500), Migrant Head Start (\$1,615,000) and Preschool (\$147,510) programs. The Board, after an examination of the future of Head Start programs, determined that the Head Start programs are better suited to be operated by a non-profit or school system, rather than by a county government that is not primarily in the education business. Since the county will no longer be doing Head Start programs, the Board notified RE-1 School District and the state that after December 31, 2009, Weld County will no longer contract to do the Preschool program. As a result, the budgets for all Head Start and Preschool programs for 2010 were eliminated in the final budget, which significantly reduced the Human Services Fund's budget.

In the 2010 budget process all county programs underwent a detailed examination by management and the Board of Commissioners to better understand the needs and value of programs. A priority process also identified what actions the county should take. This process identified programs that needed to be added, eliminated, restructured, or left unchanged. Together with the review, a re-examination of what Weld County's mission statement should be, core values, core strategic goals, and how each department and office tie their individual goals into the overall county mission and strategic goals to best serve the citizens of Weld County was accomplished.

The 2010 Proposed Budget contains adequate resources to provide a level of service similar to 2009. The county will continue to focus on improving service and communication with our citizens within our resources. Demands in many areas continually exceed resources available. To serve the growing needs in the county, we will continue to explore possibilities for improved efficiency while maintaining excellence in service.

Many uncertainties face county governments like Weld County, as we all deal with the worst economic conditions in a generation. Many tough decisions associated with implementation of programs, and how they are to be funded, must be dealt with by the Board of County Commissioners with citizen input. Hopefully, this budget document has allowed the Board to make those difficult decisions to maximize the value of the tax dollars of the citizens of Weld County.

As a final note, I want to acknowledge again the hard work and spirit of cooperation manifested by the elected officials, department managers, and employees in recognizing the problems and issues confronting the county and responding with creativity and understanding. The county, as a whole, also recognizes the Weld County taxpayers and consumers of county services who provide the economic resources to the county, and we pledge our commitment to continue to provide the best in county services possible.

Copies of all budget documents are available for the public at 915 10th Street, Room 317, Greeley, Colorado. More information can be found on Weld County's website at www.co.weld.co.us.

Very truly yours,

Donald D. Warden, Director
Finance and Administration